

## ABOUT ZEMER: JEWISH MUSIC FESTIVAL

### February 22-27, 2022

Over the past several years, Cantor Mark and I got together regularly to chat about our mutual love of classical music, opera and cantorial singing. One day Cantor asked me if I would be interested in co-sponsoring a Jewish music festival. Little did he know that this had long been a dream of mine. So I jumped at the opportunity. Calling on various figures in the music world that we knew from our respective backgrounds, we have put together a week-long series of events. Jewish music is wonderfully diverse, stretching from the more familiar like klezmer and Yiddish song to the ever growing world of classical, using both European and Mizrahi modes.

Our mission was to showcase and give voice to these various aspects of Jewish music and offer the community—Jewish and non-Jewish—an opportunity to sample this wide variety and also hear music, unfamiliar and new, as well as favorites. In the coming years, we plan to explore these fields even more. Over the week, you will have the opportunity to hear traditional music, classical composers and new commissions. We hope you will take advantage of this wonderful cornucopia of artists and performances in various formats to enjoy what both Cantor and I love—great music by wonderful Jewish composers.



**MASHEY BERNSTEIN,**  
Co-sponsor and curator

**Irish-born Mashey Bernstein Ph.D.** has long been involved in the cultural life of Santa Barbara. He was awarded an SB Independent Original Award for his work for over twenty years on *OUTRAGEOUS: The Santa Barbara Lesbian and Gay Film Festival*. He later ran the Santa Barbara Jewish Film Festival and curated the Kolnoa (Israeli) sidebar of the SB International Film Festival. In 2015, Mashey retired from the UCSB Writing Program and Film and Media Studies Dept; he presently teaches a class there for the Religious Studies Dept. on "The Image of the Jew in American Cinema." He serves on the Board of the Santa Barbara Symphony. He also served on several committees of the Music Academy of the West. For the past decade, he has led the Short Story Discussion at CBB and is President of the Mesa Shul, housed at the Jewish Federation. He has published extensively on Jewish aspects of the media and of his friendship with Norman Mailer, the subject of his dissertation.

*CBB gratefully acknowledges Daniel and Mandy Hochman for underwriting our Music Program each year; Laurie Harris and Richard Hecht for underwriting our Fund for New Jewish Music; and CBB's Lowden Musician in Residence Fund.*

See [cbbsb.org/music-festival](http://cbbsb.org/music-festival) for a full schedule of events

# ZEMER

## SANTA BARBARA'S JEWISH MUSIC FESTIVAL



### ADAM KENT, PIANO

*Havdalah Service led by Cantorial Student David Child*

7:00 PM

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2022

26 ADAR 1 5782

LIVE AT CONGREGATION B'NAI B'RITH

1000 San Antonio Creek Road,  
Santa Barbara, CA 93111

———— Co-sponsored and co-curated by ————  
Mashey Bernstein, Ph.D. and Cantor Mark Childs

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## THE PROGRAM

### Songs without Words · Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

- in E Major Op. 19, No. 1, "Sweet Remembrance"
- in E-flat Major, Op. 53, No. 2 "Fleecy Clouds"
- in B Minor, Op. 67, No. 5 "Shepherd's Complaint"
- in B-flat Major, Op. 67, No. 3 "Pilgrim's Song"
- in C Major, Op. 102, No. 3 "Tarantella"
- in F-sharp Minor, Op. 30, No. 6 "Venetian Boatsong"
- in A Major, Op. 102, No. 5 "The Happy Peasant"

### Poems of the Sea · Ernst Bloch (1880-1959)

1. Waves
2. Chanty
3. At Sea

### Saudades do Brazil · Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

1. Sorocaba
5. Ipanema
7. Corcovado

### Three Preludes · George Gershwin (1898-1937)

1. Allegro ben ritmato e deciso
2. Andante con moto e poco rubato
3. Allegro ben ritmato e deciso

### El Salón México · Aaron Copland (1900-1990), arr. by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

### From Six Improvisations on Hassidic Melodies · Paul Schoenfield (b. 1947)

- Nigun
- Kozatske

### La jongleuse, Op. 52, No. 4 · Moritz Moszkowski (1854-1925)

- Caprice Espagnol, Op. 37



## ABOUT THE PERFORMER



Professor of Music at the State University of New York at Oneonta since 2016, pianist **ADAM KENT** has performed in recital, as soloist with orchestra, and in chamber music on four continents. A winner of the American Pianists Association Fellowship and Simone Belsky Music Awards, Dr. Kent also received top prizes in the Thomas Richner, the Juilliard Concerto, and the Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competitions, and is a recipient of the Arthur Rubinstein Prize and the Harold Bauer Award. His solo and chamber music recordings are available on the Bridge and Claves labels, and a new recording of Cuban-American composer Tania León's piano music is scheduled for release by Albany Records later this year. Dr. Kent also studied with revered Music Academy teacher, Jerome Lowenthal. A recipient of Spain's Orden al Mérito Civil, Dr.

