



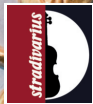
Illumination

*EARLY JEWISH-ITALIAN
SPIRITUAL MUSIC*

ENSEMBLE BET HAGAT

TRADITIONAL SINGING: YAIR HAREL,
DANIEL AKIVA, MAURO OCCHIONERO

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: AVELA SEIDELMAN



Early Italian Jewish Spiritual Music

- 1 - *Prologue: 'Shir La-Ma'alot'* for 5 voices - Salomone Rossi (Mantova, 1570-1630) 01'50"
from 'The Songs to Solomon'
- 2 - **'Adon Ha-Slichot'** - Rome (Bnei Romy) 05'23"
- 3 - **'Achoth Ketana'** - Trieste (Sephardic) 04'59"
- 4 - **'Chi sapeva'** (Ehad Mi Yodea) - Florence (Italiani) 03'15"
- 5 - **'Yehi Shalom Be-Helenu'** - Trieste (Sephardic) 04'00"
- 6 - **'Maoz Tzur'** - Hebrew melody (Ashkenazi) and elaboration
from Benedetto Marcello's 'Estro Poetico-Armonico' (Venezia, 1722-23): Psalm XV 02'40"
- 7 - **'Hallel'** - Livorno (Sephardic) 03'07"
- 8 - **'Betzet Yisrael'** - Ferrara (Italiani) 03'03"
- 9 - **'Sha'ar Asher Nisgar'** (O Immacolata e pura) - Hebrew melody (Sephardic) 05'36"
and elaboration from Benedetto Marcello's 'Estro Poetico-Armonico': Psalm XVIII
- 10 - **'Kiddush'*** - Rome (Bnei Romy) 02'08"
- 11 - **'Chad Gadya'** - Florence (Italiani) 01'18"
- 12 - **'Chad Gadya*/Alla Fiera dell'Est'** (with permission of Angelo Branduardi) 02'32"
- 13 - *Epilogue: 'Keter'* for 4 Voices - Salomone Rossi; from 'The Songs to Solomon' 03'15"

Ensemble Bet Hagat

Artistic Director: Ayela Seidelman

Yair Harel, Daniel Akiva, Mauro Occhionero: Traditional Singers

Bari Moscovitz: Lute, Theorbo, Musical Arrangements

Refael Negri, Daniel Hoffman: Baroque and Klezmer Violin

Richard Paley: Baroque Bassoon

Mati Bobek: Baroque Clarinet

Adi Silberberg: Recorders, Viola da Gamba

Ayela Seidelman: Baroque Cello

Ben Har-Ga'ash: Bass Colascione

Mauro Occhionero: Early Italian Percussion

Yair Harel: Additional Percussion



La Maison du Presseoir

BET HAGAT

A home for interfaith understanding in Jerusalem

'Illumination' is dedicated to the friends who passed away during its' production: Bruria Avidan, who was a source of light behind the scenes for over a decade; Zdenek Konicek, a remarkable mentor as a cellist, artist and person; and Brother Charles-Eugene Galichet, Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of Abu Gosh, who unwaveringly encouraged, guided and supported Bet Hagat and all its' projects.



Recording: Bert Hagat Library (Israel) July 2019

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Sound Editing and Mix: Yuval Amit, Ayela Seidelman

Mastering: Yuval Amit, Udi Horev (www.ClassicMastering.com)

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Musical supervision and Producer: Ayela Seidelman

Production Assistant: Ori Chemla

Cover Photography: Yulia Feldman, Ellie Allegra Seidelman-Moscovitz

Liner notes: Ayela Seidelman

www.ensemblebethagat.com



הקרן לירושלים

مؤسسة صندوق القدس
THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION

Musical Sources:

Recorded source material used in transcriptions:

Leo Levi collection and Jewish Music Research Center (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) collections via:
'An Invitation to Piyyut' Website of the Israel National Library

'Italian Jewish Musical Traditions-from the Leo Levi Collection' (CD; Edited Francesco Spagnolo-Rome/Jerusalem (Jewish Music Research Center) 2001)

National Sound Archive, Israel National Library

Liner Notes sources :

