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## Songs from the ashes: An examination of three Holocaust-themed song cycles by Lori Laitman

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SONGS FROM THE ASHES: AN EXAMINATION OF THREE  
HOLOCAUST-THEMED SONG CYCLES

BY LORI LAITMAN

by

Serdar Ilban

Bachelor of Music  
University of Istanbul  
1992

Master of Music  
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1995

A doctoral document submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

**Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Performance**  
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by **Lori Laitman**

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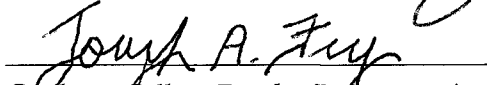
**Doctor of Music**

  
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ABSTRACT

**Songs From the Ashes:  
An Examination of Three Holocaust-Themed Song Cycles  
by Lori Laitman**

by

Serdar Ilban

Dr. Carol Kimball, Examination Committee Chair  
Professor of Music  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

During the years of the Holocaust, literature of many different types was generated in order to fulfill the distinctive needs of people caught in an unimaginable nightmare. Despite the horrific conditions or perhaps propelled by them, the Jewish people kept diaries, wrote poetry and stories, and they made music, in particular, by singing. This literature represents the undying hope, the very soul of the Jewish people.

Lori Laitman is one of the most prolific composers of American art songs working today. Although the amount of scholarly work on Laitman's music is rather limited, this should not diminish the worthiness of the composer's contributions to American art song, her extremely productive output, and her evolving and growing body of work.

Laitman has composed five Holocaust-themed song cycles to date. Three of these are composed for baritone voice and various instrument pairings and will occupy the body of the musical examinations of this document. These works are:

*Holocaust 1944*, for baritone and double-bass (1996, revised 1998)

*Fathers*, for baritone and piano trio or baritone, flute, cello and piano (2002, revised 2003)

*The Seed of Dream*, for baritone, cello and piano (2004)

The document will examine Laitman's musical translations of the texts by Jerzy Ficowski, Karen Gershon, Anne Ranasinghe, Tadeusz Różewicz, Abraham Sutzkever and David Vogel which reflect life during the Holocaust. Further, it will briefly examine dramatic and pedagogical aspects of these song cycles.

The research will rely heavily on interviews, journal articles, current performance practice and a review of related literature. Most importantly, insights of the composer herself, taken from the interviews, letters, and shared, unpublished information will be incorporated to the study.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I discovered Lori Laitman's music in 2003. Since then my admiration of her works became an ongoing love affair, culminating with the inscription of this document.

I am indebted to Dr. Carol Kimball, my examination committee chair, and my advisor, for her invaluable academic advice, her sharp editorial vision, and for her enthusiastic encouragement and support throughout this project.

I extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Alfonse Anderson, Dr. Andrew Smith, Prof. Christine Seitz, and Dr. Joseph A. Fry, who graciously served on my committee and continuously offered their academic and professional expertise.

There are no words expressive enough to articulate the gratitude I feel for my parents and my sister for relentlessly believing in me, and for teaching me the importance of education. I am grateful to my wife Nicole Ilban, who has been an incredible source of strength during this project, and to her parents, for being my parents in America.

I am eternally thankful to my first voice teacher Gül Sabar, whose patience, diligence and impeccable teaching continue to influence the teacher I strive to become today.

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To my students, who continue to inspire me everyday, thank you.

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Finally, and most importantly, I am forever indebted to the extraordinary composer Lori Laitman for her music, friendship and warmth. She has been an ardent supporter from the onset of this project, and tirelessly answered all my questions, provided much information I would otherwise never be able to obtain, and guided me in the right direction. Thank you Lori.

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## CHAPTER 1

### LORI LAITMAN: THE WOMAN AND HER MUSIC

*I think the love of music was clearly passed down from my maternal grandmother. Her maiden name was Cantor; and there were also stories that she was descended from a long line of Jewish cantors; so there is definitely a genetic component at work here.*<sup>1</sup>

— Lori Laitman

#### Biographical Information

Lori Laitman was born into a musical family in Long Beach, New York, on January 12, 1955, as the youngest of three children. She attributes her earliest musical memories to her mother, an amateur violinist, pianist, and a singer: “My mother has a remarkable memory for songs, and still remembers all the words to the songs she grew up with in the 1920s. While I don’t particularly love her voice, I am sure hearing her sing during my childhood had a certain effect on me.”<sup>2</sup>

Since Laitman was considerably younger than both of her sisters, she remembers growing up as if she was an only child. She began studying piano at age five, and flute at age seven. During these early musical experiences, she developed a passion and an ambition for a future flute career.

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<sup>1</sup> Lori Laitman, Longy School Talk, April 2007, Longy School of Music, Cambridge, MA.

<sup>2</sup> Lori Laitman, interview by author, 15 January 2008, tape recording, Potomac, MD.

Laitman was educated in the public school systems of Long Beach, New York, and from third grade on, in New Rochelle, New York. She skipped kindergarten and twelfth grade, and was accepted to Yale University at age sixteen.

After finishing her undergraduate studies at age twenty, Ms. Laitman continued on to receive her master of music degree in flute performance from the Yale School of Music. She completed the degree in one year.

After graduate school, Laitman married her college boyfriend, Bruce Rosenblum, who was also a musician at the time. The couple moved to Williamstown, Massachusetts, and together comprised the entire music department at The Buxton School, a private high school in Williamstown. During this time Laitman was also hired by the Vermont Symphony and realized her dreams of playing flute professionally. She frequently commuted to Vermont for rehearsals and to play concerts on the weekends.

Upon Mr. Rosenblum's acceptance to Columbia Law School in New York City, the couple moved to Manhattan in 1977. Laitman began teaching flute at Turtle Bay Music School and also composed various scores for industrial films of Dick Roberts:

This was an important compositional training; due to budgetary constraints, I hired a limited number of musicians, and to ensure variety in color, I tried to use each instrument to its fullest capacity. This inventiveness, driven by economics, certainly filtered into the way I choose instruments and orchestrate.<sup>3</sup>

The couple moved yet again, this time to Boston, where Mr. Rosenblum clerked for Judge Levin Campbell for a year and their first son, James, was born on November 18, 1980.

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

Mr. Rosenblum then clerked for Chief Justice Warren Burger at The Supreme Court. The family then moved to Washington, D.C. area and later to Potomac, Maryland, where their daughter Diana was born on October, 24, 1983. Three years later, their younger son Andrew joined the family on March, 28, 1986:

I loved writing music for film and theatre, but having children changed my focus. Of course being a mother changed my life completely, and was the best thing to ever happen to me. But, the realities of parenthood did not mesh well with the time pressures of composing for film or theatre. So I started to concentrate on writing chamber music.<sup>4</sup>

Laitman continued to compose more chamber music, but still had no interest in writing songs. During the 1980s, she collaborated with the koto player, Miyuki Yoshikami, at The International Music School in D.C., where they both served on the faculty. This collaboration led to several of her compositions for flute and koto.

It wasn't until 1991 that Laitman began to set poems to music. For her peculiar venture into art songs, she credits the enthusiasm and persistence of her friend, soprano Lauren Wagner:

I had always remained in touch with my old Interlochen roommate Lauren Wagner. In 1991 she won several international competitions. One of the prizes was the opportunity to record a debut album. She called me, full of excitement, and asked me to compose some songs for her CD. I was flattered but I said, no, I can't do that! I don't know how to write songs!<sup>5</sup>

Laitman began to listen to songs and to read poetry. She fell in love with the poetry of Sara Teasdale (1884-1933), and decided to set several of her poems. *The Metropolitan Tower* was the first poem she set. She remembers her insecurities and fear of showing her music to anyone at these early stages:

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<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

It came so easily to me that I was doubtful of its worth. I was going to throw the song out, but my husband stopped me and reassured me that it was a beautiful song. Even many years later, I was sort of embarrassed by this particular song, its simplicity, and strophic form. Now, however, I consider it one of my greatest songs.<sup>6</sup>

After the very successful debut performance of the song by Lauren Wagner in New York City's Merkin Hall, Laitman admits her love affair with setting poems to music never ended. She affirms that she discovered her hidden talent and true calling:

I was a grown woman, thirty-six years old, with three children; and I finally found my voice...Not as a flutist, or a composer of chamber music, but as a composer of art songs. It took a while to develop my confidence; at the beginning I was terrified to show my music to people, scared that they would find it stupid. After all, I didn't have a degree in composition, and my music was considered "beautiful," which was certainly not the style. Maybe it still isn't; but it's my style. At this point, I have composed more than a hundred and sixty songs for a variety of combinations, and to date I have set the poems of about fifty different poets from around the world.<sup>7</sup>

### Compositional Style

*Lori Laitman is clearly one of the most brilliant composers of the American genre.*<sup>8</sup>

— Adelaide Whitaker

Lori Laitman's finesse for composing for the voice is unmistakably evident in her body of work. She has composed more than a hundred and sixty songs to date, and her output already forms a distinct body of art songs in American vocal literature.

Laitman divides her opus into two different categories: she is strongly committed to making her music a voice of remembrance for the victims of the Nazi persecution in

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Lori Laitman, Athena Festival Keynote Speech, March 2005, Murray State University, Murray, KY.

<sup>8</sup> Adelaide Whitaker, quoted from "Thoughts of a Patron," on Artsongs.com, official website of Lori Laitman, accessed January 21, 2008, used by permission.

her Holocaust-related music, and classifies the remainder of her songs as her non-Holocaust music.

The effectiveness of Laitman's songs is partially due to her keen understanding of the union between poetry and music. She is also an extremely gifted melodist, which makes her works stand out in late twentieth and early twenty-first century American music, where there has been a considerable resistance to composing lyrically.

In addition to her sensitivity to the text and her lyricism, Laitman also possesses a gift for the dramatic. The combination of these elements gives her songs a special staying power, and makes her compositions popular on recital stages, enthusiastically sung by many performers:

Most of my songs are combined into cycles, but even a single song is like a baby opera for me. There is so much drama! My earliest song cycles were tied together by focusing on a certain poet, or group of poets. More and more, I have to combine poems that share a certain thematic aspect. I also have started to use musical themes from one song to the next, thus unifying the cycle on a deeper level.<sup>9</sup>

All of Laitman's early insecurities about writing for the voice seem to have been replaced by a confidence and comfort of understanding the prose. Her compositions display a fastidious concern for the prosody, the general mood and aesthetic of the poetry, rhythmic inflections of the text, and breathing patterns.

Laitman is equally comfortable in setting the various emotional conditions of the poems, whether it is the heart-wrenching cries of a child in Holocaust poetry, or the witty and humorous setting of her own lyrics in the encore song, "Dreaming."

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<sup>9</sup> Lori Laitman, Athena Festival Keynote Speech, March 2005, Murray State University, Murray, KY.



Laitman's lyricism and melodic invention produce a sound often recognizable as "Laitman". The composer credits this particular trait to having had the time to develop her style over the years without having to deal with the pressures of composing for a living.

When asked about her compositional influences, Laitman does not shy away from listing her inspirations:

Everything I have ever heard, of course has been an influence. I was born into a musical family, and surrounded by music from infancy. I am sure this had a major effect... Great music is always an inspiration. You can learn so much by listening. Likewise, bad music is also an inspiration. You can learn what *not* to do.<sup>10</sup>

She continues on to name Monteverdi, Mozart, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Bach, Barber, Britten, Beethoven, Prokofiev, Schubert, Schumann, Puccini, Verdi, Bizet, Ravel, Debussy and Golijov among her favorite composers, but attributes the greatest influence to her teachers, Jonathan Kramer and Frank Lewin:

In practical terms, I think I learned the most from taking a course in graduate school (Yale School of Music) on how to compose music for film and theatre. The course was taught by Frank Lewin. We examined dramatic music, and learned how to respond to different moods in a film or play, and how to effectively write music to dramatize these moods. Today I use these skills when composing music for a poem or libretto.<sup>11</sup>

Melody is the most important aspect of any Laitman song. Her melodies effortlessly depict and paint the text, and are certainly not in the mainstream style of the late twentieth-century American vocal compositions.

In contrast to the mathematical, and often vocally inaccessible qualities of atonality, twelve-tone, and serialist techniques, Laitman presents the antidote of

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<sup>10</sup> Lori Laitman, interview by Janelle McCoy, December 2007. Potomac, MD. used by permission.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

generous, sweeping melodies. The composer should also be praised for her intuitive setting of the English language, and her ongoing interest in the dramatic context of the poetry throughout her songs.

The range in some of Laitman's songs may present technical challenges for many singers. In her collaborative efforts, she often composes for specific singers and considers their input vital to the development of certain compositions. Therefore those pieces often reflect the flexibility and range of particular performers, and may not necessarily be suitable for younger, less experienced singers. However, Laitman is not opposed to transposing her music in order to give more singers access to it, as long as the transpositions do not threaten the general color and mood of the compositions.

Laitman's songs are often through-composed. The usage of closed forms is rare but does exist in her early works. One of her most recognizable compositional traits is the effective use of recurring themes in both melodic and harmonic fragments which this author affectionately calls "lait-motives".

Almost all of Laitman's songs are idiomatically tonal. In her later compositions, we often witness the existence of chromaticism and sometimes unexpected harmonic shifts and changes, but she is essentially committed to keeping a tonal center in her songs.

In Laitman's harmonic language, one of the most important features is the use of modulations. Almost all of these occur unprepared, reflecting the sudden or subtle changes in the text.

The meters shift just as frequently in her songs, also supporting the changes in the text. This is especially evident in her songs that set modern poetry where the rhythmic patterns are often irregular:

I have a certain process for every song. My primary goal as a composer is to create music that will illuminate the meaning of a poem. Every musical idea is derived from the words and emotions of the poem. I always compose the vocal line first and I customize each melody so that the words are set with all the right stresses and the most important words are highlighted. This allows the singer to effectively communicate my interpretation of the poem to the audience. My tonal centers shift frequently, so my rhythms vary along with the natural rhythms of the poem. I generally use harmonies to color the emotions of the texts. I frequently use word painting, where I will create an “aural” portrait of the word itself. A poem is like mini-film or a play, and I am like the director. This ability to present my interpretation of a poem through music is quite thrilling. When I am done with the vocal line, I turn my attention to the accompaniment, and I try to add yet another layer of interpretation to the poem.<sup>12</sup>

Laitman’s music is technically intricate and well-planned, but despite that fact, the composer is not particularly fond of analysis of her music. She states that her music is driven by emotion and not by any particular analytical or compositional method, and therefore the analysis of it would be elusive. She is also frank about her dislike for theory and refers back to her college years:

After my sophomore year at Yale, I wanted to stay home and do nothing, but my parents told me I had to go somewhere. They gave me the choice to go to Fontainebleau, where I could study with the legendary Nadia Boulanger, or go to Interlochen Music School in Michigan. Now it seems crazy that I would pass up a summer in France, but I have to confess, I have never liked theory, and the prospect of going to France to study with Boulanger was too scary for me.<sup>13</sup>

Laitman is often very specific with markings of her music. She uses suggestions for tempi, dynamics, mood, and even staging notes in her scores. Laitman carefully underlines that these markings are only guidelines, and the performers should observe

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Laitman, interview by author, January 15, 2008.

them only as helpful suggestions to their interpretation. This openness also helps the composer in promoting frequent performances of her works. In fact, the collaborative process is an important component of Lori Laitman's compositional technique. It enables her to hear and to evaluate the details of her works, and to revise them accordingly. She strongly values performers' inputs and refers to them in her refinement process.

Laitman also uses exoticism as an agent of color and mood in her compositions. Her Holocaust-themed song cycles frequently draw on the traditions of both *Sephardic* and *Ashkenazi* Jewish cantorial chants, and the wailing quality of *Klezmer* music. She uses rhythmic elements from dances such as tango and waltz, draws melodic elements from show tunes reminiscent of Gershwin and Porter, and employs blues and ragtime frequently as agents of local flavor in her compositions.

Perhaps the most important ingredient in Laitman's compositions is the alliance between music and poetry. She chooses her texts carefully and her musical settings are able to further illustrate the text. As she comments: "I will never set a poem that I do not feel an emotional connection to."<sup>14</sup> Laitman sums it up when asked what she thinks of her own style:

No matter what poet I set, I believe my music has a distinct style; characterized by the lyrical quality of the vocal line, the imaginative word setting, the flexible harmonies and meters, the breadth of poets and subjects that I use, and the complex interaction of the vocal line with a complex accompaniment; creating an integrated web with all factors existing to serve the text.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

## CHAPTER 2

### HOLOCAUST LITERATURE: REACTIONS AND ATTITUDES

*And he is a witness whether he has seen or known of it; if he does not speak of it, then he shall bear his sin.*

Leviticus 5:1

The Holocaust was Nazi Germany's methodical persecution and annihilation of European Jewry between 1933 and 1945. Although Jews were the primary victims, Gypsies, people with mental and physical disabilities, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and political dissidents were also targeted.

The word holocaust comes from the ancient Greek, *olos* meaning "whole" and *kaustos* meaning "burnt." Appearing as early as the fifth century B.C.E., the term can mean a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire, or a great destruction of life, especially by fire.<sup>16</sup>

In early references to the Nazi murder of the European Jews, even by Jewish writers, the term did not signify one single gruesome event but rather many that occurred through the centuries. In the late 1940s, it became a more specific term due to its equation to the Hebrew word *shoah* which had been used throughout the Jewish history to refer to assaults upon Jews.

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<sup>16</sup> Quoted from "The Holocaust" in *Holocaust Encyclopedia* on [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org), website accessed, 11 February 2008.

The term holocaust received its most prominent usage in the official English translation of the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948, and later in the translated publications of Yad Vashem<sup>17</sup> throughout the 1950s.

The usage of the word holocaust in those documents triggered the adoption of the term as the primary English reference to the Nazi crimes against European Jewry. President Jimmy Carter's establishment of the President's Commission on the Holocaust in 1978 cemented the term's meaning in the English-speaking world. Later the *Holocaust* (with a capital H) became the prevailing referent to the systematic annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany.

The contents of this chapter in no sense will attempt a historical survey of the events that occurred during the Holocaust. The historical accounts of the Holocaust are well-documented in many scholarly works. These are based not only on the eyewitness accounts of the victims, but more importantly, on the archives and the large volumes of German state documents recovered after the war. However, the insights generated by the reactions and attitudes toward Holocaust literature are briefly examined in the following pages.

Many works of literature have been published on the subject of the Holocaust in the years after World War II. These creative works in the form of memoirs, diaries, novels and poems, confronted the disheartening task of describing the world of the ghettos and concentration camps. Many writers felt compelled to bring these horrific accounts to life as a tribute to the survivors, and as a way to remember those silenced by the Nazis.

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<sup>17</sup> The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority of Israel

Poetry presented an especially ideal medium due to its emotional and personal nature, in which poets expressed ideas and sentiments that otherwise could not be adequately rendered through visual art. Poets who wrote about the Holocaust composed in the tradition of Jeremiah, the author of the biblical book of Lamentations.<sup>18</sup> In fact the scope of the destruction of the Holocaust mirrors the events of *Tisha B'av*, a day of mourning in the Hebrew calendar for the destruction of the two temples. Their texts are sorrowful, full of resentment and despair, condemning the silence of the world to the unimaginable events.

In specific reference to the poetry in the song cycles examined in the following chapters, the poets Karen Gershon and Anne Ranasinghe wrote about the agony of separation from their parents as they boarded the *Kindertransport*.<sup>19</sup> Jerzy Ficowski and Tadeusz Różewicz, Polish Gentiles, spoke of the suffering of Jews and Gypsies in the Warsaw Ghetto, while Abraham Sutzkever strongly alluded to resistance in his poetry.

Some of these poets use a great deal of biblical and traditional Jewish symbolism in their works. Some write about specific events such as the transgressions committed against children and the elderly, while some do not even mention an individual, a locale, or an expression specifically related to the Holocaust, but allude to it in their poems.

Shortly after the war, the general reactions and attitudes toward representing the Holocaust in literature were astonishingly varied. Many secularized German-Jewish philosophers argued about the ethical implications of "Holocaust Literature."

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<sup>18</sup> Philip Rosen and Nina Apfelbaum, *Bearing Witness: A Resource Guide to Literature, Poetry, Art, Music and Videos by Holocaust Victims and Survivors* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 105.

<sup>19</sup> Children's Transportation: A program by which child refugees escaped Nazi Germany in 1938 and 1939.

After World War II, philosopher Theodor Adorno asserted that “to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.”<sup>20</sup>

Adorno is well-known for his opinion because it encapsulates the concerns of many others on the question of narrating the Holocaust whether in books, plays, music or on film. Yet many survivors and their descendants used literature to effectively extract the horror and pain of the Holocaust and put them into words.

