

Tsippi Fleischer's music merges together a variety of stylistic and cultural influences – from the ancient world to *avant garde* and electronic music, from western classical traditions to the music of the Middle East. These voices often combine into a cohesive, colourful synthesis – yet they might also retain their independent character within an active dialogue, or even engage in mutual conflict. In many of her works, Fleischer confronts the constant tension between despair over the loss childhood innocence – and the persistent belief in the need to preserve and defend it.



*Tsippi Fleischer – The Music* brings together several articles – some previously published, some newly written – offering detailed analyses of specific works and examining different aspects of this unique composer's *oeuvre*. Alongside this wide-ranging, multi-faceted survey, the book offers a panoramic view of Fleischer's reception – from texts written early in her career as a composer of concert music to articles written especially for this book. The section "Composer Testimonies" adds the composer's own perspective on her music, as well as on her pedagogical activity. This section, too, combines past sources with items that Fleischer created especially for this book.

We hope this book will shed light on Fleischer's personality and artistry – and that it will inspire new studies on this fascinating composer, and new, innovative performances of her music.

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# TSIPPI FLEISCHER

## THE MUSIC

EDITOR: DR. URI GOLOMB



# **TSIPPI FLEISCHER**

## **THE MUSIC**

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ISRAEL MUSIC INSTITUTE  
מכון למוסיקה ישראלית

## Tsippi Fleischer – The Music

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## Introduction

Uri Golomb

Chapter 01 On Tsippi Fleischer's Musical Path

## Introduction: On Tsippi Fleischer's Musical Path

Uri Golomb

This book presents several articles – some old, some new – on the music of classical Israeli composer Tsippi Fleischer's, alongside sources and appendices which also illuminate aspects of her pedagogic activities and their connections with her music. In many ways, it complements the monograph *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, in Hebrew (Hakibutz Hameuchad, 2018; in Hebrew), which presented a wide-ranging survey of Fleischer's life and *oeuvre*. Here, we offer an analytic survey of several works and specific aspects of this unique composer's music.

Tsippi Fleischer was born in Haifa in 1946. Her music reflects various cultural and stylistic influences, including the languages and musical styles of the Middle East, European traditions from the Renaissance to the 20<sup>th</sup>-century *avant-garde*, and electronic music. In addition to a doctorate in musicology, she also has academic degrees in music education, Oriental studies, and Semitic languages. Her works, which include symphonies and operas, were performed and recorded in Israel and abroad, and received critical acclaim (see the appendices "Selected Reviews" and "Reference Letters for Prizes and Awards" below).

In the early 1970s, Fleischer was active primarily in jazz and popular music; however, since the late 1970s she shifted her creative endeavours to the concert halls and to 'classical' genres. Since then, her creative approach has undergone several transitions. In her early compositions, she was primarily influenced by her studies of the Middle East generally, and contemporary Arabic poetry and music in particular; in the 1980s she consolidated a musical style drawing on these influences. In the 1990s, her vision deepened and expanded historically and geographically, incorporating elements from the Semitic world and beyond, including inspiration drawn from ancient cultures. The early decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are marked by her entry into the large-scale genres of symphony and opera, allowing her to expand her artistic vision. All these aspects will be examined in depth in several articles in this book.

The book, apart from its appendices, is divided into two sections: analytic essays and testimonies. The first four chapters in the **analytic essays section** focus on three specific works: *Girl Butterfly Girl* (Op. 4, 1977/2011-2), *Resuscitation* for

cello solo (Op. 6, 1980) and *Hexaptychon* (Opp. 36-41, 1996/7). The final article offers an overview of a wide selection of Fleischer's music through the prism of the *tension between innocence and brutality*, which has been a central focus of Fleischer's *oeuvre* throughout her creative life. The **testimonies section** is divided into two sub-sections. The first presents the composer's testimonies on the two of her large-scale works, the cantata *Like Two Branches* (Op. 24, 1989) and the grand-opera *Adapa* (Op. 76, 2014). The latter part of this section presents two articles, written at different points in Fleischer's career, which represent her philosophy on *music education* – a field which also takes centre-stage in her activities.

Two of the works discussed in the analytic chapters are based on Arabic texts and reflect the central role of Arab language, literature and music in Fleischer's music; Oded Assaf's analysis of *Resuscitation* for cello solo also focuses in oriental elements in the work. My own concluding chapter, "Innocence and Brutality in Tsippi Fleischer's Music", also includes detailed references to several of her oriental-inspired works (primarily *Like Two Branches*), alongside works which represent other aspects and genres in her *oeuvre*. In this introduction, I also aim to present a wider panorama of Fleischer's development, focusing on works written from the 1990s onwards, when the Arab element – though still present – became less prominent. I will therefore focus on other aspects of her music, complementing the perspectives appearing in the rest of the book.

Even in the early 1980s and 1990s, when the use of Arab and Middle-Eastern sources was still paramount in her music, Fleischer noted three main strands within her *oeuvre*, as quoted by Nathan Mishori in his article "Tsippi Fleischer Writes Music for Peace", which he completed shortly before his death in 2001:<sup>1</sup>

- "Oriental Music", originating in her study of Near-Eastern, regional music (*Maqāmāt*, folklore) and continuing in its combination with non-Western traditions from around the globe;
- "Jewish Music" – based upon Biblical themes and other sources in Jewish history;
- "Israeli Music", inspired by specifically Israeli sources (Hebrew poets, Israeli landscapes).

<sup>1</sup> The article was published posthumously, in a version which I edited and updated, under the title "Between East and West, from Ancient to Contemporary", as part of the mini-monograph *Tsippi Fleischer* (Israel Music Institute, 2009).

Moshe Zuckerman, in a letter recommendation for the E.M.E.T Prize (quoted in full in the Reference Letters appendix below), regards Fleischer's *oeuvre* – in all its multi-faceted variety – as a creative, inter-disciplinary entity emerging from a “a humanistic view that finds expression, not in simplistic declarations, but rather, in the Fleischer's devotion to the heterogeneity of mankind, in her attentiveness to the excluded, forgotten or veiled ‘otherness’”. Her use of foreign or archaic languages marks, in his view, “an essential openness to heterogeneous cultural layering” which she combines into a coherent, organic whole, “destabiliz[ing] the ideological hierarchization of the ‘high’ and the ‘low’”.

Fleischer's cycles *Ethnic Silhouettes* and *Four Old Winds* reveal an even greater tendency for universalization by appealing to sources of inspiration from the beyond the present-day Near East. *Ethnic Silhouettes* (Opp. 42-46, 1988-1998) is a cycle of four magnetic tapes based on vocal recordings representing various ethnic groups from around the world, whereas *Four Old Winds* (Opp. 26-29, 1993-1995) draws together four multimedia works in ancient Semitic languages. The four works comprising *Ethnic Silhouettes* therefore draw their inspiration from the documentation of living languages, whereas *Four Old Winds* is, to a significant extent, an attempt to revive dead languages. In both cycles, ancient texts (*Four Old Winds*) and traditional materials (*Ethnic Silhouettes*) are combined and transmuted through creative use of innovative technologies.

The two cycles represent aspects which have become even more prominent in Fleischer's 21st-century works, including her operas and symphonies. Fleischer's four operas – *Medea* (Op. 35, 1995), *Cain and Abel* (Op. 57, 2001/2), *Oasis* (Op. 71, 2010) and *Adapa* (Op. 76, 2014) – are based, like *Four Old Winds*, on ancient sources, sometimes only on the narrative level, sometimes in the actual language.<sup>2</sup> Of the four, the closest to *Four Old Winds* is actually the latest – the grand-opera *Adapa*. Like *Four Old Winds*, this opera too presents its central myth – the story of Adapa, a half-man half-fish from Akkadian mythology who almost gains eternal life – in the original language; and like each of the works that comprises *Four Old*

<sup>2</sup> The four operas were issued on CDs and are available for listening and download on the composer's website, alongside their booklets, which include the complete libretto. With the exception of *Medea*, all of them are also available for viewing on Youtube in fully-staged versions; *Medea* is only represented in online videos by three excerpts. Links to all these videos can be found on the composer's website.

*Winds*, it too exists in a multimedia version which the composer herself shaped and produced.<sup>3</sup>

That said, there is a fundamental difference between *Four Old Winds* and the four operas in their treatment of their source materials. In *Four Old Winds*, Fleischer remained close to the letter and spirit of the original texts. In the operas, however, fundamental changes were wrought upon these sources. *Oasis* drifts furthest from its inspiration: here, the ancient source – the story of the Exodus as told in the Pentateuch and other Jewish sources – serves as a mere backdrop to a new story, and all named character were created by the librettist, Yael Medini (the only character common the opera and the original narrative is the Chorus of the Israelites). Furthermore, the Pentateuch portrays most encounters between the Israelites and the nations of the desert in a negative light: these nations often fight against Israel, or tempt them to their pagan ways. In *Oasis*, however, the encounter is portrayed as both friendly and beneficial: the Bedouins (who are not even mentioned in the Pentateuch, though it does mention the Ishmaelites in other contexts) offer assistance to the Israelites.

The myth which served as a basis for *Adapa* did not survive complete: all we have from it are fragments from different times and places, which seem to reflect divergent, even contradictory versions of the myth. Fleischer collaborated with Shlomo Izre'el (the scholar who gathered the various sources together and edited a definitive edition of the myth) and with Yoseffa Even-Shoshan; with them, she created a new version of the story, which combines elements drawn from the surviving versions with new and creative ideas. Prof. Izre'el prepared an Akkadian libretto based on this story, which includes phrases from the sources he discovered and edited. Nonetheless, the opera retains something of the fragmentary, enigmatic nature of the surviving narrative. The characters in *Adapa* are more archetypes than fully-fledged characters. This is especially true of those characters portrayed by choruses (e.g., the Earth in Scene 4). The three main protagonists – Adapa himself, the sky-god Anu and the sea-god Ea – also have a symbolic nature, despite being portrayed by soloists. In this sense, the dramatic aesthetics of *Adapa* departs from

<sup>3</sup> Another work with a major visual component is *Symphony No. 6: The Eyes, Mirror of the Soul*, which is meant to be performed together with a screening of pictures from an exhibition of the same name by the designer Dorit Harel. These pictures are also included in the booklet of the album *Box of Late Opuses*, which features this work.

those of Fleischer's other operas, returning instead to the symbolic character of *Four Old Winds*.

Rivka Kashtan's libretto for *Medea* is based on an early, less-familiar version of the vengeful-woman myth. In this version, Medea is guilty of murdering Glauce, but the citizens of Corinth are responsible for the murder of her children, later framing Medea for this crime. Most dramatizations of the myth take their cue from Euripides, who presented Medea as the epitome of vengeful, pitiless, murderous narcissism;<sup>4</sup> Kashtan's libretto, and the sources it draws upon, offer a more complex portrait. Fleischer's music further intensifies our identification with Medea by making her the only soloist, and the only one who has a singing line.<sup>5</sup> The Corinthians are portrayed, in simple speech or recitatives, by the instrumentalists.

The greatest distance from the original myth can be found in Yoseffa Even-Shoshan's libretto for *Cain and Abel*. The opera still presents Cain as the first murderer in human history, but in most other senses, we are presented with a new, fundamentally different narrative. Adam and Eve receive only a cursory mention (and are not named); God (Yahweh) is replaced by Tzafon (North) – who is regarded as the head of polytheistic pantheon, not as a single divinity in a monotheistic religion. Additionally, the original story portrays the two brothers as presenting different offerings to the Lord (Abel sacrificed “the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof”, whereas Cain “brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord”). In the opera, however, the two brothers' sacrifice is identical: each of them sacrifices his Lamb, who is part lamb, part beloved wife. The two Lambs appear on stage as full-fledged female characters; the split between humans and the rest of the living world only occurs after the murder.<sup>6</sup>

The combination between ancient and modern, familiar and surprising, is also apparent in Fleischer's musical language in general, and in these operas in particular. The connection between Renaissance and Baroque elements on the one hand, and

4 Euripides actually appears as a character in the epilogue of Kashtan's libretto, where the Corinthians appeal to him to write a play which presents Medea as the murderess of her own children.

5 In one scene, the soloist also portrays Jason, but since, in that scene, Medea recalls her confrontation with him, this can be interpreted as portraying Medea as she re-lives this confrontation, remembering what Jason had said to her.

6 For a more detailed analysis, see my article “Eros, jealousy and love: A new interpretation under an ancient guise to the myth of the first murder in Tsippi Fleischer's opera *Cain and Abel*”, *Pe'imot: Journal of Music and Culture* 4 (2020), pp. 103-127 (in Hebrew).

oriental sonorities on the other, is familiar enough in Israeli music – one example among many is Paul Ben-Haim's use of the harpsichord in *Sweet Psalmist of Israel* and other works. Fleischer's use of historical instruments in an oriental context is already apparent in several versions of *Girl Butterfly Girl*; in other works, these instruments are directly suggestive of ancient contexts. Thus, in *Cain and Abel*, they enhance the opera's mythical, archaic atmosphere; as the composer herself writes, in the notes to the CD recording of the work, “oriental, ancient and local musical languages merge easily with that of the avant-garde. Side by side with the modernism, elements of antiquity flavor the tonal texture (harp, lute, harpsichord, recorders, certain Semitic sounds, and vertical columns or perfect intervals)”.

The shaping of instrumental timbres, and the realization of each instrument's potential uniqueness, is also a prominent component in Fleischer's musical persona. Her interest in this topic started, to a large extent, with her experience of La-Rue's analytic method. Fleischer recounts that she had initially accepted, implicitly, the traditional Western thinking, which treated melody and harmony as paramount, and marginalized other aspects, such as timbre. Her encounter with La-Rue's approach was therefore a transformative experience, which had a fundamental impact on her musical thought. This found its earliest expression, by her testimony, in *Lamentation* (Op. 16, 1985), which made use graphic elements and unique sonorities. As the composer recalls:

I found myself writing for an unconventional ensemble: female choir with solo soprano, two harps and percussion. I sought a softer sonority compared with most modern composers' use of percussion instruments. I used the marimba and the vibraphone as the ensemble's harmonic backbone – a role usually reserved to strings and winds. [...] It's not as if I told myself, “I will now write for an innovative, original combination”; it started from my attempt to create an especially soft sonority, which will still allow for biting dramatic expression where necessary. Only in retrospect did I realize that no-one else had used such a unique ensemble. Here I discovered my inclination and sensitivity to timbre, which has since become a prominent feature in all of my works.<sup>7</sup>

7 Quoted from *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, p. 153; English translation by Uri Golomb.

Fleischer's next leap in the realm of timbre occurs in her cantata *Like Two Branches*. By the late 1980s, when this cantata was composed, Fleischer became increasingly interested in *avant-garde* approaches to timbre, and studied directly with the cellist Siegfried Palm and the oboist Heinz Holliger. The two musicians also referred her to collection of miniatures written for them, from which she learned, *inter alia*, how to create chords in a solo oboe or to produce special sound effects (e.g., squeaks and scratches) on the cello – elements which became central to the cantata's sound and expression. Quarter-tones in this Eastern-inspired work emerge less from the instrumental writing and more from the choral singing. It should be noted, in this context, that Fleischer's decision to compose her earlier cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* with alternative orchestrations does not represent apathy towards timbre, but rather, a belief in complementary visions of the work, different ways of balancing East and West. The use of these different sonorities, and the manner in which they illuminate different aspects of the same core musical ideas, is discussed below in an article by Mira Joseph and myself on *Girl Butterfly Girl*, in Eitan Ornoy's article on *Hexaptychon*, and in my discussion of *Lead Life* (which also exists in different versions)<sup>8</sup> in my chapter on *innocence and brutality*.

Fleischer's interest in the *avant-garde* on the one hand, and in non-Western music on the other, is also apparent in her use of diametrically opposed approaches to the improvising unwritten elements: the direct incorporation of such improvisations on the one hand, and the use of electronic or electro-acoustic composition, which pre-determines all parameters, on the other. However, the use of electronics – which is intuitively associated with alienation, with neutralizing the performer's contribution – served in several of her works to highlight a performer's specific, individualised input, highlighting elements in his or her artistic persona. Two notable examples are the computerized oratorio *At the End of the Ways* (Op. 50, 1998/9), which revolves around the unique artistic persona of the singer-actor Doron Tavori; and *Saga-Portrait* (Op. 53, 2002), which brings the vocal artist Etty Ben-Zaken into dialogue with herself. The electronic soundtracks for both works include sounds which no human singer can produce on their own, yet were clearly based on raw materials supplied by the two artists, and moulded with reference to their artistic visions.

<sup>8</sup> Soprano and piano, Op. 52, 2001/2; soprano and chamber ensemble, Opp. 60-64, 2005.

In *Ethnic Silhouettes*, Fleischer provides a fixed setting for materials which had originally been free and improvisatory. The final product – a magnetic tape – leaves nothing to chance, but it was created in part through folkloric improvisation, in which the actual composition only comes into final shape during performance. Fleischer's fourth and fifth symphonies similarly reveal the composer's quest for bridging different musical worlds. She describes *Symphony No. 4: A Passing Shadow* (Op. 51, 2000) as an "Oriental Symphony".<sup>9</sup> The unique combination of complementary contrasts – East and West, written and improvised – led the critic Gary Higginson to state that the work requires "a different pair of ears" to be appreciated.<sup>10</sup> The work was inspired by the Irish musician Ross Daly, renowned for his improvisations on near-Eastern string instruments. The orchestra is joined by two soloists, who play and improvise on ethnic woodwind and percussion instruments. The work is essentially based upon a continuous melodic line – a kind of prolonged, a-symmetrical *cantus firmus*, played by the strings and surrounded by hollow sonorities (fourths and fifths) and heterophonic ornaments. The double-bass and the harp intone a rhythmic-melodic cell, which merges at key moments with prominent points on the continuous basic line – signposts which evoke baroque elements (the continuo and the ostinato). Above all this floats the three oboes' chromatic line. The two ethnic-instrument players, who have internalised the basic line, improvise around it; the work therefore changes in each performance. The symphony is divided into five sections, but sounds, according to the composer, like "a single organic intensification, which preserves a continuous line moving from contrasting visions of the Middle East – from a peaceful utopia to an energetic, dynamically-terrifying vision".

*Symphony No. 5* (Op. 54, 2002/3) is based on different aesthetic principles, already apparent in its sub-title: *Israeli-Jewish Collage*. This is a work for symphony orchestra and magnetic tape, the latter incorporating a variety of materials: versions of the Day of Atonements prayer *Kol Nidrei* sung by cantors from different

<sup>9</sup> More information on the fourth symphony is available in the section "Musing of the Soul" on the composer's website (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/drawersh.html>, in Hebrew), which includes handwritten commentaries by the composer on her third and fourth symphonies (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/PDF/Drawer-5.pdf>).

<sup>10</sup> Gary Higginson, review of *Music from Six Continents – 2001 Series* (Vienna Modern Masters VMM 3053), *MusicWeb International*, <https://tinyurl.com/cxjnunzy>

communities (Cochin, Persia, Syria, Kurdistan and Morocco); *shofar* (ram's horn) fanfares played by musicians from the Renanont Institute in Jerusalem; and an excerpt from a song by Israeli rock singer Shalom Hanoch – “*Ken, hamatsav kashe*” (“Yes, the situation is difficult”). Most of these materials originate in oral musical cultures, characterised by a prominent improvisational element; but, unlike *Symphony No. 4*, this work leaves no room for spontaneous-improvisatory transformation in each performance. The materials are pre-recorded, and have undergone a process of electronic transformation aiming, as the composer put it, to facilitate “the shaping of their ‘narrative’ flow into five sections in a single continuity”.<sup>11</sup> The *Fourth Symphony* enacts a vivid dialogue between traditions through the constant give-and-take between the musicians on the stage. In the *Fifth Symphony*, on the other hand, the entire responsibility is shouldered by the conductor and the orchestra: the representatives of the Western tradition must ensure that “in each performance there will still remain a spark of creativity – finding the ultimate balance between the magnetic tape and the live performers”. In the process, a dramatic, sometimes blatant confrontation emerges between the different elements.