Enrico Fubini; 'Musicisti Ebrei Nel Mondo Cristiano: La ricerca di una difficile identità'

Don Harran, 'Salomone Rossi: Jewish Musician in Renaissance Italy'; *Acta Musicologica* (1987)

Joshua R. Jacobson, 'Salamone Rossi Ebreo-Overview'; Zamir Chorale of Boston website

Edwin Seroussi, 'In search of Jewish Musical Antiquity in the 18th Century Venetian Ghetto: Reconsidering the Hebrew Melodies in Benedetto Marcello's 'Estro Poetico-Armonico''; *The Jewish Quarterly Review* (2002). 'In the Footsteps of 'The Great Jewish Composer'; Oxford University Press (2004)

Francesco Spagnolo: 'Musiche in Contatto- Le tradizioni ebraiche in Italia -nelle registrazioni di Leo Levi'. 'Crossing the Sea of Song'; *MinAd: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* (2008-2009). 'Il Suono del Melting Pot'; Gabriele Mancuso Edition (2018). 'I-Tal-Yah': An Island of Divine Dew; *Italian Crossroads in Jewish Culture*; Addendum to Gallery Exhibit (2016). 'Bella e Perduta' (blog).

Jewish Music Research Center online, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Chad Gadya; Salamone Rossi)

Invitation to Piyyut website (for origins and explanations of piyyut texts)

Thank you to:

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ILLUMINATION

‘Illumination’ comprises examples of rare musical and cultural gems which were nearly lost after the Holocaust ravaged Italian-Jewish religious and cultural life. Many of the traditional Italian-Jewish *‘piyyutim’* (Hebrew spiritual/liturgical songs and poems) performed here remain widely unknown in concert halls and to the general public.

The foresight of the 20th century Italian-Israeli ethnomusicologist Leo Levi led him to spend the postwar years following WWII making invaluable field recordings of Italian synagogue music. Levi recorded the music in 20 different Italian Jewish communities, thereby almost single handedly preserving this extraordinary musical and cultural treasure. Had Levi not acted with such urgency in recording these songs, little trace of this cultural patrimony would have survived after the passing of the generation of Italian WWII survivors whose singing Levi documented.

The Jewish and Christian Italian cultures of the Renaissance and Baroque period were at once separate and also intricately connected, and synagogue music itself has always adapted and reflected contemporary- ostensibly unrelated- melodies and styles. It was thus a natural step to present works from the early spiritual music of Jewish Italy (all whose texts were in use as early as from 1600 and even before) seen through the prism of the prevalent musical styles of the same period in which Salamone Rossi and Benedetto Marcello’s own important synagogue-based works were created: the Renaissance and Baroque periods. As specialists in early Italian music, this involved interpreting which contemporary styles of music predominant outside of the ghetto in Italy at the time were likely reflected in the Jewish works (which would themselves have been performed- during synagogue services- vocally only). The task of reviving these pieces and presenting them in the fuller context of the Italian culture that they inhabited was fascinating, as the works revealed themselves in their unique beauty and spirit.

The Italian Jewish community of the late Renaissance and Baroque was subdivided into four distinct groups, each of which maintained their own rites, synagogues and identities within the general Jewish community: The Italyani and Bnei Romy were the original and most ancient of the Italian Jewish communities, descended in part from the exiles brought to Rome from the land of Israel after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. It is thought that given the antiquity of these community’s origins it is possible that the rites contained in their prayerbook are a direct remnant of the Jewish community of the land of Israel, prior to the exile to Rome. The Sephardim were descended from the communities of Spanish and Portugese Jews exiled during the Inquisition, and included communities- subsequently based in Greece and the Balkans- which also originated in

Spain and Portugal. The Ashkenazim were descended from German Jewish communities, exiled in the 15th century, who settled in Northern Italy. The fourth community, 'APAM' (for the Hebrew letters signifying Asti, Fossano and Moncalvo), settled in Northwestern Italy after being expelled from France in the late 14th Century.