Adorno’s strong opposition to the Holocaust literature is clearly stated in “Engagement” from 1974:

The so-called artistic representation of the pain of those who have been tortured contains the power to extract pleasure out of it. Through aesthetic principles of stylization, the unimaginable ordeal appears as if it had some meaning; it is transfigured and stripped of some of its horror and in itself already does an injustice to the victims.<sup>21</sup>

Leo Lowenthal echoes his lifelong friend and co-worker Theodor Adorno, and insists:

All fictionalizations, no matter how scrupulously accurate their research, are inherently pernicious because they could not help introducing an element of “aesthetic gratification” alongside of, but also structurally integral with, their presentation of the horrific subject of the Shoah. Only the most strictly factual historical studies, the memoirs of survivors, the diaries, notebooks and sketches of the victims, or interviews with those directly involved seem to not risk making an “entertainment” out of the agony of Hitler’s victims.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Engagement,” in *Noten zur Literatur, Gesammelte Schriften* trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974), 2:423.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Michael André Bernstein, “Narrating the Shoah,” in *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 42.



Emil Fackenheim, perhaps the most distinguished philosopher of the Holocaust, brings the argument of ethical representation of the Holocaust to the opposite side. His approach is somewhat biblical in the sense that he offers not only a moral standard for the attitudes toward the literary representation of the Holocaust, but also places a degree of judgment on the historical inheritance of these works:

We are first commanded to survive as Jews, lest the Jewish people perish. We are commanded, second, to remember in our very guts and bones the martyrs of the Holocaust, lest their memory perish. We are forbidden, thirdly, to deny or despair of God, however much we may have to contend with him or believe in him, lest Judaism perish. We are forbidden, finally, to despair of the world as the place which is to become the kingdom of God, lest we help make it a meaningless place in which God is dead or irrelevant and everything is permitted. To abandon any of these imperatives, in response to Hitler's victory at Auschwitz, would be to hand him yet other, posthumous victories.<sup>23</sup>

Holocaust survivor and well-known writer Primo Levi recalls Auschwitz in his last book, *The Drowned and the Saved*. He reflects upon his experiences, and the useless cruelty he witnessed. Levi notes that his survival itself was largely accidental and considers himself a part of "an anomalous minority."<sup>24</sup>

Levi also points out that the most of the survivor narratives he has come across have already been influenced, often unconsciously, by "information gathered from later readings or the stories of others."<sup>25</sup>

Levi continues by justifying the fact that even the strictest first-person narratives will bear the markings of other stories. He laments the stories that we will never hear; the stories of those who perished:

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<sup>23</sup> Emil Fackenheim, "The 614<sup>th</sup> Commandment," in *Judaism* 10, no. 3 (Summer 1967): 269-73.

<sup>24</sup> Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 83.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

We survivors are not only an exiguous but also an anomalous minority: we are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch bottom. Those who did so, those who saw the Gorgon, have not returned to tell about it or have returned mute, but they are the submerged, the complete witnesses, the ones whose depositions would have a general significance.<sup>26</sup>

Assaults upon Jews and the survival of these assaults occur frequently in the Jewish history and are part of the Jewish collective memory. Most of the principles of Judaism are reflective of a communal desire and an undying hope for survival. The horrific events of the Holocaust might be considered as an extension of those ancient experiences, and must be retold and reinterpreted regularly. Though there is always a risk that comes with over-dramatization of any event, remaining silent presents a bigger risk of – especially in terms of the Holocaust – submerging the events to a universal oblivion.

It was precisely the silence and the oblivion of the world that allowed the Nazis to carry out their terrifying mission against the Jews and many others. “Many survivors,”

Primo Levi writes, “remember that the SS militiamen cynically admonish the prisoners:

However this war may end, we have won the war against you; none of you will be left to bear witness, but even if someone were to survive, the world will not believe him. There will perhaps be suspicions, discussions, research by historians, but there will be no certainties, because we will destroy the evidence together with you. And even if some proof should remain and some of you survive, people will say that the events you describe are too monstrous to be believed: they will say that they are the exaggerations of the Allied propaganda and will believe us, who will deny everything, and not you. We will be the ones to dictate the history of the Lagers.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *ibid*, 84.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, 11. (Levi attributes the story to: Simon Wiesenthal *The Murderers Among Us*, ed. Joseph Wechsberg (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967) 334-35.)

Even decades later, the argument of ethical representation of the Holocaust still seems to produce some anxiety among writers. Mistrust and suspicion from the literary critics force the authors to exclude all imaginative stylization from their works in order to have their experiences counted as autobiographically sound.

This deep-rooted anxiety of figuration even surfaces in a recent memoir, *A Time to Speak*, by Helen Lewis, an Auschwitz survivor. The memoir contains a foreword written by the famous Irish novelist Jennifer Johnston, and shows bitter contempt at literary discomfort:

All the baggage of the novelist is here – joy and despair, good and evil, death and survival – but there is no fiction, none of the novelist’s attention-seeking tricks, nothing is manipulated as a novelist would manipulate, the pattern is inherent not imposed. Helen Lewis...never invents; there is only Truth, witnessed Truth.<sup>28</sup>

The literary responses to the Holocaust are almost as old as the Holocaust itself. The first response came from the survivors of the camps themselves. Most authors adopted a starkly realistic style that blended fiction and memoir. Others relied on suggestion and metaphor to depict the horrors of the events. Writers who did not live under Nazi persecution have struggled with the issue of representing life in the camps without diminishing the terror of the Holocaust by over-stylization. Literary critics, philosophers and skeptics traced these creations in their examinations of the Holocaust literature to place them in literary traditions. Many reactions and attitudes were generated during the process. It is impossible to profile them all. Many works are not even available in English.

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<sup>28</sup> Helen Lewis, *A Time to Speak* (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1992), Foreword by Jennifer Johnston, ix.

Regardless of these attitudes, the Holocaust should be treated as more than simply a literary device. Although this literature does not elevate historical responsibility or eliminate moral judgment, it alerts us about the history we inherit, and the actions we must ultimately take to prevent future atrocities from taking place.

## CHAPTER 3

### LAITMAN AND HOLOCAUST MUSIC

*I always thought that beauty in art would help save the world; and I continue to be driven by one piece of Jewish philosophy that I picked up: "Tikkun Olam,"<sup>29</sup> and that is that people on earth can repair the world. My belief is that everybody has a unique gift. It took me a while to discover what my gift was, which is to compose art songs. I am always driven by a desire to add beauty to the world. I hope my music touches people, and I feel that's my small contribution.<sup>30</sup>*

— Lori Laitman

#### I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Lori Laitman composed her first Holocaust-themed song cycle, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* in 1995-1996. The cycle was commissioned by Laitman's close friend Lauren Wagner, who also suggested a collection of poems written by children from the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. The cycle is composed for soprano voice with alto-saxophone accompaniment where the haunting sound of the instrument mimics

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<sup>29</sup> *Tikkun Olam*: The ethical bettering (literally, perfecting) of the world. Judaism believes that the purpose of Jewish existence is nothing less than "to perfect the world under the rule of God." In Jewish teachings, both clauses – the world's ethical perfection and the rule of God – are equally important. Human beings are obligated to bring mankind to a knowledge of God, whose primary demand of human beings is moral behavior. All people who hold this belief are ethical monotheists, and thus natural allies of religiously committed Jews. Quoted from: Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, "Jewish Ethics and Basic Beliefs," in *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know about the Jewish Religion, its People, and its History* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991) 549.

<sup>30</sup> Lori Laitman, interview by author, 15 January 2008, tape recording, Potomac, MD.

the soulful wails of *Klezmer* music.<sup>31</sup> Laitman recalls the emotional journey during the discovery of these poems and her decision on the instrumentation of the piece:

One cannot help but be touched by the hope and innocence that these children put into their poetry, despite their terrible surroundings. I had also planned on composing a piece for saxophonist Gary Louie, so, as I read these poems, the idea of the saxophone as the solo partner to the voice intrigued me – the sound of saxophone itself could be haunting, soulful, and reminiscent of *Klezmer* music.<sup>32</sup>

The poems chosen for the cycle offer a variety of imagery, allowing the composer to use a range of musical styles. Cantorial style chant and Jewish folk song themes with modal melodies alternating between minor and major sevenths are used frequently. Despite the tremendous sadness of the texts, the message in the poems is one of undying spirit and hope. The poetry of the children describes the difficult living conditions in the ghetto and how they manage to rise above these conditions and focus on the beauty of life. Laitman depicts these emotional conditions in her musical settings and uses a great deal of whimsy to bring forth the themes of hope and innocence.

*I Never Saw Another Butterfly* premiered at The Shriver Hall, at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, February 4, 1996, with soprano Lauren Wagner and saxophonist Gary Louie. Laitman's first Holocaust-themed song cycle continues to maintain an increased popularity on recital stages.

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<sup>31</sup> *Klezmer* referred to musical instruments, and was later extended to refer to musicians themselves. It was not until the mid-to-late 20th century that the word was used to identify a musical genre. Early 20th century recordings and writings most often refer to the style as "Yiddish" music. *Klezmer* developed in Southeastern Europe alongside Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian and Romanian music. The style is easily identifiable by its characteristic expressive melodies, reminiscent of the human voice. Typical instruments of *Klezmer* are violin, clarinet, accordion, trumpet and piano. These instruments take on human characteristics like laughing and crying with a joyful exuberance or a soulful wail.

<sup>32</sup> Lori Laitman, *Mystery: The Songs of Lori Laitman*, liner notes by composer, Albany Records troy393, 2000. Compact Disc.

## Holocaust 1944

*Holocaust 1944* was composed in 1996 and was revised in 1998. The cycle employs seven poems chosen from the book, *Holocaust Poetry*, edited by Hilda Schiff.

About her second Holocaust-themed song cycle, Laitman writes:

*Holocaust 1944*, for baritone voice and double-bass, was composed for the incomparable virtuoso double-bassist Gary Karr. I had planned for many years to compose a piece for Gary (who was once my husband's bass teacher) and I searched extensively for an appropriate theme. I had already composed one Holocaust song cycle, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, for soprano voice and alto saxophone, and when a second Holocaust cycle came into creative focus, I chose poetry with a darker tone, suited to the darker timbres of a baritone voice and a double bass.<sup>33</sup>

Indeed the overall musical atmosphere of the cycle is alarmingly dark. Laitman captures the gloomy and bitter tones of the poetry in her musical translations. She restores dramatic tension between some of the more pessimistic pieces by altering the mood with light-hearted touches. The unchained quality and the thematic unity of the cycle, combined with the mood variations are testaments to Laitman's gift for the drama and her lyricism.

The accompaniment, which was edited by Gary Karr, employs a variety of virtuoso bass techniques - *glissandi*, *harmonics*, and *tremolo*. The vocal line is just as virtuosic, with its range occupying the limits of the baritone voice. This demanding pairing of voice and double-bass is extremely effective in invoking the declamatory and resentful shades of the poetry by Jerzy Ficowski (Poland), David Vogel (Russia), Tadeusz Różewicz (Poland), Karen Gershon (United Kingdom), and Anne Ranasinghe (Sri Lanka).

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<sup>33</sup> Lori Laitman, *Dreaming: The Songs of Lori Laitman*, liner notes by composer, Albany Records, troy570, 2003. Compact Disc.

Laitman eloquently underscores the importance of their works:

Each of these poets' lives was directly touched by the Holocaust. Their poems allow us to identify with their collective experience, making the horror of the Holocaust seem immediate and real. Their works teach the lesson of the Holocaust to a new generation, heroically declaring: never again!<sup>34</sup>

A detailed examination of *Holocaust 1944* is included in the following chapter.

### Daughters

Lori Laitman's song cycle *Daughters* employs the universal theme of mother and daughter connection. The three poems inspiring Laitman's musical settings are written by two Holocaust survivors, Anne Ranasinghe and Karen Gershon. Both authors lost their parents to the Nazi persecution during the Holocaust, and each of the poems in the cycle is a message from the poet to her daughter. Laitman admits a particular connection to these poems:

Since both Anne and Karen lost their mothers at such a young age, these poems are particularly poignant. As a mother of three (including one daughter), I was touched on a very emotional level.<sup>35</sup>

Commissioned by pianist Kirsten Taylor, *Daughters* premiered at Griswold Hall, Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore on October 19, 1998, featuring Patricia Green, mezzo-soprano, Juliette Kang, violin, Thomas Kraines, cello, and Kirsten Taylor, piano. The cycle marks Ms. Laitman's first work for voice and piano trio:

As with my other works, I composed the vocal line first, illuminating the text to the best of my ability, and then used the additional colors and textures to further enhance the meaning of the words.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Lori Laitman, *Becoming a Redwood: Songs of Lori Laitman*, liner notes by composer, Albany Records, troy865, 2006. Compact Disc.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*



Musically, the cycle offers a more intimate tone, reflecting the mood and color of the poetry. The declamatory nature of *Holocaust 1944*, and the soulful tunes of *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* are replaced here by extended phrases that are much less exotic in nature.

Laitman also uses all accompanying instruments in very communicative yet independent ways. The violin often recalls the playful cries of a child, while the cello depicts the wise and mature tone of a mother. The trio is anchored cohesively by the rhythm-driven piano accompaniment, offering a dynamic counterpoint to the vocal line.

### Fathers

Setting the poems of Sri Lankan poet Anne Ranasinghe and the late Russian poet David Vogel, *Fathers* could be considered a sequel to Laitman's third Holocaust-related cycle, *Daughters*. The dramatic center of the texts focuses on the father and child relationship, thus paralleling the mother and daughter relationship explored in *Daughters*. Each of the four poems used in Laitman's musical settings is autobiographical. Both Ranasinghe's and Vogel's fathers were killed in the concentration camps. The main themes of their poems are despair and guilt.

Laitman acknowledges the challenges she had to overcome as a composer during the creative process of the cycle:

The subject matter of these poems, as well as their length, created some particular challenges for me as a composer. There are three main songs in this cycle; "You, Father," "Last Night I Dreamt," and "I Saw my Father Drowning." The fourth poem, "Don't Cry," is much shorter and its theme serves as a respite to the nightmarish visions of the other poems.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Lori Laitman, *Fathers*, poems by Anna Ranasinghe and David Vogel, (New York: Enchanted Knickers Music, BMI, 2003), 1.

Upon completing her musical settings, Laitman still observed the cycle to be structurally incomplete, with three long songs followed by a much shorter one:

I felt that something was needed to counteract the despair of the three long songs. So I divided the last song, "Don't Cry," with its message of hope, into musical fragments. Each of these fragments appears before each of the main songs. The first fragment is a setting of the first sentence of the poem, the second fragment is a setting of the first two sentences, and so on. While there are slight differences in the repetitions of the fragments, there is enough similarity so that as each fragment returns, it sounds familiar thus enhancing the message of the poem.<sup>38</sup>

*Fathers* is composed for baritone voice and piano trio which is another thematic element that ties it to its prequel, *Daughters*. Although the poetry chosen is much darker and harsher, the fragments and the complete setting of "Don't Cry" elevate the message of the cycle to one of hope and renewal. A detailed examination of *Fathers* is included in chapter five.

### The Seed of Dream

*The Seed of Dream* is Lori Laitman's last Holocaust-themed song cycle to date.

In many ways, this author also considers it to be the composer's best song cycle yet. *The Seed of Dream* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance and uses five poems of renowned Yiddish poet Abraham Sutzkever. Four of the five poems in Laitman's settings were translated by Pulitzer Prize winner C.K. Williams, while "Beneath the Whiteness of your Stars" was translated by Leonard Wolf. The poetry of Abraham Sutzkever often alludes to resistance and human suffering with great lyricism and grace. His poems offer the perfect atmosphere for Laitman to cultivate the musical elements of grace and lyricism in her settings:

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

Abraham Sutzkever consistently produced poems of great artistry under the most dire of circumstances. These first-person accounts, written between 1941 and 1944, not only bear witness to the destruction around him, but to his undying belief in the beauty of the word and the world.<sup>39</sup>

*The Seed of Dream* was composed in 2004 for baritone voice, cello and piano and had its premiere performance on May 9, 2005 at The Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Remembrance Concert at Benaroya Hall, Seattle, Washington. During her research for the cycle, Laitman's most difficult task was finding poems that provided first-person accounts. Upon discovery of Sutzkever's poetry, Laitman recalls being struck not only by their beauty, but also the emotional power they contain:

The works of Abraham Sutzkever amazed me. I thought his poems were absolutely breathtaking. The language was so powerful and beautiful, and the fact that he was able to create poems of such beauty while hiding from the Nazis was also source of inspiration.<sup>40</sup>

Laitman's musical translations of these poems are equally beautiful and powerful, conveying a wide range of emotions. The emotional delivery of Laitman's music is immediate and memorable, often leaving the listener with a sense of familiarity and comfort:

I try to be sensitive to the moods of the poem and try to figure out how best to magnify the meaning of the text. I pretend I am the person in the poem. The different layers of the accompaniment also let me add layers of interpretation.<sup>41</sup>

*The Seed of Dream* is examined in further detail in chapter six.

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<sup>39</sup> Lori Laitman, *The Seed of Dream*, poems by Abraham Sutzkever, trans. C.K. Williams and Leonard Wolf, (New York: Enchanted Knickers Music, BMI, 2005), 1.

<sup>40</sup> Lori Laitman, interview by Janelle McCoy, December 2007. Potomac, MD. used by permission.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

## CHAPTER 4

### HOLOCAUST 1944

*I am Jewish. My father was one of three Jewish people in the West Point Class of 1939. I do feel particularly aligned with the Nazi Holocaust. All this other material should be set as well; by someone. And in a way, it's all the same tragedy. When you memorialize one, you honor them all. There will never be a shortage of material. Sometimes, - as with 'Holocaust 1944,' - it's actually easier for me, when poems are so sad. There's some kind of stimulus that I feel. I'm not religious, but I am Jewish, and I'm a mother, and I'm a human being. I feel a responsibility to set these poems. 'Holocaust 1944' took me a long time to write, and when I was done I thought... my soul is in that piece. And when I first heard (double-bass virtuoso) Gary Karr play it... I thought he was me. It also took years to find the right venue for the premiere of 'Holocaust1944.' It's extremely frustrating to have a time lag between creation of a song cycle (or song) and its performance birth. Music of Remembrance provided us the right venue.<sup>42</sup>*

— Lori Laitman

#### I Did Not Manage to Save

*Holocaust 1944* sets the poetry of five Holocaust poets from various backgrounds. In general, the texts have a macabre tone with themes of grief, guilt and resentment. Given these themes, Laitman's song cycle employs a great deal of musical and dramatic tension in both the vocal line and the double-bass accompaniment.

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<sup>42</sup> Kathleen Watt, "An Acclaimed Art Song Composer Takes the Opera Stage: Kathleen Watt Speaks with Composer Lori Laitman," *US Operaweb*, Online Magazine Devoted to American Opera, 2001-2004, accessed February 8, 2008.

The cycle was composed expressly for the virtuoso double-bassist Gary Karr in 1996, and was slightly revised in 1998. It premiered on November 6, 2000, with baritone Erich Parce, and double-bassist Gary Karr at The Music of Remembrance Series, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, Washington.

*Holocaust 1944* is one of Laitman's longest song cycles. It consists of seven poems chosen from the book, *Holocaust Poetry*.<sup>43</sup> The first song in the cycle, "I Did Not Manage to Save" sets the poem of Polish poet Jerzy Ficowski (1924-2006) in the translation of Keith Bosley.<sup>44</sup> Ficowski was one of Poland's most prominent poets. He fought in the Polish army during the Nazi occupation, and later was an activist in the human rights campaign against the communist rule. In his works, Ficowski memorialized the Jewish, Gentile and Gypsy victims of the Holocaust. His poems tell the stories of the ghetto, and the horrific transgressions committed by the Nazis.

"I Did Not Manage to Save" opens the cycle with an extended double-bass solo reminiscent of Eastern European Jewish folk tunes. Its mournful melody is a precursor to the musical disposition of the entire cycle. Laitman changes the metric signature fourteen times in the (twenty-measure-long) double-bass solo, creating a free flowing and expressive quality (Example 4.1). The vocal line enters with another mournful melody, expertly painting the sorrow and regret in the text. Aside from shifting the meters frequently, Laitman also marks 'push' and 'relax' for the tempi, underscoring the importance of the free flowing character of the piece. Generally the slight push in the tempo occurs on the 5/8 bars, followed by a relaxation (Example 4.2).

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<sup>43</sup> Hilda Schiff, ed., *Holocaust Poetry* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1995).

<sup>44</sup> Jerzy Ficowski, *A Reading of Ashes*, trans. Keith Bosley (London: The Menard Press, 1981).

Not including the extended double-bass prelude, the song is divided into two sections. The second part of the song is a variation of the first, where the escalating rhythms in the accompaniment offer an effective contrast between the two sections.

Example 4.1 "I Did Not Manage to Save" mm. 1-20

The musical score for Example 4.1, "I Did Not Manage to Save", measures 1-20, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) shows the Baritone and Double Bass parts. The Baritone part is mostly rests. The Double Bass part begins with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 88$  and the instruction "freely and very expressively". The music is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations: *mp*, *push*, *Sul D*, *relax*, and *push*. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the Double Bass part with markings for *relax*, *mf*, and *Sul D*, ending with a *push*. The third system (measures 9-12) shows the Double Bass part with *relax*, *mf*, and *simile...* markings. The fourth system (measures 13-16) features a change in time signature to 3/4 and includes *relax* and *mf* markings. The fifth system (measures 17-20) shows the Double Bass part with a *poco rit.* marking and a final time signature change to 3/4.