The excerpt from Shalom Hanoch's song in the *Fifth Symphony* represents an unusual entry of the world of Hebrew-Israeli song into Fleischer's classical *oeuvre*. Fleischer's early musical career in the 1970s had taken place primarily within this popular-music world, with her vocal band “Daughters of Eve”, her setting of Bialik's *Akharei Moti* (After my Death) for Hava Alberstein, etc. Later, Fleischer turned towards the classical-concert world, which became the focal point of her creative life; but Hebrew-Israeli song remained a core of her identity as a scholar and pedagogue.<sup>12</sup> Her monumental treatise *Harmonization of Songs* is also heavily (though not exclusively) reliant on this genre.<sup>13</sup> The Music Education Corner in this book presents other aspects of her pedagogic approach, which are more closely reliant on classical repertoire.

11 Notes to the album *Tsippi Fleischer – Symphonies I – V* (Vienna Modern Masters, VMM 3056), p. 26. See also a letter that the composer Robert Stern sent Tsippi Fleischer regarding this work. A partial quotation from this letter can be found on the page dedicated to the album of Fleischer's symphonies on the composer's website, <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco2004.html>; the complete letter appears in the letters page of the Musing of the Soul section on Fleischer's website (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/PDF/Drawer-3.pdf>, p. 20).

12 See also my chapter “Education and Research” in the Hebrew monograph *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, pp. 184-261.

13 The book is available for download from the composer's website; see <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/publicationsb.html>, under “The Harmonization of Songs”.

Fleischer's pedagogic work is also apparent in her music in other ways – such as the work with Bedouin children in Rahat which provided materials for her compositions *The Gown of Night* (Op. 21, 1988); the scene *The Judgement of Solomon* (Op. 27, 1995), which was written for a children's choir and served as the basis for a multi-disciplinary teaching unit;<sup>14</sup> the children opera *Oasis*, which also served as the basis for an online pedagogic project;<sup>15</sup> her work *The Animals' Wish* (Op. 74, 2011);<sup>16</sup> and others. In several of these works, writing for children – as performers and listeners alike – merged with a paramount theme in Fleischer's artistic persona: the gulf between the yearning for childhood innocence and the urge to preserve it on the one hand – and the recognition of the loss of innocence and the presence brutality in the world. I will expand upon this topic in the chapter 6, which rounds off the Analytic Essays section of this book.

Another prominent theme in several of the articles below is, of course, the synthesis between East and West in Fleischer's music, and specifically the dominant presence of Arabic elements (both linguistic and musical) in many of her compositions. Fleischer is regarded as pioneer of art-music settings of Arabic texts and of writing music with direct Arabic inspiration, and her activities in this field have encouraged and inspired many other composers, especially in Israel. She used varied sonorities in relation to Arabic texts in two works analysed in this book: alternate versions of *Girl Butterfly Girl*, and the different works which make up, collectively, her *Hexaptychon*. Even in the instrumental work *Resuscitation*, which is not rooted in specific Eastern sources, Oded Assaf finds “Oriental attributes” which testify to the “extra-European, Oriental ramifications” of “many premises of the serial and post-serial *avant-garde*”. Jehosh Hirshberg finds similar characteristics in other instrumental works, such as *Ten Fragments for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon* (Op. 15, 1984). The extra-European influence

14 See *The Judgement of Solomon: An Interdisciplinary Approach to a Biblical Story* (Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute, 2008; in Hebrew). An electronic version of this book is available for free download on the Institute's website: <https://store.macam.ac.il/store/books/4003/>.

15 Links to the various parts of this educational project can be found in the introduction, <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/Assaf/PDF/landing-pages.pdf>. Short films demonstrating the project's practical application are available on <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSFYH8iOmyKYaq5oExeEH1EwTP-1yTF5E>.

16 See a short film on the work's composition, and on workshops regarding its pedagogical uses, on <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/video202.html>.

is constantly present in the rhythmic treatment of a-symmetry, alternating metres and open forms in many of her compositions, including several mentioned in this paragraph. Another prominent example is her *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* (Op. 20, 1987), setting an Arabic text.

The presence of the Eastern element in many of Fleischer's compositions, especially but not exclusively in the 1980s and 1990s, led Nathan Mishori to describe her as "writ[ing] music for peace". In fact, her first major contribution to classical art-music – the symphonic poem *A Girl Named Limonad* (Op. 3, 1977) – was directly related to Arabic music and literature: the work drew inspiration from poem by the Lebanese poet Shauki Abi-Shakra, and the composer resided temporarily in the Druze village Daliyat al-Karmel in order to absorb the atmosphere appropriate to the work (in other senses, the work also represented an early grappling with the tension between innocence and brutality). However, Fleischer does not view her affinity with Arab music and culture as rooted in ideology. Instead, she attributes it to other factors – such as humanity, awareness of her demographic environment, and the study of Arabic as a subject in its own right. The results, she argues, might serve a cultural-political purpose, but she does not set out with this aim in mind.

In retrospect, one might consider this element as reflecting several of her general ambitions and areas of interest. Artistically, the combination of Arabic elements with western ones (traditional and *avant-garde* alike) is part of a wide-ranging synthesis, a quest to bridge musical and cultural worlds separated by time and space, yet allowing them to retain their unique identities. Stylistic and sonic diversity also served in her exploration of more general themes. As she put it, "in each of my works I tackle a problem which I'm interested in grappling with".<sup>17</sup>

In its original context, this quotation referred to musical issues – Fleischer illustrated her point by pointing to the "renewed reference to consonance-dissonance relations" in her *Scenes of Israel – Six Madrigals* (Opp. 9-14, 1981-3). Similarly, one might regard the cantata *Like Two Branches* and the opera *Adapa* as the **culminations of stylistic breakthroughs in Fleischer's oeuvre**. Both works made a unique contribution to Israeli music, both in their musical language and in

<sup>17</sup> From a letter to Prof. Judith Etzion's students, following a session on 26 March 1985 at Tel Aviv University; quoted in *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, p. 150 (in Hebrew; English translation by Uri Golomb).

the connection between this language and the drama inherent in their respective texts. The critic Gerhard Koch and the composer Dieter Schnebel viewed *Like Two Branches* as a pioneering work, and Schnebel even called it a masterpiece. Both works are characterised by an intense, direct expression which enables their immediate absorption in listeners' minds.

Alongside this, one can note, in many of Fleischer's compositions, a grappling with extra-musical issues that touch her very soul. This confrontation moves across genres and unites the works that differ radically in their dimensions, performing medium and even musical style; yet one can also find, in certain works, connections between musical and extra-musical themes which echo across different contexts. Thus, one can note Fleischer's use of triple metres to communicate pastoral expression, nostalgia or longing in works like the song "Waltz of the Devil" in her cycle *Lead Life*; in the third scene of *Cain and Abel*; in the opening passages of *Saga Potrait, Oasis, Ancient Love* (Op. 67, 2006), and others. The composer's response to extra-musical issues is discussed in all analyses in this book, and receives special emphasis in Eitan Ornoy's article on *Hexptychon* and in my own concluding article on *innocence and brutality*.<sup>18</sup>

Overall, this book presents a wide-ranging panorama, not just of Fleischer's music but also of its reception – from articles written near the beginning of her career as an art-music composer to articles written expressly for the present book. The section **Composer's Testimonies** expands this panorama with Fleischer's own viewpoint on her musical *oeuvre* and pedagogic activity alike. This section is largely based on pre-existing sources (published here for the first time), but the items on *Adapa* – the expertise and the interview – were created especially for the present book.

The book's appendices section opens with **complete and updated list of Fleischer's compositions**. This list includes **links to online scores**, available on the composer's website or in the National Library of Israel's (NLI) website, **for each of the scores mentioned in the book**. More information is available on the composer's website (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com>) – including access to all her commercial

<sup>18</sup> See also my discussion to other themes in her *oeuvre* in my chapter "The Observant Soul", in *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, pp. 150-181 (in Hebrew).

CDs (also available on Spotify) and their booklets, other audio and video files,<sup>19</sup> and books and articles by and about the composer. Other resources can be found in the Music Department of the National Library of Israel (NLI) in Jerusalem. These include, first-and-foremost, all of her physical scores (available in Section A of her archive at the library, MUS 121A), many of which are also available for online perusal on the library's website. Because of the technical limitations of remote access, these online scores can offer but an initial glimpse, and they are available for viewing, not download; yet they can still provide an opening for a detailed study of all of Fleischer's works. We should mention that many of these high-resolution scores are also available for download on the composer's own website.

The rest of the composer's NLI (National Library of Israel) archive, MUS 0121, is only available physically at the library itself. In addition to physical scores, this archive contains many other treasures: materials on Fleischer's works (e.g., documentation of premiere performances), pictures from various periods in her life, copious correspondences, posters, contracts, testimonies on the compositional process (such as sketches and drafts), and more. The second appendix in our book is *a concise catalogue of the composer's archive in the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem*. More information can be found on the archive's portal on the national Israeli library website, <https://tinyurl.com/Fleischer-NLI>.

Two other appendices document the reception of the composer and her *oeuvre*: selected reviews published over the years, and reference letters written by leading figures in Israeli musical life.

We hope this book will open a window into Fleischer's artistic persona – and lead to many more studies on this fascinating composer, and new and surprising performances of her works.

<sup>19</sup> The *Retrospective Collection* in the website's Discography section (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/RETRO-menu.html>) features many recordings which have never been commercially available, as well as interviews with the composer, documentation of various events, etc.

## Section One: Analytic Essays

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### B) An Overview from a New Perspective

## Discography

All of Tsippi Fleischer's music albums, as well as a retrospective collection of previously unreleased recordings, is available for free streaming and downloading on the Discography page on the composer's website: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco.html>



<p><b>אוסף רטרוספקטיבי</b> <b>Retrospective Collection</b> 1970 - 2016 הקלטות נדירות של מוזיקה, אירועים מיוחדים וריאיונות Rare recordings of music, special events and interviews</p>	<p>צ'יפי פליישר מוזיקה לזמרים קטנים טסיפי פלאישר מוזיקה לנסקלות קטנות TSIPPI FLEISCHER MUSIC FOR SMALL ENSEMBLES</p>	<p>MUSIC FROM SIX CONTINENTS 1986</p>	<p>TSIPPI FLEISCHER VOCAL MUSIC</p>	
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## Tsippi Fleischer: Musician between East and West<sup>1</sup>

Jehoash Hirshberg

Israeli art-music's prolonged search for ways to approach an East-West encounter began with its founders, such as Paul Ben-Haim, Alexander Uriyah Boscovich, Josef Tal, Erich Walter Sternberg, Marc Lavry, Oedoen Partos and many other composers who immigrated to Israel from Europe in the 1930s.<sup>2</sup> They arrived in Palestine as well-trained composers, suddenly faced with a newly-adopted homeland. They worked under strong ideological pressure and internal conviction, which pushed them to look for a liaison with the music and culture of the East, so as to fulfil the "melting pot" Zionist ideology and thus become integrated in a region dominated by Arab culture.

All this was easier said than done. These composers, who hardly spoke Hebrew, let alone Arabic, had no way to communicate with a culture and heritage totally alien to them. Some, like Sternberg, opposed any forced ideology. Others, like Boskovich, Ben-Haim and Partos, tried to use mediators like the Yemenite-Jewish singer Bracha Zephirah, who filled a unique role in the history of Israeli music, or else they used written sources, such as Idelsohn's venerable *Thesaurus of Oriental Hebrew Melodies*, in order to overcome cultural barriers. The actual worlds of Yemenite-Jewish communities or Arab villages represented for them a fascinating but unattainable culture, enclosed within a context of ritual and festive music which does not encourage the participation of outsiders. The symphonic and chamber repertory created by these first-generation composers reflects their sincere struggle to transplant the great European heritage of concert music into their new home, while acknowledging the importance of the strange new world surrounding them, and the need to overcome the difficulties inherent in their encounter with it.

<sup>1</sup> This article was first published in *Ariel: A Review of Arts and Letters in Israel* 76 (1989), pp. 46-54. This journal, issued by the Cultural and Scientific Relations Division at the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs (1962-2003), was published in English, Spanish, French, German, Arabic and Russian. The article was revised for the present book. All footnotes in this chapter are editorial.

<sup>2</sup> See: Tzvi Avni, "Currents in contemporary Israeli music", *Ariel* 68 (1987), pp. 82-91; and Jehoash Hirshberg, "The Vision of the East and the Heritage of the West: Ideological Pressures in the Yishuv Period and their Offshoots in Israeli Art Music during the Recent Two Decades", *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology* 4 (2005); <https://min-ad.org.il/min-ad/article/view/168>.

The Second World War severed the connections between Eretz Israel and the West. It was only in the early 1950s that a new generation of composers, raised and educated in Israel, found the opportunity to close the gap between their local style and the exciting progress in new music made in Europe and the USA at that time. Again, attention was turned to the West. It was only in the following two decades that the desire to bridge East and West was felt again. Yet, professional music education in Israel was then, and still is, a transplant of the Western model conservatory of music. Only since the 1980s has there been a modest beginning in the applied study of non-European instruments sponsored by the musicology departments at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and at Tel Aviv University.<sup>3</sup> Before this period, the study of non-Western musics centred largely on theory and ethnomusicological research. In the context of that period, Tsippi Fleischer's music represented the boldest attempt thus far to integrate Arabic culture into a musician's personal world – not as a scholar or an explorer, but rather as a sensitive and motivated creative artist.

Fleischer's biographical data reflect the difficulty of taking that first step. She graduated in 1967 from the Music Teachers' College, Tel Aviv,<sup>4</sup> where she was certified as a teacher of music theory. She then turned to composition, taking a degree at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem, and receiving a BA degree in Hebrew Language, Mid-Eastern studies and Arabic at Tel Aviv University. Her initial steps in composition were motivated by her interest in music education. She wrote works for children's choirs, and throughout her life remained involved in several projects involving children or amateur musical groups. She has written incidental music for the theatre, such as a musical setting of a story by the Yiddish author Shalom Aleichem, *Alei Kinor* (Op. 1, 1974), and was involved with the study and dissemination of Israeli folk songs. In 1977 she achieved a breakthrough when she composed the song cycle, *Girl-Butterfly-Girl* (see also chapter 3 below).

<sup>3</sup> Since the publication of Hirshberg's article in 1987, many new developments have taken place – for example, the establishment of the Cross-Disciplinary Music Faculty at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, which seeks to update and expand the western conservatory model and incorporate non-Western music as an integral part of theory and practice alike.

<sup>4</sup> Now the Faculty of Music Education, Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Tel Aviv.

Example 1: *Girl Butterfly Girl* – the fourth song in the cycle*Girl Butterfly Girl*, bars 1-20 (manuscript)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song 'Girl Butterfly Girl'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The first system is marked 'cresc. (sempre)'. The second system is marked 'mf'. The third system is marked 'mf'. Each system has three lines of lyrics: Hebrew, Arabic, and English. The English lyrics are: 'A girl dreamed that she was a but-ter-fly', 'When she a-rose She did not know', and 'if she was A girl who had dreamed she was a'.

While modest in size and aspirations, the cycle – one of the most original and fresh musical products to emerge from Israel in the 1980s – is a faithful reflection of a direct encounter between East and West. Fleischer selected four poems by modern Lebanese and Syrian poets (Fu’ad Rifqa, Shawqi Abi-Shaqra, Muhammad al-Maghut, and Unsi al-Hajj). Prof. Sasson Somekh, a scholar in Arabic and mid-Eastern studies who translated these poems to Hebrew and introduced Fleischer to them, writes that these modern poets

have succeeded, almost overnight, in freeing themselves from the classic Arabic formula and have adopted forms very similar to those of contemporary European and American poetry. [...] Yet comprehension of the themes of these brief lyrical poems is strongly dependent on knowledge of and sensitivity to the life-style

and cultural norms of the Arab Orient, with their juxtaposition of village scenes, everyday life and ancient local symbols within the poetic-surrealistic or imagistic texture.<sup>5</sup>

Fleischer initially scored the poems for soprano voice with two optional sets of chamber ensembles: the original Arabic version is scored for the Arabic flute, nai, whose part may also be taken by the violin (which was fully assimilated by Arabic ensembles in the Middle East) and the oud, which may be replaced by the *kanūn*.<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew version is sung to the accompaniment of a purely Western ensemble of flute and piano. The integration of East and West is also reflected in the selection of artists for the record. In the premiere recording, the Arabic version is performed by Marina Levitt, a singer trained in the Western style, but strongly responding to the poetic sound of the Arabic texts, accompanied by two Israeli-Arab musicians, both of whom were students of the Musicology Department at the Hebrew University Jerusalem: the oud player Taiseer Elias and the violinist Nassim Daqwar. The Hebrew version is sung album by American-born Robin Weisel-Capsouto (who also sings one of the songs in English) with flautist Amir Sela and pianist Miri Zamir-Capsouto. The two renderings, included side-by-side on the same record, symbolize the complexity of Israeli culture. The Arabic version, which emphasizes the melodies based on Arabic scales, represents the integration of Arabic language, *maqām* and instrumental texture with the form of chamber songs, reminiscent of Stravinsky’s Russian songs for voice and chamber ensembles. The Hebrew version, with the oud part arranged for the piano, represents the reverse direction taken by a western ensemble which approaches the heterophony and melos of the East. The interaction of two cultural worlds is, interestingly enough, evident in the recording of the Arabic version. Fleischer uses two of the Arabic scales which introduce the typically Arabic interval of three-quarters of a tone – *maqām rāst* and *maqām šaba*. The Arabic inflections are marked by the traditional notation of the flat and the

<sup>5</sup> Sasson Somekh, “Girl Butterfly Girl: Translation has its own melody (note from the translator from Arabic)”. From the liner notes to the LP *Tsippi Fleischer: Music for Small Ensembles* (Hataklit 35362, 1986), which included the premiere recordings of the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*, discussed below.

<sup>6</sup> The master score, which features the two initial ensembles side-by-side, can be viewed and downloaded on the composer’s website; <https://tinyurl.com/5n6rmzy9>. Since the original publication of Hirshberg’s article, this cycle received many new versions (see List of Works), and new recordings were published of the original and new versions alike. Some of these versions will be discussed in chapter 3 below.



sharp used for this typical interval; in the vocal part, however, she also provides an optional equal temperament intonation suitable for Western-educated musicians. Indeed, Marina Levitt maintains the European half-tone intonation for the same motifs which are played by the Arabic performers in the three-quarter tone *maqām* intonation.

An important characteristic of the work is the use of contrapuntal texture. Counterpoint does not occur in Arabic music. However, it frequently features heterophony – that is, the simultaneous rendering of the same melody by several performers, each providing their own ornamentation and rhythmic patterning. The song cycle’s scoring is indeed similar to that of Arabic music, in which the singer is accompanied by a small ensemble of instruments such as the violin and the oud. Fleischer makes much use of written-in heterophony, but it frequently extends through its temporal organization into actual counterpoint. Yet, the prevailing heterophony prevents the counterpoint from developing Western-like melodic implications, and the dichotomy of consonance-dissonance typical of European music is not felt at all in the cycle. The predominance of the melodic factor in the cycle is most pronounced in the last song, the very moving village parable, “Girl-Butterfly-Girl”:

*A girl dreamed that she was a butterfly  
When she arose  
She did not know if she was  
A girl who had dreamed she was a butterfly or  
A butterfly dreaming that it was a girl...*

(Poem by Unsi al-Hajj; English translation by Gila Abrahamson)

The delicate poem is set for unaccompanied soprano.<sup>7</sup> One hopes it will eventually be performed by an Arab singer, who will be able to render the Arabic *maqām* inflections which are replaced by the optional reading in a beautiful performance by Marina Levitt.