The first composer to write Jewish liturgical music in the prevailing art music style of the Renaissance, Salamone Rossi lived in Mantova between 1570-1630. During that period the Jewish inhabitants of Mantova, despite being constrained to dwelling in a segregated area, were nonetheless exposed to the cultural flourishing of the Renaissance. Ultimately, in 1612, they were barricaded behind Ghetto walls. While many occupations were prohibited to Jews in Mantova at the time, work as a musician was permitted. Thus Rossi was able to be active at the Gonzaga court as a violinist, composer and orchestral leader. He achieved such favour at the court that he was exempt from wearing the yellow identifying badge which Mantovan Jews at the time were required to wear.

A prolific composer, in 1622/23 Rossi published his 'Songs of Solomon' (Hashirim Asher le Shlomo) in Venice: 33 Hebrew language works for 3-8 voices, set to Jewish sacred texts and ostensibly intended for use in the synagogue. The 'Songs of Solomon' signified the introduction of contrapuntal art music - a form until then only associated with non Jewish music - into the synagogue. By innovatively assimilating polyphony within traditional Hebrew texts, Rossi created music with integrated Italian and Jewish features, and which thus served as a bridge between two cultures. Designated, as the composer wrote, 'for joyous singing on joyous occasions...(for) use of the greatest possible beauty of voice in praising the Lord', the radiance of Rossi's 'Shirim' caused his defender, the Mantovan Rabbi Leone di Modena, to declare of Rossi's transcendent musical gifts 'a rainbow has appeared in our days'. Salamone Rossi likely died either during the Austrian sack of the Mantovan Ghetto in 1630, or in the subsequent plague which decimated the area, as no further record of him exists beyond that fateful year.

Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739) was a Catholic Venetian nobleman who in his lifetime worked as both a writer, lawyer and composer. A contemporary of Vivaldi, Marcello's most significant work is considered to be his 'Estro Armonico-Poetico', a collection of 50 psalm paraphrases published in 1722-23 in Venice, written for voices and a small accompanying ensemble. This work includes transcriptions of eleven Hebrew melodies for the psalms, which Marcello used as a *cantus firmus* in ten of his psalm settings. One of the first instances of ethnomusicological field research of Jewish music, Marcello's embedding of unadulterated Hebrew language and melodies

in these works is considered groundbreaking.

The Venetian ghetto - which has the sad distinction of being the first ghetto established in the world - was created in 1516, despite Venice at the time having a reputation for being a relatively tolerant place for Jews to live. The isolation of the ghetto contributed to a distinct development of culture within the walls. Despite the segregation, in Marcello's time there was movement and discourse between the ghetto and the larger Venetian society, and Marcello- having resided very close to the Ghetto- is believed to have visited various synagogues in the Venetian ghetto on many occasions. In these local synagogue visits- notable for being made by a Catholic Venetian patrician- and likely also in encounters with Venetian Rabbis and cantors, Marcello meticulously transcribed both the words and musical notation of eleven Hebrew psalms and liturgical poems.

Given that Hebrew is written from right to left, Marcello devised a unique method of notating the Hebrew lyrics by actually writing the musical notation from right to left, synchronized with the layout of the written Hebrew lyrics (thus avoiding a problem which Rossi encountered when publishing his own Hebrew language works in Venice a century earlier). 20th century musicologists discovered that certain Italian-Jewish piyyutim which they transcribed from oral sources were virtually identical to the piyyutim that Marcello himself transcribed 200 years earlier. This proved the tenacious longevity of the oral musical traditions, and suggests the likelihood that the same melodies were almost certainly transmitted intact orally for at least hundreds of years previously, if not more.

In his 'Estro Poetico-Armonico' Marcello introduces each Hebrew melody in its' original form, and describes its' community origin (Sephardic, Ashkenazi) and associated Jewish festival. The Hebrew melodies were then woven into the exquisite contrapuntal structure which Marcello composed around them, for which he used Italian language paraphrases of the Hebrew sacred texts. The strikingly beautiful original Hebrew text of the piyyut 'Sha'ar Asher Nisgar' ('The Closed Gate') -sung in the Venetian Sephardic synagogue during the festival of Simchat Torah- was written by the revered medieval Jewish poet, Solomon Ibn Gvirol. Still in use today in Jewish communities around the world, the original Hebrew text's organic suitability to the radiant melody it was set to -the melody which Marcello transcribed and adopted- has led Ensemble Bet Hagat to reinstate the original Hebrew text of this haunting liturgical poem, sung here in place of the Italian text which Marcello used in his adaptation of this piyyut. Inspired by Benedetto Marcello's belief that art music derived from authentic Hebrew melodic sources should 'be executed naturally and simply- very different from our common manner of executing music', the approach in all of these

recordings (both Renaissance/Baroque art music, and the traditional works) was to seek out singers whose voices are characterized by a similar unaffected simplicity, reminiscent of the natural style of synagogue singing which made such an impression on Marcello 300 years ago.