Example 4.2 "I Did Not Manage to Save" mm. 21-26

21 *poco rit.* *mf* *A Tempo* *slight push* *relax*  
 I did not man- age to save a sin- gle life

25 *slight push* *relax*  
*slight push* *relax*

Laitman effectively applies text painting using a chain of triplets in 'And I wander round cemeteries,' (Example 4.3). She repeats the technique in 'I run to help where no one called,' this time by creating a thicker rhythmic texture, intensifying the sorrow of the words and leading the song to an effective climax (Example 4.4).

Example 4.3 "I Did Not Manage to Save" mm. 31-35

*plaintively*  
 And I wan- der round

*mp*  
 33 *mp*  
 cem- e - ter - ies which are not there I

Example 4.4 "I Did Not Manage to Save" mm.41-47

41 *A Tempo* with a breathless quality *mp* sighing *mf*  
run to help where no one called to  
*A Tempo* *f* *p*

45  
rescue after the event  
*mf* *p*

The vocal range in "I Did Not Manage to Save" is rather unusual, posing technical and interpretive difficulties for many singers. It should be remembered that Laitman often composes for specific voices, and often for instruments of unusual flexibility and range. As most of the vocal line remains on or above *passaggio*, it is not suitable for younger, inexperienced singers. However, a singer of vocal and artistic maturity is greatly rewarded by Laitman's lyric vocal writing.

Another challenge may present itself within the rhythmic articulation of the piece. Both voice and double-bass are lyrical instruments, where the rhythmic pulse often stretches beyond the bar lines. Although the composer provides ample freedom with frequent changes in tempi, the dramatic pulse of the piece must remain steady. It should also be remembered that Laitman composed the cycle for double-bassist Gary Karr, whose performance skill extends the significance of the double-bass part beyond an accompanying role.



## How Can I See You, Love

Seamlessly connected to the first song, “How Can I See You, Love” is a poem of David Vogel (1891-1944) in a translation by A.C. Jacobs.<sup>45</sup> David Vogel was born in Satanov, Podolia (now Russia) to a religious family. From an early age on, he traveled to the well-known Jewish cultural centers in Eastern Europe. He was living in Vienna when World War I broke out and was arrested as a Russian enemy alien. Some of his early poems date from that period.

In 1923, Vogel published his first collection of poems. He left Austria for Paris in 1925. After the outbreak of World War II, he was arrested by the French, this time as an Austrian enemy alien, and later by the Nazis as a Jew. In 1944, he was presumably deported to a concentration camp, where all traces of him vanished.

Vogel’s prose reflects the tortured relationship between Jewish intellectuals and Europe of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. His lyrical poetry was a sharp departure from the Hebrew verse of his time with touches of surrealism and stoic intellect.<sup>46</sup>

“How Can I See You, Love” opens with a short double-bass solo, where the repeated large intervallic leaps of fifths and sevenths offer a slight contrast between the otherwise seamlessly linked first two songs (Example 4.5). The vocal line enters without accompaniment, and the communication between the two instruments turns into a captivating canonic duet (Example 4.6). The canon continues with slight variations in the melodic lines of both voice and double-bass. The vocal line ascends to a passionately sustained high G, the vocal pinnacle of the song (Example 4.7).

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<sup>45</sup> A.C. Jacobs, *Collected Poems and Selected Translations*, (London: The Menard Press and Hearing Eye 1996).

<sup>46</sup> David Vogel, *David Vogel: Collected Poems*. (TelAviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1966), rev. ed. 1971, 1975, 1998, xi.

Example 4.5 "How Can I See You, Love" mm. 1-9

Double Bass

*c. 138 freely and flexible*  
*mf*  
*puh*  
*mf*  
*poco rit.*  
*mp*

Example 4.6 "How Can I See You, Love" mm. 10-22

10 *mp* *A Tempo*  
 How can I see you, love, Stand - ing a -  
*A Tempo*  
*mp*

14 *poco accel.*  
 lone - A - mid storms of grief. With - out  
*poco accel.*

19 *f*  
 feel - ing my heart - shake?  
*f*

Example 4.7 “How Can I See You, Love” mm. 41-54

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows a vocal line with the lyrics "And is touch-ing your curls" and a piano accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 45, with the vocal line saying "Come, My" and the piano accompaniment. The third system starts at measure 50, with the vocal line saying "hand will clasp your dream - - - ing Hand," and the piano accompaniment. Performance markings include *poco accel.*, *f*, *passionately* (option - sing D a fourth below), *mf*, and *dreamily*.

A short double-bass interlude reminiscent of the introductory melody acts as a bridge to the last section of the song. Once the vocal line reenters, harmonies begin to shift consistently, but do not alter the melodic drive in the vocal line. As is typical in Laitman’s compositional process, these harmonic shifts occur primarily in the vocal line, and are later fleshed-out by adding another layer of harmonic texture in the accompaniment. Laitman ends the song with quiet acceptance, setting escalating rhythms in the double-bass against a calmer vocal line (Example 4.8).

Example 4.8 "How Can I See You, Love" mm. 61-75

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes the following lyrics and performance markings:

61 *mp* *very calmly*  
Through the pale mists of child-hood, Thus my

66 *mp*  
fa-ther guid-ed me To the house of

69 *poco accel.* *poco rit.*  
prayer

72 *slower, very expressive*  
*mp*

One of the most important features of the first two songs is the musical and dramatic unity between them. The two pieces are linked together through use of the same key which strengthens the bond between the poems and establishes a story line. These two pieces may also be considered the introduction section of the cycle, leading into an elaborate development where a variety of new musical and dramatic ideas are presented.

## Both Your Mothers

“Both Your Mothers” recites the true story of poet Jerzy Ficowski’s wife who was smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto immediately after she was born. Her natural mother perished in the Holocaust and she was brought up by a foster mother.<sup>47</sup>

Jerzy Ficowski was a peerless advocate for the arts and letters of a decimated Polish Jewry. Following World War II, during which he served in the Home Army and participated in the Warsaw Uprising, Ficowski published twenty volumes of poetry including the acclaimed *A Reading of Ashes*. Aside from his poetry, Ficowski also was lauded for his work as an archivist, and his biographical work on perhaps the greatest Polish Jewish writer Bruno Schultz,<sup>48</sup> who was murdered by the Gestapo in 1942. Without Ficowski, who was not Jewish, Schulz’s work would have been lost.

In “Both Your Mothers,” Ficowski accounts in poetic detail the unimaginable first hours of his wife’s life. It is also a tribute to both the birth mother, who happily walks to her death knowing that she saved her child, and the foster mother who cares for the baby with love, for life.

The poem presents images varying from fear and terror of death, to undying hope for survival. Ms. Laitman integrates these dramatic elements in her musical setting. She deepens the meaning of the poem with shifting harmonies, sophisticated vocal colors, and a virtuoso double-bass part. The song also functions as the development section of the cycle, where a variety of thematic elements are introduced. Some of these elements return later in the cycle with altered melodic and harmonic structures.

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<sup>47</sup> Schiff, 210.

<sup>48</sup> Jerzy Ficowski, *Regions of the Great Heresy: Bruno Schulz, A Biographical Portrait*, translated and edited by Theodosia Robertson (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

A short double-bass solo opens the song, introducing a haunting theme. The melodic sequence that begins with the sixteenth notes in measure six through eight is repeated in the vocal line ‘under an imprisoned star.’ Laitman highlights the text by using heightened articulation, cautioning the singer to emphasize the ‘n’ in ‘imprisoned.’ When I asked the composer about her specific intention for what otherwise would have been faulty diction on the singer’s part, she enthusiastically answered: “I wanted to put that consonant in a box where it was imprisoned just by the virtue of its own sound!”<sup>49</sup> (Example 4.9)

Example 4.9 “Both Your Mothers” mm. 1-16

The musical score for Example 4.9, "Both Your Mothers" mm. 1-16, is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 1-8) is a double bass solo in bass clef, 3/4 time. It begins with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 66$  and the instruction "but freely". The dynamics are marked *mp*, *mf*, and *mf*. Performance instructions "push" and "relax" are placed above the notes. The second system (measures 9-12) features vocal lines with lyrics "Un-der a fu-tile To-rah". The dynamics are *mf*, *p*, and *mp*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" above it. The third system (measures 13-16) continues the vocal lines with lyrics "un-der an im-prisoned star your moth-er gave birth to you". The dynamic is *mp*, and a performance instruction "sing the 'n'" is placed above the notes. The fourth system (measures 17-20) continues the bass line with dynamics *mf* and *mp*.

<sup>49</sup> Laitman to author, January 15, 2008.

As the birth scene in the poem comes to a close, a double-bass interlude acts as a bridge to the next musical section. Flowing triplets depict the sorrowful parting between mother and child, followed by a more angular melody and slightly thicker rhythmic texture which build dramatic tension (Example 4.10).

Example 4.10 “Both Your Mothers” mm. 33-44

33

turn page for bass

know

*mp*

*mp* *mf*

*take time, more bow*

*A Tempo*

Once again the interaction between voice and double-bass becomes canonic in the following section. Frequent use of triplets in both vocal phrases and accompaniment creates a flowing forward motion. The music seems to illustrate the joy of a life saved, a hopeful exuberance for the future.

A mood of terror returns as Laitman skillfully paints the words of Ficowski with agitated tremolos in the double bass leading to a sinister glissando pitted against the

emphatic, repeated notes in the vocal line – ‘and fire took over the corner you left vacant’ (Example 4.11).

Example 4.11 “Both Your Mothers” mm. 74-79

74

*poco rit.*

fi - re took o - ver the cor - ner you left va - cant

*pizzicato*

*mp*

*poco rit.*

Laitman’s music becomes captivatingly drowsy in ‘*luminal* hummed you its lullaby’,<sup>50</sup> illustrated by a steady 6/8 in the vocal line supported by glissando octave leaps in the double-bass accompaniment (Example 4.12).

Example 4.12 “Both Your Mothers” mm 85-88

85

*freely*

*mp* *A Tempo*

death lu - mi - nal hummed you its lul - la - by

*freely*

*A Tempo*

*mf*

*p*

*Luminal is the trademark for phenobarbital.*

<sup>50</sup> *Phenobarbital* or *phenobarbitone* is a barbiturate, first marketed as *Luminal* by Bayer and Co. It is the most widely used anticonvulsant worldwide and the oldest still in use. It also has sedative and hypnotic properties but, as with other barbiturates, has been superseded by the benzodiazepines for these indications.

Quoted from the official website of Bayer™ [www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com), accessed February 17, 2008.



The abstract quality in the music is soon confronted by the bitter reality of the birth mother walking to her death. Ficowski's poignant lines strongly allude to a group of victims approaching the gas chambers:

But the mother  
 who was saved in you  
 could now step into crowded death  
 happily incomplete  
 could instead of memory give you  
 for a parting gift  
 her own likeness  
 and a date and a name  
 so much

Laitman augments the horror of the lyrics by writing a peaceful vocal line with a delicate melody, set against the spine-chilling cries of the double-bass, leading into an abrupt glissando after 'death' (Example 4.13).

Example 4.13 "Both Your Mothers" mm.97-107

The musical score for Example 4.13 consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting with the lyrics "moth - er - who was saved in you - could" and the double bass line. The second system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "now step in - to crowd - ed death" and the double bass line. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (mp, p, mf), performance instructions (plaintively, poco rit., freely), and articulation (Arco).

The pessimistic tone of the poem is softened by the entry of the foster mother theme which Laitman gracefully ties to the recapitulation of the song. The opening melodies return again with contrasting harmonies. The last six measures of the song leave the listener with plenty to contemplate as the defiant quality of the first 'I am,' supported by the decisive accompaniment, turns into a submissive quietness when it is repeated at the very end (Example 4.14).

Ficowski's poem makes an immediate emotional impact and calls to mind strong biblical references with its plot strikingly similar to Moses's salvation in *Exodus*. Laitman's musical setting captures the core of the text and creates a focal point for the cycle.

"Both Your Mothers" is vocally and dramatically challenging. Laitman also uses the full range of the double-bass with many virtuoso techniques including *glissandi*, *harmonics*, *double-stops* and *tremolo*, adding layers of interpretive intensity to the piece. Although the tonal and harmonic centers consistently shift to reflect the changes in the text, the piece has a cohesive dramatic pulse that keeps the audience alert and engaged.

The vocal range is somewhat less challenging but in the author's opinion, this is only to provide a balance between the two instruments. The full range of the double-bass is used, creating many of the dramatic sound effects, while the voice takes on the role of an observant narrator. Laitman's mastery of cultivating drama is evident in the way the piece is revealed. Its structure unfolds like a group of scenes.

Example 4.14 "Both Your Mothers" mm. 143-151

The musical score consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system (mm. 143-144) is in 2/4 time, marked *mf* and *♩ = 60*. The vocal line has a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure. The lyrics are "That was how both your moth-ers taught you". The second system (mm. 145-146) is in 5/4 time, with the vocal line marked *freely*. The lyrics are "not to be sur- prised at all when you say". The third system (mm. 147-151) is in 5/4 time, marked *A Tempo* and *f*. The vocal line has a long note for "I am" in measure 147. The piano accompaniment in measure 147 is marked *mf*. The final system (mm. 150-151) is in 5/4 time, marked *mp*. The vocal line has a long note for "I am" in measure 150.

143 *mf* *♩ = 60*  
That was how both your moth-ers taught you

145 *freely*  
not to be sur- prised at all when you say

147 *A Tempo* *f*  
I am

150 *mp*  
I am

## What Luck

The fourth song “What Luck” brings a much needed release and an upbeat melodic energy to the cycle. Tadeusz Różewicz’s<sup>51</sup> poem in Adam Czerniawski’s translation is internally reflective. It reads like a love poem on the surface but is filled with angst and disbelief for man’s inhumanity against man. As a survivor caught in the midst of an unimaginable nightmare, the poet also reflects on his profound sense of astonishment in any mundane existence of life around him.

Polish poet and playwright Różewicz was born in Radomsko in 1921. During the war he was involved in the Polish Home Army’s resistance in which his brother Janusz Różewicz was murdered by the Gestapo. His works have been translated into many languages, and in 1966 he was awarded Poland’s prestigious State Prize for Literature. Różewicz’s style is considered by many a precursor of the avant-garde in poetry and drama, though his poetic discipline is deeply rooted in the romantic tradition. After the war, despite the pressure of public opinion, Różewicz remained politically inactive. The ethical sensitivity to the events of World War II remains the core of his creative existence. In his poem “The Execution of Memory” Różewicz writes:

I would like just to be silent  
but being silent I lie.<sup>52</sup>

As a witness and a victim of the Nazi occupation, Różewicz declares his point of view about the representation of the Holocaust in literature: “What I produced is poetry for the horror-stricken. For those abandoned to butchery. For survivors.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Tadeusz Różewicz, *They Came to See a Poet*, trans. Adam Czerniawski (London: Anvil Press Poetry, 1991).

<sup>52</sup> Schiff, xxii

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, 216.

Laitman's musical setting of the text is upbeat in tempo and reflects the overall internal energy of the poem. There are twenty-four metric shifts in "What Luck" which is only thirty-four measures long. This is partially due to the irregular meter of the poem. By frequent metric shifts, Laitman also is allowing a natural ebb and flow in the dramatic atmosphere of the song, which is significantly different than those of first three. The last few lines of the poem show the optimism of love. Laitman paints the vocal line 'my heart beats so' with rhythmically accelerated *portamenti* in the bass, depicting the beating of a heart. This optimistic respite reaches a bitter conclusion at the end of the song when the baritone sings 'man has no heart' (Example 4.15).

Example 4.15 "What Luck" mm. 22-34

The musical score for "What Luck" (mm. 22-34) is presented in three systems. The vocal line is written in a single staff, and the bass accompaniment is in a double bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes various performance instructions such as *poco rit.*, *rubato, gentle, sweet*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *a tempo*, *accel.*, *rit.*, *slightly slower*, *arco*, *pizz.*, and *short*. The lyrics are: "What luck I am with you — my heart beats so — I thought man has no heart —".

System 1 (mm. 22-25):  
 Measures 22-25. Vocal line: "What luck I am with you —".  
 Bass line: Accompaniment for the vocal line.  
 Instructions: *poco rit.*, *mp*, *rubato, gentle, sweet*, *mf*.

System 2 (mm. 26-30):  
 Measures 26-30. Vocal line: "— my heart beats so — I".  
 Bass line: Accompaniment for the vocal line.  
 Instructions: *f*, *a tempo*, *accel.*, *rit.*, *mp*, *slightly slower*, *pizz.*, *slightly slower*, *mf*.

System 3 (mm. 31-34):  
 Measures 31-34. Vocal line: "thought man has no heart —".  
 Bass line: Accompaniment for the vocal line.  
 Instructions: *arco*, *p*, *rubato*, *mf*, *pizz. downwards*, *f*, *short*.

## Massacre of the Boys

The relief we find in “What Luck” is short-lived as we are confronted by the cries of children in “Massacre of the Boys.” Laitman admits her own horror in setting this poem:

Perhaps the most disturbing song in the cycle is *Massacre of the Boys*. The poem is found in The Museum at Auschwitz, and its description of innocent children being slaughtered is almost unbearable to read.<sup>54</sup>

Różewicz’s poem in Czerniawski’s translation describes the transgressions committed against children in metaphoric detail, and decries the world’s indifference to these horrific events. In her musical setting, Lori Laitman enhances the terror, allowing the natural dark timbre of the poetry to linger through her music.

The song opens with a short introduction where the repeated intervals in the bass depict the cries of children, alerting us of the upcoming vocal line of ‘Mummy!’ (Example 4.16). The protesting wails continue, peaking on a sustained high F, where a short bass interlude leads us to the second section of the song. Laitman’s music turns into an unassuming statement, once again allowing the text to speak. She text-paints by placing the word ‘bottom’ in the lower range of the baritone voice, creating a darker tone by virtue of the pitch (Example 4.17). The soft spoken quality continues as the thematic melodies are exchanged between the voice and bass, leading into the last section of the song. The overall atmosphere of the song changes all at once, turning into a declamatory protest of the narrator. The metaphorical lines of ‘a tree of black smoke’ and ‘a vertical dead tree’ allude to the helpless little bodies burning in the crematorium as the vocal line

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<sup>54</sup> Lori Laitman, *Dreaming: The Songs of Lori Laitman*, liner notes by composer, Albany Records, Troy 570, 2003. Compact Disc.

leads into a climax. The song concludes with the bass quoting the opening vocal theme 'The children cried Mummy!' (Example 4.18)

Example 4.16 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 1-4

Example 4.16 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 1-4. The score shows a vocal line and a bass line. The vocal line begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 76 and includes the lyrics "The child-ren cried" and "Mum-my! But". The bass line includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *poco accel*.

Example 4.17 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 9-14

Example 4.17 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 9-14. The score shows a vocal line and a bass line. The vocal line includes the lyrics "See them" and "They are go-ing to the bot-tom". The bass line includes a dynamic marking of *mp*.

Example 4.18 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 51-53

Example 4.18 "Massacre of the Boys" mm. 51-53. The score shows a vocal line and a bass line. The vocal line includes the tempo marking *Slower, and freely* and the lyrics "They are go-ing to the bot-tom". The bass line includes dynamic markings such as *mp* and *al niente*.

The interpretation of “Massacre of the Boys” poses a difficulty that is especially significant to this song. It is nearly impossible to be emotionally disconnected from the poem which delivers such bitter guilt and anguish in its lines. Mathematically, we are in the middle of the cycle, and naturally after the performance of four songs with various vocal and interpretive demands, some fatigue is inevitable. Laitman proves to be sensitive to the needs of both performers, setting the middle section of the song in a modest range for the voice, providing a much desired rest. This effort also proves to be effective in enhancing the dark shades of the poem. By contrast, Laitman uses the full spectrums of both instruments in the climax, creating a much more austere dramatic effect.

#### Race

Setting the poem of Karen Gershon, the sixth song in the cycle, “Race” offers a breathing space between the gloom of the preceding and following songs. Gershon was born Kaethe Loewenthal in Bielefeld, Germany in 1923. She arrived in England in 1939 as part of the *Kindertransport*, a program by which young refugees escaped Nazi Germany in 1938 and 1939. Her parents perished in the Holocaust. She became well-known for her poem “We Came as Children” in 1966. Many of her works are autobiographical and reflect her experiences as a child refugee and the grief for the loss of her parents.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Karen Gershon, *The Bread of Exile* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1985).  
\_\_\_\_\_, *Coming Back from Babylon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1979).  
\_\_\_\_\_, *Selected Poems* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1966).