It is noteworthy that composition of the cycle did not lead to an ideological change in Fleischer’s attitude to composition. It was not a beginning of an exclusively

<sup>7</sup> In later versions, Fleischer adds instrumental parts to this song as well. Uri Golomb, in his contribution to Chapter 3, discusses some of the expressive implications of this compositional decision.

“Arabic” period in her writing. On the contrary, she continued to look for ideas and subjects the West and the East alike. In 1985, she completed *Lamentation* (Op. 16), a setting of the German-Jewish poetess Else Lasker-Schüler’s poem, “Little Song of Death”, for soprano, women’s chorus, two harps and percussion. The composition juxtaposes an array of styles and techniques: from the opening clusters of mysterious sonorities and glissandi, through a chromatic-expressionistic soprano aria, to folk-song strains, culminating in a dense, chromatic chorale, reminding one of Stravinsky’s Bach-inspired works.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, her involvement in Arabic culture has intensified, branching out in three directions:

1. Application of Arabic scale patterns to European formal organization;
2. Setting of Arabic poetic texts to music written in European harmony, form and expressive rhetoric;
3. Educational and creative projects.

An example of the first direction is her *Ten Fragments for Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon* (Op. 15, 1984).<sup>9</sup> These are miniatures, each expressing a momentary mood, such as “Joyous Folk Dance”, “Lament”, “Ironic Chorale”, and so on. The problem of adjusting the harmonic factor to the melodic *maqām* concept is solved through the prevailing use of unisons, solo passages, and clusters which function as negation of functional harmony. To be sure, non-European scale patterns are not new to European music. They were frequently used by composers like Bartók, who derived them from Hungarian folk music; Stravinsky, who found them in Russian folk songs; and other nationally-minded composers. It is not the innovation which counts in this case, but rather the specific use of Arabic patterns as an integral part of an Israeli composer’s vocabulary rather than external, coloristic Orientalism.

The second direction is represented by Fleischer’s 1985 work, *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* (Op. 20, 1987). It is a setting of a dark, mystical poem by the Egyptian poet Şallah Abd El-Şabur, written in two versions: for tenor solo with

<sup>8</sup> See a more detailed discussion of this work in chapter 6, “Innocence and Brutality”, below.

<sup>9</sup> The score can be viewed and downloaded on the composer’s website, <http://tinyurl.com/sce92yu4>.



three violins and piano; and for mezzo-soprano with two violins, viola and piano.<sup>10</sup> The writing is tonal, with dissonant harmonies and dense textures, featuring large melodic leaps typical of European expressionistic rhetoric.

The third direction is represented by a project which was inspired by Fleischer's work in music education and with children's choruses. Initially she planned a short piece to be performed by a choir of young Bedouin children from the Negev town of Rahat, where the nomadic Bedouins have formed a permanent settlement. She soon found out that the children were too shy to perform in front of an audience. She therefore altered her plan, turning her composition *The Gown of Night* (Op. 21, 1988) into a collage of children's voices which render a rhythmic declamation of poetic text, combined with electronically-processed sonorities. The preparation of the piece occupied her for a year, training the enthusiastic and responsive children, and slowly gaining the confidence of the adult Rahat residents, who had initially been suspicious.<sup>11</sup>

Each of the musical directions that Fleischer had chosen brought her into contact with new performers and audiences, previously little exposed to Israeli music or to Western-oriented concert contexts. For example, the song cycle was broadcast on the Arabic channel of Israel Radio in November, 1986. Soon after the broadcast she received a letter from Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭṭāb, an Arab resident of Gaza:

It is the first time since I was born that I heard an oriental music piece like that, with such use of the violin and the *oud*. I enjoyed it very much, and I highly appreciate what you did. I salute you for what you do for the advancement of the oriental factor in music – whether through the literary aspect or through the use of the *maqāmāt*.

<sup>10</sup> The two versions were initially intended for two specific performers: the Egyptian tenor Hassan Kami, and the American mezzo-soprano Isabel Ganz. Both singers recorded their respective versions on commercial albums, now available on Spotify and on the composer's website. A further performance of the mezzo-soprano version, sung by Hadas Gur with a small ensemble conducted by Karin Ben Josef, is available on the Retrospective Collection section of the composer's website.

<sup>11</sup> The composer and scholar Robert Fleisher chose to include this work in his CD anthology *Composing Israel: The First Three Generations* (Neuma Records 177, 2023), and even used the work's graphic score as a central element in the album's back-cover design.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Fleischer established a musical base in Cairo, which acquired special importance for her music at the time. She visited the city several times with the cooperation of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo, which has played an important role in contacting the Egyptian capital's intellectual community. She found a sensitive and sophisticated audience there for art music, supported by the scholarly interest of the American University in Cairo.

Tsippi Fleischer is well aware of the political implications of her creative activity; but she considers any potential political consequence as a possible outcome, not as a guiding factor in her work. She is much more excited about its social and educational implications. She deliberately avoids political texts, and concentrates on lyrical, introverted poems, whether by the sixth-century Arab poetess Al-Khansā, or by Else Lasker-Schüler. Her works have reached international audiences with scheduled performances in Germany, Britain and the United States.



Fleischer is essentially an expressive artist, responsive to the unique *milieu* of the Mediterranean culture, where Jewish immigrants from Germany and Morocco live next to Palestinian Arabs, with open borders to the ancient and diverse culture of Egypt. She has shaped her inner world as a faithful reflection of the region in all its bizarre diversity, proving the power of music and language to overcome cultural and social barriers. In 1983, she published her setting of an optimistic poem by Israeli poet Yoram Ben-Meir as a gentle madrigal for the Rinat national choir.<sup>12</sup> The short commentary to the madrigal describes the poet who "views all the sights around him – the trees, children, thistles... his eyes stray among the natural and human phenomena...". Two parallel musical motifs bring out the essence of the poem: the image of two Jerusalem flowers whose growth delights Arab and Jewish children alike. A naïve, romanticized view, perhaps, but when it originates in the personality of a musician who has proved in her own way the feasibility of cultural and social coexistence, it might carry a significant message for the future.

<sup>12</sup> *Like a Soft Light: To Jerusalem* (Op. 11), the third piece in Fleischer's *Scenes of Israel – Six Madrigals* for unaccompanied mixed choir (1981-1983).

## Girl Butterfly Girl: Stylistic Analysis and Comparison between Versions

Mira Joseph, Uri Golomb

### Editorial introduction:

Mira Joseph's analysis of the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* (Op. 4) originated in a seminar paper written in the course of her studies for a Master's Degree in Musicology at Tel Aviv University. It is based upon the work's initial  publication as a Master Score (<https://tinyurl.com/5n6rmzy9> ) presenting, side-by-side, its two initial versions – with 'Western' instruments and 'Oriental' instruments (details in the article below). This analysis was first published in the booklet accompanying the 1986 LP *Tsippi Fleischer – Music for Small Ensembles*; a revised version was included in the booklet accompanying the 2005 CD *Girl Butterfly Girl – A World Journey*. Both albums, including their accompanying booklets, are available for listening, viewing and download in the Discography section of the composer's website. The *World Journey* booklet also included Mira Joseph's interviews with several of the cycle's first performers. In preparing the article for publication in the present book, I incorporated several quotations from these interviews into her main text.

Following requests from several performers, Fleischer prepared many additional versions of the work even after these albums were issued, which shed new light on this composition. I have therefore chosen to add a follow-up article to Mira Joseph's study, in which I discuss some aspects of Fleischer's two latest versions (2011, 2012), with references to other versions and arrangements. The scores are available for perusal on the composer's website; for details, see the List of Works at the end of this book and on the composer's website (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/RETRO-menu.html>).

### Part One: Comparative analysis

Mira Joseph

Tsippi Fleischer's song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* is based on poems by four 20<sup>th</sup>-century Lebanese and Syrian poets. The very act of merging such contemporary Arab poetry with the musical styles and traditions of the modern *Lied* is a significant innovation, as Oded Assaf notes:

Whereas a modern tradition has come into being in contemporary Arabic poetry, an equivalent musical tradition has not crystallized as yet. An Israeli – not an Arab – woman composer is performing the task<sup>1</sup>

This song cycle, with its myriad versions, has undergone a unique compositional process. It was composed in 1977 for solo soprano with two instrumental combinations – Western (flute and piano) and Oriental (nai or Oriental violin, with *kanūn* or oud). Fleischer originally composed both versions with Hebrew texts. The premiere of the Western version, sung in Hebrew, took place in February 1979 at the Beit Ariella Library, Tel Aviv, as part of a "Composers' Forum" under the auspices of the Israel Composers' League. The Arabic version was added in May 1983, in preparation for an evening devoted to Arabic poetry presented by the Choir Singers' Association (part of the erstwhile Center for Fostering Choral Singing), at the Tzavta Auditorium in Tel Aviv. The premiere of the complete song-cycle in its Oriental version, in Arabic, took place in May 1984 with Marina Levitt (soprano), Nassim Daqwar (Oriental violin) and Taiseer Elias (oud), in an event celebrating the launch of the Israel Music Institute's Listening Center; a second performance took place immediately afterwards, at the Academy of Music, Tel Aviv University. This version first appeared on the 1986 LP *Tsippi Fleischer: Music for Small*

<sup>1</sup> Oded Assaf, "A Meeting which has not yet occurred", *Iton 77* (Literary Monthly, in Hebrew), October 1984, p. 27.

*Ensembles*.<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1984, Fleischer arranged the fourth song – originally written for unaccompanied voice – for unaccompanied choir in its Arabic version, at the request of the Tel Aviv Philharmonic Choir; in the following years, the Choir performed it often, both in Israel and abroad.<sup>3</sup>

The score has also undergone a number of transformations prior to the publication of its Master Score by the Israel Music Institute. The tonic of C is shared by all the songs. Song No. 3 was originally written a semitone higher, in D $\flat$ , and in this version was sung by Robin Weisel-Capsouto on the 1986 LP. All the songs are provided with equirhythmic translations to Hebrew and English, as well as a transliteration of the original Arabic. The resulting Master Score (IMI 6228-I) includes all the possibilities for performance in each of the three languages and with either instrumental combination (Western or Oriental), to suit the musical resources available to the performers. The version for Oriental instruments is written above the vocal line, whereas the Western version appears below it.

The song cycle merges vocal expressionism with modal impressionism. The vocal expressionism may be discerned in the vocal line, which hovers between declamation and free rhythmic flow. This line is also richly chromatic, replete with the addition of dissonant intervals such as tritons, sevenths and augmented fifths. The image of modal impressionism arises from the way these elements are drawn together harmonically by the combination of voice and instruments. This basically Western foundation is enhanced by the Arabic-Oriental flavor in linear voices; Arabic modes with their microtones and augmented seconds are used, even though the microtones may be performed as semi-tones (see also the comparison between the piano part in the Western version and its equivalents in the Oriental version, below). The rhythmic structure, steeped as it is in asymmetries, adds its own Oriental dimension.

The work's basic character is clearly linked with Western-Classical traditions, marked *inter alia* through the very existence of a fully-notated musical score. On the other hand, the composer's flexible treatment of melody and harmony alike

<sup>2</sup> The complete album is available for listening and download on the composer's website: <http://www.tsippi-fleischer.com/disco1986.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Fleischer also permitted an unaccompanied performance of the entire cycle; a performance of this solo a cappella version, sung in Arabic by Esti Keinan Ofri, opens the album *Girl Butterfly Girl: A World Journey*. See the second part of this article, by Uri Golomb, for a short discussion of this version.

often defies 19th- and 20th-century Western traditions. The composer allowed the players to add their own ornaments and subtle improvisations within the notated framework, and many players – especially those who represent non-Western traditions – have taken her up on this. The oud player Taiseer Elias – one of the work's first performers – declined to give a clear-cut answer when asked whether performances of the cycle should be informed by a Western mind-set or an Eastern one. He did state, however, that, for non-Western musicians, the chief problem is adjusting to the written score and its near-precise realization.<sup>4</sup>

The divergent elements in this work come together in a bold attempt to reflect and express, through musical means, a poetic language which combines a Folkloristic-Oriental realism with surrealist imagery. The Arabic-Oriental color is more evident in the first three songs whereas the fourth deals with more general symbols (a butterfly, children, a dream). The Eastern hues are more keenly expressed in the Oriental versions: here we have the delicate texture of linear voices combined with the timbres of the Oriental instruments and the distinctive diction of the Arabic language. The Western version comes closer to the classical conception of voice with harmonic accompaniment.

The composer described her attitude to the *maqām* in this work as both conceptual and spontaneous. Thus, the work utilizes use of segments from one *maqām* or another, rather than making systematic use of *maqāmāt* (functional order, *finalis* etc.). The basic compositional idea is Western: this finds expression in the intervallic construction of the melodic lines, in the harmonic conception and in the polyphonic writing (especially in the Oriental version; see the discussion of "Harmony and Scales" below). However, the composer still employs the color characteristics of Arabic folk music which have insinuated themselves into her work as a result of her exposure to Arabic music.

As noted above, the cycle consists of four songs, each with its own melodic material, atmosphere and tempo. On the other hand, several musical elements common to all the songs – and which together create a stylistic unity – can be enumerated precisely.

<sup>4</sup> The interview is quoted in the CD booklet for *Girl Butterfly Girl: A World Journey*, p. 38; see <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco2005a.html>.

**Concerning Form**

a. The structure mostly flows freely with the text, unbounded by traditional musical forms. All the songs are *through-composed*; the occasional reappearances of fragments, where present, does not serve a structural function. A typical practice is starting a new section at the beginning of the second poetic verse, on relatively low notes (for example, at the words “In secret places of the desert” in Song No. 1, and at the words “Hundreds of years went by” in Song No. 4).

b. The melodic-vocal phrases are interrupted by rests, while instrumental interludes “fill the space” between vocal sections. This process can be exemplified through the prominent interludes between “cavern of light” and “And nights I spent in its sand” in Song No. 1, and between “giant demons” and “And they kicked me up” in Song No. 2.

**Concerning Melody**

a. The structure of the vocal phrases typically consists of an ascent to a climax accompanied by a *crescendo*, a moment of suspension, and a melodic descent accompanied by a *diminuendo*. One example for this is the vocal phrase beginning with “In secret places of the desert” and ending “As the edges of the stones they knew me” in Song No. 1:

**Song No. 1, English version, bars 39-46**

In sec-ret pla-ces of the des--ert Wrapped in a vir - - gin cloud - - let  
To me would he then come his feet — knew — me as ed-ges of the stones — they knew me

Another example is the opening sentence of Song No. 3, “I stand alone... upon a window ledge”:

**Song No. 3, English version, bars 5-14**

I — stand a - - lone on the brink of— mad - - ness — like an  
In - fant who — stands up on a win-dow ledge — up - - on a win-dow ledge —

b. The work features frequent changes of metre within a single musical sentence, in vocal phrases and instrumental interludes alike. See two examples from Song No. 3:

**Song No. 3, vocal part, bars 16-25**

(mm. 16-25) "There's no moon..."

**Song No. 3, piano part, bars 33-40**

The next musical illustration shows how the equirhythmic translations of the texts in a number of languages were inserted into IMI's master-score. The common melodic line is given in ordinary notes; the small notes indicate the deviations from this line. The words of the text in three languages, using Latin script, appear below the vocal line:

**Song No. 3, vocal part, bar 16**

Hebrew LO YA - RE - - AH  
 Arabic LA^L - - QA-MA - RU  
 English There's no moon \_\_\_\_

**Concerning Harmony and Scales**

a. The unsystematic use of *maqāmāt* gives rise to the development of a unique harmonic language; this includes combinations of typical chords of fourths, fifths and seconds (including augmented seconds), resulting in extreme chromaticism. In the versions for Western instruments, this chromaticism replaces the microtones of the Oriental versions: thus, in Song No. 1, the  $G\flat$  in the kanūn/oud is translated to  $G\sharp - F\sharp$  played simultaneously on the piano:

**Song No. 1, bars 19-22**

b. In spite of the chords' complexity, which prevents a clear tonal orientation, the texture remains transparent and steeped in delicate sonorities; thus it is relatively simple to follow the harmonic technique. In the Eastern version a type of three-voiced polyphony is apparent, whereas in the Western version, it is the harmony that commands a central position in the accompaniment of the voice, with close dissonances (usually major and minor seconds) added in the piano to the basic harmonic infrastructure.

Following are a number of illustrations from Song No. 1 to demonstrate the technique:

**Song No. 1, bars 6, 10, 28**

The B $\flat$  in the piano is drawn from the oud. E $\flat$  and A $\flat$  are chromatic to the voice containing D-A.

The line of the oud F-E is in the alto (or tenor) of the piano. All the rest of the pitches in the piano are in relationships of 2nd (major or minor) to the pitches in the flute, voice and oud.

The bass-line in the piano is identical to the line of the oud. The F $\sharp$  - A $\flat$  (G $\sharp$ ) - B $\flat$  of the first chord are in voice and instruments. E $\flat$  is chromatic to E in the flute. In the third chord, F $\sharp$  and A lie near to E and G $\sharp$  in the flute in the previous quarter-note beat.

c. This unique “interpretation” of the *maqāmāt* results in the emergence of modal coloration, both in melodic characteristics (for example, the very obvious way in which the *Kurdi maqām* resembles the Phrygian mode) and in the focusing on hidden points which disguise what might be described as tonal centers. At times, this occurs in a bi-tonal context.

An examination of the score for Song No. 1 reveals an obvious pull towards fixed centers, where B (B $\flat$ ) and C $\sharp$  (possibly perceived as an overtone of F $\sharp$ ) are the predominant pitches. This pull expresses itself both in the linear dimension (F $\sharp$  and C $\sharp$  stand out in the relationships between phrases which follow on one another, and in their combination, as beginnings and ends of phrases), as well as in the vertical dimension (B/B $\flat$  is prominent at cadential points in the bass, in combinations with F $\sharp$  and C $\sharp$ , where the “bass” is presented in the piano or oud).

**The main attributes of individual songs**

In the **first song**, which generates an atmosphere of “Oriental Impressionism”, one’s attention is drawn to the fragmented phrases, the rejection of harmonic functionality, the continuous floating upwards and the total lack of formal strictures. It is interesting to note the references to the *maqāmāt* here: for example, the melody on the oud in the opening bar is based on the *Sikah maqām* in its original form (E $\flat$ -F-G-A/A $\flat$ ) and the vocal melody at the end of the song presents the *Kurdi maqām* (equivalent to the Phrygian mode) in transposition:

**Kurdi maqām and its modification in Song No. 1**

Its modifications in the vocal line, at the end of the song

The piano also concludes with a Phrygian ending (see score: bar 52 C-B, equivalent to the oud’s C-C $\flat$ ).

The interludes play an important structural function, as preludes or postludes to the vocal phrases. The latter have an almost uniform attribute: they rise to a climax, in pitch, range and dynamics alike, and then drop in both register and dynamics.

The musical conception of the **second song** is based on a paradox: restless, continuous movement together with a stubborn equilibrium which creates the sensation of impending doom. The equilibrium is achieved by the use of a single *maqām* (*Rāst*) and a fixed metre throughout the song, while restlessness is generated by rhythmic changes of phrase content and a continuous friction between the vocal and instrumental parts in the fugal texture.

The subject of the *fugato* is the opening motif (♩♩) in the violin:

#### **Song No. 2, Nai/violin part, bars 1-2**



After the voice's imitative entry, this vocal line becomes the countersubject when the motif itself reappears in the instruments.

Here too the interludes play an important structural role: they separate the sections of the song designated as "verses" by the composer, even though the original text is continuous. As far as the composition is concerned, the first verse ends with the words "giant demons". Then comes a three-measure interlude, followed by the short second verse ("And they kicked me up high towards the desert sands"). Another interlude separates this verse from the final coda ("They took from my fingers a gift-ring, and gold of my eyelids"). The use of a coda is borrowed from Western music, yet the song's marked lack of structural symmetry has an undeniably Oriental flavor. In addition to their formal function, the interludes were also intended for enhancing the Arabic *Rast maqām* and for demonstrating the inexhaustible possibilities of melodic variation inherent in it.