The order of the program is itself designed to reflect through Rossi's works - as the nature of his music truly did - the symbolic and literal gate connecting the ghetto to the culture and society of the outside world. Placed as both Prologue and Epilogue, the two Rossi works performed here face outward - and the rest of the program, with a more traditional flavor, gazes inward as from within the ghetto - yet always with a perception of the parallel world beyond the walls.



The program:

*original version from 'An Invitation to Piyut' website (Israel National Library)

**original version from 'Italian Jewish Musical Traditions-from the Leo Levi Collection' CD
(Ed. Francesco Spagnolo)

The liturgical poems (piyyutim) performed here are as follows:

1) *Prologue: 'Shir La-Ma'alot' (A Song of Ascents) by Salomone Rossi:*

Taken from Psalms, Shir La-Ma'alot is a prayer for protection from trouble and difficulty which is traditionally sung in order to gain strength in times of trial. Rossi's luminous rendition is performed here instrumentally.

2) 'Adon Ha'Slichot' (Lord of Forgiveness) - Rome/Bnei Romy version*

Arrangement supervision: Ayela Seidelman

Paytanim/Singers: Daniel Akiva, Yair Harel; Responsive congregational singing: Members of the ensemble

Adon Ha'Slichot is sung in the period preceeding the Jewish High Holidays, during 'Slichot' (forgiveness) prayers, which are traditionally done at the synagogue during the quiet, spiritually potent hours between midnight and dawn. This arrangement evokes the stillness of the sleeping, pre-dawn outside world during the slichot prayers, contrasted with traditional (deliberately non-unison) responsive singing of the congregants, intensifying with each stanza.

3) 'Achat Ketana' (Young Sister) - Trieste/Sephardic version

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz

Paytan/Singer: Yair Harel

Responsive Singing: Members of the Ensemble

In Sephardic congregations this piyyut accompanies the final sunset of the old year, and the very first moments of the new year, which are timed to coincide with the singing of the hopeful, heartfelt lines 'May the new year and its' blessings begin'.

4) 'Chi sapeva' (Ehad Mi Yodea- Who is he that knows?) - Firenze/Italyani version**

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz

Singer : Mauro Occhionero

A Passover Eve piyyut whose text came into use in the late Renaissance/Early Baroque, the melody supports the playful upwards and downwards counting of the text, which deals with typically Jewish symbols. This version is sung in Italian.

5) 'Yehi Shalom Be-Chelenu' (May there be peace among us) - Trieste/Sephardic version**

Arrangement Supervision: Ayela Seidelman

Paytan/Singer: Daniel Akiva

First appearing in print in 1522 in Venice, this tender piyyut is traditionally sung at the Brit Milah (ritual circumcision) ceremony of newborn boys, and is a prayer for tranquility and hope in the life of the infant.

6) 'Maoz Tzur' (Stronghold of Rock) - transcribed and elaborated on by Benedetto Marcello from the Ashkenazi rite in Venice

The text of this piyyut is believed to have been written in Germany during the time of the Crusades. This memorable, somewhat martial melody is still frequently used in Jewish communities worldwide. Here Maoz Tzur is performed instrumentally.

7) 'Hallel' (Praise) - Livorno/Sephardic version*

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz

Singer/Paytan: Daniel Akiva

Taken from Psalm 114, this dancelike Hallel melody is a joyous song of praise sung on festivals.