In her musical setting, Laitman retreats to a message of hope with a melodic intervention after a very dark piece. There is a charming, folk-like simplicity in “Race” where the bass is *pizzicato* throughout, and the vocal line carries an uncomplicated but revealing melody, often mimicked by the bass in its descending lines (Example 4.19). The musical theme in ‘when I returned to my home town’ bridges the two main sections of the piece and also closes the song (Example 4.20).

Example 4.19 “Race” mm.18-20

18 *mp*  
 I who am al-ways a-lone be-  
 thumb pizz.  
 mp

Example 4.20 “Race” mm. 60-67

60  
 When I re-  
 4 Tempo normal pizz.  
 p  
 61  
 turned to my home town when I re-  
 thumb pizz.  
 poco rit.  
 64  
 turned to my home town  
 thumb pizz.  
 poco rit.  
 fine

## Holocaust 1944

“Holocaust 1944” by Anne Ranasinghe gives the cycle its name. Ranasinghe was born in Essen, Germany, in 1925 as Anneliese Katz. She was also in the group of refugee children which was sent to England by *Kindertransport* in 1939. She is the only member of her family who survived the Holocaust. After the war, Ranasinghe worked as a journalist, and later married a university professor from Sri Lanka, where she settled and still resides today. Drawing comparisons to Karen Gershon’s works, Ranasinghe’s poems also reflect the inner turmoil and despair of being separated from her parents.<sup>56</sup>

The poem is directly addressed to Ranasinghe’s mother who had perished in the Holocaust and underscores the futility of an unfathomable death. The overall tone of the poem is extremely dark. Ranasinghe’s remembrance of happier times briefly brings forth a hopeful glow, but it fades rapidly as the author’s agony and protest build to the emotional pinnacle of the poem:

And therein lies the agony  
The agony and the horror  
That after all there was no martyrdom  
But only futility –  
The futility of dying  
The end of nothing  
And the beginning of nothing.  
I weep red tears of blood.  
Your Blood

As the cycle approaches its close with “Holocaust 1944,” Laitman sets an angular vocal line against a sparse double-bass accompaniment, hinting at a cantorial wail in the distance.

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<sup>56</sup> Anna Ranasinghe, *At What Dark Point* (Colombo: English Writers Cooperative of Sri Lanka, 1991).

\_\_\_\_\_, *Not Even Shadows* (Colombo: English Writers Cooperative of Sri Lanka, 1991).

There is a significant amount of dissonance as the two instruments communicate in a contrapuntal manner through the first section of the song. Laitman enhances the effect of a cold, wintry day in 'As you walked naked and shivering' by using tremolos in the double-bass which mimic the rhythmic structure of the vocal line (Example 4.21). As we move into the second section of the song, the dissonance fades and the harmonies evolve into a luxurious texture with a deliberate wail, fully pitting the double-bass against a more melodic vocal line. Laitman also brings back elements from all six of the previous songs in melodic, harmonic or rhythmic fragments.

We are bridged to the next, more hopeful part of the song by Laitman's quote of the *Sabbath*<sup>57</sup> blessing melody sounded out in the double-bass. This hopeful figure returns frequently within the second section of the song (Example 4.22).

The repeated *Sabbath* figure leads to the conclusion of the song which mirrors the beginning with sparse and dissonant harmonies. The bass plays the same melodic and rhythmic figure lasting twelve bars, in which the vocal line provides the only changes. A brief melodic segment returns from the beginning of the song, followed by a short bass interlude leading the song to its climax. The main theme from the first song in the cycle ("I Did Not Manage to Save") is briefly sounded. This is followed by the repetition of the prayer theme, this time set against a recurring bass figure, leading to the echo of the words 'I weep,' and quietly ending the cycle (Example 4.23).

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<sup>57</sup> The Sabbath (or Shabbat, as it is called in Hebrew) is the most important ritual observance in Judaism. It is also the only ritual observance instituted in the Ten Commandments:

*Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy* - Exodus 20:8

*Observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy* - Deuteronomy 5:12

Shabbat is primarily a day of rest and spiritual enrichment and a time when observant Jews set aside all of the weekday concerns and devote themselves to higher pursuits.

Example 4.21 "Holocaust 1944" mm. 17-18

17  
bit-ter As you walked nak-ed and shiv-er-ing  
f  
mf  
take time as singer

Example 4.22 "Holocaust 1944" mm. 30-39

30  
me?  
freely  
poco rit.  
mf  
push a bit  
35  
take time  
mp  
Oh  
relax a bit  
f  
mf  
take time  
sul tasto  
mp

Example 4.23 "Holocaust 1944" mm. 90-97

90  
bles-sing I weep I weep, I  
mf  
f  
mp  
94  
weep  
end together  
end together

*Holocaust 1944* is superbly composed in every aspect, featuring a thoroughly captivating range of songs. The cycle's immediate emotional impact (due to its subject matter) is enhanced by Laitman's thoughtful musical details.

*Holocaust 1944*'s seven songs are based on an array of poems either stemming directly from the human tragedy of the Holocaust or written in reaction to it. The cycle is relentlessly bleak and inconsolable, its dark texts touchingly personified by Laitman's eloquent musical settings.

Both performers are confronted by many technical and interpretive challenges in bringing these tragic accounts to life. Although there are some optimistic moments, the general disposition of the cycle is sorrowful and desperate. The composer uses both voice and double-bass in the lowest and uppermost reaches of their ranges, reflecting every savage, and sometimes hopeful detail. Consequently, *Holocaust 1944* is a remarkable union of words and music, and a precursor to Laitman's future compositional accomplishments.

## CHAPTER 5

### FATHERS

*The parent-child relationship was the central focus of many ghetto poems, or at least of those that enjoyed the greatest popularity. Because every Jew was ultimately singled out for destruction, the fate of one became the fate of many, and everyone was to become an orphan. The power of the poem was in the tension between innocence and knowledge: the parents' task was to initiate their children into hunger and cold, or into the cruelty of the ghetto and of those who stood outside. But it was also the parents who could read the signs of salvation for the benefit of their children: the day of liberation was soon to come.*<sup>58</sup>

— David G. Roskies

*Fathers* for baritone voice and piano trio, sets the poems of Sri Lankan poet Anne Ranasinghe and the late Russian poet David Vogel. Laitman had previously set poems by Ranasinghe in two of her earlier song cycles, *Holocaust 1944* and *Daughters*, and had set one poem by David Vogel in *Holocaust 1944*. In many ways *Fathers* is a sequel to an earlier song cycle by Laitman titled *Daughters*, which sets the poetry of Anne Ranasinghe and Karen Gershon. Exploring the gruesome visions of the Holocaust, each of the four poems employed in *Fathers* is autobiographical. Both authors' fathers were murdered by the Nazis. Consequently the general mood of these poems is bleak, with the exception of "Don't Cry," whose optimistic theme offers a breathing space.

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<sup>58</sup> David G. Roskies, ed. "Ten Ghetto Poets," in *The Literature of Destruction: Jewish Responses to Catastrophe* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 466.

The cycle was composed in 2002 and was revised in 2003. It premiered on April 27, 2003 at The Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Memorial Day Concert at Benaroya Hall, Seattle, Washington.

#### Don't Cry, Fragment 1

Laitman was faced with particular musical challenges during the early creative stages of the cycle. Three of the poems employed "You, Father," "Last Night I Dreamt," and "I Saw My Father Drowning" are lengthy, and thematically united by their dark, pessimistic statements. The fourth poem "Don't Cry" is much shorter, and its theme is one of hope and renewal. In her efforts to provide a more cohesive structure, and also to extend the message of hope, Laitman divided "Don't Cry," into three musical fragments. These fragments appear before each of the main songs in the cycle. While there are slight variations with each repetition of the fragments, they are unified by a gentle and memorable melodic line. This juxtaposition unites the cycle on a deeper level by enhancing the message of hope in the poem, and also offers a healing contrast before each of the more sorrowful songs.

The first fragment is a setting of the first sentence of the poem, and is accompanied only by *pizzicato* strings. The entire fragment is nine measures long, featuring a flowing vocal line against the sparse *pizzicati* of the strings. The octave leap on the word 'Don't' is repeated at the end of the fragment, and it musically illustrates the reassuring tone of a father (Example 5.1).

Example 5.1 “Don’t Cry, Fragment 1” mm. 1-9

Baritone *mf*  
Don't cry be-cause the pot is bro-ken... It had long been

Violin *Pizz.*  
*mp*

Cello *Pizz.*  
*mf* *mp*

6  
cracked... Don't cry...

*mf* *mp* *p*

*mf* *mp* *p*

You, Father

“You, Father” opens with a short, whimsical piano introduction, suggesting happier times as recalled by the poet Anne Ranasinghe. The voice enters with a delicate melody whose last line is mournfully repeated by the violin. With the entrance of the strings, the harmonies expand immediately, leading into a canonic dialogue between the voice and the strings, while the piano accompaniment features repeated rhythms (Example 5.2).

As the tone of the poem grows darker, the harmonic structure in Laitman’s musical setting becomes noticeably agitated. The vocal line becomes more angular with



faster rhythms, often imitated by the violin, supported by the *pizzicato* triplets in the cello, and a more complex piano accompaniment.

Example 5.2 "You, Father" mm. 5-8

The musical score for Example 5.2, "You, Father" mm. 5-8, consists of three systems. The first system shows the vocal line in a bass clef, starting with a fermata and a *mf* dynamic marking. The lyrics are "gainst the win-ter tree. — Ice on the lake, And two small ducks — that were". The second system shows the piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, with a *mp* dynamic marking and the instruction "delicately". The piano part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line with triplets. The third system shows the cello/piano part in a bass clef, with a *mf* dynamic marking and the instruction "Ped." (pedal) under each triplet. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

A melodic theme from the beginning of the song is echoed briefly in 'On the innocent powdery snow' which serves as a bridge to the conclusion of the song (Example 5.3). The responsive duet between the voice and the violin continues to provide the haunting effect of a flashback, but comes to an abrupt stop, and all accompanying instruments abandon the voice to a lonely finish.

The song concludes with a short postlude, as the piano accompaniment presents a variation of the opening theme against the mournful melody of the cello (Example 5.4).

Example 5.3 "You, Father" mm. 26-28

26 *poco rit.* *mp* *touch slower* *poco accel.* *poco rit.*  
 yet lies so light On the in-no-cent pow-der-y snow.

*poco rit.* *touch slower* *poco accel.* *mp* *poco rit.*  
*p* *mp*

Example 5.4 "You, Father" mm. 33-40

33 *somewhat freely* *poco accel.* *Tempo Primo*  
 could you have known?

*somewhat freely* *poco accel.* *Tempo Primo*  
*somewhat freely* *poco accel.* *Tempo Primo*  
*mf* *poco accel.* *Tempo Primo*  
*p* *poco rit.*

*mp* *f* *poco rit.*  
*f* *poco rit.* *8va*

## Don't Cry, Fragment 2

The second fragment of "Don't Cry" adds the next sentence of the poem and four more measures of music to the otherwise virtually unchanged fragment 1. With the beginning of the poem's second sentence, subtle variations occur in the vocal line in both the melody and the rhythm. The accompaniment still consists only of the *pizzicato* strings with minor changes for either instrument (Example 5.5)

Example 5.5 "Don't Cry, Fragment 2" mm. 7-13

10

bu - ry them... Don't... cry...

(no rit.)

(no rit.)

(no rit.)

## Last Night I Dreamt

“Last Night I Dreamt” opens with a short introduction by the strings in which Laitman skillfully establishes a dream-like quality. The vocal line enters, accompanied by the cello playing a continuing trill figure (Example 5.6).

Example 5.6 “Last Night I Dreamt” mm. 1-5

The musical score for Example 5.6, “Last Night I Dreamt” mm. 1-5, is presented in three systems. The first system shows the vocal line in a 3/4 time signature, starting with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 88 \text{ to } 96$  and the instruction “but with a gentle feel in opening”. The vocal line begins with the lyrics “Last night I dreamt— back to for - got - ten and sleep - ing”. The second system features the piano accompaniment, with the right hand playing a melodic line marked “Lilting” and “tr” (trill), and the left hand playing a trill figure marked “tr” and “Pizz.”. The piano part is marked “mf” and “p”. The third system shows the piano accompaniment continuing, with the right hand playing a melodic line marked “dreamily” and “mp (very legato)”, and the left hand playing a trill figure marked “tr”. The piano part is marked “p” and “8va”. The score includes various performance instructions such as “mf”, “mp”, “p”, “Lilting”, “tr”, “Pizz.”, “Arco”, “dreamily”, and “8va”.

The tonal structure at the beginning features sparse harmonies in the strings and the piano, supporting the sweeping, exuberant vocal phrases. The vocal line has a bright character with playful rhythmic touches, heightening the pastoral imagery of the poem. The harmonic texture gradually thickens, leading to the main vocal theme of the song on ‘How still the sweltering summer day’ (Example 5.7).

Example 5.7 "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 25-30

The image shows a musical score for the song "Last Night I Dreamt" from measures 25 to 30. The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staves. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes the following lyrics: "fields of wheat as yet un-cut How still the", "swell - er - ing sum - mer's day". The score features various musical markings such as *poco rit.*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *Very Calm*, and *Slightly Slower*. The piano accompaniment includes triplet markings and dynamic markings.

The hopeful mood soon turns into an agitated chromaticism, reflecting the changes in the text. The shape of the vocal line shifts from its sweeping legato to angularly notated, repetitive intervals. The hurried line of 'Run down the hill, across the bridge and homewards to my father's house,' is beautifully depicted in Laitman's musical setting with descending lines of sixteenth notes in violin and the piano (Example 5.8). A subtle change in tempo bridges the music to the finale of the song, where the opening motif returns with variations, bringing the dream to its bitter conclusion (Example 5.9).

Example 5.8 "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 51-54

*mf*

51 *mf*

Run down the hill, a cross the bridge and home-wards to my fath-er's house.

*p*

*Pizz.*

*mp*

*mp*

Example 5.9 "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 62-64

*Tempo Primo*

*Tempo Primo*

*p*

*Tempo Primo*

*p*

*mf*

*tr*

*ped.*

The desperate awakening scene introduces another theme in the vocal line with a lyrical, sweeping melody supported by the sparse harmonic texture in the accompaniment. A brief moment of musical tension interrupts the tranquility. The vocal line 'Vibrating only in the hollow echo of my waking dream' is pitted against the distant *tremolos* in the strings (Example 5.10). This epigrammatic interaction leads into a tense chromatic sequence and finally lands back on the main vocal theme, this time featured in the violin, bringing the song to a conclusion (Example 5.11).

Example 5.10 "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 77-81

The musical score for Example 5.10, "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 77-81, is presented in two columns. The left column contains measures 77, 78, and 79, and the right column contains measures 80, 81, and 82. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins in measure 77 with the lyrics "Vi - brat - ing" and continues through measure 82 with "on - ly with the hol - low e - cho -" and "The hol - low". The piano accompaniment includes various techniques such as *Pizz.* (pizzicato), *Arco* (arco), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score also includes dynamics like *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano), and articulation marks like *simile...* and *mf*. The score is written for a vocal line and piano accompaniment, with the piano part including a double bass line.

Example 5.11 "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 86-90

The musical score for Example 5.11, "Last Night I Dreamt" mm. 86-90, is presented in three systems. The first system shows a vocal line with a fermata over the first measure. The second system shows the vocal line continuing with a fermata over the first measure, and the piano accompaniment starting with a *mp* dynamic. The third system shows the vocal line continuing with a fermata over the first measure, and the piano accompaniment starting with a *p* dynamic. The string accompaniment is shown below the piano part, with *Red.* markings under each measure. The tempo is marked "Slightly Slower" and the mood is "Very Calm".

Don't Cry, Fragment 3

The third fragment features the addition of the third sentence of the poem. The strings continue with a *pizzicato* accompaniment to an unchanged vocal line. The most important aspect of this fragment is the introduction of the right hand in the piano accompaniment. Starting simultaneously with the third sentence of the poem, the piano features a *staccato* articulation matching the *pizzicati* of the strings (Example 5.12).



Example 5.12 "Don't Cry, Fragment 3" mm.11-19

11

and the rain will smooth-en the dis - turbed earth, The sun will bake, and

*mf*

*legato* *mf*

*mf*

15

wind trace New land - marks, Don't cry.

*mp*

*mp*

*match pizz.* *mp*



The song continues with the recurrences of the ‘sinking’ theme and variations of the main theme without major harmonic shifts. Musical tension begins to develop in the accompaniment in measure twenty-three. However, it is short-lived with the echo of the ‘sinking’ theme in the piano, leading into a variation of the opening section of the song (Example 5.14).

Musically, the most effective part of the song arrives at the very end, with a postlude reminding the listener of past melodic motives. The violin’s soothing phrases lead into the mournful echo of the opening line ‘I saw my father drowning’ in the cello and concludes the song (Example 5.15).

Example 5.14 “I Saw My Father Drowning” mm. 23-26

The musical score for Example 5.14 consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows a piano part with a *ff* dynamic and a violin part with a *mf* dynamic. The second system continues the piano and violin parts, with the piano part marked *ff* and the violin part *mf*. The third system shows the piano part with a *mp* dynamic and the violin part with a *mp* dynamic. The score includes tempo markings of *poco rit.* and *A Tempo*, and dynamic markings of *ff*, *mf*, and *mp*. The time signature is 2/4.

Example 5.15 "I Saw My Father Drowning" mm.46-52

46

sil ver.

*f*

*f*

*f*

48

*mf*

*poco rit.*

*mf*

## Don't Cry

“Don't Cry” is an amalgamation of the preceding three fragments with the addition of the last sentence of Ranasinghe's poem. Another addition to the piece is the left hand of the piano accompaniment. The simple and memorable vocal line of the song, combined with the whimsical touches in the accompaniment, concludes the cycle on a hopeful note (Example 5.16).

*Fathers* is an intricately structured piece. Laitman's use of the fragments unites the cycle on a deeper level. One of the more interesting aspects of the cycle is its freedom from Jewish musical influences. The cantorial style chants or *Klezmer* wails are not utilized in *Fathers*. If anything, the cycle has a resounding American identity which offers a significant contrast to *Holocaust 1944*, and possibly to *The Seed of Dream*, which it precedes.

Although the musical and dramatic unity of the cycle is instantly recognizable, each song (excluding the fragments) also lends itself to extraction from the group. It may be a worthwhile effort for Laitman to arrange the cycle for voice and piano, to give more singers access to it.

Vocally, *Fathers* is less demanding. Although the difficulty level of the songs is still considerably high, a well-trained baritone voice at the graduate level would certainly benefit from their beautiful, lyric melodies and gripping dramatic settings.

Example 5.16 "Don't Cry" mm. 21-31

21

Till fi-nal-ly you won't re-mem-ber E-ven the place, Don't

26

no ritard

Don't cry...

no ritard

Arco

no ritard

mp

p

no ritard

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SEED OF DREAM

*It is rare when a piece of music can be called a masterpiece. The plausibility of using such a term creates skepticism and begs for proof. If not proof, the designation yearns for a full explanation, at least. Such a work must display the highest level of compositional skill and excellence without pretense or artificiality of technique in its creation. It should impart a vivid depiction of its aesthetic intent and cause the listener to be forever changed for having experienced it. Further, the consequence of its performance should be a demand that it be repeated frequently, since its absence would diminish the lives of all potential listeners...Lori Laitman has an innate ability to capture the essence of textual meaning, a keen perception of vocal nuance, and a lavish intellectual and musical vocabulary that she uses with a facile ease. It was with all these extraordinary skills that she created a magnificent song cycle called *The Seed of Dream*...This cycle is indeed a masterpiece and should not be missed!<sup>59</sup>*

— Sharon Mabry

Composed for baritone voice, cello and piano, *The Seed of Dream* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance and had its premiere performance on May 9, 2005 at Music of Remembrance's Holocaust Remembrance Concert at Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA. The cycle employs five poems of the Vilna Ghetto survivor Abraham Sutzkever (1913- ), written between 1941 and 1944. Sutzkever's poems relate the first-person accounts of the destruction of the Holocaust, and underscore his undying belief in the human spirit.

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<sup>59</sup> Sharon Mabry, "The Masterful Lori Laitman," *Journal of Singing* 64, no.1 (September/October 2007): 95-97.