In the **third song**, "The Coffin with its Lid Remote", it is the voice above all which expresses spiritual distress. The speaker's dramatic mood changes are faithfully expressed – from the stillness of madness at the beginning to the hysterical outburst at the end. Hence the gradually increasing intensity in all musical parameters – melody, rhythm, dynamics. The deliberate melodic directionality – a continuous progression upwards – is unmistakable.

Here too the song is divided into two unequal parts, this time following the division of the text; there are also secondary divisions in the first verse. The compositional technique is based on repetition. For example, musical phrases are repeated with variations (either rhythmic or with extended register).

#### **Song No. 3, first verse, vocal part**

**Song No. 3, second verse, vocal part**

First and second lines (mm. 41 - 42)

I am en - vious of — the nail That has woo - den boards — to em —

Third and fourth lines (mm. 44 - 46)

I am en - vious of — the corp - ses drip - ping blood —

The initial impression of a seemingly conventional song, based on a melody with accompaniment where the voice predominates (in contrast to the first two songs in which the weight is evenly distributed between instruments and voice), turns out to have been misleading, after the intricacies of the harmonic content of this accompaniment have been exposed. It is worth devoting some space to what the composer calls “the capricious use of the *maqāmāt*” which is relevant here mainly as regards two of them – *Hijāzi* and *Nagrīz*.

For example, here is the first phrase, based on the *Hijazi maqām* from G:

**Transposition of Hijazi maqām in Song No. 3**

**Song No. 3, bars 1-3 (instruments), 5-7 (voice)**

Original Hijāzi Maqām      The same Maqām transposed from G

First phrase in instruments, later in voice <sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of the song, the prominent use of the augmented second emphasizes the authentic Oriental timbre. Later on, however, the *maqām* acquires a more “Westernized” sound, because of the broken chords which, in many cases,

evoke a septachordal reverberation; see, for example, a point in the instrumental interlude, before the beginning of the second verse:

**Song No. 3, bars 36-37**

In addition to the tonal center C which stands out all the way through together with the augmented second A $\flat$ -B in the linear line (to resemble the harmonic minor), there is a tonal center on E. Compare, for example, the tonally functional opening phrase with the phrase at bars 23-25: at this point there is a vocal cadence on E combined with bass-range C in the piano. Moreover, the quartal chord which ends the song, in spite of its complexity, uses C as bass note (piano and oud); E and B are also evident amongst the notes of this chord.

The **fourth song** appears, if taken at face value, like a “calm after the storm”: there is a clear contrast between its relatively calm character and the gradually growing tensions in the rest of the work, culminating in the third song. The composer testifies that she has chosen to end with this poem precisely because it differed from the other three. In contrast to previous poems’ lack of clarity, which stems from the mixture of dream and reality, “Girl Butterfly Girl” offers a ray of light and optimism, which breaks through, especially, on the word “children”. The musical conception rests on the desire to symbolize the butterfly and the children by means of a light, feminine song, without strong stresses – an airy flight, so to speak. The outcome is an *a cappella* song for soprano voice, singing in a particularly wide register (two octaves + major second!) and in a fixed – but extremely flexible – metre.

And yet, the composer also acknowledges that many listeners perceived this song as pessimistic – possibly expressing the desolation which conflict and war have left in their wake. This reaction is documented, *inter alia*, in papers submitted by Noa Yeffet’s 13-year-old pupils in the 1990s.<sup>5</sup> It arises, in part, from the “incisive, cruel” sonority of the word “tamazzakat” (“was torn”) in Unsi al-Haj’s Arabic original. This pessimistic conception contradicts the composer’s own feelings and intentions, both during the composition and in retrospect.<sup>6</sup>

A similar clash between different conceptions of this songs can be discerned in my interviews with three of its earliest interpreters. Marina Levitt “accept[ed] the composer’s perception that the song is mainly optimistic (a butterfly and children continue to live on forever)”. The other two found darker undertones in the poem: the depiction of “the innocent victims of the trauma of war” (Robin Weisel-Capsouto) or “a catastrophe, destroying innocence and beauty” (Hadassah Ben-Haim). Even these singers, however, agreed that Fleischer’s musical interpretation of the poem accentuated its optimistic aspects.<sup>7</sup>

The melody is divided into three unequal parts: the second part begins “Hundreds of years went by”, the third, with the words “All was torn apart outside”. The *Rāst maqām* appears in its original form (on C) and in transposition on A (starting with “Hundreds of years...”) and on F (starting with “All was torn apart outside”), fitting in exactly with the structural division.

The text’s propensity for reverting, time and again, to the same images – a dream, a butterfly, a girl, a boy – is reflected musically in repeated intervals that recur like *leitmotifs*: in the Hebrew version, a rising minor seventh is associated with *chalom* (dream) or the verb *lachlom* (to dream). In the English version the seventh is also used for “girl”. In both Hebrew and English, the ascending fifth (sometimes fourth) is associated with other forms of the verb “to dream”, and the minor seventh together with the linking third, when “children”, “girl” or “boy”

<sup>5</sup> Noa Yeffet (1934-1999), a student of Tsippi Fleischer’s at the Levinsky College of Education, was a distinguished educator, who taught at the Reali Junior High School in Haifa. She encouraged her pupils to adopt and develop an independent analytic approach. In this context, these teenaged students analysed works by many Israeli composers, including Tsippi Fleischer.

<sup>6</sup> See also Uri Golomb’s analysis of this song’s incarnations in the composer’s latest versions.

<sup>7</sup> The interviews are included in the CD booklet for *Girl Butterfly Girl: A World Journey*, pp. 43-46.

are in proximity to the dream. But this melodic material flows together with the text and does not repeat itself symmetrically or in a fixed pattern as in traditional forms of Western music. The many intervallic leaps – a Western characteristic – are diluted by the Oriental whirls of the butterfly motif which is sequentially repeated – for example, towards the end of the song:

#### Song No. 4, bars 83-91

Chil - dren ————— A but - - ter - - fly

A but - - - ter - fly



Tsippi Fleischer’s song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* follows the composer around the world. Here is the butterfly image from the front cover of the 1992 album *Tsippi Fleischer: Vocal Music* issued by the American label OPUS ONE (catalogue number 158). Painting by Arona Reiner.

## Part Two: A Glimmer of Hope or the Loss of Innocence? On the Final Two Songs in Two Late Versions of *Girl Butterfly Girl*

Uri Golomb

### Introduction:

Even from its inception, the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* was treated with a degree of flexibility which is rare in Western Classical music, at least from the mid-18th-century onwards. Mira Joseph's article above already pointed its dual genesis, in two different versions. Since then, the work continued to evolve: the composer herself wrote several additional versions, as well as allowing performers to prepare their own arrangements. By November 2019, the composer completed her work *Girl Butterfly Girl: A New Flutter By* (Op. 80), which combines an existing recording of the song cycle (with Yael Levita and the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Petr Vronský) with new musical materials in singing, playing and motion. This version was commissioned by the Atar Trio, but its eventual completion was achieved in collaboration with its first performers – the pianist Hagai Yodan, the violinist Tali Goldberg and the cellist Avigail Arad. Their recording is available on Youtube, both on its own (<https://youtu.be/OobbhaFtRUg>) and as part of the film *Fleischer at 75: The Butterfly Still Flutters* (<https://www.youtube.com/live/tgoDiBIvTMM>). This latter film also features two new versions of the cycle, arranged by pianist Ofer Shelley (see details in footnote 8 below), as well Dorit Feldman's video-art *As Language of the Stones, They Knew Me*, which adds a series of visual images to the cycle's opening song.

In this short sequel to Mira Joseph's paper, I will focus on the cycle's 2011 version for soprano and chamber ensemble, and the 2012 version for soprano and symphony orchestra. I contend that these two versions offer two contrasting yet complementary interpretations of the cycle's final song, suggesting different answers to a question which had already concerned the three singers responsible for its earliest performances: does this song offer an optimistic conclusion to the cycle, or a pessimistic one?

Before reading this article, I recommend that readers take the time to listen to both versions (both available on the CD *Innovated Classics*, which can be heard on Spotify and downloaded on the discography page in the composer's website; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco200013.html>), preferably with the scores, which can be downloaded by scanning

these QR codes:



**chamber version**

<https://tinyurl.com/324rjvvpf>



**symphonic version**

<https://tinyurl.com/ydspahry>

The album *Girl Butterfly Girl: A World Journey* (2005) presents various versions of each of the cycle's songs, as well as improvisations inspired by them. The versions for each song are presented along an East-to-West spectrum. The album *Tsippi Fleischer: Innovated Classics* (2013) includes the premiere recordings for two additional versions: in Hebrew, for soprano and chamber ensemble (flute, clarinet, bassoon, piano, violin, viola and cello; 2011); and in Arabic, for soprano and symphony orchestra (2012). Judged by the criteria employed in the album *A World Journey*, both these new versions belong at the Western end of the spectrum: they are scored for exclusively Western instruments, and the music is fully written-out, with none of the improvisatory freedoms allowed in some of the other versions. Yet some of the sonorities emerging from these standard Western-classical ensembles clearly evoke Eastern sonorities. This is especially apparent (at least to Western ears) in the symphonic version, which might explain why the composer asked for this version to be sung in Arabic.

In this short paper, I wish to focus on another aspect of the new versions – their approach to interpreting the fourth song (“Girl-Butterfly-Girl”) and its relation with the third song (“The coffin with its lid remote”). Mira Joseph, in her article above, had already noted the controversy surrounding the fourth song. As she observed, the music's calmer demeanor, compared especially with the dramatic character of the previous song, arises in part from its scoring for unaccompanied voice. This scoring creates a lighter, airier sonority as well as giving the singers greater flexibility, allowing each of them to express her own understanding for the words, the music, and their interrelationships.

In the two latest versions, however, Fleischer decided to withdraw this distinctive element, retaining the full instrumental ensemble in the last song. There is only one original version in which the last song has the same scoring as the others – namely, singer Esti Keinan Ofri's purely-vocal version, which opens the album *A World Journey*.<sup>8</sup> In this version, the singer extended the original vocal line to include allusions to instrumental accompaniments and interludes from the original versions. Keinan Ofri's performance of the fourth song is quieter, more introverted than her renditions of the three other songs; this is especially notable after the anguished cry which ends the third song. However, this rendition also includes hints of vulnerability, fragility and darkness, pointing towards a more pessimistic interpretation of the final song.

Fleischer's 2011 and 2012 orchestrations do seek, however, to retain some of the last song's distinctiveness: most of the ensemble, in both versions, moves primarily in parallel with the vocal line, albeit in different intervals, enveloping the voice in a resonating halo instead of offering an active accompaniment. This distinctiveness is especially noticeable in the chamber version, since the symphonic version employs the resonating-halo approach in other songs as well. In many instances, the orchestral instruments move in parallel lines, creating the effect of a single, multi-layered sonority, albeit rich in inner timbres; whereas the instruments in the chamber version are more clearly differentiated. This distinction is already notable in the opening of the first song: the chamber version features distinctive *obbligati* for specific instruments (e.g., the transition from bassoon to clarinet in bb. 14-21, and earlier violin *obbligati*), whereas similar lines in the symphonic version are subsumed into the overall sonority.

<sup>8</sup> Ofer Shelley – the pianist of the Atar Piano Trio – created two arrangements of the song cycle: one for soprano and piano trio, which they recorded in Arabic with Nour Darwish; and the other for bass and piano trio, which they recorded in Hebrew with Guy Pelc. In these arrangements, the fourth song is mostly sung unaccompanied, but Shelley does introduce an occasional instrumental echo, usually played by just one of the three instruments. These instrumental interpolations mostly appear in the pauses between the vocal phrases. Shelley's versions also include an instrumental interlude between the third and fourth songs, featuring quotations from the first three songs. Both version can be viewed on Youtube, with striking visual images filmed at Qumran National Park near the Dead Sea. Each version appears as a separate film on the trio's Youtube channel (<https://youtu.be/ixbs6bLgjdE>, <https://youtu.be/IHsQaf9-6M8>), and both of them are incorporated into the film *Tsippi Fleischer at 75: The Butterfly Still Flutters* on the composer's Youtube channel.

### First Song, Chamber Version, bars 14-21

Scherzando, leggiero  
14 ♩ = 110 - 116

Fl. *p*

Cl. in Bb. *p*

Bn. *obbligato*  
*mf*

Sop.

Pno *mp* cluster  
RH  
LH lift pedal gradually  
ped.

Vln

Vla. *sub.mp*

Vcl. *sub.mp*



18

*obligato* *rit.* *a tempo*

Fl.

*obligato* *ff* *f* *mf*

Cl. in B $\flat$

*f* *ff* *sub.f* *mp*

Bn

*f* *mf* *mp*

Sop.

Pno

*ped.* *senza pedal cluster* *mf* *natural dim.*

Vln

*mf* *mp*

Vla

*mf* *mp*

Vcl.

*mf* *mp*

First Song, Symphonic Version, bars 14-21

Scherzando, leggiero

14  $\text{♩} = 110$

2 Fls

2 Obs

2 Cls in B $\flat$

2 Bns

Xyl.

Mar.

Hp

Sop.

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

D. B.

*mp* *mp* *p* *mf* *mf* *mp* *mp* *sub.mp* *sub.mp* *mp*



Musical score for 'Girl Butterfly Girl' showing orchestration for various instruments including Flutes, Oboes, Bassoons, Xylophone, Maracas, Harp, Soprano, Violins, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass. The score includes dynamic markings like *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, and performance instructions such as *obligato*, *rit.*, and *a tempo*.

It is important to note, however, that the resonant-halo approach does not dominate the last song throughout. The symphonic version makes use of sustained individual notes on harp and piano at key points, creating inner divisions in the song (bb. 1-2, 28-27, 79-80,<sup>9</sup> 93); and in both versions, an independent, rising-and-falling figure recurs intermittently. In the chamber version, this figure is played on the piano; in the symphonic version, it is played by the flutes (I will discuss the possible implications of this difference in scoring below). This is a distinctive compositional addition, above and beyond the change in the song's orchestration. A similar addition appears in the third song, where a recurring ornamental figure is added, appearing first in the second half of bar 4 (oboe in the symphony version, piano in chamber version). This figure has no clear parallels in earlier versions of this song.

Melodically, the additions to each song in the symphonic version are virtually identical to those in the chamber version:

**Third Song, Chamber Version, bars 4-5 (piano)**

Musical score for the Third Song, Chamber Version, bars 4-5 (piano).

**Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 4-5 (oboe I)**

Musical score for the Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 4-5 (oboe I).

<sup>9</sup> This particular point forms a darker, threatening sound, as I will discuss later.

**Fourth Song, Chamber Version, bars 11-12 (piano)**

Musical score for the chamber version of the fourth song, bars 11-12, piano. The score is in 3/4 time and features a single melodic line on the piano with triplets and a 'p leggiero ped.' marking.

**Fourth Song, Symphonic Version, bars 11-12 (flutes I & II)**

Musical score for the symphonic version of the fourth song, bars 11-12, for flutes I & II. The score is in 3/4 time and features two parallel melodic lines for the flutes, both marked 'p leggiero'.

In examining the score, one might note a certain affinity between the melodic figures added to the third and fourth songs. For listeners, this affinity is much more apparent in the chamber version than in the symphonic version, since the chamber version allocates these figures to the same instrument (the piano), whereas the symphonic version scores them differently. As a result, the added figures clearly deviate from their surroundings in the chamber version, even when they move in parallel with other instruments (compare the instrumental interlude in the third song, bb. 39-46, in both versions).

**Third Song, Chamber Version, bars 39-46**

Musical score for the chamber version of the third song, bars 39-46. The score is in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 110. It features multiple instruments including Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Bassoon, Soprano, Piano, Violin, Viola, and Violoncello, with various dynamics and articulations.



44 *accel.*

Fl.

Cl. in B $\flat$

Bn

Sop.

Pno

Vln

Vla

Vcl.

Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 39-46

39  $\text{♩} = 110$

2 Fl.

Ob. I

Ob. II

Cl. in B $\flat$  I

Cl. in B $\flat$  II

2 Bns

Xyl.

Mar.

Hp

Sop.

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vcl.

D. B.



The consistent use of the piano also creates a sense of continuity between songs 3 and 4. In the symphonic version, on the other hand, the added figure is more organically integrated into the surrounding texture, and the connection between is blurred.

It should be stressed that these orchestration choices are not inevitable consequences of the ensembles available to the composer in the two versions. Fleischer could have used the piano in the symphonic version in exactly the same way that she used it in the chamber version; and in the chamber version, she could have used the woodwind instruments in a similar fashion to their use in the symphonic version. Instead, she used the instrumentation to suggest, in each version, a distinctive narrative-dramatic interpretation of the two songs and the relationships between them. Listening to the two versions side-by-side further intensifies the sense of ambiguity in Fleischer's interpretation of the poetic texts, above and beyond the separate implications evoked by each version on its own.

In the chamber version, the added figures in the third song – appearing consistently on the piano – receive a percussive character, which seems to be grafted onto the rest of the texture, almost like a foreign implant. Each of its appearances – and each omission – is clearly apparent.

**Third Song, Chamber Version, bars 4-9 (piano):**

**The first two appearances of the “grafted foreign element”**

The singer's line is closer to that of the other instruments, and the piano therefore seems to struggle against the entire ensemble. The figure also seems to reflect the dominant literary motif of distance and alienation in the text; in the instrumental interlude, one can connect it with the storm, or "foul weather", described in the text in the preceding lines.

In the fourth song, the piano creates, as I've already noted, a connection with the third song. Thus, the gap between the two songs, which is such a distinctive feature in most of the cycle's versions, is less notable here. Instead, the figure's significance in the fourth song seems to echo its role in the third song: in both cases, its rendition on the piano creates the sense of an alien element grafted onto the texture. In the fourth song, this alien element undermines the singer's melancholy – yet potentially optimistic – lyricism.

The symphonic version of the third and fourth songs create a greater sense of inner dialogue – and of dramatic and narrative development – compared with the chamber version. This is already apparent in the relationships between songs 2 and 3. The second song (in both chamber and symphonic versions) features a sort of obsessive unity in the entire ensemble. In light of this, the opening of the third song in the symphonic version provides apparent relief. The opening orchestral prelude evokes, in my ears, the pastoral image of a distant caravan of camels, or of a shepherd's melody, set against the backdrop of vast, serene desert vistas. The orchestra is clearly split between atmospheric background (strings, harp) and woodwind *obbligati*. The entry of the added figure – the "grafted foreign element" in the chamber version – is perceived here as an answer, or echo, of what we've already heard: Oboe I, introducing this added figure in the middle of bar 4, is merely responding to Oboe II's presentation of the opening motif in bars 1-4, and the two instruments seemed engaged in an almost equal dialogue, soon joined by the bassoon (bars 3-4), Clarinet II (bars 4-5) and the singer (bars 5-8). The motivic connection between the added figure and the familiar materials from earlier versions is more audible here than in the chamber version.

### Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 1-6

The musical score for the Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 1-6, is presented in a standard orchestral format. The tempo is marked "Moderato ca. ♩ = 80" and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes parts for 2 Flutes, Oboe I, Oboe II, Clarinet in B♭ I, Clarinet in B♭ II, 2 Bassoons, Harp, Soprano, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The Oboe II part is marked "obligato" and begins with a motif in bars 1-4, starting at a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Oboe I enters in bar 4 with a similar motif. The bassoon and Clarinet II also contribute to this "obligato" texture. The strings and harp provide a background accompaniment, with the harp marked *mp* and the strings marked *mf*. The Soprano part is marked "obligato" and begins in bar 5. The score concludes with a large black arrow pointing to the right.

**Third Song, Symphonic Version, bars 8-9 (flutes I & II)**

The sense of threat and alienation enters only later in the song (in the flute's fast, upper-register playing, bars 8-9).