8)'Betzet Yisrael' (When Israel Came Forth) - Ferrara/Italyani version

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz

Paytan/Singer: Yair Harel; Percussion: Yair Harel, Mauro Occhionero

Also taken from Psalm 114, Betzet Yisrael is sung on Passover Eve, a rhythmic, engaging retelling of the Israelites exodus from Egypt.

9) 'Sha'ar Asher Nisgar' (The Closed Gate) - Hebrew melody

(Sephardic-Venezia) transcribed and elaborated on by Benedetto Marcello as 'O Immacolata e Pura' from Marcello's 'Estro Poetico-Armonico', Psalm XVIII

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz
Paytanim/Singers: Daniel Akiva, Yair Harel

This haunting melody of love and longing was sung in the Italian Sephardic synagogues during the High Holiday festival of Simchat Torah. The original Sephardic melody is introduced by the cello at the outset of the piece, then repeated and embellished throughout.

10) 'Kiddush' (Sanctification of the Sabbath Meal Wine) - Rome/ Bnei Romy version*

Arrangement Supervision: Ayela Seidelman

Paytan/Singer: Daniel Akiva; Congregational Responsive Singing: Members of the Ensemble

The traditional blessing over the wine sung on Sabbath Eve (Friday night).

11-12) 'Had Gadya'** (One little goat) - Here performed in two different versions: The first version (11), performed instrumentally only, is from the Firenze (Italyani) community (Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz).

The second version (12) is sung in the original Aramaic and is combined with the modern Italian song 'Alla Fiera dell'Est' by Angelo Branduardi (arranged by Bari Moscovitz)

13)'Keter' (Crown): Rossi's uplifting version of the prayer based on biblical verses, written for the synagogue in Mantova. Performed here instrumentally, it closes the program with Rossi's joyous 'Halleluya'.

'Alla Fiera dell'Est':

Arrangement: Bari Moscovitz

Italian Singing: Mauro Occhionero; Aramaic Singing: Daniel Akiva, Yair Harel, Adi Silberberg

Written by Angelo Branduardi in 1976 (and recorded here with his permission) the lyrics of 'Alla Fiera dell'Est' are based on and nearly identical to the lyrics of the original Aramaic song "Had Gadya", sung for centuries on Passover Eve in diverse Jewish communities around the world. At the same time, given the similarity of both its' text and humorous atmosphere to the original Aramaic version, the Italian song has since been adopted for use as an Italian language version of Had Gadya, sung during the Passover festival in families and communities in Italy. Also, Branduardi's tune is occasionally sung with the original Aramaic text, thereby adapting the

captivating tune for use with the original ancient text, and returning the modern song full circle to its' ancient point of origin. In the spirit of cultural symbiosis which characterizes all the works on this album, Ensemble Bet Hagat presents here a union of these two approaches and worlds: the Italian song 'Alla Fiera del Est' (itself based on the Passover song Had Gadya) sung simultaneously with the original Aramaic text, which in turn is itself superimposed on Branduardi's melody. Like the story of early Italian Jewish spiritual music, Fiera del Est/Had Gadya symbolizes the parallel telling of two related stories, told in different languages, interacting with, shaping, and illuminating one another.

Ensemble Bet Hagat

This new international ensemble is based at Bet Hagat, a unique center for intercultural and interreligious thought and art founded and directed by the physician and medical historian Prof. Etienne Lepicard, located in the Ein Karem neighborhood of Jerusalem. Founded by Ayela Seidelman, Ensemble Bet Hagat is a modular ensemble focussing on the symbiosis of early Jewish music with the neighboring cultures surrounding and permeating it. In the spirit of Bet Hagat the ensemble is devoted to celebrating and communicating the connections between diverse backgrounds, faiths and cultures. Ensemble Bet Hagat is defined also by its' belief in engaging the community and audience, by its' unique atmosphere of collegiality, and also by its' multi-generational membership, spanning three generations of teachers and their students.