Four of these five poems were translated by Pulitzer Prize winning poet C.K. Williams,<sup>60</sup> while “Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars” was translated by Leonard Wolf.<sup>61</sup>

#### Abraham Sutzkever

*In the midst of personal and communal tragedy, Abraham Sutzkever wrote poems of classical meter in perfect rhyme, making aesthetic resistance the subject of his verse. Sutzkever’s ghetto poems responded to tragedy and human suffering with lyricism laced with lamentation. At age ninety-two, Sutzkever may be the last of a line of Jewish writers that began in the nineteenth century with Shalom Aleichem. Without direct use of religious language, Sutzkever’s poetry translates the inherited faith of the Jewish people, and recounts the quintessential pilgrimage from annihilation to renewal.*<sup>62</sup>

— Mina Miller

Abraham Sutzkever was born in Smorogon, near Vilna (today Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania) in 1913. Although Vilna’s Jewish community did not count as one of the largest in Eastern Europe, Jews constituted a sizeable portion of the city’s population –

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<sup>60</sup> C. K. Williams was born in 1936 in Newark, New Jersey. He is the author of numerous books of poetry, including *The Singing* (2003), which won the National Book Award; *Repair* (1999), winner of the Pulitzer Prize; *The Vigil* (1997), *A Dream of Mind* (1992), *Flesh and Blood* (1987), which won the National Book Critics Circle Award, *Tar* (1983), *With Ignorance* (1997), *I Am the Bitter Name* (1992), and *Lies* (1969). Quoted from the official website of Academy of American Poets, at [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org), accessed, February 8, 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Leonard Wolf is a distinguished novelist and translator of Yiddish books, short stories, and poetry. He has taught courses in New York University’s School of Continuing Education since his retirement from San Francisco State University. Quoted from the official website of Yale Press, at [www.yalepress.yale.edu](http://www.yalepress.yale.edu), accessed, February 8, 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Lori Laitman, *The Seed of Dream*, Music of Remembrance, Holocaust Remembrance Concert, Seattle, Washington, 9 May 2005. Notes by Mina Miller.



almost thirty per cent, according to the last census prior to World War II, taken in 1931.<sup>63</sup>

Pre-war Vilna was also one of the most dynamic and vibrant European Jewish communities. By the end of the nineteenth century, the city had established itself as a center of secular Yiddish and Hebrew culture. Some of the most important Jewish writers and artists were based in Vilna, and it was also a hub of a number of Zionist institutions, including *Chibat Tsiyon* (Love of Zion), a social and literary club which influenced the Jewish Labor Movement, and gave shape to the birth of Zionism. The vast capacity of cultural activity in Vilna earned it the title of "Jerusalem of Lithuania."

In June 1941 Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, which brought Vilna under German occupation. Lithuanian anti-Semitism was already a dominant force in the city. The Nazi occupation further intensified the anti-Jewish sentiments, and by the end of 1941, more than a third of Vilna's Jewish residents were murdered by the Nazis who were enthusiastically assisted by Lithuanian volunteers.<sup>64</sup> The remaining Jewish population of Vilna was forced into two ghettos.

The thriving Jewish cultural life for which Vilna was known remained one of its remarkable characteristics during the two-year existence of the ghettos. This was largely due to Vilna's pre-war cultural scene. The prominent cultural figures of the ghetto which include Abraham Sutzkever, were already active members of the city's cultural life before the war.

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<sup>63</sup> Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1982), 27.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid*, 77.

There was also strong political activity within the walls of the ghetto. The underground *Fareynigte Partizaner Organizatsye* (FPO, United Partisans Organization) was established in early 1942.

Abraham Sutzkever was imprisoned in the Vilna Ghetto with his wife. He joined FPO, and in September 1943, escaped the ghetto, walking more than sixty miles in the forest to join a Soviet partisan unit. It was against this backdrop that Abraham Sutzkever's incomparable poetic masterpieces were produced. In fact, his creative output was never interrupted during the years of Nazi occupation:

Beginning with a situation of extreme terror, brutality and despair, Sutzkever arrives, through a poetry of wrenched opposites, of oxymorons, at a sense of beauty, wholeness and artistic permanence. Thanks to his memoirs (first published in Moscow in 1946), we can piece together the dire circumstances under which these poems were written.<sup>65</sup>

Before the establishment of the ghettos, immediately following Nazi occupation, many Jews were murdered systematically within months. Strong, young men were first to be targeted, and for two hot summer months, Sutzkever hid under a tin roof of a building with just enough room to lie flat on his stomach.<sup>66</sup>

Although Sutzkever experienced great losses (murders of his firstborn son and his mother within weeks of one another), his poems are not dedicated solely to his personal horror and tragedy. Sutzkever was also a central cultural figure in the Vilna Ghetto, where he organized and inspired revues, exhibitions, lectures, and poetry readings during the war. He was a member of the "Paper Brigade," a group of Jewish intellectuals chosen by Germans to select Jewish cultural artifacts to be sent to the Institute for the

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<sup>65</sup> Roskies, 467.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*

Investigation of the Jewish Question,<sup>67</sup> and risked his life to smuggle out hundreds of rare books and artifacts.

Abraham Sutzkever is a late romantic poet “in love with his craft, with his language, with the boundless gifts of nature,”<sup>68</sup> who may never receive the recognition he deserves because he composed his poems in a language whose natural readership has been destroyed by the Holocaust. By those who read his works in the original Yiddish, he is considered the greatest Yiddish poet of the twentieth century. By his personal experiences, Sutzkever also gives meaning to the survivor’s role in the aesthetic representation of the Holocaust.

After World War II, in 1947, Sutzkever immigrated to Israel, where in 1948 he founded the country’s foremost Yiddish literary quarterly *Di Goldene Keyt* (The Golden Chain), which he still edits to this day. Sutzkever has received many awards, including the Literary Prize of the Vilna Ghetto Writers Union, and the prestigious Israel Prize. His poetry has been translated into many languages, including Hebrew, English, French, German, Russian, Polish, and Japanese.

Perhaps the most important translations of Sutzkever’s poetry are those of Lori Laitman’s musical settings, which eternalize the beauty of Sutzkever’s words and expose them to a new generation of listeners.

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<sup>67</sup> From 1933 to 1945, the Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg headed the foreign - affairs department of the Nazi Party. In 1939 he established in Frankfurt the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage* (Institute for the Investigation of the Jewish Question). Rosenberg declared in his inaugural speech that the ‘Jewish question’ would be considered solved ‘only after the last Jew has left the Greater German living space.’ The institute’s principal task was to ransack the libraries, archives, and the art galleries of European Jewry in order to promote its ‘research.’ Rosenberg was captured by the Allied Forces after the war, convicted as a war criminal at Nuremberg trials and was hanged in 1946.

<sup>68</sup> Roskies, 467.

## I Lie in This Coffin

Written on August 30, 1941 in the Vilna Ghetto, "I Lie in This Coffin" is based on Sutzkever's own experience of hiding from the Germans in a coffin:

Sutzkever's faith that poetry could rescue him from death was tested when he entered the precincts of the *Judenrat*<sup>69</sup> to sign up for a labor battalion that would lead him to safety outside of town. The head of the first *Judenrat* then informed him that all members of the previous battalions had just been shot in Ponar and that the Germans were coming at any moment to claim their daily allotment of fifty male victims. And so, with nowhere else to hide, Sutzkever jumped in a coffin in the yard of the Burial Society next door and, lying on top of a corpse, composed a poem about the interpenetration of the living and the dead.<sup>70</sup>

Laitman's musical setting of this poignant poem opens with the piano at the very bottom of its range, suggesting a death march (Example 6.1). Upon the cello's entrance, harmonies and textures expand immediately. A mournful plea begins in the vocal line as the poet appeals to the spirit of his dead sister, who had died while in exile in Siberia, when Sutzkever was a child. This invocation is skillfully depicted in Laitman's music as the cello continually imitates the vocal line, leading to a subtle harmonic shift, while the piano features taut and agitated rhythms. An optimistic episode follows as the piano accompaniment announces the presence of a spirit (Example 6.2), immediately giving the music a jubilant character. The tempo changes to a bright allegro, supporting the buoyancy in the vocal line, aided by *pizzicati* in the cello. Meanwhile, a playful piano accompaniment in its uppermost ranges depicts the twinkling stars in the poem, and suggests the past happiness of a childhood (Example 6.3).

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<sup>69</sup> *Judenrat*, German for 'Jewish council' was an administrative body that the Germans required Jews to form in each ghetto in the Nazi-occupied territories of Poland and the Soviet Union. It was an important extension of Hitler's government and was charged with solving the problems that arose in the occupied community.

<sup>70</sup> Roskies, 468.

Example 6.1 "I Lie in This Coffin" mm. 1-4

Piano

*p*

*Tea* *Tea* *simile...*

Example 6.2 "I Lie in This Coffin" mm. 29-30

*poco rit.* *mp*

here: I

*f* *mf*

*Tea* *Tea* *Tea* *Tea* *Tea*

Example 6.3 "I Lie in This Coffin" mm. 32-34

*mf* *freely/slowly mp*

stars of your eyes, your light, your breath, your tear, your

*mf*

*Tea* *Tea* *Tea* *Tea*

(8va)

This optimistic episode concludes quickly as the piano repeats the 'spirit' theme, mournfully imitated by the cello, leading the song back to its opening pathos. The death march motif returns in the piano accompaniment, this time depicting a nail being hammered in the coffin. As the poet is overjoyed by the presence of his sister's memory, he is at a loss for words. Singing only 'ah,' first delicately, then decisively, followed by an optimistic hum at the end, declaring the disappearance of his fear (Example 6.4).

Example 6.4 "I Lie in This Coffin" mm. 52-66

The musical score for Example 6.4, "I Lie in This Coffin" (measures 52-66), is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 52-58) features a vocal line with lyrics "aah" and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 120$  and  $\text{♩} = 152$ . The second system (measures 59-66) includes a cello part and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *poco rit.* and the dynamics range from *mf* to *mp*. The score includes various performance instructions such as *mf*, *mp*, *pp*, *Arco*, and *Pizz.* (Pizzicato). The piano accompaniment features a death march motif, and the cello part includes a nail being hammered in the coffin motif. The score is marked with asterisks (\*) at the beginning and end of the second system.

## A Load of Shoes

“A Load of Shoes” was written in the Vilna Ghetto, on January 1, 1943. Sutzkever wrote several poems about the death of his mother, but the poem that most powerfully transmits the impact of her death was written upon the sight of her shoes in a shipment of ransacked articles a year later. In “A Load of Shoes,” Sutzkever describes one of the most macabre of ‘death dances’ ever imagined.<sup>71</sup>

Laitman’s musical setting of “A Load of Shoes” is just as macabre with its rhythmically motivated 3/8 accompaniment, its figures strongly suggesting the wheels of a cart. While the piano anchors the trio with its driven rhythms, the cello is used much like a second voice, often imitating the vocal line. In the opening phrases, Laitman skillfully paints the text on the words ‘quivering’ and ‘shivering’ by using tremolos in the cello.

In the most chilling section of the poem, Laitman features the voice and the cello in a beautiful duet where *Klezmer* inspired wails in the cello are pitted against sustained notes in the vocal line (Example 6.5). Laitman adds a chilling effect at the end as the vocal line is abruptly silenced at ‘transported from Vilna to Berlin,’ allowing the cello to highlight the ‘cartwheel’ figure borrowed from the piano, bringing the song to a dramatic conclusion (Example 6.6).

Sutzkever’s poem is full of innuendos and metaphors, and Laitman enhances them with a straightforward melody throughout, against a steadfast accompaniment. Though the song may not present too many vocal challenges for the singer, “A Load of Shoes” demands extremely crisp diction for lucid delivery of the text.

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<sup>71</sup> *ibid*, 468.

Example 6.5 "A Load of Shoes" mm. 69-76

69

tongue is like meat, \_\_\_\_\_ but the truth, shoes, \_\_\_\_\_

*mf*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

Example 6.6 "A Load of Shoes" mm. 132-140

132

Vil - na \_\_\_\_\_ to Ber - lin.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

(8<sup>th</sup>)



## To My Child

Written also in the Vilna Ghetto and dated January 18, 1943, "To My Child" is an extended poem, telling the story of the death of Sutzkever's son by poison. Consequently, the poem reveals many horrific anecdotes, but also the purest and most vulnerable metaphors of human love imaginable.

"To My Child" is the longest song in the cycle, employing the full range of Sutzkever's imagery in distinct sections. The opening of the song is conversational, featuring a soulful duet between voice and cello. This almost blasé communication leads into a descending triplet motif in the vocal line that accompanies the words 'swallow you, child' and is passed from the voice to the cello (Example 6.7).

Example 6.7 "To My Child" mm. 10-11

The musical score for Example 6.7, "To My Child" mm. 10-11, is presented in a four-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the cello part. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins at measure 10, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes. The vocal line features a descending triplet motif that is passed to the cello in measure 11. The dynamics shift to mezzo-piano (*mp*) in measure 10 and back to forte (*f*) in measure 11. The cello part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 10 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 11, both marked with forte (*f*). The score concludes with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic in measure 11. The lyrics "swal-low you, child, \_\_\_\_\_ when I felt your\_" are written below the vocal line. The cello part is marked with "Cello" below the staves.

Musical elements from the opening theme return with variations, as the trio continues in a conversational manner. The declamatory tone of the vocal line is softened by the continuous use of triplets which are mirrored by the cello.

The next section of the song is set like a lullaby with shifting meters allowing a steady delivery of the text. Laitman creates a new balance in the trio, giving the vocal line precedence, with soft *pizzicati* in the cello supported by anchoring rhythms of the piano (Example 6.8). This allows the composer to highlight the most heart-wrenching lines of Sutzkever's poem:

Child, the word for you would be love  
but without words you *are* love  
the seed of dream  
unbidden third,  
who from the limits of the world  
swept two of us  
into consummate pleasure.

The thematic elements from each section alternate continuously; the voice, piano and cello complete each other's musical sentences as the poem travels through various emotional landscapes.

The song concludes with a coda, where the musical colors shift effortlessly between sorrow and hope. As the trio maintains the conversational tone of the piece with constant pushes and relaxations in tempi, the melody is passed from the vocal line to the accompanying instruments. The cello brings the song to a conclusion with its lonely variation of the 'swallow' motif (Example 6.9).



Example 6.9 "To My Child" mm.112-121

112 *poco rit.* *mp*  $\text{♩} = 80$

cold. I want - ed to swal-low you,

*mf* *mp*

\* *Ped.* \*

117

child.

*poco rit.*

## Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars

Written in Vilna Ghetto, on May 22, 1943, "Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars" is the only poem in the cycle that is translated by Leonard Wolf. Although the poem is lyric in style, its content makes strong political statements; not surprising, given Sutzkever's partisan background.

The song is especially interesting for its combination of musical elements. It combines Lori Laitman's musical setting of the poem, with another setting composed in the Vilna Ghetto by Abraham Brudno (? -1943). Brudno's beautiful, strophic setting was first presented in the ghetto theater in the play "*Di Yogenish in Fas*" (The Hunt in the Barrel). After the liquidation of the ghetto, Abraham Brudno was deported to a Nazi concentration camp in Estonia, where he presumably was murdered. His musical setting was published with Sutzkever's poem in *The Literature of Destruction* by David G. Roskies (Example 6.10).

### Example 6.10 "Unter dayne vayse shtern" mm.1-10

Moderato



Un-ter day-ne vay-se shte-rn Shtrek tsu mir dayn vay-se hant, -  
May-ne ver-ter zay-nen tre-rn, Vi-ln ru-en in dayn hant, -  
Ze, es tun-klit zey-er fin-kl In mayn ke-ler-di-ken blik, -  
Un ikh hob gor-nit keyn vin-kl Zey tsu shen-ken dir tsu-rik,  
Un ikh hob gor-nit keyn vin-kl Zey tsu shen-ken dir tsu-rik.

Laitman's masterful combination of Brudno's strophic melody with her own through-composed vocal writing achieves a brilliant vocal and dramatic effect. The two versions consistently alternate, directly responding to the textual meanings and colors.

In the opening of the song, the lone cello provides an exposed, *pizzicato* accompaniment, suggesting old *Sephardic*<sup>72</sup> folk rhythms (Example 6.11). While the repeated rhythms in the accompaniment provide a dance-like elegance, the simplicity of the vocal line features an intimate plea. Lori Laitman states:

Here, the beauty of the natural world is contrasted against the world of Sutzkever's pain and horror, and the striking alteration of harmony on the word 'me' calls attention to this fact.<sup>73</sup>

The introduction of Brudno's melody occurs in the first instrumental interlude, and is featured in the piano. The last group of the sixteenth notes is echoed by the cello, reaffirming Brudno's simple but defiant musical statement (Example 6.12). Laitman gracefully bridges the interlude back to the opening theme with a stepwise harmonic shift. From this point forward, the two settings coexist with slight modifications, each highlighting the various dramatic highs and lows of the poem. A crisply articulated piano accompaniment against the *sostenuto* vocal line, and the *pizzicato* cello sets the stage for the final rendition of Brudno's tune, sung in the original Yiddish.

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<sup>72</sup> Sephardic music (*Sepharad*: name of Spain in Hebrew) was born in medieval Spain, with *canciones* being performed at the royal courts. Since then, it has picked up influences from across Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Greece and Argentina. Among the many types of Sephardic songs, traditional folk songs, romances and cantorial songs are most significant. Lyrics can be in several languages, including Hebrew for liturgical songs, and *Ladino* (a Judeo-Spanish language with a vocabulary derived mainly from Old Castilian, Hebrew and Turkish. Speakers are currently almost exclusively Sephardic Jews from Istanbul, Izmir and Thessaloniki) for romances. These song traditions spread from Spain to France (the *Western Tradition*) and from parts of the Ottoman Empire (the *Eastern Tradition*) to Greece, Morocco, Israel and Argentina.

<sup>73</sup> Lori Laitman, *The Seed of Dream*, Music of Remembrance, Holocaust Remembrance Concert, Seattle, Washington, 9 May 2005. Notes by composer.

Example 6.11 "Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars" mm. 1-6

♩ = 46

*calmly mp*

Be - neath the white - ness of your stars,

*Pizz.*

*mp*

5

Stretch out toward me your white hand;

Example 6.12 "Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars" mm. 27-30

27

*f*

♩ = 63

my days...

*f*

*Arco*

*f*

*mp*

*Pia Pia Pia Pia \**

## No Sad Songs Please

“No Sad Songs Please” is the only poem used in the cycle that was not written within the walls of the Vilna Ghetto. It is also chronologically the last, dated February 5, 1944. Abraham Sutzkever escaped from the ghetto along with a group of other United Partisan Organization fighters on September 14, 1943. This poem was written in the Narocz forests, located ninety miles east of Vilna:

During the Nazi occupation, Sutzkever’s confrontations with death were translated into radical confrontations with himself. The destruction of Jewish Vilna and all that it stood for finally strengthened Sutzkever’s faith in the power of the poetic word to rescue beauty from annihilation. Strengthened also was his faith that nature would help propel and purify that poetic process (“No Sad Songs Please”). By personal example, he gave meaning to the survivor’s role in history, and by making Vilna the sacred text, rather than invoking the ancient archetypes, he made each reader a partner in the resurrection of the dead.<sup>74</sup>

In the program notes for the premiere performance of *The Seed of Dream*, Laitman writes that she chose to end the cycle with Sutzkever’s poem of hope, “No Sad Songs Please,” in keeping with the poet’s belief that words and nature would help heal the tortured souls.

The message of hope in the poem is beautifully encapsulated in Laitman’s musical setting. The song features an elegant and lyric melody cushioned by uncomplicated harmonies, expressing a final statement of optimism. In both of the instrumental interludes the cello seamlessly takes over where the voice leaves off, continuing a conversation with the piano (Example 6.13). A plaintive vocal line repeats the words ‘No sad songs, please’ and brings the cycle to a conclusion with a plea for hope and understanding (Example 6.14).

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<sup>74</sup> Roskies, 469.



Example 6.13 "No Sad Songs Please" mm. 24-37

24 *poco rit.* *Tempo Primo*

*mf* *push*

*mp*

*f* *mf* *mp* *mf*

*simile...*

\* *ped* *ped*

30 *Tempo Primo*

*poco rit.*

*mp* *f*

*relax* *push* *poco rit.*

*p*

*Tempo Primo* *poco rit.*

36

*ped* *ped* *ped*

Example 6.14 "No Sad Songs Please" mm. 55-68

55 *mp*

*relax*

No...

*f*

*f*

59 *Tempo Primo* *push* *mf* *f* *mp* *freely*

sad songs, please, No... sad songs please, No

*mp* *mf*

*mp* *mf*

63 *Tempo Primo* *poco rit.*

sad songs...

*Pizz.*

*mp*

*mp*

*ten.* \*

*The Seed of Dream* contains many thoughtful musical details and nuances which unfold like the pieces of a puzzle, enhancing every sad and hopeful detail in Sutzkever's poems. It also demands a high level of artistic maturity from each member of the ensemble. The author recommends the piece to a performer of vocal and artistic maturity, who has access to collaborative artists of equal maturity, and who are willing to embark on a musical journey that will benefit them and their audience in many remarkable ways.

*The Seed of Dream* is indeed a masterpiece, bringing its composer to new heights in her craft. Laitman's melodic invention, her incomparable sensitivity to Sutzkever's texts, and her use of every possible color in each instrument are testaments to her genius.