Kent has long been noted for his expertise in Spanish music. The Consulate General of Spain in NYC, the Foundation for Iberian Music at the CUNY Graduate Center, the Spanish Ministry for Education and Culture, and the King Juan Carlos I Center at NYU have all underwritten his Spanish-themed projects. Dr. Kent received a D.M.A. from The Juilliard School where his dissertation, "The Use of Catalan Folk Materials in the Works of Federico Mompou and Joaquín Nin-Culmell" received the school's Richard F. French Award. His playing was praised in The New York Times for its "wonderful sense of authority and technical flair."

## PROGRAM NOTES BY ADAM KENT:

In the early nineteenth century, there was a huge market for short piano works accessible to serious amateur players. In major European cities, pianos were ubiquitous in middle-class households, and major piano manufacturing firms did a booming business in Paris, Vienna, London, Berlin, and elsewhere. The *Lied ohne Worte* (Song without Words) was the title **Mendelssohn** conferred on many of these works, which he published in collections throughout his career. In them, his writing shows a particular mastery of phrase length, as he extends and manipulates his musical thoughts through surprising harmonic twists and digressions. His immersion in Bachian counterpoint makes itself felt too, in the scrupulous voice leading and subtle play of inner parts and bass lines. Most of the nicknames associated with these pieces were in the invention of later publishers.

The Swiss-born composer **Ernst Bloch** may be especially associated with works celebrating his Jewish heritage, although he produced as well a substantial body of abstract works for solo piano, chamber combinations, and orchestra. His "Poems of the Sea" seem heavily intended to the harmonic innovations of French composers like Debussy and Ravel.

Known as one of Les Six, a group of 5 French composers and one Swiss who pioneered a carefree, willfully banal musical style in the inter-war years, **Darius Milhaud** was impressed by the nightclub music he heard in Rio de Janeiro during the First World War. His *Saudades do Brazil*—originally for solo piano and later orchestrated by the composer—take their names from various districts of Rio and feature the rhythms of popular Brazilian dances; several of them actually derive from simpler works by such Brazilian composers as Ernesto Nazareth. Milhaud's great innovation in these pieces lies in the harmony, which is frequently bi-tonal in its superimposition of dissonant key regions. (Milhaud was also instrumental in founding the Music Academy of the West!)

One of the ironies of twentieth-century music is the paucity of solo piano music published by **George Gershwin**, whose numerous recordings testify to an astonishing capacity for improvisation, a virtuoso technique, and an innovative keyboard style. His only published solo works are the Three Preludes heard this evening. Always eager to be taken seriously by the classical music establishment, Gershwin aspired to write a set of 24 Preludes in the manner of J. S. Bach, Frederic Chopin, Claude Debussy, and so many other composers who preceded him. He premiered a set of six at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City in 1926, and chose three for publication. The first and third Preludes feature a typically Latin-American rhythm of 3+3+2, while the middle Prelude is popularly known as "Blues Lullaby."

Like many American composers of the early twentieth century, **Aaron Copland** found occasional inspiration south of the border. "El Salón México" refers to a Mexico City nightclub the composer frequented in the 1930's and quotes several popular regional folk tunes. The apparent simplicity and tunefulness are subtly subverted by the rhythmic complexity, which features constantly changing meters and cross-accents, often giving the impression of melodies and accompaniments out of phase with each other. The work was brilliantly scored for orchestra by the composer, and his younger friend and colleague Leonard Bernstein devised the ingenious transcription for solo piano heard tonight.

Detroit-born composer **Paul Schoenfield** spent several years growing up on a Kibbutz and is currently a professor of composition at the University of Michigan. Much of his output relates to his interest in traditionally Jewish themes, and the intersection of popular, folk, and classical idioms. His "Six Improvisations on Hassidic Melodies" feature simple tunes from traditional Yiddish culture in a virtuosic piano idiom. Although he makes free use of dissonant clusters and bi-tonality in the decorative material, the composer never strays far from the conventional tonality of the original sources.

Like Frederic Chopin before him, the Polish-born **Moritz Moszkowski** settled in Paris, where he was known as a formidable piano virtuoso and master composer for the instrument. Few aspiring pianists escape his "15 Etudes de Virtuosité", and his idiomatic writing for the instrument is on par with the most important nineteenth-century masters. If his harmonic language seems conservative for its time, his melodic inventiveness, his mastery of concise musical forms, and his clever facility never cease to delight. "La jongleuse" evokes the high-wire antics of a lady circus juggler, and the "Caprice Espagnol", with its wild guitar imitations and references to the Aragonese jota, recalls the composer's fascination with all things Spanish.