Overall, one senses an arch of cumulative tension – from quiet beginnings to a growing sense of looming threat made manifest by all orchestral instruments, especially in the stormy orchestral interlude. In the chamber version, one specific musical factor – the added figure in the piano – was experienced as the focal point of all tensions; in the symphonic version, however, a similar sense of tension emerges from the collective efforts of the entire orchestra.

As for the **fourth song**: if the added chromatic figure in the piano was perceived as a disconcerting element in the chamber version, that same figure in the flutes (in the orchestral version) sounds like an image of the fluttering butterfly, peacefully ascending and descending above more threatening sonorities. The latter include the low-register opening sounds (gong, mallets on piano) and the quick, a-symmetrical string *tremolandi* (bb. 19ff).

**Fourth Song, Symphonic Version, bars 19-27 (violins I & II, viola)**

recitations in all Vlns - free rapid repetitions, extremely not symmetrical between all Vln's.

19 *mf* *p*

24 *mp*

The *tremolandi*'s disappearances and reappearances, and the increasing presence of mallet-on-piano and harp-octave strokes, create a sense of growing tension and discomfort, culminating in the threatening sounds surrounding the word “*tamazzakat*” (“was torn”) in bars 80-82. After this, the appearance of the descending figure in the flute (bb. 85-87) seems to depict the fall of the butterfly.

**Fourth Song, Symphonic Version, bars 85-87 (flute I)**

85 *mp*

In my view, then, both of these later versions enhance the interconnections between the fourth song and the other three, especially the third song. Most earlier versions of the fourth song are indeed characterized by a sense of peace and innocence, which distinguishes it from the others, leading to a lyrical and (potentially) optimistic conclusion. The composer's choice to add a new motivic figure to this song – in the instrumental accompaniments of both versions – affects this optimistic potential in different ways. In the chamber version, one senses that a foreign, alienated element – represented by the piano – preserves a sinister echo of the previous song, where it had already contributed to intensifying the dark drama. In the symphonic version, on the other hand, that same motif enhances the sense of optimism through its depiction of the butterfly's flight – but this is contrasted with other musical elements, which were either absent or subdued in the chamber version, to create a narrative of growing threat, similar to that created in the same version's third song.

**Fourth Song, Symphonic Version: Table of Mallets on Piano**

Mallets

- |  |           |   |
|--|-----------|---|
| 1 middle high                              | 6 high    | Always touch quite slowly and only once!! with one/both mallets according to what is written.   |
| 2 under middle high                        | 7 higher  |   |
| 3 above middle high                        | 8 highest | When with both mallets- hold mallets and swift/act (=play) in contradictal direction, in the length of one bar with pedal on strings (sound will continue naturally). |
| 4 low                                      |           |   |
| 5 middle trill (bar 79)                    |           |   |
| 5 middle on strings, first octave (bar 94) |           |   |

The topic of innocence and its loss is a dominant motif in many of Fleischer's compositions (see my chapter on this topic below, and also *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography*, pp. 157-165; in Hebrew), especially since the turn of the 21st century. It is therefore more characteristic of the period in which these orchestrations were made, rather than the period of the original composition. In works like the opera *Cain and Abel* (Op. 57, 2001/2), *Symphony No. 6: The Eyes, Mirror of the Soul*

(Op. 73, 2011), the song cycle *Lead Life* (Op. 52, 2001/2; Opp. 60-64, 2005), and others, Fleischer confronts the elements that threaten human innocence, such as violence, jealousy and cynicism. Her own approach is never cynical in itself: if real innocence does not exist, its loss cannot be perceived as real, let alone tragic. In the original, unaccompanied version of the fourth song in *Girl Butterfly Girl*, one might hear a pure if fragile representation of this innocence (though its purity has already been questioned), serving as a counterweight to the dark, threatening worlds in the rest of the cycle. The 2011 and 2012 orchestrations seem to present a more soberly reflective approach. The chamber version is harsher, accentuating the sense of threat through a clear connection between the final song and the darker song that precedes it. In the symphonic version, the sense of innocence is enhanced by the representation of the fluttering butterfly, and the familiar contrast between the third and fourth songs is retained. Despite this, the darker shadows are intensified in other instruments in the orchestra. The sense of innocence embodied in the vocal line remains unchanged; but Fleischer's new orchestrations delineate different dangers which threaten this fragile innocence.

## The Third and its Oriental Connotation in Tsippi Fleischer's *Resuscitation*<sup>1</sup>

Oded Assaf

The premiere recording of *Resuscitation: Five Miniatures for Cello Solo* (Op. 6) was issued in 1986, in an album which also featured two instrumental works by Fleischer – the guitar suite *To the Fruits of My Land* (Op. 8, 1981) and *Ten Fragments for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon* (Op. 15, 1984) – and two versions of the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* (Op. 4, 1977), which forms the focal point of chapter 3 above.<sup>2</sup> Listeners to that album may well have been surprised by this work's greater affinity with the then-familiar, 1950s-1960s "international vocabulary", especially compared with the aforementioned works. *Resuscitation* is an introspective work and, at least superficially, cannot be linked to a specifically Israeli or Mediterranean idiom. Closer inspection, however, reveals that here, too, Tsippi Fleischer's characteristically indigenous, distinctive expression manifests itself on several levels. For one thing, many premises of the serial and post-serial *avant-garde* have extra-European, Oriental ramifications. The focus on a limited selection of pitches and intervals, going round and round in small circles; repeated patterns with minute chromatic changes which make for a type of 'fluttering' sound; rhythmic figures which 'breathe' more flexibly than more standard, symmetrical patterns; an emphasis on timbre and on timbral changes – all these Oriental attributes have penetrated contemporary European musical currents, revitalizing composers of the Far and Near East. Many Israeli musicians of various generations used them to further their own quest for a synthesis between East and West.

Tsippi Fleischer composed *Resuscitation* in 1980, and the work proved a natural development for her at this early stage of her creative life: she uses

<sup>1</sup> This paper first appeared in the liner notes of the LP album *Tsippi Fleischer: Music for Small Ensembles* (Hataklit 35362, 1986). In preparing the article for the present book, I have made some minor revisions to Gila Abrahamson's English translation. The album, including the original liner notes, can be freely heard and downloaded from the composer's website: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco1986.html>. The score can be viewed and downloaded on the the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/4yr2rnxf>



<sup>2</sup> The cellist in this premiere recording was Alexander Kaganovsky. The work was also recorded by Yifat Weltmann and Simca Heled; see details in the List of Compositions below.

contemporary idioms and techniques while preserving the components of her personal, indigenous musical language. The work also contains a sharp focus of expression which the composer describes as “little bits of mood” – the perpetuation of a moment of recovery, or resuscitation, from a tragic event in her personal life. There are five short movements; and while the composer states that the process of composition was “particularly spontaneous” in this work, the organization of elements and their arrangement into well-defined forms is evident.

This first movement is fast and dramatic. It opens with a phrase which will return in mirror-inversion before the conclusion, and immediately continues with a phrase which is repeated in full at the end of the movement. A five-note circle, pivoting between high and low notes, serves as the nucleus for the movement; thus a three-note seems to echo in the background, creating an interval of a minor third “hidden” within a major third:

#### First Movement – basic cell



This alternation between major and minor thirds is extremely characteristic of Oriental music with its modes; it passes through the work like a *leitmotif*.

While the first movement tends to concentrate on a single note or on its repetition (another Oriental trait), the second movement brings out the melodic continuity, together with reminiscences of “hidden polyphony”. A sensation of wave upon wave is produced, and the constantly fluctuating meters prevent the emergence of symmetry, despite the use of repeated melodic patterns. Another possible modality, also Oriental in origin, is implied here – that of the whole-tone scale. This option is already suggested momentarily towards the end of the first movement:

#### First Movement, bars 41-43



In the second movement, it is clearly stated right at the outset:

#### Second Movement, bar 1



One can note here, *inter alia*, the combination of two major thirds.

The listener is aware of certain moments of respite between the waves in this movement, some of them pivoting on C and D, and most – including the very last – on G:

#### Second Movement,

#### “moments of respite” – bars 10, 12



Is this an indication of the centrality of G in a kind of hinted-at mode which accompanies this movement? The answer will be provided later in the work.

The third, scherzo-like movement connects with its predecessor without a break. The second movement's melodic flow is preserved and a new *pizzicato* coloration is added. Compared with the previous movement, the melodic patterns here are shorter and more fragmented. Right at the beginning, the major and minor thirds encountered in previous movements appear, although here they are spaced far apart:

#### Third Movement, bars 1-2



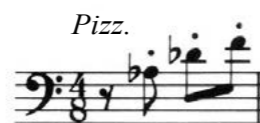
Shortly afterwards – for the first time in the entire work – the convergence of the same combination of major and minor thirds (introduced in the first movement) achieves some hint of melody with a very clear Oriental flavour:

### Third Movement, bars 7-9



As we have heard earlier, and will be hearing again later, such Oriental hints are tentatively touched upon throughout the work; the Oriental melody heard here will reappear, altered and extended, towards the end of the movement, and the thirds ring out briefly behind rather chromatic progressions. Near the beginning of the movement, the major third combines with fourth within the compass of a sixth. This sounds like the inversion of A Major chord, but does not actually function as such.

### Third Movement, bar 5



This combination may be transformed into an extended progression such as this, at the end of the movement:

### Third Movement, bars 41-44



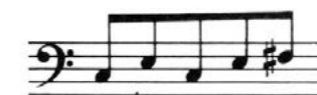
Even at this stage, the listener can already register all the hints of modes and scales as one overall design which may be termed “pan-modal”. The fourth movement confirms this and continues to pull threads out of the previous movement. It is recitative-like, far freer and more aggressive than its predecessors; but the interval of the fourth is focused on more as a structural element. The same give-and-take of major and minor thirds is reflected in it.

### Fourth Movement, bars 6-7



While the arpeggios re-assert the interval of the fourth throughout, the whole-tone scale also raises its head again towards the end of the movement.

### Fourth Movement, bar 12 (excerpt)



The low G is given great prominence (see also our discussion of the second movement) and is to be found at the root of the movement's opening and closing *arpeggio*. No wonder, then, that its position is strengthened in the fifth and last movement.

It is the last movement which closes the circle with its slow tempo and sombre, lyrical expression: it opens with a D and closes on a G – in confirmation of the enigma which accompanied us during the previous movements – and its ascending and descending waves (see again the second movement for comparison) concentrate within themselves the motifs and pan-modal usages of the whole work. In this movement, for example, the major third resounds at the beginning (exactly

as it opened the first movement) and the minor third B $\flat$  - G marks the end. The listener will find this clearly discernible at the very end of the work.

**Fifth Movement, bars 19-21**



## Many Faces in One Work: Tsippi Fleischer's *Hexptychon*

Eitan Ornoy

*Hexptychon* is a series of six movements, or six pieces (to use the composer's own designation), incorporated into a single overarching work, based on the poem "I am sick of you" by the Palestinian poet Jabra Ibrahim Jabra. Fleischer composed the work during the years 1996-7 in response to a series of commissions from the Israel Kibbutz Choir and its conductor Avner Itai, and from several other chamber musicians and organizations. The commissions were unrelated, but Fleischer decided to utilize the presence of multiple ensembles by writing a single work with varied orchestrations.

Fleischer initially drafted the six pieces while staying at the Mishkenot Sha'ananim Artist's Colony in Jerusalem. Her visit took place about a year and a half after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, shortly after the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath in southern Lebanon, and following Benjamin Netanyahu's first victory in the elections to the 27th Knesset and the subsequent rise of a right-wing government to power. Tempers were high in Israel at that time, in the wake of a wave of terror attacks which spread through city centres that same year.

This charged web of interwoven events is not mentioned here gratuitously: Fleischer composed this work during the height of Critical Musicology, which was governed by the demand to examine artworks in their overall cultural, social, historical and political contexts. During the 1990s, theoretical circles defiantly echoed the demand that music be viewed as having social responsibility and upholding a moral stance.

And indeed, *Hexptychon* is immersed in a continuous, complex and many-sided discourse, with a fascinating mesh of associations, implications, interpretive images and historical frames of reference. Its very basis, a poem by a Palestinian writer and poet about humanity's hypocrisy, alienation and crushing loneliness, constitutes only one aspect of the work, one of several narrative contexts. Throughout the work, Fleischer sweeps us to distant universes, to the shadowy images of an extinct world: to the music of the mysterious Orient, to the brilliance of the ostentatious and flamboyant Baroque, to the songs of the ancient Greek lyre.

The poet, Jabra, is considered a complex and multi-faceted character. His words speak of weeping, laughter, dreams and the human visage, and throughout Fleischer's work, they shift and change their guise: ideas sometimes appear in Renaissance monody, sometimes in respectable contrapuntal garb, and sometimes with sweeping, acrobatic virtuosity. While listening to the work in its entirety, fragments of visual observations and phantasmagoria mingle in the mind of the listener, who thus becomes, reluctantly, the subject of nightmares: The blurred image of the poet, a native of Bethlehem, an intellectual, a tormented cosmopolitan; poetic words speaking of disgust, alienation, hypocrisy and mourning; a bitter reflection of a beloved homeland torn and stricken with violence and haunted by fear of terrorism; the chant of a distant *muezzin* echoing in a shuttered study in Jerusalem's Mishkenot Sha'ananim neighbourhood; a Hebrew choir cloaked in exotic *maqām* melody; a baroque ensemble accompanying Umm Kulthum's singing; a harp, bare and exposed, magically transformed into an oriental *kanūn* – these are some of the images which flicker in our awareness, as residents of this land, while listening to this fascinating work.

The six movements of *Hexptychon* differ in their orchestration: the first is for *a capella* mixed choir; the second for contralto singer, oboe and continuo; the third for string quartet; the fourth for the harp and string quartet; the fifth for harp solo; and the sixth for piano 4-hands. All of the movements derive their inspiration from a uniform melodic line, which serves as a kind of broadly based *cantus firmus* and which constitutes the foundation of the whole work.

### ***Hexptychon I*, for choir a-cappella, Opus 36<sup>1</sup>**

The work's first movement presents the melodic contour in its entirety: a monodic song in *Maqām Sigah-Huzam* (whose two tetrachords are separated by an augmented second) that opens with the note B in the first octave. Elements within the work serve as a muted nod to Gregorian chant, giving it something of a religious tone. These include its monophonic, syllabic song, its shifting sense of rhythm, and its linear movement confined to small steps within a broad range (in intervals which for the most part do not exceed a major second). The religious association is further enhanced by the traditional four-part scoring, which moves between paired adjacent voices and a rich homophonic texture; it is as if this form of scoring is nestled within the antiphonal chant of the Psalms, or the polyphonic texture of the motet. The ornamental (albeit somewhat restrained) writing, the use of differing variants of the vocal *glissando*, of voices in unison, and of the Arabic scale and language, could have been used, in a different context, to conjure an atmosphere of cloying Orientalism. But Fleischer is not one to be seduced by *clichés*: the surprising variations in dynamic texture, the frequent pauses, the declamatory *parlando* sections presented in hushed whispers and the leaps in the range, all steep the entire work in mystery, in a bleak, unbounded desolation, with hidden, implicit tensions.

Based on a direct enunciation of the poetic text, this movement is rich in metaphorical constructs of text-music connections. We see many examples of this: the melodic contour is broken with a dramatic drop to the bass register on the word "enough", immediately followed by a leap of two octaves and the words "my own face", sung forcefully by the sopranos alone, and a slow descending *glissando*, over a range of more than an octave, on the word "me" (bars 5-9); an extreme, bitter *diminuendo* on the word "weep" (bars 16-17); a dramatic descent in range and in dynamics on the words "your sorrow", sung in a low-pitched duet ascending and descending in half tone intervals, like a madrigalesque sigh motif (bars 24-26); declarative recitative tones, sung with greatest intensity on the word

<sup>1</sup> The scores of all six pieces are available for viewing and downloading on the composer's website.

The first piece can be downloaded on <https://tinyurl.com/59spdazf>



“important” (bars 27-29); a slow *glissando* whose declining intensity is followed by a low *parlando* on the word “deep” (bars 32-36); a descending melodic sequence, suggesting a hidden shadow, through echoed repetitions of the words “behind your face” (bars 38-39); a declarative *parlando* coupled with foot stamping, growing stronger on the words “your nakedness”; or the sudden polyphonic scoring in the four final bars, in a sharply dissonant sonority achieved by means of parallel seconds. The latter creates a warped chorale-like sonority on the words “I’m sick of it” (bars 63-66).

The technique of ‘word painting’, in the style of the late Renaissance, constitutes another facet of associative context. We have before us a kind of madrigal, which follows tradition in maintaining sharply delineated emotional and semantic contrasts between pairs of words or sentences (“it doesn’t laugh... and it doesn’t weep”, “the face behind your face”), in its 14-line sonnet-like structure, in its climatic ending (“I’m sick of it”) and in its sentimental poetic theme. Melodic motifs incorporated throughout the piece, as in the best monodic writing of the late Renaissance, also add to the image of the tormented and pensive hero, seeking genuine love and tired of sanctimoniousness.

### Hexptychon I, bb. 24-38:

“... linked to your sorrow, / And still more important is my own deeper sorrow”

The musical score for Hexptychon I, bars 24-38, is presented in five systems. Each system shows the vocal lines for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The lyrics are in Hebrew, and the score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions.

**System 1 (bars 24-27):** Soprano and Alto lines are mostly rests. Tenor and Bass lines play a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics: *p* (piano) for Tenor and Bass.

**System 2 (bars 28-31):** Soprano and Alto lines enter with lyrics. Dynamics: *f* (forte) for Soprano and Alto, *mf* (mezzo-forte) for Tenor and Bass.

**System 3 (bars 32-35):** Soprano and Alto lines continue with lyrics. Dynamics: *p* (piano) for Soprano and Alto, *mp* (mezzo-piano) for Tenor and Bass.

**System 4 (bars 36-39):** Soprano and Alto lines continue with lyrics. Dynamics: *f* (forte) for Soprano and Alto, *mp* (mezzo-piano) for Tenor and Bass.

**System 5 (bars 40-43):** Soprano and Alto lines continue with lyrics. Dynamics: *ff* (fortissimo) for Soprano and Alto, *f* (forte) for Tenor and Bass.

## *Hexaptychon II*, for contralto, oboe and continuo, Opus 37<sup>2</sup>

The movement opens with a stirring declaration by the oboe, consisting of a sequence of descending major and minor seconds, leading toward a tense, unstable, dissonant chord played by the harpsichord (a diminished seventh chord with an added fourth above the root of the chord). The first movement's *a-capella* tones, with their somewhat clear, restful, and uniform sonority, are abruptly and unexpectedly replaced with bygone instrumental hues. These new sonorities, intoned by the cello and harpsichord who serve as continuo instruments, directly evoke a broad range of musical images: the baroque sonata, the improvising continuo, instrumental virtuosity, a sense of rhythmic flow.

The singer's entry intensifies the spectacular effect: dark Arab singing with elaborate parallelism – a platform of quartal chords with the addition of a seventh degree, progressing in parallel movement in half-tone intervals, which are presented against the b of parallel seconds in the continuo's inner voices and the doubling of the vocal line by the ornamental oboe. This is multi-layered eclecticism: East and West, baroque and modernism, the lament of a bereaved Palestinian mother merging with Ashkenazi culture, the silent screams of fear intermingled with hedonistic escapism.

Listening to the work without interruption reveals that this is a duplication of the melodic contour from the previous movement. The vocal line, presented among fugal passages and short thematic transitions in the different parts, is a sixth lower than in its original appearance. This altered tessitura, as well as the choice of the intimate texture of a single voice, imbues everything with a sense of dejection and introspection. The vocal part is amplified by the saturated effects generated by the instruments: the improvising oboe, sometimes playing in quarter-tone intervals, suddenly evokes a *shofar* on the word "outright" (bar 14), or a kind of *zurna*, swirling around the words "in pain" or "deep" (bars 23, 38-39). The harpsichord provides a harmonic platform of quartal chords rich in darkening seconds and sevenths; these are presented sometimes as block chords, and sometimes as interwoven *arpeggi*. Highly-charged moments stand out through the harpsichord's use of a sharp trill or a high, jarring sound ("in pain" – bar 23), or by knocking on the sound box ("your

<sup>2</sup> The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/bdZX3ed5>



nakedness", bars 53-54). The cello's *portamento* effect ("weep", Bar 19), which merges and communicates with the vocal *glissando* ("my", bar 11), also illustrates the fascinating use of idiomatic expressive devices as well as their direct or implicit connections with semantic connotations.