It is evident in the way *The Seed of Dream* is composed that Laitman's musical persona merged completely with Sutzkever's poetic identity. She is the narrator and the distant observer all at once. Every musical detail is natural; nothing should be taken out, and nothing should be added. In a sense, Abraham Sutzkever's poetry and Laitman's music coexist in a symbiotic environment of creativity, but worlds and generations apart.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

*I would hope it's timeless. I think it's beautiful. And it's certainly lyric.*

— Lori Laitman<sup>75</sup>

Lori Laitman believes that every poem she has set to music is a living, breathing entity, waiting to be musically discovered. She also states that when she emotionally connects to a poem (otherwise she will never set it to music), she hears its inner melody. Laitman makes these statements with genuine candor and a mundane attitude (usually in the middle of a completely different conversation) which gives the impression that she truly believes the rest of us mortal souls are blessed with the same ability.

The author believes that much like the poetry they bring to life, the songs of Lori Laitman are also living, breathing entities, capturing not only the imagery of the poems but also the silent, breathing spaces which are unique to the voices of each poet. Consequently, the musical voice of Lori Laitman deftly matches the voice of a poem.

When I met with Lori Laitman on a cold January morning in Potomac, MD, she was in the middle of completing her first opera *The Scarlet Letter* (see appendix II) which is set to premiere in the fall of 2008.

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<sup>75</sup> Watt, 2004. (In an interview with Kathleen Watt, Lori Laitman used these three words to describe her music).

Although *The Scarlet Letter* is Laitman's first full scale opera, some of her songs have already been heard in an operatic setting. In 2004, David Bamberger, the general director of The Cleveland Opera, crafted a Holocaust-themed opera titled *Come to Me in Dreams* from a collage of Laitman's songs.

In this operatic dramatization of Laitman's songs, the action takes place largely in the imagination of a man who survives the Holocaust. Lost to him are his older daughter, who was murdered by the Nazis in Terezin, and his wife, whose death came after giving birth to their second daughter, in a different camp. As he finally reveals his story to his surviving daughter, he comes to terms with his past and acknowledges his future.

The music of *Come to Me in Dreams* is derived from Laitman's song cycles *Holocaust 1944*, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, and *The Years*. In addition, the opera also features the song "Wild Nights" from the cycle *Days and Nights*, and "Echo" which is a beautiful Laitman setting of Christina Rossetti's poem.

Given the musical and dramatic strength of Lori Laitman's songs, one can predict that her opera *The Scarlet Letter* is going to be a stellar addition to the standard American opera repertoire.

Although the music examined in this document may not be suitable for some younger, inexperienced singers, a considerable amount of Laitman's songs are very accessible and rewarding for developing artists. Their lyric vocal writing, supportive accompaniments and powerful dramatic contexts, combined with Laitman's innate sense of humor, make these songs great recital pieces.

Laitman's songs will hold their place in American art song literature as timeless, lyrical, and beautiful additions.

## APPENDIX I

### A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HOLOCAUST-RELATED LITERATURE AND MUSIC

The following bibliography was compiled to guide researchers to materials on Holocaust poetry, music, and a variety of collections that explore Holocaust-related themes. It is by no means an exhaustive list. Annotations are provided in many entries to help the reader establish the item's concentration.

#### Encyclopedias

**Kremer, S. Lillian, editor. *Holocaust Literature: An Encyclopedia of Writers and Their Work*. New York: Routledge, 2003.**

Provides detailed accounts of the lives and careers of over three hundred poets, novelists, dramatists, and memoirists. Appendices provide lists of works by genre, literary themes, historic events, ghettos, and camps explored in Holocaust literature.

**Riggs, Thomas, editor. *Reference Guide to Holocaust Literature*. Detroit: St. James Press, 2002.**

Presents biographical entries for over two hundred writers and poets as well as brief critical essays about many poems, books, and short stories. Includes a chronology of Holocaust literature, title index, and an index of authors by nationality.

**Rosen, Philip, and Nina Apfelbaum, editors. *Bearing Witness: A Resource Guide to Literature, Poetry, Art, Music, and Videos by Holocaust Victims and Survivors*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.**

Collects brief biographies and lists works by more than thirty major poets who survived the Holocaust, as well as important works of art, fiction, and music by survivors.

Analysis and Interpretation

**Aaron, Frieda W.** *Bearing the Unbearable: Yiddish and Polish Poetry in the Ghettos and Concentration Camps*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.

Presents and analyzes poetry written in the ghettos and concentration camps, with an emphasis on themes of faith, morale, and resistance. Includes poems in their original language with English translations.

**Alexander, Edward.** "Holocaust and Rebirth: Moshe Flinker, Nelly Sachs, and Abba Kovner." In *The Resonance of Dust: Essays on Holocaust Literature and Jewish Fate*, 31-71. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979.

Examines the themes of "rebirth" and "hope," particularly in relation to the foundation of the State of Israel.

**Bahti, Timothy, and Marilyn Sibley Fries, editors.** *Jewish Writers, German Literature: The Uneasy Examples of Nelly Sachs and Walter Benjamin*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995.

A collection of essays that address the themes and language of Nelly Sachs's poetry, and her place in the German literary tradition.

**Bower, Kathrin.** "Claiming the Victim: Tokenism, Mourning, and the Future of German Holocaust Poetry." In *German Studies in the Post-Holocaust Age: The Politics of Memory, Identity, and Ethnicity*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2000.

An examination of themes of guilt, mourning, and memory in Holocaust poetry.

**Colin, Amy.** *Paul Celan: Holograms of Darkness*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

A detailed analysis of the works of Holocaust poet Paul Celan.

**Dinesen, Ruth.** "At Home in Exile-Nelly Sachs: Flight and Metamorphosis." In *Facing Fascism and Confronting the Past: German Women Writers from Weimar to the Present*. Albany: State University of New York, 2000.

Presents a brief overview of Sachs's life and work. Includes poems in the original German with English translations.

**Felstiner, John.** *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Literary biography of Paul Celan, with analyses of his poetry. Poems are presented in German and in English translation.

**Garloff, Katja.** *Words from Abroad: Trauma and Displacement in Postwar German Jewish Writers*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005.

Provides an analysis of German-Jewish identity after World War II, in the works by Nelly Sachs and Paul Celan.

**Goldsmith, Emanuel S. "The Holocaust Poetry of Aaron Zeitlin in Yiddish and Hebrew." In *Reflections of the Holocaust in Art and Literature*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1990.**

Surveys the works of Yiddish poet Aaron Zeitlin, which are not widely-known due to the lack of English-language publication.

**Grimm, Erk. "Uncanny Holograms of the Past: Recent German Poetry and Writing After Paul Celan and Theodor Adorno." In *German Studies in the Post-Holocaust Age: The Politics of Memory, Identity, and Ethnicity*. Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2000.**

An examination of modern poetic attitudes and styles towards technology and the Holocaust.

**Gubar, Susan. "The Long and the Short of Holocaust Verse." *New Literary History* 35, No. 3 (2004): 443-468.**

An analysis of Holocaust poetry with an emphasis on the implications of the poet's style and language.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Poetry After Auschwitz: Remembering What One Never Knew*.  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.

An analysis of the theoretical aspects of Holocaust poetry.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Poetry and Holocaust Remembrance." In *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2004.

Analyzes various common elements of Holocaust poetry. Examines the challenges and benefits of studying Holocaust poetry in a classroom setting.

**Hakak, Lev. "The Holocaust in the Hebrew Poetry of Sephardim and New Eastern Jews." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 23, no. 2 (2005): 89-119.**

Explores Sephardic poetry and its reflection of the Holocaust experience.

**Kohn, Murray J. *The Voice of My Blood Cries Out: The Holocaust as Reflected in Hebrew Poetry*. Vineland, NJ: Rival Publication, 2004.**

Reviews the major poets of the Holocaust who wrote exclusively in Hebrew. Explores the major themes of their work, including immediate post-war reactions.

**Langer, Lawrence L. "Gertrud Kolmar and Nelly Sachs: Bright Visions and Songs of Lamentation." In *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit*, 191-250. Albany: State University of New York, 1982.**

Examines the works of two poets and their individual experiences of the Holocaust. Includes biographical information and a detailed index.



**Leftwich, Joseph.** *Abraham Sutzkever: Partisan Poet.* New York: Thomas Yoseloff Publisher, 1971.

Detailed account of Sutzkever's life, using excerpts from many of his poems. Includes an index.

**Nader, Andres.** "The Shock of Arrival: Poetry from the Nazi Concentration Camps at the End of the Century." *Poetics Today* 21, No. 1 (2000): 151-186.

A historical survey of the publications of Holocaust poetry with an emphasis on the reception of these works.

**Rowland, Antony.** *Holocaust Poetry: Awkward Poetics in the Work of Sylvia Plath, Geoffrey Hill, Tony Harrison and Ted Hughes.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

Examines the works of four post-Holocaust writers, drawing comparisons between their poems and those of Paul Celan, Miklos Radnoti, Primo Levi, and Janos Pilinszky.

**Pilinszky, Rudnick, Ursula.** *Post-Shoa Religious Metaphors: The Image of God in the Poetry of Nelly Sachs.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995.

Extensive analysis of the poetry of Nelly Sachs. Surveys the critical reactions to Sachs's works and her significance in Holocaust literature.

**Samuels, Clarise.** *Holocaust Visions: Surrealism and Existentialism in the Poetry or Paul Celan.* Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1993.

An investigation into the surrealism in Paul Celan's writings and its connection to existentialism.

**Young, Gloria.** "The Poetry of the Holocaust." In *Holocaust Literature: A Handbook of Critical, Historical and Literary Writings.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993.

Examines the conditions and motivations surrounding the existence of Holocaust poetry. Includes biographical information and a bibliography of Holocaust poetry.

**Yudkin, Leon I.** "Poet and Activist: Abba Kovner." In *Literature in the Wake of the Holocaust, 65-84.* Saint Denis, France: Suger Press, 2003.

An analysis of the poetry and prose of Abba Kovner. Contains biographical information.

#### Anthologies

**Fishman, Charles, editor.** *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust.* Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1990.

Presents poems representing American views of the Holocaust. Includes commentaries by the poets and an index of poet names and titles.

**Florsheim, Stewart J., editor. *Ghosts of the Holocaust: An Anthology of Poetry by the Second Generation*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1989.**

Collection of poetry written by those whose parents were either victims or perpetrators. Emphasizes the struggles of the "second generation."

**Gillon, Adam, editor. *Poems of the Ghetto: A Testament of Lost Men*. New York: Twayne, 1969.**

Anthology of verse composed by survivors of ghettos and camps. Includes brief notes about each author.

**Kramer, Aaron, editor. *The Last Lullaby: Poetry from the Holocaust*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998.**

Anthology of poems written during the Holocaust as well as works by survivors.

**Langer, Lawrence L., editor. *Art from the Ashes: A Holocaust Anthology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.**

An anthology of Holocaust-related fiction, poetry, and drama.

**Lévy, Isaac Jack, editor. *And the World Stood Silent: Sephardic Poetry of the Holocaust*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.**

Collection of poetry commemorating the nearly 160,000 Sephardic Jews who died in the Holocaust. Includes a brief history of Sephardic Jewry.

**Schiff, Hilda, editor. *Holocaust Poetry*. New York: St. Martins Press, 1995.**

Thematically-arranged collection of 119 poems by 59 poets.

**Striar, Marguerite M., editor. *Beyond Lament: Poets of the World Bearing Witness to the Holocaust*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998.**

Presents approximately 280 poems from poets who perished, poets who survived, and second generation poets.

**Teichman, Milton, and Sharon Leder, editors. *Truth and Lamentation: Stories and Poems on the Holocaust*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.**

Brings together 90 poems and some short stories composed by a variety of Jewish and non-Jewish writers.

**Volavková, Hana, editor. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezín Concentration Camp, 1942-1944*. New York: Schocken Books, 1993.**

Collection of poetry and drawings made by the children of Theresienstadt. Provides background information about the camp, notes, an epilogue, and chronology of events. Includes one of the most well-known Holocaust poems: "The Butterfly," by Pavel Friedman.

## Poetry Collections

This is a representative list of Holocaust-related poetry collections in English or in translation.

Agosín, Marjorie. *Dear Anne Frank: Poems*. Translated by Richard Schaaf. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998.

Amichai, Yehuda. *Open Closed Open: Poems*. Translated by Chana Bloch and Chana Kronfeld. Orlando: Harcourt, 2006.

Birenbaum, Halina. *Sounds of a Guilty Silence: Selected Poems*. Translated by June Friedman. Krakow: Centrum Dialogu, 1997.

Borenstein, Emily. *Night of the Broken Glass: Poems of the Holocaust*. Mason, TX: Timberline Press, 1981.

Brett, Lily. *The Auschwitz Poems*. Brunswick, Australia: Scribe, 1986.

Brodsky, Louis Daniel. *The Eleventh Lost Tribe: Poems of the Holocaust*. St. Louis: Time Being Books, 1998.

Bryks, Rachmil. *Ghetto Factory 76: (Chemical Waste Conversion): Poem*. Translated by Theodor Primack and Eugen Kullman. New York: Bloch, 1967.

Celan, Paul. *Glottal Stop: 101 Poems*. Translated by Nikolai Popov and Heather McHugh. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Last Poems*. Translated by Katherine Washburn and Margret Guillemin. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan*. Translated by John Felstiner. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Speech-grille, and Selected Poems*. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel. New York: Dutton, 1971.

Delbo, Charlotte. *Auschwitz and After*. Translated by Rosette C. Lamont. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Days and Memory*. Translated by Rosette Lamont. Marlboro, VT: The Marlboro Press, 1990.

Duba, Ursula. *Tales from a Child of the Enemy*. New York: Penguin Books, 1997.

- Ficowski, Jerzy. *Odczytanie popiołów: A Reading of Ashes*. Translated by Keith Bosley and Krystyna Wandycz. Browarna: Wydawn Browarna, 1993.
- Gershon, Karen. *Selected Poems*. London: Gollancz, 1966.
- Glatstein, Jacob. *I Keep Recalling: The Holocaust Poems of Jacob Glatstein*. Translated by Barnett Zumoff. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1993.
- Gurdus, Luba Krugman. *Painful Echoes: Poems of the Holocaust*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1985.
- Heyen, William. *Erika: Poems of the Holocaust*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Shoah Train: Poems*. Silver Spring, MD: Etruscan Press, 2003.
- Hyett, Barbara Helfgott. *In Evidence: Poems of the Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camps*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986.
- Katzenelson, Yitzhak. *The Song of the Murdered Jewish People*. Translated by Noah H. Rosenbloom. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House, 1980.
- Klein, A. M. *Complete Poems*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Second Scroll*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.
- Kolmar, Gertrud. *Dark Soliloquy: The Selected Poems of Gertrud Kolmar*. Translated by Henry A. Smith. New York: Seabury Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Shimmering Crystal: Poems from 'Das Lyrische Werk'*. Translated by Elizabeth Spencer. London: Millennium Publications, 1995.
- Korwin, Yala. *To Tell the Story: Poems of the Holocaust*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1987.
- Kovner, Abba. *My Little Sister and Selected Poems, 1965-1985*. Translated by Shirley Kaufman. Oberlin, OH: Oberlin College, 1986.
- Levi, Primo. *Collected Poems*. Translated by Ruth Feldman and Brian Swann. London: Faber and Faber, 1988.
- Lifshin, Lyn. *Blue Tattoo: Poems of the Holocaust*. Desert Hot Springs, CA: Event Horizon Press, 1995.
- Molodowsky, Kadia. *Paper Bridges: Selected Poems of Kadya Molodowsky*. Translated by Kathryn Hellerstein. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999.

- Pagis, Dan. *The Selected Poetry of Dan Pagis*. Translated by Stephen Mitchell. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Radnóti, Miklós. *Foamy Sky: The Major Poems of Miklós Radnóti*. Translated by Zsuzsanna Ozsváth and Frederick Turner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Ranasinghe, Anne. *Not Even Shadows*. Colombo: English Writers Cooperative of Sri Lanka, 1991.
- Reznikoff, Charles. *Holocaust*. Boston: David R. Godine, 2007.
- Rosensaft, Menachem Z. *Fragments, Past and Future: Poems*. New York: Shengold Publishers, 1968.
- Sachs, Nelly. *O the Chimneys: Selected Poems, Including the Verse Play, ELI*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967.
- Sklarew, Myra. *From the Backyard of the Diaspora: Poems*. Washington, DC: Dryad Press, 1981.
- Snodgrass, W. D. *The Führer Bunker: A Cycle of Poems in Progress*. Brockport, NY: Boa Editions, 1977.
- Soyfer, Jura. *It's Up to Us!: Collected Works of Jura Soyfer*. Translated by Horst Jarka. Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Legacy of Jura Soyfer 1912-1939: Poems, Prose, and Plays of an Austrian Antifascist*. Translated by Horst Jarka. Montreal: Engendra Press, 1977.
- Sutzkever, Abraham. *Burnt Pearls: Ghetto Poems of Abraham Sutzkever*. Translated by Seymour Mayne. Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1981.
- Taube, Herman. *Autumn Travels, Devious Paths: Poetry & Prose*. Washington DC: Dryad Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Between the Shadows: New and Selected Works by Herman Taube*. Takoma Park, MD: Dryad Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Chain of Images: Poetic Notes*. New York: Shulsinger Bros, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Echoes: Poetic Notes*. Washington DC: DIN, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Looking Back, Going Forward: New & Selected Poems*. Takoma Park, MD: Dryad Press, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Questions: Poetic Notes*. Washington, DC: D.I.N. Yiddish of Greater Washington, 1982.

Whitman, Ruth. *The Testing of Hanna Senesh*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986.

## Music

**Bergen, Doris L.** "Hosanna or 'Hilk, O Herr Uns': National Identity, the German Christian Movement, and the 'Dejudaization' of Sacred Music in the Third Reich." In *Music and German National Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Outlines the efforts of government officials to "Germanize" and "dejudaize" the texts of sacred works by modifying the verses to reflect Nazi ideals. Includes a suggested reading list on the subject.

**Bergmeier, Horst J. P., and Rainer E. Lotz.** "Propaganda Swing." In *Hitler's Airwaves: The Inside Story of Nazi Radio Broadcasting and Propaganda Swing*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

Describes the use of music broadcasts and recordings as propaganda tools in the Third Reich.

**Brinkman, Reinhold, and Christoph Wolff, editors.** *Driven into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Detailed accounts of the experiences of musicians forced to leave Nazi Germany for racial, political, or professional reasons.

**Currid, Brian.** *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

Analyzes how radio programming, film music, and popular songs were used to shape the cultural life in Nazi Germany.

**Dümling, Albrecht.** "The Target of Racial Purity: The 'Degenerate Music' Exhibition in Düsseldorf, 1938." In *Art, Culture, and Media Under the Third Reich*, 43-72. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Presents the history of German music from the end of World War I through the rise of Nazism.

**Goldsmith, Martin.** *The Inextinguishable Symphony: A True Story of Music and Love in Nazi Germany*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2000.

Tells the story of the author's parents, who met as performers in the Jewish Culture Association ("Jüdische Kulturbund") Orchestra in Frankfurt. Describes the activities of the association.

**Kater, Michael H. *Different Drummers: Jazz in the Culture of Nazi Germany*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.**

Outlines the ways jazz and swing music, which were denounced as “undesirable” by the Nazis, became a form of expression and cultural resistance.

\_\_\_\_\_. ***The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.**

Illustrates the effect of Nazi policies on German musical culture.

**Kater, Michael H., and Albrecht Reithmüller, editors. *Music and Nazism: Art under Tyranny, 1933-1945*. Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2003.**

Collection of essays describing the musical atmosphere under the Nazi regime.

**Lawford-Hinrichsen, Irene. *Music Publishing and Patronage: C. F. Peters, 1800 to the Holocaust*. Kenton: Edition Press, 2000.**

History of C. F. Peters, one of the oldest and largest music publishing houses in the world which was taken over, or “aryanized,” by the Nazis after *Kristallnacht*.

**Levi, Erik. “The Aryanization of Music in Nazi Germany.” *The Musical Times* 131, No. 1763 (1990): 19-23.**

Overview of the methods Nazi party officials occupy to cleanse German music of “non-Aryan” influences and reshape the repertoire to reflect Nazi ideology.

\_\_\_\_\_. **“Atonality, 12-Tone Music and the Third Reich.” *Tempo* 178 (1991): 17-21.**

Analyzes the Nazi treatment of modern, atonal compositions, which were condemned as “degenerate” and were considered part of a “Jewish world conspiracy.”

\_\_\_\_\_. ***Music in the Third Reich*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994.**

Provides an overview of music culture in the Third Reich by tracing the careers of composers, musicians and critics.

\_\_\_\_\_. **“Opera in the Nazi Period.” In *Theatre under the Nazis*, edited by John London, 136-186. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2000.**

Details the efforts to recreate the German opera repertoire to reflect Nazi political and cultural ideology.

**Meyer, Michael. *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*. New York: Peter Lang, 1991.**

Explores the effect of Nazism on German music before and during the war.

\_\_\_\_\_. **“The Nazi Musicologist as Myth Maker in the Third Reich.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 10, no. 4 (1975): 649-665.**

Examines the role of music scholarship as it relates to the Nazi efforts in reshaping the German cultural scene.

