

YIDDISH FOLKSONG

Even people who know no Yiddish, or little Yiddish, derive no end of satisfaction from singing or listening to Yiddish folksongs. The feelings which the songs express are easily appreciated.

Yiddish folksongs are a rich source of insight into Jewish attitudes and culture patterns. In times of greatest suffering the Jews have put their feelings into song. Even during the dark years of World War II, new songs were created – songs of love, and fear, defiance and hope.

Domestic and social songs express, or reflect upon, the realities of Jewish daily life. The songs often have texts which are descriptive, but are also full of intellectual and satirical allusions and comments. In the Yiddish language, there are cradle songs, childrens' songs, songs of family and lifestyle, humorous songs, songs of poverty and toil, wedding, celebration and holiday songs, ghetto and partisan songs. Some of them are very old, for instance the lullabies which are the oldest Yiddish folksongs of Eastern Europe and made their first appearance in the latter part of the Middle Ages.

Some of the love-songs are composed as a dialogue between a 'him' and a 'her'. The song *Tumbalalaika* which is on the 17th June programme (Baxter) is a beautiful example, and will be sung by Jeff Weiner and Aviva Pelham in Yiddish. The whole programme will, in fact, be a sampling of some of the best known Eastern European folksongs, but the programme also includes Yiddish songs which came across the oceans and found popularity in the American experience, particularly Broadway.

As most South African Jews are descended from communities in Eastern Europe, Lithuania and Latvia, they will probably identify strongly with the songs, yet the songs also have a universal appeal. It is time that Yiddish song – as is it is known in South Africa – should come out from the shadows, and take its rightful place in World Music.

FAY SINGER

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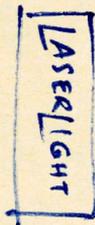
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From Donna Kay Lee

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(? USA 1990/91?)

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YIDDISH
FOLKSONGS

STEREO

ORCHESTRA OF THE JEWISH
THEATRE BUCHAREST

Conductor:

CHAJIM SCHWARTZMAN

Side A

A Nigndl
Gez ich mir shpatsirn
shpatsirn
Lezz ich mir mayn
keppele

Yan ram
(Iance ram ciam)

Di mame'ic geyap
Inter a klein beimela
Di Wamikes
Ein mul ti ich si baraien
Lonir singen civi bim
Civi bom

Side B

"Wus dergeist: mir di lum"
"Oi Avram"
"Di mame kocht Wamikes"
"Mamenim, liubeni"
"Mit a nudl, un a nudl"....

Returned to Donna-Kay Lee
on 7-03-94

U.C.T.