The six-part work as a whole is structured in the form of variations on the central thematic subject, thereby providing an anchor and a familiar framework for intensive developments in the accompanying textures. This variation model is uniquely suited for this purpose: it provides compositional panache, imbues each part of the work with the magic of discovery and innovation, and evokes a breadth of shifting associative images. The effect is reminiscent of the musical corpus of liturgical works, in which the meaning of the religious-canonical text is reinterpreted according to the musical platform in which it is placed. Here, too, the meaning of the poetic words shifts as the music is rescored and surprising timbres emerge.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the oboe – an instrument commonly identified with lamentation, suffering, and misery – adds images of death and annihilation when played in conjunction with words such as "weeping" or "pain". However, the frequent use of *glissando*, of unexpected pauses and quarter-tone intervals, which sounds like distorted intonations, adds a parodic, surrealistic feeling, almost with a modicum of humour. The transitional section in the continuo (bar 29) serves to reinforce the syntactic separation before the phrase's final sentence (indicated in the poem by a hyphen). This division is presented by means of short, metallic staccato tones that add a layer of cynicism to the word "sorrow" and with it to the entire proceeding. The quasi-percussive section (bars 53-54), which serves as the transition between the poem's second and third phrases, emphasizes the narrative sequence between them by emphasizing the B-flat, which closes the previous verse and begins the one after it, and which is sounded in a sequence of intervals of minor seconds with C natural. In addition, it infuses these poetic phrases with an allegorical, mediating interpretation: between the small hours of the night (closing the poem's second phrase) and the weave of dreams experienced during this night (opening the next poetic phrase), the oboe, the cello and the harpsichord hammer us with blows, as if the composer wants to wake us aggressively from our selfish sleep.

<sup>3</sup> A similar effect can be discerned in the different scorings of *Girl Butterfly Girl*, discussed by Mira Joseph and Uri Golomb in chapter 3.

## Hexptychon II, bb. 53-62

"During dreams at night that / are unable to dissemble and tell lies"

53 Percussive sound in which B $\flat$  figures prominently.

mf Cadenza f p sub.

fi 'ah -

mf f

mf f

56 a tempo

- la - - - mi - llay - li - lla - - - ti

mp accel. p mf molto accel. f ff fff

la - tas - ta-ti - - - u - nni - fa - ka - 'a-wil - ka-dhib

Hexptychon III, for string quartet, Opus 38<sup>4</sup>

From this point onward, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's text will no longer be heard: the human voice disappears from the work, making way for instrumental ensembles only, while the memory of the text lingers relentlessly. Like the other pieces in this work, here too the instrumental texture is used to portray a complex platform of images steeped in constant discourse with the entire work. In this context, there is nothing like a string quartet to sharpen and amplify archetypal concepts of cultural identity: The string quartet is considered the ultimate representation of Absolute Music and marks the pursuit for universality and equality associated with the Age of Enlightenment. Yet all of a sudden, this instrumental entity is required to embrace and encompass a poem of Palestinian pain. Reiteration of the insights regarding stereotypical bias and cultural imperialism, articulated by scholars like Edward Said or Linda Nochlin, is void, despite the wide dissemination of their writings in the decade of the work's composition: those who have been brought up on string quartets from Haydn and up to John Adams, may find themselves, even if only in a fraction of a second, inadvertently taken aback by the intensity of the dissonance between the ensemble's supreme status and its adaptation to a narrative of "the Orient".

The absence of a vocal role, and the resulting reliance on the poetic text as a hidden, indirect and non-binding platform, does not dull the sense of conflict between the musical genre chosen here and the associative world of content that wells up between the lines. In fact, the choice of an instrumental platform derived from an external narrative – as in the finest traditions of program music or of instrumental arrangements of vocal *Lieder* – indeed obscures the semantic connotations associated with words when presented directly, yet contributes to the expansion of the metaphorical field and the scope of the images.

The opening is unexpected: a reiteration of the melodic line, presented in the first violin (in tandem with its doubling in the bass line), this time in the second octave, lends clarity and brilliance to the sonoric effect. A gradual, *unisono* entrance of the parts, with the viola completing the sonorous tapestry by entering precisely in the bar marked *piano* (bar 5), creates a contrast between the rich homophonic

4 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/mv7dehav>



texture and the mysterious dynamic orientation. The sharp dissonance created in the following bar by the forcefully-presented parallel seconds, serves to re-introduce a harmonic motif that returns throughout the entire work as a form of compositional hallmark.

The movement's texture is varied: fast entrances in an imitative texture are contrasted with homophonic sections; the momentary splitting of the quartet into duos or trios is juxtaposed against rich polyphonic segments; short-lived patterns give rise to extreme and frequent differences in dynamics; parallel seconds and cluster-like sections appear alongside unison passages; frequent changes in sonic hues arise from richly-varied articulation; marked tempo changes in the middle section, and even a large-scale *cadenza* in the first violin. As for the latter: in line with the tradition typical of the classical quartet, here too the *cadenza* serves as a nod to genres such as the solo concerto or the operatic aria, its improvisational nature blending in with the Arab *Maqām*.

As in the previous movement, the idiomatic specification associated with playing string instruments also serves to present various sonic effects: the trill introduced in the first movement in the soprano (bar 13) is transformed into a threatening *tremolo*, which continues in *fortissimo* to the following bars' dotted half-note, with the major second between the two violins creating a disturbingly dissonant effect. In its original appearance, this trill was associated with the word "no"; the absence of a textual platform in the current movement, as already stated, enables an auditory experience that is free of direct connotations, while at the same time expanding the associative weave in a limitless manner. A hidden sensation of tension, terror, or violent outburst accompanies the passage; the dotted half-note presented in unison in the opening movement (E flat, bar 17 denoting the word "weeping" in the original text) splits into a pattern in sixteenth notes and thirty-second notes, in parallel major seconds between the two violins. As in the first bars, here too the rhythmic diminution is surprisingly marked *diminuendo* and ends with weakened intensity, perhaps as a hint to those aware of the hidden meanings in the textual context; the declamatory *parlando* (bars 34-35, originally on the word "deeper") is replaced by a threatening, percussive *col legno*; the sequence on the words "it smites you", presented originally in the low voices (bars 43-44), is muted here (*sordino*), while the three repetitions allocated to the note G, indicating muted knocking, are produced by plucking the strings; the clear contrast between *staccato* and *legato* – among the prominent advantages of the use of string instruments – is

used here to emphasize the transition to the *col legno* effect (bar 32), but also serves as a muted echo of the original text ("my own deeper sorrow"); the frequent use of *glissandi* and the broad range of registers additionally demonstrates an array of possibilities inherent in string instruments, further enhancing this fascinating compositional artefact.

#### Hexptychon I, bb. 13-19 (incl. upbeat) compared to Hexptychon III, BB. 13-19 (incl. upbeat)

"And it doesn't weep outright"

The image displays a musical score comparison between two sections of Tsippi Fleischer's *Hexptychon*. The top system, labeled 'Hexptychon I, upbeat, bars 13-16', shows the vocal parts (Soprano and Tenor) with lyrics 'wa - la la tab - ki - l - bu - ka - - - a'. The dynamics range from *p* to *ff*, and the tempo is marked *tutti*. The bottom system, labeled 'Hexptychon III, bars 13-16', shows the string parts (Violins I and II, Viola, and Cello) with dynamics *mp*, *ff*, *mf*, and *fff*. The middle system, labeled 'Hexptychon I, bars 17-19', shows the vocal parts with lyrics 'ku - - - l - la - - hu' and dynamics *p*, *mp*, and *rit. sempre*. The bottom system, labeled 'Hexptychon III, bars 17-19', shows the string parts with dynamics *f sub.*, *mf sub.*, *p*, and *mp*, and tempo markings *accel.* and *a tempo*.

### ***Hexptychon IV*, for harp and string quartet, Opus 39<sup>5</sup>**

Apart from minor changes, this is a full repetition of the previous movement, with an additional part for the harp. The composer introduces it with the following note:

It is necessary to slow the music down (in comparison to *Hexptychon III*) because of the nature of the harp. When the harp joins the string quartet it immediately and abundantly infuses the whole with archaic, Oriental shading (in Avner Itai's words).

An examination of the few sections in which the original string-quartet texture was modified raises intriguing insights. For example, in bar 20 of *Hexptychon I*, the original melodic contour is based on a descending wave-like motion in seconds, directly associated with the poem's text ("it is in pain"). While in *Hexptychon I* this text is presented in parallel octaves in the soprano and alto, in *Hexptychon II* the parallel line, played by the oboe, is placed a third above the vocal part's melodic line, with an arpeggio sequence in the continuo. In *Hexptychon III* we witness an imitative *stretto* entry of this wave-like pattern, moving between the four string players in a densely-contrapuntal texture; and in *Hexptychon IV*, our current focal point, this pattern is presented by a solo harp, based on layered chords built of thirds moving up and down in intervals of seconds. Fleischer's attempt to grant a unique status to the word 'pain' has given rise to a fascinating collection of sonoric means of expression that send the listener into diverse associative realms: bitter sighs of resignation, cautious optimism, turbulent soul-searching, or, as in the case before us, an internalized contemplative pain, emerging from the acceptance of fate.

The expression "a face which you ignore", which is the essence of the poetic message (bars 40-42), is rendered through a dramatic, forceful leap of an octave, followed by a melodic outline in descending minor thirds, presented in eighth-notes, in *diminuendo*, ending in a rest. In *Hexptychon I*, the line is presented in the upper two voices, in the next movement – in the alto voice and the oboe, thickened later on with the entrance of other instruments (bars 44-46), and in the

<sup>5</sup> The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/hxkucyph>



string quartet version (*Hexptychon III*) through maximum intensity (*fortissimo*) and the stormy presentation of the melodic contour by all the parts in unison (bars 40-42). In *Hexptychon IV*, Fleischer expands the texture by adding the harp to the original string-quartet parts (bars 40-42). The drama is intensified, not only because of the thickening of the instrumental texture (by using the thick sound of the harp to intensify the general unison), but also by means of the *tremolo* in the string instruments that occurs alongside the octave jump and change in time signature to 6:4, which augments the rhythmic value of the opening notes of the sequence. One should also note the thickening of the *col legno* sequence (bars 47-50) brought about by adding the high strings and by the knocking on the harp's wooden frame, intensifying the tension towards the violin's *cadenza*, and the addition of the harp to the original line of the violin during the *cadenza* section (bars 55-59), creating a unique sound.

The introduction of harp, in this movement and in the next one, evokes an abundance of associations: an ancient lyre plucked in the muted *pyknon* sounds of the Greek tetrachord intermingles with the "3/4 tone" interval which opens and closes the sequence of the *Maqām Sigah-Huzam*; a shadowy memory of the Seikilos epitaph, one of Ancient Greece's best known feast songs, exhorting us to find joy in our short lives: "while you live – be happy... have no grief at all". In contrast, the portrait of Jabra's face is presented, disgusted with derisive laughter, hurt and saddened to tears. The combination with Fleischer's chosen title for each movement – the word "*Hexptychon*" followed by a Roman numeral – can also evoke the images of Hellenic spaces, of a destroyed Empire, and of the Nation of the Book gradually losing its sanity.

**Hexptychon I, bars 40-42 (incl. upbeat) ; Hexptychon II, bars 44-46 (incl. upbeat) ;  
Hexptychon III, bars 40-42 (incl. upbeat) ; Hexptychon IV, bars 40-42 (incl. upbeat)**

“A face which you ignore”

Hexptychon I  
upbeat,  
bars 40-42  
original sonority

Hexptychon II  
upbeat,  
bars 44-46

Hexptychon III  
upbeat,  
bars 40-42

Hexptychon IV  
upbeat,  
bars 40-42

S. A. *p* *f* *mp*  
wu - ju - hin ta - ta - gha - fa - lu - na 'an - ha 'an - ha

Voice *p* *f* *accel.* *mp*  
wu - ju - - - hin ta - ta - gha - fa - lu - na 'an - ha 'an - ha

Oboe *mf* *f* *p*

Continuo *mf*

Vln I *p* *ff* *p*

Vln II *p* *ff* *p*

Vla *p* *ff* *p*

Vcl. *p* *ff* *p*

Harp. *f* *ff* *accel.*

Vln I *f* *ff*

Vln II *f* *ff*

Vla *f* *ff*

Vcl. *f* *ff*

## Hexptychon V, for harp solo, Opus 40<sup>6</sup>

Fleischer robes the image of ancient Greek's open spaces in the mantle of the eastern *kanūn*, with its caressing tones and sensual plucking. The slow tempo, rich in *fermatas* and rests, immediately draws us into a contemplative atmosphere, saturated with mystery. The increasing emphasis on frequent changes in dynamics, alongside rhythmic changes expressed over short time segments, serves as a rhetorical tool for constructing sub-phrases and for stirring the emotions. Striking sonic effects, including playing with nails, metallic sounds, tapping on the wooden frame, pedal or *glissandi*, demonstrate instrumental virtuosity and idiomatic means of expression with a near-vengeance, as if this movement sweeps us, surprisingly and irresistibly, into a stylized baroque suite.

It is remarkable how closely the melodic and harmonic textures mirror the harp's role in the previous movement, including the passages with percussive effects (bars 34-35, 47-50) and the *cadenza* (bars 51-59); one exception is the slightly shortened *codetta* (bars 59-64). It seems that the change in the instrumental sound – arising from the removal of the strings' backdrop and the consequent exposure of the unadorned solo harp – is sufficient to transport us to an ineffable dimension.

We are presented here with yet another spectacular game of stimulation, an all-encompassing fantasy. It seems that the textual poetic anchor, with its fixed words that demand semantic association and relevance, has vanished long ago. We are left only with sounds, apparently without any reason to try to match a specific text to the tonal content. Swept away by the sounds of parallel octaves, second and minor chords, of the overshadowing *glissandi* and sonic effects so unique to the harp, we are left pensive, thoughtful: we are smitten, dreaming, sailing over lakes and oceans, marvelling at the power of the abstract and the blurred, delighting in impressions, in games of light and shadow. Like “the face behind your face”, and similarly to “during dreams at night” – the selfsame veiled word-pearls that Jabra dissolves into his poem – this movement leads us far beyond the obvious, into the sensual and undefined.

6 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website:  
<https://tinyurl.com/cruwjyv5>



**Hexptychon V, bars 45-50****Rhythmic alterations and sonic effects:**

5

The musical score for Harp, bars 45-50, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 45-48) is in 4/4 time. Bar 45 is marked 'Rubato' and 'mp'. Bar 46 is marked 'ff'. Bar 47 is marked 'mp' and includes the instruction 'knock on wood'. Bar 48 is marked 'pp'. The second system (bars 49-50) is in 3/4 time. Bar 49 is marked 'quasi accel.', 'hit pedal by foot', and 'p'. Bar 50 is marked 'rit.', 'f', 'ff', and 'knock on back of sound box'. The score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions such as 'knock on wood' and 'knock on back of sound box'.

**Hexptychon VI, for piano duo, Opus 41<sup>7</sup>**

A brilliant cadential opening, based on fast-paced, based on rhythmically-fast, turbulent exchanges of pentachordal and hexachordal scales, ends in a flabbergasting descent of about three octaves in a mode similar to that of the *maqām*. The listener is rooted to the spot, stunned and taken aback by the sudden tempest. Immediately after this introduction, the melodic contour emerges in moderate tempo. Its introduction is marked by extreme changes in register. Initially (bars 4-7), it appears in parallel octaves, spread over a range of six whole octaves! This is followed immediately by parallel-second motion, spread over an extreme range (bars 8-12). The harmonic effect is recognizable from previous sections in

<sup>7</sup> The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/mwadexn>



this work; however, Fleischer intensifies this by weaving in a dense cluster texture (bars 12-13), accentuated by a significant contraction of the register, a deceleration in the tempo, extreme reduction in volume and the addition of the pedal.

In general, this movement is characterized by dramatic textural changes in quick succession, stirring up and inflaming the listener to an unprecedented degree, even compared with other movements within this work. There are myriad examples: a single monodic line in the seventh octave followed by a cluster-like chord, presented in *fermata* with maximum intensity and pedal echo (bars 13-17); major seconds rendered in a trill on a percussive and violent *staccato* background (bars 21-25); imitative entries in a dense *stretto*, sounding as if we were in the midst of a traditional fugal episode (bars 28-36); thick, low-range clusters, blurred by the sustaining pedal, abruptly replaced by a playful *scherzo*-like texture (bars 36-42); idiomatic gestures such as plucking on the strings or knocking on the sound box (bars 61-64); a fast, virtuosic *fugato* section in eighth-notes (*molto virtuoso, alla cadenza*, bars 65-71) placed between the percussive section (bars 61-63) and the thematic subject opening of the *coda* (bars 72-75). All these features, and more, create an intense drama, with compositional and instrumental virtuosity, as befits a rousing Grand Finale.

The agitated *codetta* section, whose thematic texture is reminiscent of the introduction, ends abruptly: The note B, which served to open the cycle, is presented here in *sforzando* in the *Primo piano* part and extended in a *fermata*, and remains in place to conclude the movement – and thus the entire work. The choice of a circular order embraces a hidden yearning for the classical structure – after all, the piano duet genre itself can turn our gaze two centuries back. This choice is derived from levels reaching far deeper than mere structural considerations: as in the poetic text itself, where the opening line returns towards the end of the work, Fleischer seeks to send us back, as in a vicious circle. “Turn your face away from me” cries the poet, and we are swept away in a rapidly swirling whirlwind, with a dizziness and frenzy that ends in a single “B” – a sound of violent desperation, a roaring image of the words of the poem that conclude Jabra Ibrahim Jabra’s sonnet, “I’m sick of you”.

Hexptychon VI, bars 36-42

Thick clusters suddenly replaced by a playful, scherzo-like texture:

36

8<sup>va</sup>-----

*mf* *f* *ff*

36

*mp* *mf* *f*

8<sup>vb</sup>-----

40

8<sup>va</sup>-----

*alla taccata* *accel.*

*ff* *f*

40

*alla taccata*

*f* *ff*

\*\*\*\*\*

And so, stunned and drained, the listeners are left open-mouthed. They have undergone a tempestuous journey, infinite in its combinations, battered by fragments of images through time and cultures. “The face behind your face”, the poet challenges in defiance, “a face which you ignore”. But Fleischer stares at this face without flinching: here are the forehead, the chin, the rounded eyes and the curves of the lips. Here are the sensual outlines, the delicate skin, the semicircles of the eyelashes – together with sunburned beard stubble, sores and scars. And here’s a choir, and a continuo ensemble, and a string quartet. Here is a harp and a piano. Here is Hellenic culture, a Turkish harem, baroque elegance and a French suite. And here is a resident of Bethlehem on his way to the checkpoint, and at his side, an Israeli soldier, scared to death. These are the dreams, which “are unable to dissemble or tell lies”: the nightmares, the dreams of eroticism, innocence and prophecy; dreams of an Arabian culture, of carpets and deserts; dreams of pleasant, cultured chamber music concerts, of the wolf lying down with the lamb, of healthy ears of corn, swallowed up by blighted ears.

This work is an homage to a lost postmodern spirit, or perhaps its swan song: a multitude of voices, a gamut of truths, a strange imaginative portrayal of an elusive reality; a work composed during a difficult and depressing period, in a paralyzing Jerusalem summer, at a time of turbulent confusion: peace and its demise, a public splintered into a thousand shards, politics of contradictory and complementary identities. In this respect, no work could possibly be more Israeli than the work before us, which is so very appropriate to the spirit of its time. *Hexptychon* – a reflection of the end of the second millennium, transparent and opaque, complete and shattered.