**Potter, Pamela M. *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler's Reich*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.**

Presents an overview of the role musicologists and music scholarship played in Nazi efforts to reshape German society.

\_\_\_\_\_. **"Music in the Third Reich: The Complex Task of Germanization." In *The Arts in Nazi Germany: Continuity, Conformity, Change*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2006.**

Deconstructs recurring myths about the Nazi use of music as an agent of social control.

\_\_\_\_\_. ***Trial of Strength: Wilhelm Furtwängler in the Third Reich*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994.**

Documents the controversial career of conductor and composer Wilhelm Furtwängler, who chose to remain in Germany and work with the Nazi Party throughout the war despite his open criticism of the regime.

**Steinweis, Alan E. *Art, Ideology & Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.**

Outlines the incentives used by the Nazi officials to persuade artists including musicians, composers, and conductors to support the regime.

#### Music in the Ghettos and Concentration Camps

**Adler, Eliyana R. "No Raisins, No Almonds: Singing as Spiritual Resistance to the Holocaust." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 24, no. 4 (2006): 50-66.**

Examines the various ways Jewish composers and songwriters re-worked popular songs from the pre-war period to reflect Nazi persecution. Characterizes songwriting and performing as tools of spiritual resistance against oppression.

**Beker, Sonia Pauline. *Symphony on Fire: A Story of Music and Spiritual Resistance During the Holocaust*. New Milford, NJ: Wordsmithy, 2007.**

Relates the story of Max Beker and Fania Durmashkin, accomplished Lithuanian musicians who performed in the orchestras of the Vilna Ghetto.

**Bergen, Doris L. "Music and the Holocaust." In *The Holocaust: Introductory Essays*, edited by David Scrase and Wolfgang Mieder, 133-147. Burlington, VT: The Center for Holocaust Studies at the University of Vermont, 1996.**

Identifies the major topics and personalities in the history of music during the Holocaust.



**Bor, Josef.** *The Terezin Requiem*. New York: Knopf, 1963.

Fictionalized account of the actual performance of Verdi's *Requiem* in the Theresienstadt in 1944, conducted by Raphael Schächter

**Cummins, Paul.** *Dachau Song: The Twentieth-Century Odyssey of Herbert Zipper*. New York: Peter Lang, 1992.

Traces the life of Herbert Zipper, a Viennese conductor and composer sent to Dachau in 1938.

**Fénelon, Fania.** *Playing for Time*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997.

Memoir of a French singer who spent two years in the Auschwitz concentration camp, where she was a featured performer in the women's orchestra.

**Flam, Gila.** "The Role of Singing in the Ghettos: Between Entertainment and Witnessing." In *Holocaust Chronicles: Individualizing the Holocaust through Diaries and Other Contemporaneous Personal Accounts*. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1999.

Analyzes two songs recorded shortly after the war by survivors of the camps, using clues from the lyrics to determine when, where, and under what conditions the songs were originally composed and performed.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-45*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

Explores the repertoire of songs created or performed by prisoners in the Lodz ghetto.

**Gilbert, Shirli.** *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Social history documenting musical life in the Warsaw and Vilna ghettos as well as prisoner choirs and orchestras in the Sachsenhausen and Auschwitz concentration camps.

**Graham, Lisa.** "Musik Macht Frei: Choral Music Composed and Performed in the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1938-44." DMA diss., University of Southern California, 2001.

Detailed documentation of how prisoner choirs in concentration camps and ghettos were formed.

**Heskes, Irene.** "Music of the Holocaust." In *Holocaust Literature: A Handbook of Critical, Historical, and Literary Writings*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993.

Introduction and overview of music in the Third Reich and the Holocaust.

**Hirsch, David H.** "Camp Music and Camp Songs: Szymon Laks and Aleksander Kulisiewicz." In *Confronting the Holocaust: A Mandate for the 21st Century*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997.

Discusses the role of music as a method of survival in the camps by focusing on the writings of two survivors who explored the subject in detail.

**Jani, Emilio. *My Voice Saved Me: Auschwitz 180046*. Milano: Centauro Editrice, 1961.**

Memoir of an Italian Jewish tenor who was arrested and imprisoned in the Via Tasso prison in Italy, and who later performed with the prisoner orchestra in Auschwitz.

**Karas, Joža. *Music in Terezín 1941-1945*. New York: Beaufort Books, 1985.**

Describes the musical culture that developed in the "model" ghetto, Theresienstadt, where many of Europe's most prominent Jewish musicians and composers were detained.

\_\_\_\_\_. **"Operatic Performances in Terezín: Krása's Brundibar." In *Theatrical Performance During the Holocaust: Texts, Documents, Memories*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.**

Chronicles the planning and production of the opera *Brundibar*, performed by a children's company in Theresienstadt.

**Kulisiewicz, Aleksander. "Polish Camp Songs, 1939-1945." *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Winter, 1986): 3-9.**

Analyzes several songs composed in Nazi concentration camps.

**Laks, Szymon. *Music of Another World*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989.**

Recounts the author's daily existence, including performances for SS officers at Auschwitz.

**Newman, Richard. *Alma Rosé: Vienna to Auschwitz*. Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2000.**

Traces the life of violinist Alma Rosé, a niece of Gustav Mahler from her childhood to her time as music master of the women's orchestra in Auschwitz.

**Wadler, Aleeza Nemirovsky. "Strings in the Shadows: A Portrait of Three Violinists at the Terezin Concentration Camp." DMA diss., Boston University, 2003.**

Describes the daily experiences of three musicians in the Theresienstadt: Paul Kling, Thomas Mandl, and Egon Ledec.

#### Scores and Sheet Music

**Kalisch, Shoshana, and Barbara Meister, editors. *Yes, We Sang!: Songs of the Ghettos and Concentration Camps*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.**

Compiles music and lyrics to twenty-five songs composed or performed in the ghettos and concentration camps, with introductory notes to each song. Includes a bibliography and a guide to Yiddish pronunciation.

**Kon, Henech, arranger. *Songs of the Ghettos*. New York: Congress for Jewish Culture, 1972.**

Presents arrangements for twenty songs originally performed in the ghettos

**Mlotek, Eleanor, and Malke Gottlieb, editors. *We Are Here: Songs of the Holocaust*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1983.**

Melodies and lyrics for over forty Holocaust-era Jewish folk songs.

**Pasternak, Velvel, arranger and editor. *Songs Never Silenced*. Baltimore: Tara Publications, 2003.**

Compilation of over 100 ghetto and camp songs presented in Hebrew, Yiddish and English.

**Silverman, Jerry, arranger and editor. *The Undying Flame: Ballads and Songs of the Holocaust*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2002.**

Piano arrangements and guitar chords for 110 Holocaust-era songs in sixteen languages, with English translations.

#### Recordings

***Chamber music from Theresienstadt: 1941-1945*. Englewood, NJ: Channel Classics, 1991. Compact Disc**

Presents five pieces by Gideon Klein and Viktor Ullman, all composed or performed in Theresienstadt.

***Composers of the Holocaust*. New York: Leonarda, 2000. Compact Disc.**

Presents eighteen songs composed in the ghettos and camps. Includes a booklet with English translations of the lyrics.

**Gebirtig, Mordecai. *Krakow Ghetto Notebook*. Port Washington, NY: Koch, 1994. Compact Disc**

Presents nineteen songs drawn from the notebook Mordecai Gebirtig kept in the Krakow ghetto.

**Hawthorne String Quartet. *Chamber Music From Theresienstadt: 1941-1945*. Amsterdam: Channel Classics, 1991. Compact Disc**

Presents four works by Gideon Klein along with Viktor Ullmann's "Quartett op. 46, no 3." Produced by the Terezín Chamber Music Foundation.

***Hidden History: Songs of the Kovno Ghetto*. Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1997. Compact Disc**

Compiles seventeen songs written and sung in the Kovno ghetto. Includes a booklet with lyrics to each song.

**Krása, Hans. *Brundibár: A Children's Opera in Two Acts*. New York: Arabesque, 1996. Compact Disc**

New recording of the children's opera performed for representatives of the Red Cross by prisoners in the Theresienstadt ghetto in 1943. Includes a booklet with the libretto in English, Czech, French, and German.

**Lishner, Leon. *Our Town is Burning: Cries from the Holocaust*. [U.S.]: Centaur, 1994. Compact Disc**

Twenty-seven songs from the ghettos and camps, many of which are drawn from the book *We Are Here: Songs of the Holocaust*. Sung in Yiddish and Czech.

***The Music Survives!: Degenerate Music*. London: London Records, 1997. Compact Disc**

Collection of music suppressed and labeled "degenerate" by the Nazis. Includes a VHS documentary exploring how and why these composers came to be viewed as corrupting influences on "Aryan" culture.

***Rise Up and Fight! Songs of the Jewish Partisans*. Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996. Compact Disc**

Eighteen songs, mostly in Yiddish, based on poetry written by Jewish partisans. Accompanying booklet includes an essay by Dov Levin about the music folklore of the partisans, as well as English translations of the lyrics.

***Terezin: The Music 1941-1944*. London: Romantic Robot, 1991. Compact Disc**

Presents works composed and performed in Theresienstadt, including music by Viktor Ullman, Gideon Klein, and the children's opera *Brundibar* by Hans Krása.

**Zamir Chorale of Boston. *Hear Our Voices: Songs of the Ghettos and Camps*. Newton, MA : HaZamir Recordings, 1995. Compact Disc**

Twenty-nine songs composed by Mordecai Gebirtig, Pavel Haas, Viktor Ullman, and others in the ghettos and concentration camps.

## APPENDIX II

### THE SONGS OF LORI LAITMAN (Current as of May 2007)

The following are published by Enchanted Knickers Music unless otherwise specified.

**Dreaming (1991)**

(Soprano; soprano and baritone; soprano and mezzo-soprano; SATB) A humorous encore song. Music and lyrics by Lori Laitman.

**The Metropolitan Tower and Other Songs (1992)**

(Soprano/piano) 6 settings of Sara Teasdale.

**The Love Poems of Marichiko (1993, rev. 1994)**

(Soprano/cello) Poems by Kenneth Rexroth.

*I Sit at my Desk; If I Thought; Oh the Anguish; You Ask Me; Autumn; Just Us.*

**Days and Nights (1995)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Browning, Dickinson, Rossetti, and Bourdillon.

*Along with Me; They Might Not Need Me; The Night Has A Thousand Eyes; Over the Fence; Song; Wild Nights.*

**Echo (1995)**

(Baritone/piano, soprano/piano, mezzo/piano) Setting of Christina Rossetti.

**The Ballad Singer (1995)**

(Baritone/piano) Setting of Thomas Hardy.

**Thumbelina Songs (1989, rev. 1995)**

Lyrics by Lori Laitman and Wendy-Marie Goodman.

*A Tale to Tell; Alone; Fine Family; I'm Falling in Love; King Song; I am the Mole; Wish Song; My Son; Thumbelina; Wedding Day.* (Not yet published)

**Plums (1996)**

(Soprano/piano) Two settings of William Carlos Williams.

*To a Poor Old Woman; I Just Wanted to Say.*

**Four Dickinson Songs (1996)**

(Soprano/piano; mezzo/piano) Poems by Emily Dickinson.

*Will There Really Be A Morning?; I'm Nobody; She Died; If I...*

**I Never Saw Another Butterfly (1996)**

(Soprano/saxophone; soprano/clarinet; soprano/bassoon) 6 settings of poems by children who were killed in the Holocaust.

*The Butterfly; Yes, That's the Way Things Are; Birdsong; The Garden; Man Proposes; God Disposes; The Old House.*

(Published by Arsis Press)

**Between the Bliss and Me (1997)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Emily Dickinson.

*I gained it so; The Book; I Could Not Prove.*

**Mystery (1998)**

(Baritone/piano, mezzo/piano) Poems by Sara Teasdale.

*Nightfall; Spray; The Kiss; The Mystery; The Rose.*

**Daughters (1998)**

(Mezzo-soprano and piano trio) Poems by Anne Ranasinghe and Karen Gershon.

*Mascot and Symbol; Stella Remembered; A Letter to My Daughter.*

**Holocaust 1944 (1996, rev. 1998)**

(Baritone and double-bass) Poems by Jerzy Ficowski, David Vogel, Tadeusz Rózewicz, Karen Gershon, and Anna Ranasinghe.

*I Did Not Manage to Save; How Can I See You, Love; Both your Mothers; What Luck; Massacre of the Boys; Race; Holocaust 1944*

**Homeless (1998)**

(Mezzo-soprano/piano) Poem by Michael Flack.

**Sunflowers (1999)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Mary Oliver.

*The Sunflowers; Dreams, Sunrise.*

**I am in Need of Music (1999)**

(Soprano/baritone/piano, or soprano/mezzo/piano) Poem by Elizabeth Bishop.

**Men with Small Heads (2000)**

(countertenor/piano, baritone/piano, mezzo/piano) Poems by Thomas Lux.

*Men with Small Heads; Refrigerator; 1957; A Small Tin Parrot Pin; Snake Lake.*  
The song *Men with Small Heads* was awarded "Best American Art Song" in the 2004 American Art Song Competition sponsored by the San Francisco Song Festival.

**This Space (2000, rev. 2005)**

(Bass/piano, mezzo/piano) Poem by Thomas Lux.

**Armgart (2000)**

(Soprano/piano) Poem by George Eliot.

Winner of The Boston Art Song Competition, 2000.

**One or Two Things (2001)**

(Mezzo-soprano/piano) Poem by Mary Oliver.

*Don't Bother Me; The God of Dirt; One or Two Things*

**Round and Round (2001)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Anne Spencer Lindbergh.

*Earlier this Afternoon; Little Plump Person; I Contrived A Poem; Bar the Door; Little Anne; Round and Round*

**The Years (2001)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Sara Teasdale.

*Jewels; To-Night; Barter; Faults; The Years*

**Living in the Body (2001)**

(Soprano/saxophone) Poems by Joyce Sutphen.

*Burning the Woods of my Childhood; Living in the Body; Not for Burning; Lost at Table; Bring on the Rain; Crossroads*

**Within These Spaces (2002)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Marjorie Saiser, Janet Coleman and Judith Sornberger.

*I Grow to be My Grandmother; My Mother Has Recovered; Letter to my Daughter; The China Cup; Pioneer Child's Doll*

**Little Elegy (2002)**

(Soprano/piano) Poem by Elinor Wylie.

**Long Pond Revisited (2002)**

(Baritone/cello) Poems by C.G.R. Shepard.

*I Looked for Reasons; The Pond Seems Smaller; Late in the Day; Days Turn; Long Pond Revisited.*

**Two Dickinson Songs (2002)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Emily Dickinson.

*Good Morning Midnight; Wider than the Sky.*

**Lines Written at the Falls (2002)**

(Soprano/piano) Poem by Thomas Moore.

**Captivity (2002, rev. 2004, rev. 2007)**

(Soprano/trumpet) 5 settings of Toi Derricotte.

*The Minks; The Struggle; Books; The Polishers of Brass; The Weakness.*  
(Not yet published)

**Fathers (2002, rev.2003)**

(Baritone/piano trio; also baritone, flute, cello and piano version) Premiered by Music of Remembrance, Benaroya Hall, April 2003. Poems by Anna Ranasinghe and David Vogel.

*Fragment 1; You, Father; Fragment 2; Last Night I Dreamt; Fragment 3; I Saw My Father Drowning; Don't Cry.*

(Not yet published)

**Early Snow (2003)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Mary Oliver.

*Last Night the Rain Spoke to me; Blue Iris; Early Snow.*



**The Throwback (2003)**

(Baritone/piano) 5 settings of Paul Muldoon.

*Cradle Song for Asher; The Ancestor; Redknots; The Breather; The Throwback.*

**One Bee and Revery (2003)**

(Soprano/piano) Three settings of Emily Dickinson.

*The Butterfly upon; Hope is a Strange Invention; To Make a Prairie.*

**Fresh Patterns (2003)**

(Soprano, soprano and piano) Texts by Emily Dickinson and Annie Finch.

*It's All I Have to Bring Today* (Dickinson, soprano and piano); *A Letter for Emily Dickinson* (Finch, soprano and piano); *Fresh Patterns* (Dickinson and Finch, soprano, soprano and piano).

**Becoming a Redwood (2003)**

(High voice and piano and High voice and orchestra) Poems by Dana Gioia.

*The Song; Pentecost; Curriculum Vitae; Becoming a Redwood*

**Money (2003)**

(For voice and piano; also duet setting soprano/baritone/piano) Poem by Dana Gioia.

**The Apple Orchard (2004)**

(Tenor/piano or baritone/piano) Poem by Dana Gioia.

**Being Happy (2004)** (Baritone/piano) Poem by Dana Gioia.

**Swimmers on the Shore (2004)**

(Baritone/piano) Poem by David Mason.

Commissioned by The West Chester University Poetry Conference.

**If I... (2004)**

(Choral version) Arrangement by Bruce Rosenblum.

**Come to Me in Dreams (2004)**

A 50 minute long opera created by David Bamberger, general director of The Cleveland Opera from a collage of Lori Laitman's songs.

Premiere: The Ohio Theatre June 9-12, 2004, Cleveland, Ohio.

Cast: Sanford Sylvan, Fenlon Lamb, Megan Tillman, and Sara Renea Rucker.

Instrumentalists: Judith Ryder, Maximilian Dimoff, and Paul Cohen.

*I Did Not Manage to Save; Faults; Yes, That's the Way Things Are; To-Night; Birdsong; Massacre of the Boys; Wild Nights; The Butterfly; The Years; Holocaust, 1944; Man Proposes, God Disposes; Jewels; The Garden; Both Your Mothers; Echo.*

**On A Photograph (2004)**

(Solo version for all voice types; duet versions for mezzo-soprano/baritone and mezzo-soprano/bass) Poem by John Wood.

**The Seed of Dream (2004)**

(Baritone, cello and piano or mezzo-soprano, cello and piano) Poems by Vilna Ghetto survivor Abraham Sutzkever, with translations by C.K. Williams and Leonard Wolf. Commissioned by Music of Remembrance, Seattle, WA.

*I Lie in This Coffin; A Load of Shoes; To My Child; Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars; No Sad Songs, Please.*

**Five Lovers (2004)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Jama Jandrokovic. Commissioned by Jama Jandrokovic.

*On Meeting Again; Lovely in His Bones; This Morning; Second Date; July, 95 degrees.*

**My Garden (2004)**

(Soprano/piano) Poem by Adelaide Ayer Kelley. (Not yet published)

**Equations of the Light (2005)**

(High voice and piano, also duets for soprano and baritone or soprano and tenor with piano) Poem by Dana Gioia. Commissioned by The West Chester University Poetry Conference 2005.

**River of Horses (2005)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Charles Baudelaire, James Wright, James Dickey, Traditional Navajo poem. Commissioned by Jean del Santo, University of Minnesota. (Not yet published)

*My Hand Forever; A Blessing; A Birth; Sioux Warrior Song; Two Horses*

**The Perfected Life (2006)**

(Soprano, baritone and tenor/mezzo-soprano versions) Poems by Emily Dickinson.

*An Amethyst Remembrance (2005); Dear March; The Perfected Life (2006).* (Not yet published)

**Orange Afternoon Lover (2006)**

(Soprano/piano, and mezzo-soprano/piano version) Poems by Margaret Atwood.

*Against Still Life; I Was Reading a Scientific Article; I Am Sitting on the Edge*

Jointly commissioned by The Howard Hanson Fund of The Eastman School and The College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University, and written expressly for soprano Eileen Stempel and pianist Sylvie Beaudette.

**Eloise at Yaddo (2006)**

(Soprano/piano) Poem by David Yezzi.

**Full Moon and Light Hearted William: Two William Carlos Williams Songs (1997, rev.2007)**

(Tenor/piano) Poems by William Carlos Williams.

Premiere November 5, 2006, Dimensions New Music Series, Austin Peay University, Clarksville, TN. Thomas King, tenor, Vicki King, piano.  
(About to be published)

**The Blood Jet (2006)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Sylvia Plath.

*Morning Song; The Rival; Kindness; Balloons*  
(Not yet published)

**The Silver Swan (2007)**

(Mezzo-soprano and piano, mezzo-soprano, piano and flute) Poem by Orlando Gibbons.

Premiere March 29, 2008, Doc Rando Recital Hall, Beam Music Center, The University of Nevada, Las Vegas with Juline Gilmore, mezzo-soprano, Jennifer Grim, flute and Lori Laitman, piano

**On The Green Trail (2007)**

(Soprano/piano) Poems by Jeff Gundy.

*On the Green Trail; Looking at My Hands; Small Night Song from Oneonta.*  
Premiered February 10, 2008, at Bluffton University, Bluffton, OH.  
(Not yet published)

**And Music Will Not End (2007)**

(Countertenor/piano, mezzo-soprano/ piano)

*Partial Lunar Eclipse* (Anne Ranasinghe); *A Pastoral Lament* (John Wood)  
Commissioned by The Lyrica Society to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the deaths of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy. (Not yet published)

**The Scarlet Letter**

(An opera in two acts)

Libretto by David Mason, based on the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Commissioned by The University of Central Arkansas

Laitman began composing her first opera in February 2007. She is currently finishing the piano-vocal score and will spend the next several months orchestrating the piece for a chamber orchestra. The opera is scheduled to premiere at The University of Central Arkansas, fall 2008.