Ayela Seidelman - Artistic Direction, Baroque Cello

A specialist in the performance of early Jewish music, Ayela Seidelman received a BMus in cello performance from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, and an MMus in cello performance from the Shepherd school of Music at Rice University, where she also minored in Religious Studies. Having studied with many of the era's leading cellists, such as Paul Katz, Shmuel Magen, Zdenek Konicek and Janos Starker, Ms. Seidelman also specialized in Baroque cello and ensembles at the Istituto Vittadini in Pavia, Italy. Ayela was winner of the first prize in the Yad Vashem competition for performance of music by composers who perished in the Holocaust, and was a member of the Israel Camerata Orchestra. A founding member of the Early Jewish Music ensembles 'RitmoAnima' and 'Di Tsaytmashin', her recordings are broadcast frequently in Israel and Europe. In 2015 released with 'Di Tsaytmashin' a groundbreaking CD of early Yiddish music (Brilliant Classics). Ayela was a longstanding faculty member at the Jerusalem Conservatory Hassadna, where she taught cello and chamber music for over a decade. Ayela is founder and Artistic Director of Ensemble Bet Hagat, an international ensemble which specializes in early Jewish music at the intersection of the non-Jewish world.

Bari Moscovitz - Musical Arrangements, Lute, Theorbo

A graduate of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, where he received a BMus degree in composition, and the Istituto Vittadini in Pavia, Italy, where he studied lute, theorbo and early music with Prof. Massimo Lonardi. Bari Moscovitz performs frequently in Israel and Europe as a soloist and with ensembles. Dedicated to the performance of early music- and specifically early Jewish music- he has collaborated with Yaniv D'Or, Yasmin Levy, Roberto Balconi, Massimo Lonardi, Roberto Gini, Ye'ela Avital, and others. Bari has released recordings with Naxos, Brilliant Classics, and Ortav. In addition to his work as a performer and arranger, heads the music department at Harel High School in Mevasseret Tzion (Israel).

Daniel Akiva - Paytan (Traditional Hebrew Liturgical Singing)

The composer, guitarist and singer Daniel Akiva has earned international acclaim for his performances and original music, much of which has evolved from the music of Sephardic Jews. Winner of the Amazon prize for his 2007 CD 'Hope', he was awarded the Prime Minister's prize for Israeli composers in 2017. Artistic Director of the international 'Guitar Gems' festival in Netanya from 2006-2018, Daniel Akiva has released numerous recordings with prominent singers including Ye'ela Avital, Kochava Levy, Avraham Ferrera, and Yasmin Levy. Mr. Akiva established the Music department at Haifa's Wizo High School for the Arts, which he headed for over 30 years, and through which he was instrumental in educating a generation of Israeli classical musicians. Daniel is also active as a 'paytan' (singer of Jewish liturgical poems) at traditional Sephardic synagogues.

Yair Harel - Paytan (Traditional Hebrew Liturgical Singing), Percussion

Yair Harel is a world renowned Israeli performer, singer, artistic director, teacher and community activist. He is a leader in the revival and contemporary interpretation of the ancient art of Piyyut (Hebrew liturgical poetry) in Israel and abroad, which has revolutionized the face of Israeli culture in the past decade. Yair's unique style of singing combines his knowledge of Jewish traditions from North Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe, and improvisation. Founder and editor in chief of the 'Invitation to Piyyut' website, the artistic director of the 'Within the Secret of Many Voices' festival in Jerusalem, and the 'Ben Zvi Piyyut Vocal Ensemble'.

Mauro Occhionero - Traditional Italian Singing, Early Italian Percussion

The Italian percussionist and multi-instrumentalist Mauro Occhionero trained musically in the field of contemporary dance, working for several years at the Ballet School of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan with the most important choreographers and dancers from Italy and abroad. A founder of the Yiddishe Mame

and Locus Amoemus Ensembles, Mauro has performed works on intercultural themes for over fifteen years. He has diplomas in flamenco guitar (Catedra de Flamencologia- Jerez), classical guitar (Istituto Vittadini- Pavia), and a degree in music from University of Bologna. Mauro studied composition with Maestro Ugo Nastrucci and produced over 20 Oratori dedicated to the figures of Christianity and Jewish culture of the 20th century. Active as a performer- primarily in early Italian and Mediterranean percussion- in Italy, Europe, Israel and Japan, Mauro has participated in the recording of over 20 CD's in the field of early music, for labels such as Brilliant Classics, Tactus, Stradivarius, Amadeus and Virgin. He has recorded with the Europa Galante ensemble, the organist Luca Scandali, Ensemble Bet Hagat, and the lutenist Massimo Lonardi.