## Innocence and Brutality in the Music of Tsippi Fleischer

Uri Golomb

The issue of innocence – and its loss – is common thread running through many of Tsippi Fleischer’s works. Echoes of this preoccupation can already be detected in her first orchestral works – the symphonic poem *A Girl Named Limonad* (Op. 4, 1977) – and its presence is increasingly felt in her later works. Among other things, it is a predominant theme in two of her operas – *Medea* (Op. 35, 1995) and *Cain and Abel* (Op. 57, 2001/2). In this paper, I will examine the role of naïve innocence, and of the sarcasm and brutality which threaten it, in several of Fleischer’s works. I will begin by discussing works which represent the extremes of this spectrum: pure innocence in *Ancient Love* (Op. 67, 2006), and near-demonic cynicism in the computerized oratorio *At the End of the Ways* (Op. 50, 1998). I will then discuss works which represent the tension between these extreme, including the song cycle *Lead Life* (voice and piano version, Op. 52, 2001/2; voice and chamber ensemble version, Opp. 60-64, 2005); the oratorio *Avram* (Op. 72, 2011); and the cantata *Like Two Branches* (Op. 24, 1989).

### Pure innocence and its opposite

Music education has always been a central aspect of Fleischer’s life, thought and *oeuvre*, and several of her works were explicitly intended to be performed and/or heard by children. As expected, many of these works provide an especially refined presentation of innocence. Examples include the near-absence of conflict in the children’s opera *Oasis* (op. 71, 2010), and the simple, seemingly naïve message of *The Animals’ Wish* (Op. 74, 2011) and *Spielmobil* (Op. 34, 1995). In *Oasis*, setting a libretto by Yael Medini, the encounter between two nomadic tribes – the Israelites crossing the Sinai Desert on their way to Canaan, and the local Bedouins – proceeds without confrontation: Elon and Noa, the little Israelite brother and sister, are welcomed warmly by Laila and Ali, the children of the desert, and the adults’ subsequent encounter is likewise warm and friendly. The depictions of the animals in *The Animals’ Wish* is similarly naïve. The case of *Spielmobil* might

seem different: the work portrays various real and toy vehicles in a mechanical manner, which in the 20th-century is often associated with alienation or anxiety. This atmosphere is not entirely absent in *Spielmobil*; however, it is balanced and contained by a sense of playful transparency.

However, the purest representation of innocence – as the composer herself also stated – appears in her work *Ancient Love* for children’s (or female) choir and lute, commissioned by the Tölzer Knabenchor and its conductor, Gerhardt Schmidt-Gaden.<sup>1</sup> The work’s German title, *Die älteste Liebe*, represents, in the composer’s view, the most reliable summary of its overall message. The libretto, collated by the composer, consists of four brief texts, each set in its original language: verses from the Biblical *Song of Solomon*; a German medieval love song; an 18th-century French love song; and a popular love song in Palestinian Arabic. In her notes to the CD recording, Fleischer writes that these “ancient love songs deal in a direct manner with the primitive emotions common to all mankind – joy, disappointment, yearning, enthusiasm, despair”.<sup>2</sup> In practice, there is very little emphasis on “disappointment” or “despair” in *Ancient Love*, especially in comparison to Fleischer’s other works, many of which will be discussed below. The gentle, ethereal combination of children’s voices and lute evokes a sense of purity and innocence, as well the ancient aura associated with the work’s title.

The work’s opening section, though written in an a-symmetrical metre (7/8), still has a dance-like simplicity, further enhanced by the transparent texture: the choir sings in parallel fifths, reminiscent of medieval church *organum*, with matching support from the lute. This liturgical association, combined with dance rhythms and *forte* singing, creates a ceremonial aura, somewhat reminiscent of Jewish and Christian attempts to mask and contain the eroticism inherent in *The Song of Solomon*. With the introduction of the German and French lyrics, the work becomes increasingly soft and lyrical, as these folk texts present the joys of love and the yearning for them. When the lute re-introduces the opening materials, in a

1 On the circumstances of the work’s composition and premiere recording, see *Tsippi Fleischer: A Biography* (Tel Aviv: Hakibutz Hameuchad, 2018; in Hebrew), pp. 211-215. The score is available for viewing and downloading on the composer’s website: <https://tinyurl.com/4deza3zw>



2 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder* (Vienna Modern Masters, VMM 1060, 2009), p. 114.

subsequent instrumental interlude, it imbues them with a more lyrical, mellifluous character. The final text in the libretto hints, unusually, at some of the darker aspects of love: the lament of the jilted lover, and the menacing power of jealousy. But these hints are so subtle that even a listener who follows the text might miss them, and they are encompassed and contained by the work's aura of innocence. For listeners familiar with Fleischer's *Cain and Abel*, this passage might evoke Cain's jealousy in the opera's fourth scene, where Cain responds with rage to Abel's lute-supported lament over his sacrificed Lamb. Other listeners, unaware of the operatic connection, might still sense the incursion of acerbic sonorities and relatively dense textures, all the more prominent against the backdrop of the work's Renaissance-like beauty. Even this passage, however, does not approach the heights of brutality one can find in musical literature generally, and other works by Fleischer in particular. The work's conclusion could be viewed as more strained and intense than its previous sections, but even this does little to detract from its generally lyrical, optimistic character.

One might expect the two Fleischer operas which revolve around murder in the family – *Cain and Abel* and *Medea* – to represent the other end of the spectrum; but Fleischer's interpretation of these myths actually mitigates their brutal potential. In *Cain and Abel*, setting a libretto by Yoseffa Even-Shosan, the musical representation of violent emotions reaches its peak prior to the murder; in the murder scene itself, the orchestra falls completely silent, and Cain is required to present the ultimate act of violence without musical support. Even Cain's brutal episodes prior to the murder, in his envy-fuelled confrontations with his Lamb and with Abel, are pitted against contrary emotional forces represented by the other characters.<sup>3</sup> In *Medea*, Fleischer and her librettist, Rivka Kashtan, draw on less-familiar versions of the myth, in which Medea is not accused of the most heinous crime attributed to her by Euripides and his followers – namely, the murder of her own children. The most brutal characters in this opera are the Corinthians, portrayed by the instrumentalists, who abuse Medea and murder her children off-stage, seeking to pin this murder on her. These characters and their actions, however, are presented primarily in *Sprechgesang*, and their power largely depends therefore on the players-actors.

It is important to note, in this context, that Fleischer does not associate sexual

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see my paper "Eros, jealousy and love: A new interpretation in an ancient guise for the myth of the first homicide in Tsippi Fleischer's opera *Cain and Abel*", *Pe'imot: Journal of Music and Culture* 4 (2021), pp. 103-127 (in Hebrew).

experience with loss of innocence (unlike the sanctification of virginity prevalent, for example, in Christianity). The libretto for *Cain and Abel* does contain a reference to "a world virgin no more / that was violated by murder", but this is but a fleeting image: the openly romantic and sexual connection between Cain and Abel and their respective Lambs is presented within the opera as a symbol of innocence, and only the murder leads to the disconnect between Cain and his Lamb (and between humanity and the rest of the animals) in all realms, including the erotic. This conception is further intensified in Akkadian grand opera, *Adapa* (Op. 76, 2014): when the title character, Adapa (who dedicated himself in a monk-like fashion to the service of Ea, the Sea God) protects his "innocence" against the advances of the South Wind, this refusal leads to nearly global devastation. It is only when Adapa decides to surrender his "innocence", and copulates with the South Wind, that the two of them together return life to the world. The conflict between the blatant (and feminine) Wind and Adapa (half-man, half-fish, whose portrayal by a counter-tenor brings his own image closer to the feminine) is described as destructive. By contrast, their union at the end of the opera is portrayed, musically, by a waltz-like passage: here, the triple metre, together with other musical elements, contributes to a depiction of a world moving slowly, in a decidedly non-combative mood (though not devoid of sorrow).<sup>4</sup>

The purest, most blatant depiction of brutality and lack of innocence can be found in Fleischer's computerized oratorio *At the End of the Ways*.<sup>5</sup> This composition is based on recordings of a solo singer and a cellist, both electronically manipulated by the composer. The singer-actor is Doron Tavori – for whom Fleischer also wrote the role of Cain in *Cain and Abel*, and who portrays this role in the work's world-premiere version (the audio recording issued by Vienna Modern Masters). The text is drawn from Uri Zvi Grinberg's poem "At the end of the ways, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev stands and demands the Almighty's answer". It is filled with open defiance of the Heavens, as the believer demands divine accountability for the sufferings of the Jewish people. As Fleischer puts it:

<sup>4</sup> This sorrow is related to Adapa's unwitting decision to forego an opportunity for eternal life. The resumption of global life following his union with the South Wind is tinged by his realization that death is inevitable, for him – and for all creatures besides the Gods.

<sup>5</sup> The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/2asfubxx>



Suddenly Uri Zvi Grinberg stood up and shouted: he combined the justified human complaint of this people with a loud, resonating cry; he burst bravely into a previously unknown spiritual area – the believing Jew’s violent anger against a humiliating God.<sup>6</sup>

In the Hebrew original of her notes, Fleischer’s use of the harsh verb “zore’ach” (“shouts” or “screams”) rather than the more literary “zo’ek” (“cries out”) reflects her musical choices in certain key junctions in the work. Though written for only one singer, Fleischer divides the text between several different “characters”: “A powerful member of the People”, “Narrator-Observer”, “God in His ugliness”, “The People”. These are distinguished from each other in the written music, in Tavori’s vocal timbres, and in the electronic transformations which allow the composer to distort his voice, and to combine it with several simultaneous iterations of itself, thereby creating several small “choirs”. Fleischer’s use these techniques helps intensify her most bitter work – perhaps the purest example in her *oeuvre* of a distilled, powerful expression of sarcasm, cynicism and defiance. The text contains references to the People’s initial innocence – that is, the believers’ unwavering loyalty to their God. However, this is projected musically as vulnerability and fragility, which the “The People” can no longer sustain; and this impasse leads them to challenge their God with increasing vehemence. Here, and elsewhere, Tavori’s scream-like projection is further intensified electronically.

Another distortion is used to shape the character of “God in His ugliness”. Here, Tavori occasionally uses a *falsetto* register, which is often associated in Western music with celestial beauty. Here, however, it is projected as the height of cynicism and hypocrisy, an effect achieved through the clashes with the cello, electronic manipulations, and the contrast with the rough vocal production surrounding it. The electronic treatment of this character includes a shattering or stuttering effect, reminiscent of the death-rattle in the sixth movement (the coda) of *Saga Portrait* (Op. 53, 2002) – another vocal-electronic work by Fleischer, to a text by Dan Pagis. In both works, this effect is used a symbol of loss and death.<sup>7</sup>

*At the End of the Ways* might be the only work in Fleischer’s *oeuvre* where

6 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder*, p. 52.

7 The handwritten score is available for viewing and download on the composer’s website: <https://tinyurl.com/yt2wcbwc>



innocence itself is depicted in a negative light:<sup>8</sup> given God’s betrayal of his people, given the death and suffering that surround them, retaining their innocence seems a pathetic and dangerous attitude which the people ought to shake off:

*You are not accustomed to a Jew standing up and demanding.  
You are accustomed to his praise. To the tribute of his songs.  
You are accustomed to see him tearfully discourse, in drops of blood,  
His heart torn and burning, his knees trembling, his body tortured  
by fasting,  
But now – the wheel will turn no more,  
I shall not allow it!*<sup>9</sup>

More often, Fleischer’s *oeuvre* presents the opposite view: Innocence as a necessary virtue, which must be preserved even when reality itself threatens it. This position is expressed in several works connected with the Arab-Jewish conflict – most notably *Letter from Naguib Mahfouz* (Op. 75, 2012) for vocal quintet or five-part a capella choir.<sup>10</sup> This vocal miniature sets a short extract from a letter that the Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz wrote on 12 October, 1978, to his friend and Hebrew translator, Sasson Somekh, who studied his work in detail:

For many years our two nations lived side by side peaceably  
Periods of confrontation were few and short-lived.  
What a pity that, in our writings, we dwelled so much more upon  
the moments of strife!

Fleischer received this text from Prof. Somekh, whom she first met as a student in the early 1970s, attending his courses on Arabic literature and poetry. Since then, she frequently used his translations of Arabic poetry, maintained a close professional relationship with him, and consulted him on aspects of Arabic

8 A more minor allusion can be found in *Adapa*: the protagonist’s innocent faith in his God, Ea, enables the latter to deceive him, and lead him to reject the offer of Eternal Life.

9 The first two lines are taken from the partial translation in the English CD booklet to double CD album *Lieder* (p. 42). The rest – from the third line onwards – is my own translation.

10 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer’s website: <https://tinyurl.com/yck3j4j3>



literature relevant to her work.<sup>11</sup> Among other things, Somekh played a key role in the inception of her cantata *Like Two Branches*, which we will discuss in detail below.

*A Letter from Naguib Mahfouz* presents the possibility of peace, not just an end-of-days Utopia, but rather as a return to a well-documented past. This attitude, already inherent in Mahfouz's words, is intensified by Fleischer's choice to present the text in five languages simultaneously: in the Arabic original, and in translations to Hebrew, English, French, and German. Each language is sung by a different singer (or a different section in the choir), yet they merge into a single, coherent, five-part madrigal, in imitative or homophonic textures. Prosodic differences between the languages do, however, give each part a different rhythmic character. Interestingly, the similarity between the voices increases in the setting of the second line, with its references to "periods of confrontation", but this is done within "a pictorial, somewhat stormy fugato" (to use Fleischer's own description),<sup>12</sup> which makes the vertical clashes between the voices all the more palpable. The tension in this short fugato culminates – and is abruptly cut off – by the sudden transition to speech, where each singer or section reads out the third line in their own "language".

In fact, a sense of unease can be felt throughout the work: the relationship between the voices is reminiscent of early Baroque polyphony (Monteverdi's so-called *Seconda Prattica*), with its vertical clashes and intense harmonies and sonorities all serving to intensify the text (in contradistinction with the tranquil polyphony of the Renaissance's *Prima Prattica*). The sense of friction intensifies in the "heterophonic chorale" setting of the last line. The voices eventually merge into an *unisono* texture, as if they had reached an agreement; but the composer's decision to end the work in a *crescendo* does not allow us to perceive even this agreement as a full-fledged reconciliation. The voices might recognize the importance of peaceful relations, and they might strive for them; but this requires constant effort, and their mutual agreement does not entirely resolve the underlying tensions.

11 See Tsippi Fleischer, "My association with Sasson Somekh", in *Moznayim* 82:5-6 (January-February 2009), pp. 22-26 (in Hebrew); available for download from the composer's website: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/27SomekhMoznaim.pdf>

12 CD booklet to *The Box of Late Opuses* (Vienna Modern Masters VMM 1065, 2013), p. 14.

A similar narrative is presented, more expansively, in Fleischer's *Avram: An Oratorio on the Birth of Monotheism*.<sup>13</sup> This work, too, touches upon the conflict in the Middle East, as part of the more general relationship between the three monotheistic, or Abrahamic, religions. As the latter name suggests, these religions share (at least metaphorically) a common ancestor; yet their mutual conflicts often arise precisely from their shared mythology, history and ideas, to which each of religion (and each faction and denomination) tries to claim exclusive ownership. In the work's title and in her notes, the composer seeks to contemplate "the birth of the three monotheistic religions, the angle from which I view the beginnings of monotheisms", focusing on "the image [of] massed believers, from all three religions, assembling at the gates of one temple dedicated to that one monotheistic God – a joyful assembly, positive and ecstatic".<sup>14</sup> Yet an examination of the section titles – and more importantly, of the actual music – reveals that this positive aspect appears alongside a sense of struggle between the religions; indeed, the section titled "The ecstasy of the believers" leads directly into the section titled "The believers struggle with one another".

The words in this work are not presented as a continuous text, but rather, as a mosaic of separate words or phrases in different languages, some associated with a specific religion and others with monotheism – or indeed religion or humanity – in general; e.g., Logia Kresthenta, *الكعبة*. Fleischer uses this single-word or single-syllable technique in many of her works (though not in any of the compositions analysed above). It first appears in her work *Lamentation* (Op. 16, 1985), based on a short poem by Else Lasker-Schüler, in which the composer isolated many individual words – "each word has become a world", as the composer put it (in conversation with the author).<sup>15</sup> Use of this technique could cause the words to function as a purely sonorous element, and lose any connection with their original meaning and message. In Fleischer's case, however, the choice of words is not arbitrary, and neither is their fragmentation into syllables, and the repetitions

13 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/4exdxjda>



14 CD booklet to *The Box of Late Opuses* (Vienna Modern Masters VMM 1065, 2013), p. 46.

15 The work exists in two versions, and both scores are available for viewing and download on the composer's website:

<https://tinyurl.com/y66wdp87>



<https://tinyurl.com/yc47ntfw>  
(Hebrew version)



enhance their meaning (which listeners can discern by following the texts), and fill their own role in the work. In *Lamentation*, this is already evident in the elongation of the sh-sh-sh sound on the word “shke-ta” (I’m silent), which opens the work (in Yehuda Amichai’s Hebrew translation of Lasker-Schüler’s poem, used in most performances of this work). In *Avram*, several short textual phrases are indeed presented clearly and coherently, at least to those listeners who know the languages – e.g., “emuna” (faith), “gvura mul makh’shela” (heroism vs. obstacles), “av hama-aminim” (patriarch of the believers), “dim’a” (tear), “hakrava” (self-sacrifice).

In terms of sonority, there is an affinity between *Avram* and *Die älteste Liebe*: the use of female voices, harp and violins echoes the sound world of the children’s (or female) voices and lute in the earlier work, evoking similarly ancient and innocent associations. This leads us to expect a tranquil, reserved, ethereal work, but this expectation is only partly realised. *Avram*’s two opening sections (out of six) are indeed quiet, even distant. But the third section, “Ecstasy of the believers”, introduces a tougher, more dramatic element, intensified (as in *A Letter from Naguib Mahfouz*) through the use of vocal unison. These tougher elements are intensified within the ecstasy section itself, so that the sense of conflict and discord in the next section – “the believers struggle with one another” – is experienced as the culmination of earlier developments, not as a dramatic surprise. This section’s opening part revolves around the seemingly innocent, unifying Hebrew phrase “Ahavat Ha-Aretz” (“The love of the land”). However, anyone with even a cursory familiarity with the history of the Holy Land can understand that this element is actually at the heart of the conflict. The next part revolves around the words “Pursuit of peace”, which gives a temporary sense of repose, drawing heavily on waltz rhythms (a recurring element in many of Fleischer’s works, which I will touch upon again below). Yet even this dance, and the positive text it sets, leads back into a somewhat aggressive stubbornness. The two final sections offer some respite, with a partial return to the opening’s mysterious atmosphere. The oratorio ends with Avram’s name, set with brightness and clarity. The overall narrative is therefore reminiscent of *A Letter from Naguib Mahfouz*: the quest for a unifying, pacifying element, coupled with the pervasive presence of a dark, dramatic conflict, which in the end is only partly resolved.