The opera will feature three major roles:

*Hester* : lyric-soprano

*Dimmesdale*: lyric-tenor

*Chillingworth* : baritone

Also,

3 minor roles and a small chorus.

## APPENDIX III

### POETS REPRESENTED IN LORI LAITMAN'S SONGS

#### **American:**

Traditional Navajo poem (ND)  
Emily Dickinson (1830 - 1886)  
William Carlos Williams (1883 - 1963)  
Sara Teasdale (1884 - 1933)  
Elinor Wylie (1885 - 1928)  
Kenneth Rexroth (1905 - 1982)  
Adelaide Ayer Kelly (1911 - 1997)  
Elizabeth Bishop (1911 - 1979)  
Michael Flack (1920 - )  
James Dickey (1923 - 1997)  
C.G.R. Shepard (1924 - )  
James Wright (1927 - 1980)  
Sylvia Plath (1932 - 1963)  
Mary Oliver (1935 - )  
Janet Coleman (1935 - )  
Margaret Atwood (1939 - )  
Anne Spencer Lindbergh (1940 - 1993)  
Toi Derricotte (1941 - )  
Thomas Lux (1946 - )  
John Wood (1947 - )  
Dana Gioia (1950 - )  
Jeff Gundy (1952 - )  
Judith Sornberger (1952 - )  
Wendy-Marie Goodman (1954 - )  
Lori Laitman (1955 - )  
Annie Finch (1956 - )  
Joyce Sutphen (1949 - )  
Marjorie Saiser  
Judith Sornberger  
David Mason (1954 - )  
David Yezzi (1966 - )  
Jama Jandrokovic (1976 - )

**British:**

Orlando Gibbons (1583 - 1625)  
Robert Browning (1812 - 1889)  
George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans, 1819 - 1880)  
Christina Rossetti (1830 - 1894)  
Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)  
Francis W. Bourdillon (1852 - ?)  
Karen Gershon (1923 - 1993)

**Czech:**

Pavel Friedmann (1921 - 1942)  
Franta Bass (1930 - 1944)  
Hanus Löwy (1931 - 1942)  
Miroslav Kosek (1932 - 1942)  
Bachner (? - died 1942?)  
Anonymous

**French:**

Charles Baudelaire (1821 - 1867)

**Irish:**

Thomas Moore (1779 - 1852)  
Paul Muldoon (1955 - )

**Israeli:**

Abraham Sutzkever (1913 - )

**Polish:**

Jerzy Ficowski (1924 - 2006)  
Tadeusz Różewicz (1921 - )

**Russian:**

David Vogel (1891 - 1944)

**Sri Lankan:**

Anne Ranasinghe (1925 - )

## APPENDIX IV

### SELECTED HOLOCAUST-RELATED VOCAL MUSIC

The following list is a selection of Holocaust-related works for voice and various instrument pairings. This is not an exhaustive list, and it is limited to the works of the classical genre. Some operatic and choral works with significant solo parts are also included.

Samuel Adler

*Stars in the Dust* (mixed chorus and chamber ensemble) 1986; Transcontinental Music Publications.

David Amram

*The Final Ingredient* 1965, libretto by Arnold Weinstein (one-act opera) solo roles, chorus and orchestra.

Sylvie Bodorova

*Terezin Ghetto Requiem* (cantata) 1998, baritone and string quartet; published by ArcoDiva.

Aharon Charlap

*The Fire and the Mountains (Ha Eish Ve He Harim)* 1980, mixed chorus, soloist, narrator and orchestra; Tel Aviv, IMP 1980.

Charles Davidson

*I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (solo voice or duet version and orchestra) 1971; published by G. Schirmer, 1980.

Elwood Derr

*I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (song cycle) soprano, saxophone and piano 1966; published by Dorn Productions, 1977.

Rémy Gillis

*Chant d'espoir des bagnards de Mathausen* (song) solo voice and piano, 1944; KZ Gusen Camp

Irving Glick

*I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (song cycle) low voice and piano, 1972; published by Alberta Keys Music Publications, 1992.

Sylvia Glickman

*Am I a Murderer?* (cantata) bass and chamber orchestra, 1997; United Publishing Co., 1997.

Stanley M. Hoffmann

*A Psalm Beyond the Silences* (song) SATB and piano or orchestra, 1994; ECS Publishing.

Michael Horvit

*Even When God is Silent*, SATB and rehearsal keyboard, 1993; Transcontinental Music Publications.

*Child's Journey*, SATB and rehearsal keyboard, 1998; Transcontinental Music Publications.

Ståle Kleiberg

*Requiem for the Victims of Nazi Persecution* (oratorio) soprano, mezzo-soprano, baritone or bass, chorus and orchestra, 2004; Simax Classics PSC 1257.

Lori Laitman (please refer to appendix II for all dates and publishing information)

*I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (song cycle) soprano, saxophone; soprano, clarinet or soprano, bassoon.

*Holocaust 1944* (song cycle) baritone, double-bass or baritone, cello.

*Daughters* (song cycle) mezzo-soprano and piano trio.

*Fathers* (song cycle) baritone and piano trio.

*The Seed of Dream* (song cycle) baritone, cello and piano or mezzo-soprano, cello and piano.



Leonard Lehrman

*Licht im Dunkel (A Light in the Darkness)*, op. 73 (song cycle) soprano or tenor with piano or orchestra, 1984; Theodore Front Publishing Co.

Ruth Lomon

*Songs of Remembrance* 1996, soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone with oboe, English horn and piano, not yet published.

David Lumsdaine

*Annotations of Auschwitz* (cantata) 1964, soprano, flute, trumpet, horn, violin, cello and piano; The University of York Music Press, 1964.

Joel Mandelbaum

*The Village* (opera) 1995, libretto by Susan Fox, solo roles, chorus and orchestra; not yet published

Nicholas Maw

*Sophie's Choice* (opera) 2002, libretto by composer, solo roles, chorus and orchestra; Faber Music, London, 2005.

Thomas Pasatieri

*Letter to Warsaw* (song cycle) 2003, soprano and orchestra; Theodore Presser 2003.

Marta Ptaczyńska

*Holocaust Memorial Cantata* (cantata) 1992, unspecified vocal soloists, mixed chorus and chamber orchestra; Theodore Presser 1992.

Simon Sargon

*Shemà, Five Poems of Holocaust Survivor Primo Levi* (song cycle) 1988, soprano, flute, clarinet, cello and piano; Transcontinental Music Publications, 1988

*Ash un Flamen, Five Yiddish Songs of the Holocaust* (song cycle) mezzo-soprano and piano; Transcontinental Music Publications, 1993.

Arnold Schoenberg

*A Survivor From Warsaw* 1947, unison male chorus, orchestra and narrator; New York, Boelke Bomart, 1949.

Paul Schoenfield

*Camp Songs* (song cycle) 2002, medium voice, violin, cello, double-bass, clarinet and piano; not yet published.

Dmitri Shostakovich

*Symphony No.13 in B flat minor "Babi Yar"*, Op. 113, bass, bass chorus, orchestra, 1962.

Michael Tippett

*A Child of Our Time* 1944, chorus and orchestra; Mainz, Schott, 1944.

Andy Vores

*Sh'ma* (oratorio) 1995, tenor, chorus, obbligato piano and orchestra; not yet published.

Frank Waxman

*The Song of Terezin* (song cycle) 2004, mezzo-soprano, mixed chorus, children's chorus and orchestra; Fidelio Music Publishing Co.

Lazar Weiner

*Gele Late* (SATB) 1947; Transcontinental Music Publications, 1947  
*Kaddish in Memory of Six Million* 1971, tenor solo, SATB, piano; New York Cantors Assembly, 1971.

Susan Wollenberg

*The Survivor* (song cycle) 2001, poems by Primo Levi, mezzo-soprano and piano; not yet published.

## APPENDIX V

### POETIC TEXTS BY SONG CYCLE

The following poems are taken directly from the song cycles examined in the previous chapters. They are provided for the reader's reference, and listed in exact order as they appear in Laitman's musical settings.

#### Holocaust 1944

I Did Not Manage to Save

I did not manage to save  
a single life

I did not know how to stop  
a single bullet

and I wander round cemeteries  
which are not there  
I run

to help where no one called  
to rescue after the event

I want to be on time  
even if I am too late

Jerzy Ficowski (Translated by Keith Bosley and Krystyna Wandycz)

How Can I See You, Love

How can I see you, love,  
Standing alone  
Amid storms of grief  
Without feeling my heart shake?

A deep night,  
Blacker than the blackness of your eyes,  
Has fallen silently  
On the world

And is touching your curls.

Come,  
My hand will clasp your dreaming  
Hand,  
And I shall lead you between the nights,

Through the pale mists of childhood,  
Thus my father guided me  
To the house of prayer.

David Vogel (Translated by A.C. Jacobs)

Both Your Mothers  
*for Bieta*

Under a futile Torah  
under an imprisoned star  
your mother gave birth you

you have proof of her  
beyond doubt and death  
the scar of the navel  
the sign of parting for ever  
which had no time to hurt you

this you know

Later you slept in a bundle  
carried out of the ghetto  
someone said in a chest  
knocked together somewhere in Nowolipie Street

with a hole to let air in  
but not fear  
hidden in a cart load of bricks

You slipped out in this little coffin  
redeemed by stealth  
from that world to this world  
all the way to the Aryan side  
and fire took over  
the corner you left vacant

So you did not cry  
crying could have meant death  
luminal hummed you  
its lullaby  
and you nearly were not  
so that you could be

But the mother  
who was saved in you  
could step into crowded death  
happily incomplete  
could instead of memory give you  
for a parting gift  
her own likeness  
and a date and a name

so much

And at once a chance  
someone hastily  
bustled about your sleep  
and stayed for a long always

and washed you of orphanhood  
and swaddled you in love  
and became the answer  
to your first word

That was how  
both your mothers taught you  
not to be surprised at all  
when you say  
*I am*

Jerzy Ficowski (Translated by Keith Bosley)

What Luck

What luck I can pick  
berries in the wood  
I thought  
there is no wood no berries.

What luck  
in the shade of tree  
I thought trees  
no longer give shade

What luck I am with you  
my heart beats so  
I thought man  
Has no heart

Tadeusz Różewicz (Translated by Adam Czerniawski)

Massacre of the Boys

The children cried "Mummy!  
But I have been good!  
It's dark in here! Dark!"

See them They are going to the bottom  
See the small feet  
they went to the bottom Do you see  
that print  
of a small foot here and there

pockets bulging  
with string and stones  
and little horses made of wire

A great closed plain  
like a figure of geometry  
and a tree of black smoke  
a vertical dead tree  
with no star in its crown

Tadeusz Różewicz (Translated by Adam Czerniawski)

## Race

When I returned to my home town  
believing that no one would care  
who I was and what I thought  
it was as if the people caught  
an echo of me everywhere  
they new my story by my face  
and I who am always alone  
became a symbol of my race

Like every living Jew I have  
in imagination seen  
the gas-chamber the mass-grave  
the unknown body which was mine  
and found in every German face  
behind the mask the mark of Cain  
I will not make their thoughts my own  
by hating people for their race

Karen Gershon

## Holocaust 1944 *To my mother*

I do not know  
In what strange far off earth  
They buried you;  
Nor what harsh northern winds  
Blow through the stubble,  
The dry, hard stubble  
Above your grave

And did you think of me  
That frost-blue December morning,  
Snow-heavy and bitter,  
As you walked naked and shivering  
Under the leaden sky,  
In that last moment  
When you knew it was the end,  
The end of nothing  
And the beginning of nothing,  
Did you think of me?

Oh I remember you my dearest,  
Your pale hands spread  
In the ancient blessing  
Your eyes bright and shining  
Above the candles  
Intoning the blessing  
Blessed be the Lord...

And therein lies the agony,  
The agony and the horror  
That after all there was no martyrdom  
But only futility –  
The futility of dying  
The end of nothing  
And the beginning of nothing.  
I weep red tears of blood.  
Your blood.

Anne Ranasinghe



## Fathers

You, Father

You, Father, stand in your heavy dark coat  
Against the winter tree.  
Ice on the lake  
And two small ducks that were caught afloat  
By winter frozen

The sun is behind me as I take  
This photograph, what I make  
Is a last sad record, though I could not have known.

The sun behind me is cold and white  
And projects my elongated shadow  
It falls black between us, yet lies so light  
On the innocent powdery snow.

You do not smile  
is the sun in your eyes  
Or now I wonder, could you have known?

Anne Ranasinghe

Last Night I Dreamt

Last night I dreamt  
back to forgotten and sleeping images  
of childhood days

How green the grass upon the swelling hillside  
Patched with the dazzling gold of buttercups,  
The firs stand dark and tall, still in the midday heat  
Above the fields of wheat as yet uncut

How still the sweltering summer's day  
How still my father's valley

And I am searching up among the trees  
Alone among the dark and silent fir trees,  
And panic growing as I lose my way  
And cannot find that I am searching for

Then, screaming run along the river  
That moves like a molten lead beneath the willows,  
Run down the hill, across the bridge  
Homewards to my father's house.

But when I reach it  
It's not there nor any trace of it  
I woke.  
And stretching out my hand  
I searched for you  
Stretched out my hand  
And searched the empty night

Vibrating only with the hollow echo  
The hollow echo  
of my waking dream.

Anne Ranasinghe

### I Saw My Father Drowning

I saw my father drowning  
In surging days.  
His weak hand gave a last white flutter  
In the distance  
And he was gone.

I kept on alone  
Along the shore  
With small, thin legs,  
And have grown as far as this.

And now I am my father,  
And all those waves  
Have broken over me,  
And left my soul numb.

But all I held dear  
Have gone into the wilderness  
And I can stretch out a hand to no one.

I am happy to rest  
In the black cradle of night  
Under the sky's canopy,  
Studded with silver.

David Vogel (Translated by A.C. Jacobs)

Don't Cry

Don't cry because the pot is broken  
It had long been cracked.  
But gather the shards,  
Dig a deep hole and bury them

And the rain will smoothen the disturbed earth,  
The sun will bake,  
and wind trace new land marks,  
Till finally you won't remember  
Even the place,  
Don't cry.

Anne Ranasinghe

## The Seed of Dream

### I Lie in This Coffin

I lie in this coffin  
The way I would lie  
in a suit made of wood  
a bark  
tossed on treacherous waves  
a cradle, an ark

From here, where all  
flesh is taken to eternity,  
I call  
to you, sister, and you  
in your distance  
still hear me.

Something stirs  
in my coffin,  
a presence; you're here:  
I know you by your stars  
of your eyes, your light, your  
breath, your tear

This is the order of things,  
and the plot:  
today here, tomorrow not.  
But now, in my coffin  
my suit made of wood,  
my speech lifts,  
my speech sings.

Abraham Sutzkever (Translated by C.K. Williams)

### A Load of Shoes

The cartwheels rush,  
quivering.  
What is their burden?  
Shoes, shivering.

The cart is like  
a great hall:  
the shoes crushed together  
as though at a ball.

A wedding? A party?  
Have I gone blind?  
Who have these shoes  
left behind?

The heels clatter  
with a fearsome din,  
transported from Vilna  
to Berlin.

I should be still,  
my tongue is like meat  
but the truth, shoes,  
where are your feet?

The feet from these boots  
With buttons outside  
or these, with no body,  
or these, with no bride?

Where is the child  
who fit in these?  
Is the maiden barefoot  
who bought these?

Slippers and pumps,  
look, there are my mother's:  
her Sabbath pair  
in with the other

The heels clatter  
with a fearsome din,  
transported from Vilna  
to Berlin.

Abraham Sutzkever (Translated by C.K. Williams)

To My Child

Because of hunger  
or because of great love –  
your mother will bear witness –  
I wanted to swallow you, child,  
when I felt your tiny body  
cool in my hands  
like a glass of warm tea.

Neither stranger were you, nor guest.  
On our earth, one births  
only oneself, one links  
oneself into rings and the rings into chains.

Child, the one word for you would be love  
but without words you *are* love  
the seed of dream,  
unbidden third,  
who from the limits of the world  
swept to of us  
into consummate pleasure.

How can you shut your eyes,  
leaving me here  
in the dark world of snow  
you've shrugged off?

You never even had your own cradle  
to learn the dances  
of the stars.  
The shameful sun, who never shone  
on you, should shatter like glass.  
Your faith burned away  
in the drop of poison  
you drank down as simply  
as milk.

I wanted to swallow you, child  
to taste the future waiting for me.  
Maybe you will blossom again  
in my veins.

I'm not worthy of you, though.  
I can't be your grave.  
I leave you  
to the summoning snow,  
this first respite.  
You'll descend now  
like a splinter of dusk  
into the stillness  
bringing greetings from me  
to the slim shoots  
under the cold.

Abraham Sutzkever (Translated by C.K. Williams)

Beneath the Whiteness of Your Stars

Beneath the Whiteness of your stars,  
Stretch out toward me your white hand;  
All my words are turned to tears –  
They long to rest within your hand.

See their brilliant light goes darker  
In my eyes, grown cellar-dim;  
And I lack a quiet corner  
From which to send them back again

Yet, O Lord, all my desire –  
To leave you with my wealth of tears.  
In me, there burns an urgent fire,  
And in the fire, there burn my days.

Rest, in every hole and cellar  
Weeps, as might a murderer.  
I run the rooftops, even higher,  
And I search – where are you? Where?

Past stairs and courtyards I go running,  
Chased by howling enemies.  
I hang, at last, a broken bowstring,  
And I sing to you – like this:

Beneath the whiteness of your stars,  
Stretch out toward me your white hand;  
All my words are turned to tears –  
They long to rest within your hand.

Abraham Sutzkever (Translated by Leonard Wolf)

No Sad Songs Please

No sad songs please:  
Sad songs just tease  
At sorrow.  
Words, too, betray  
And names,  
Forever,  
And tomorrow

Look out the snow:  
In memory's art  
Is unexpected  
Radiance, and in  
The speeches of the heart,  
You yourself are  
Resurrected.

Stretch your hands out  
To that whiteness:  
In its cold and burning  
Veins  
You'll feel returning  
The redeeming life  
It contains.

Abraham Sutzkever (Translated by C.K. Williams)



## APPENDIX VI

### LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

NUMBER	SONG TITLE	MEASURES	SONG CYCLE
4.1	I Did Not Manage to Save	1-20	Holocaust 1944
4.2	I Did Not Manage to Save	21-26	
4.3	I Did Not Manage to Save	31-35	
4.4	I Did Not Manage to Save	41-47	
4.5	How Can I See You, Love	1-9	
4.6	How Can I See You, Love	10-22	
4.7	How Can I See You, Love	41-54	
4.8	How Can I See You, Love	61-75	
4.9	Both Your Mothers	1-16	
4.10	Both Your Mothers	33-44	
4.11	Both Your Mothers	74-79	
4.12	Both Your Mothers	85-88	
4.13	Both Your Mothers	97-107	
4.14	Both Your Mothers	143-151	
4.15	What Luck	22-34	
4.16	Massacre of the Boys	1-4	
4.17	Massacre of the Boys	9-14	
4.18	Massacre of the Boys	51-53	
4.19	Race	18-20	
4.20	Race	60-67	
4.21	Holocaust 1944	17-18	
4.22	Holocaust 1944	30-39	
4.23	Holocaust 1944	90-97	
5.1	Don't Cry, Fragment 1	1-9	Fathers
5.2	You, Father	5-8	
5.3	You, Father	26-28	
5.4	You, Father	33-40	
5.5	Don't Cry, Fragment 2	7-13	
5.6	Last Night I Dreamt	1-5	
5.7	Last Night I Dreamt	22-30	
5.8	Last Night I Dreamt	51-54	
5.9	Last Night I Dreamt	62-64	

5.10	Last Night I Dreamt	77-81
5.11	Last Night I Dreamt	86-90
5.12	Don't Cry, Fragment 3	11-19
5.13	I Saw My Father Drowning	1-4
5.14	I Saw My Father Drowning	23-26
5.15	I Saw My Father Drowning	46-52
5.16	Don't Cry	21-31
6.1	I Lie in This Coffin	1-4
6.2	I Lie in This Coffin	29-30
6.3	I Lie in This Coffin	32-34
6.4	I Lie in This Coffin	55-66
6.5	A Load of Shoes	69-76
6.6	A Load of Shoes	132-140
6.7	To My Child	10-11
6.8	To My Child	29-37
6.9	To My Child	112-121
6.10	Unter dayne vayse shtern	1-10
6.11	Beneath the Whiteness	1-6
6.12	Beneath the Whiteness	27-30
6.13	No Sad Songs Please	24-37
6.14	No Sad Songs Please	55-68

The Seed of Dream

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