Ben Har-Ga'ash - Bass Colascione

The Jerusalem based bass and colascione player Ben Har-Gaash (b.1994) has played with some of Israel's greatest artists both on stage and in the studio. His uniquely diverse musical taste has allowed him to work with a wide range of artists and genres, from pop-rock with Dana Berger to electronic jazz fusion with world renowned Belgian pianist Valentin Lazar, as well as early music with Ensemble Bet Hagat. Currently a student of the Israeli center for Jazz Studies in Tel Aviv, Ben continues to work as a session musician, music teacher and music director.

Richard Paley - Baroque Bassoon

Richard Paley is the principal bassoonist of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, whose 40-year career encompasses a prolific range of preeminent orchestral, chamber music, and teaching positions. Richard is a founding member of Israel's premier contemporary music group, the Ensemble of the 21st Century, as well as a pioneer in early music performance on historical instruments in Israel. He is an adjunct professor of bassoon and chamber music at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University, and is widely acclaimed as a devoted teacher of aspiring young musicians.

Adi Silberberg - Recorders, Viola da Gamba

The recorder player Adi Silberberg (b.1975) is a multi-instrumentalist, multi-stylistic player, and an educator of music. Having specialized in early music performance in Holland, Adi is active as a composer, teacher and performer at the highest level. Adi frequently performs internationally, and has appeared on numerous CD's. His resume includes radio and television broadcasts alongside work with leading classical artists such as Yaniv D'Or and Myrna Herzog. Adi has also collaborated with outstanding fringe artists. In recent years Adi has also been active in the academic world as a student and instructor, primarily through the department of Musical Technologies at Bar Ilan University.

Mati Bobek - Baroque Clarinet

The clarinetist Mati Bobek is a graduate of the Mannes School of Music, where he was a student of David Krakauer. For numerous years he held the position of first clarinet and soloist with the Ra'anana Symphonette. Mati performs widely with the Jerusalem based 'Naam' ensemble and the 'Amechaye' klezmer band, both of with whom he has released CD's. In addition to music performance- of which the CD 'Illumination' is his first foray into early music- Mati has a degree in music therapy and works both privately and in schools as a music therapist.

Daniel Hoffman - Baroque Violin

The Tel Aviv based violinist Daniel Hoffman is one of the leading international experts of the klezmer violin style. A co-founder of Davka and The Klez-X in San Francisco and Trio Carpin in Israel, as well as the Turkish music group Harel Shachal and the Ottomans, Daniel has also composed silent film scores, concert pieces and many theatrical scores, including the musical 'David in Shadow and Light'. Daniel has performed with Ehud Banai, Shai Tsabari, Shuli Rand, Berry Sakharov and many more, and tours internationally with Ute Lemper. He is currently producing a documentary film series, 'Violin Around the World', which explores the Italianate violin's unique role in classical and traditional music worldwide.

Refael Negri - Baroque Violin

Based in Milan, Refael Negri is a professor of modern and baroque violin at the Conservatorio Luca Marenzio in Brescia, Italy. Mr. Negri performs worldwide with the Como-based contemporary group 'Traiettorie Sonore' the 'Ensemble Europa Galante' early music group, as well as Ensemble Bet Hagat and the Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra. Refael has performed on CD's released with EMI, Opus 111, Brilliant Classics, and others. Always attracted to and interested in the intrinsic components of sound and its' psychological implications, Mr. Negri shares this research with friends from Milan to New York to Jerusalem.

Yuval Amit - Sound Engineering

Based in Jerusalem, Yuval Amit has worked in recording, mixing and mastering for over twenty years. Active in classical recording and concert sound for all genres, Yuval has taught sound engineering at various academic institutions in Israel. He operates an independant sound-studio in Jerusalem, working closely with Ensemble Bet Hagat, as well as with various other important Jerusalem based theaters, venues, orchestras and bands, such as the Jerusalem Cinematheque and the Israel National Library.



Torah Ark, Vittorio Veneto synagogue, 1700

Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem (Sara Kopelman-Stavisky)