## Yearning for lost innocence

The longing for past innocence – real or imagined – carries distinctly political undertones in *Avram* and in *A Letter from Naguib Mahfouz*, as well as in other works by Fleischer, including *Symphony No. 4 – A Passing Shadow* (Op. 51, 2000)<sup>16</sup> and *Symphony No. 5 – Israeli-Jewish Collage* (Op. 54, 2002/3).<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere, Fleischer examines this theme in a more personal, intimate context. The most distinctive example is her song cycle *Lead Life*, which brings together poems by five different poets, each set in their own language: Else Lasker-Schüler in German, Shin Shifra in Hebrew, Paul Verlaine in French, Esther Kunda in English and Genrix Sapgir in Russian. In her notes to the first version of this cycle (for voice and piano), the composer explicitly cites the loss of innocence as its unifying theme:

The entire song-cycle *Lead Life* expresses deep regret at the growing loss of innocence in every world within our world.<sup>18</sup> Each song thus reflects the same mood – the awareness of this loss of innocence and the disappointment involved. In all the five poems I chose, each creative artist appeared to be telling this sad truth in his/her own way. To my mind this is indeed the great tragedy of Homo Sapiens.<sup>19</sup>

The cycle encompasses a wide stylistic and expressive range, above and beyond the use of multiple sung languages. Fleischer implies as much in her notes, characterising each of the five songs, respectively, as dramatic, exotic, descriptive, tragic and theatrical. As a listener, I feel that these characteristics are indeed present in the song cycle as a whole, though not necessarily in accordance with

16 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer’s website: <https://tinyurl.com/7ry2tuhm>

17 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer’s website: <https://tinyurl.com/3bn9sr2r>

18 The phrase “world within our world” refers to the view that our world consists of many groupings, framework or institutions (states, nations, cultures, communities, and so forth), each of which can be viewed as a world or microcosm in its own right. The idea that each individual is a world unto itself can also be mentioned here.

19 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder* p. 89.



the composer's specific labels. This is particularly apparent in the cycle's second version, for voice and chamber ensemble (Opp. 60-64, 2005), which serves as the main starting point for the discussion below. The version for voice and piano (Op. 52, 2001/2) was completed earlier, but according to the composer, it is the chamber version which represents her original vision for the work:

The musical images in the chamber version of *Lead Life* are the ones with which I have lived from the moment I started sketching the work; the use of the piano in the original version had been a practical necessity, but I have always known that someday the opportunity to present the instrumental version I've heard in my mind's ear will arise – and in 2005, it did.<sup>20</sup>

In most of the songs, instrumentation is the primary or sole difference between the two versions; the one exception is the first song, *Weltschmerz*, setting words by Else Lasker-Schüler, whose piano version is nearly three times as long as the chamber version.<sup>21</sup> This opening *Lied* focuses, according to the composer, on the individual's grappling with the loss of their own innocence. It is, indeed, a dramatic song, and in several ways echoes and continues Fleischer's earlier large-scale Lasker-Schüler setting – *Lamentation* for soprano, female choir, two harps and percussion (already discussed above). This earlier work was composed in 1985, responding, inter alia, to Fleischer's personal mourning for the loss of her first baby a few days after his birth. *Lamentation*'s operatic character can be felt, first and foremost, in the complex interrelationships within the ensemble, and especially in the tensions between the soloist and the choir. For the most part, the choir represents a dynamic element – at times aggressive, at times dance-like. By contrast, the singer's line is more lyrical and flowing, and her lament floats above the instruments' more vigorous, rhythmical elements.<sup>22</sup> The words are still

20 Tsippi Fleischer in conversation with the author, January 2022.

21 Both versions are available for viewing and download on the composer's website:

<https://tinyurl.com/26ru4k6d>  
(voice and piano)



<https://tinyurl.com/264t234u>  
(voice and chamber ensemble)



22 The pitched percussion (marimba and vibraphone) actually provide a softer timbre, compensating for the absence of woodwinds and strings. They are also called upon, at times, to provide a harmonic foundation.

presented primarily in sequence, without the dismemberment of words into their constituent syllables which would become prominent in Fleischer's later works; though, as noted above, Fleischer does often focus on individual words, isolating and repeating them.

In *Weltschmerz*, disjointed syllables alternate with a continuous setting of the text, as the composer points out in her notes:

In a most picturesque manner Else Lasker-Schüler describes the difference between 'Wüstenwind' (Desert Wind) as a symbol of the purity of youthful enthusiasm, and 'Sphinx' as a symbol of the flaws of a spirit become emotionless and frozen with the passing of time. Thus, in the music, many fluctuations of mood ensue directly from the tonal word-painting: the use of wus..., s..., ich..., help to illustrate the differentiation between a burning desert wind and a petrified sphinx. The image of the desert wind encouraged me to use stringent onomatopoeia and rapid, extreme changes in texture along with lyricism; outbursts of the same gusts of wind, as it were, with all the implied symbolism.<sup>23</sup>

Fleischer has become, at this point, well-practiced in providing musical expression to such harsh, arid imagery: she had already explored the parallels and connections between pitiless desert landscapes and human brutality in several of her settings of Arabic poetry. The musical images of the desiccated wasteland in *Weltschmerz* can be connected with similar images in her song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl* and in her cantata *Like Two Branches*, which I will discuss in detail below.

The use of isolated syllables contributes, paradoxically, the song's monumental character, even in its shorter chamber version, and especially in its longer piano version, since it freezes the sense of time. Another paradox is the affinity between the wide desert spaces in some parts of the song and the threatening, claustrophobic feeling in other passages. This threat is more keenly felt in the shorter, sharper and more dynamic chamber version. The evocation of empty, desolate spaces and the sense of claustrophobia both contribute the discomfort the song arouses, as Moshe Zuckerman notes:

23 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder*, p. 93.

Fleischer elaborates and transforms every moment, every syllable, in Lasker-Schüler's relatively short poem, using myriad musical-expressive devices and techniques, including *Sprechgesang*, speech-like singing and an onomatopoeic use of the syllables, linking their phonetic character with their meaning. The word "Wind", for instance, is given such a powerfully suggestive musical setting, that listeners can imagine themselves surrounded by the desert wind. This is a harsh, challenging work, but responding to its challenge can have a cathartic, transformative effect.<sup>24</sup>

To further illustrate the point, we will focus on Fleischer's musical response to the word "Blitz". Lasker-Schüler likens the tempestuous spirit of youth to repeated thunderbolts, with earth-shattering power. Fleischer emphasizes this image, and expands upon it, especially in the piano version – see the vocal line with its accompanying texture, first in the piano version, and later in the chamber version.

"Weltschmerz", Piano Version, bb. 68-78

The musical score for "Weltschmerz" (Piano Version) spans measures 68 to 78. It is written for Mezzo-soprano and Piano. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked as *rit. molto* with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The score is divided into three sections: A1 (measures 70-73), B (measures 74-76), and C (measures 77-78). The vocal line includes the lyrics: "Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz ah zer - speech", "schmet-tern kann[n] S O - der der Blitz Blitz der", "mich zer - schmet-tern der mich zer - schmet-tern Blitz Blitz Blitz", and "Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blick blick... nun". The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and chords, with dynamic markings such as *f*, *fff*, and *mf*. Performance instructions include *accel. molto*, *rit. molto*, and *Ossia (the higher option preferable)*.

24 Quoted from "Moshe Zuckermann on Elsa Lasker-Schüler in Tsippi Fleischer's Music: 2. Weltschmerz", excerpted from his lecture at the Felicja Blumenthal Music Centre in Tel Aviv, 29 November, 2009, as part of a series of events launching Fleischer's double CD album *Lieder*. The lecture excerpt (in Hebrew) can be heard and downloaded as File 15 on the page "Part C - Events" in *Tsippi Fleischer - Retrospective Collection* (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/RETRO-C.html>).

“Weltschmerz”, Chamber Version, bb. 65-70

65 (f) Sop. mich zer-schmet-tern der mich zer schmet-tern Blitz Blitz Blitz

68 Sop. Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz Blitz ah zer-schmet-tern kann[n]

68 *accel. molto* *fff*  $\text{♩} = 60$  *rit. molto* *mp* *p*

In *Lead-Life*'s second song, Fleischer moves from Lasker-Schüler's dramatic-metaphysical plane to the intimate bitterness of Shin Shifra's *Two Family Songs*: the explicit cynicism of "I gave you an Ancient Heart of Gold" and the more implicit irony of "Family Idyll".<sup>25</sup> Fleischer described this pair of songs as "exotic", alluding perhaps to the frequent use of chromaticism which the second song associates with the *narghile*'s (or hookah's) spiralling smoke. To my ears, this chromaticism is more expressive than exotic. In "I Gave You an Ancient Heart of Gold", it is allied with the speaker's nagging complaint that his or her gift had been ignored,<sup>26</sup> whereas the chromaticism in "Family Idyll", together with its spoken passages, serve to undermine the idyllic images. Bitterness governs both poems. The text of "Family Idyll" can be interpreted in different ways: do the words "Nothing is as it seems" suggest a more exalted interpretation for the hookah being passed among the family members, turning it into an image of love and connection? Or are they meant to make readers *doubt* the family's peaceful, loving appearance? Fleischer's music strongly leans towards undermining the family idyll, thereby directing listeners towards a bitter disappointment at the loss of innocence.

After this expression of bitterness, Fleischer introduces *Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit* ("Above the roof, the sky is fair") – the longest song in the cycle's chamber-ensemble version.<sup>27</sup> Paul Verlaine's text expresses a longing for the calm, simple serenity reflected in the blue sky – an image which might be associated with a lost Paradise, but which the last line might incline us to associate itself with the loss of "youth's best years" (in Norman Shapiro's translation of the poem). In her notes, Fleischer writes:

25 Both versions are available for viewing and download on the composer's website:

<https://tinyurl.com/43w3htwp>  
(voice and piano)



<https://tinyurl.com/b2r2tdm3>  
(voice and chamber ensemble).



26 Fleischer, in her notes, reads this is a mother talking to her daughter: "In my naiveté, I gave you a golden heart, but you, my less-innocent child, would not acknowledge it". A literal reading of the text, however, also allows for other interpretations – e.g., a man talking to his beloved. In the original Hebrew, the supposedly-ungrateful recipient is definitely female; the speaker, however, might be male or female.

27 Both versions are available for viewing and download on the composer's website:

<https://tinyurl.com/mryw56de>  
(voice and piano)



<https://tinyurl.com/m7y33n66>  
(voice and chamber ensemble)



When Verlaine leaves all the symbols clearly visible, we are amazed at the revelation: while something appalling has happened suddenly, we find we are questioning ourselves within this statement of the passing of innocence.<sup>28</sup>

In her summary of the cycle, Fleischer labels this song “descriptive (somewhat impressionistic)”; she points to specifically pictorial elements in her composition, as well to the influence of Debussy’s Impressionism apparent, *inter alia*, in the use of the whole-tone scale and in a direct quote from his piano piece *Le Petit Berger*. In the chamber version, the pictorial element clearly registers in the orchestration as well; even in the piano version, some listeners might pick up on the sound image of specific instruments (flute, clarinet, violin) which were already intended by the composer even as she wrote this preliminary, piano-only version.

For all its pictorialism, however, I believe this song constitutes the cycle’s tragic core – the only one in which bitterness or cynicism are completely absent. Fleischer’s setting is notable for its transparent fragility (in the chamber version, even the small ensemble splinters sometimes into its constituents), imbued with darker forebodings, especially in the long melismatic passages which sound like frightening bursts of wind – or even like ghosts.

Bitterness and cynicism return in the next song, *Waltz of the Devil*,<sup>29</sup> setting Esther Kunda’s poem “Bereavement” which expresses “mourning \ for dead hopes”. Fleischer, who labelled this song “tragic”, cites an autobiographical inspiration – “deep distress at the unwillingness of actor/singer Doron Tavori to fulfill the role of Cain onstage in my opera *Cain and Abel* [...] A deep disappointment is concealed in the guise of a waltz”.<sup>30</sup> The waltz is indeed drawn from the opera – it is introduced as the melody Abel plays as he mourns for the death of his sacrificed Lamb, and later reappears, distorted, as Cain misinterprets it as an expression of Abel flaunting

28 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder*, p. 104.

29 Both versions are available for viewing and download on the composer’s website:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9c6jdan>  
(voice and piano)



<https://tinyurl.com/manwz8rh>  
(voice and chamber ensemble)



30 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder*, p. 108.

his own superiority. However, familiarity with the autobiographical background is not required to understand Fleischer’s setting of Kunda’s words. The music consists primarily of a melancholy, somewhat mechanical dance which occasionally spins out of control, like a music box whose spring has been too tightly wound. The vocal line is out of synch with this dance: one gets the impression that the speaker hears the dance but cannot join it. Singing and dancing alike are cut short in mid-stream. All these features join together to express bitter mourning at the tomb of the dead hopes. Listeners who recognize the allusion to *Cain and Abel* might connect the song with the sentiments associated with it in the opera (Abel’s mourning over the Lamb that he himself had sacrificed, and Cain’s twisted interpretation of this mourning) even without any knowledge of the trigger in Fleischer’s own life.

The dance-like spirit of *Waltz of the Devil* continues into the fifth and final song – *Kupite luk* (“Buy onions”),<sup>31</sup> as part of Fleischer’s bleakly humorous setting of Genrix (Henry) Saggir’s text. As the composer writes:

In the atmosphere of a busy, rowdy, teeming market, the parents are about to sell their young daughter, the child at the beginning of her life. The happy mood is nothing but a mask, the terrible truth concealed behind it.<sup>32</sup>

Fleischer notes that she “approached the setting of this harsh text as a theatrical scene in every respect”, in which (as in her opera *Medea*) the solo singer portrays multiple roles: both the desperate parents, and the buyers who took the child with them.

The cycle as a whole reflects various viewpoints on the subject of loss of innocence; the use of different sung languages intensifies the universality of the theme. In *Two Family Songs*, I felt that the very existence of innocence was being questioned; musically, this was especially apparent in the constant nagging complaint in “I gave you a heart of gold”. The other extreme, where painful fragility

31 Both versions are available for viewing and download on the composer’s website:

<https://tinyurl.com/9mtjk9bu>  
(voice and piano)



<https://tinyurl.com/6r7bsr3s>  
(voice and chamber ensemble)



32 From the English booklet to the double CD album *Tsippi Fleischer – Lieder* p. 111.

completely replaces cynicism, is represented by *Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit*. The entire cycle maintains Fleischer's outlook: experiencing the loss of innocence while acknowledging the reality and value of innocence itself; even when doubt is cast momentarily (as in the cynicism of *Two Family Songs*), it is put in sharp relief against the rest of the cycle.

### Expression of horror and conflict

In the cantata *Like Two Branches* – based on verses from a poem by Al-Khansā, a sixth-century Bedouin poetess – the dominant emotion in the text is mourning for the author's brother, who died in battle.<sup>33</sup> The work's motto – which opens the work and recurs in several key points – is related to the image of lost innocence:

*We were like two branches on a tree-trunk, / flourishing for  
some time, / in the best condition of the growth of trees [...] when suddenly one branch was cut off by the hazards of Time – / nothing survives the cruel hand of Time.*

(translation by Gila Abrahamson).

Time's cruelty is combined here with the pitiless sublimity of the desert landscape, a point that I already mentioned in my discussion of *Weltschmerz* in *Lead Life*, and which can also be sensed in other pieces by Fleischer, including the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*.

Several of Fleischer's other works contain direct critiques of violence and war, or representations of their inherent terror. A prominent example is the gruesome sound of scarping knives which opens the brief dramatic scene *The Judgement of Solomon* (Op. 27, 1995):<sup>34</sup> although the threat of the baby's dismemberment is not realized, either in the original Biblical story or in Fleischer's dramatization, the

33 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/like-2branch-score>

34 The score is available for viewing and download on the composer's website: <https://tinyurl.com/25p549uc>



composer chose to open the work with a distinctive auditory reminder of this threat.<sup>35</sup> She notes that the memory of the threatening knife in the story of King Solomon's trial is the most visceral trace embedded in her soul since she first became familiar with this Biblical story. A distinctly anti-war message can also be sensed in the short duet *War* (Op. 23, 1988) for woodwinds and percussion; and in certain episodes in her *Fourth Symphony (Passing Shadow)* and *Fifth Symphony (Israeli-Jewish Collage)*. In this sense, Fleischer partakes in a common 20th-century approach to musical portrayals of war. The first inklings of this approach can already be sensed in "Mars, the Bringer of War" in Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, and it is intensified in several works by Britten, Prokofiev and Shostakovich. In Israel, it can be found in works like Mark Kopytman's *October Sun* and Oded Zehavi's *L.H.M.*

Looking further back in musical history, one might find completely different portrayals of combat – ranging from patriotic fervour to an almost humorous approach. Examples can be found at least as early as Clement Janequin's *La Bataille de Marignan* (1515), known sometimes merely as *La Guerre*, through the instrumental *Battaglias* by composers like Andrea Gabrieli, Biber and Schmeltzer, to Beethoven *Wellington's Victory* (though a more critical portrayal of war can certainly be noted in many of his other 'heroic' works) and Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*. When the conductor-violinist Terje Tønnesen recorded Biber's *Battaglia* in 2017, he found it necessary to balance the work's lighter passages with an emphasis on its more disturbing aspects; his arrangement highlighted the grotesque elements and the portrayal of suffering, though without entirely erasing the work's more entertaining features.<sup>36</sup>

A similar tension can be sensed in *Like Two Branches*, whose text emerged from the poet's mourning over a specific death – but within a culture which treated

35 Fleischer cites *The Judgement of Solomon* among the works in which she faced the death of her own baby; while composing it, she writes, "I sensed the fear of knives (aroused perhaps by hospital surgical knives) and the death of a baby" ("An operatic video work – *The Judgement of Solomon*: From the composer's desk", in Tsippi Fleischer, Rivka Elkoshi and others, *The Judgement of Solomon: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to a Biblical Story*; Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute, 2008, pp. 213-258; quote from p. 215; in Hebrew).

36 The performance, in which Tønnesen leads the members of the Camerata Nordica, appears on the album *Tales of Sound and Fury* (BIS-SACD-2256, 2017).

warfare, not as a necessarily evil, but rather as source of honour. The composer herself pointed this out in a lecture-dialogue on *Like Two Branches* at a meeting of the Israeli Women Composers' Forum (13 April, 2007),<sup>37</sup> pointing out that many portions of Al-Khansā's text are "not a lament in the usual sense of the word", but rather "descriptions of heroism". When Al-Khansā writes, "You appease the thirsty spears, you smite the armed horsemen, / your anger is like a cook's cauldron / when it boils over, / You cover the horses of the enemy in dark blood" (translation by Gila Abrahamson), these words are meant as praise: Al-Khansā regards her brother's blood-thirsty cruelty as noble and honorable. As Fleischer puts it, the brother is viewed as "an animalistic hero within an animal fight".

The tension between the composer's horrified objection to violence and brutality on the one hand, and the text's more ambiguous treatment of them on the other hand, is exacerbated by another tension: between measured, ceremonial expressions of mourning and more unmediated, personal outbursts. Both these tensions can be sensed in the sequence joining the second appearance of the motto "We were like two branches" (which functions as a kind of *ritornello* for the work as a whole) and the section "You appease the thirsty spears". This second appearance of the motto is mostly mono-rhythmic – i.e., the entire choir sings in identical rhythms and in parallel intervals, even as the rhythms themselves create an improvisatory, dance-like impression. This could be heard as a kind of *tombeau* – a co-ordinated, well-timed dance of ritualistic mourning. Above all that, one soloist breaks the choral ranks with her own, more personal cry (bars 295-298, p. 27 in the score), which is all the more jarring against the otherwise homophonic texture.

37 A translation of the event's full transcript appears in the Testimonies section below.

"Like Two Branches" (autograph score), bars 295-298

This outcry brings to mind one woman emerging from a mourners' circle, whose ritual dance cannot contain her pain. One might relate this to noble and honorable's comparison between her own mourning and that of other women crying over their own dead brothers, though this comparison would only appear later, in the cantata's eighth section:

*Wherever I turn, I see a bereaved woman, / crying bitterly,  
bemoaning the day of her tragedy, / I see her crazed by grief,  
mourning for her brother. / They do not mourn for a brother  
like my brother.*

After the soloist's outburst in bar 295, the choir resumes its mono-rhythmic chant, leading the third section (i.e., the second motto-refrain) towards a relatively tranquil ending. But as the next section ("You appease the thirsty spears") begins,

oboes and percussion burst out in one of most brutal episodes in the cantata – and in Fleischer’s entire *oeuvre*. The sense of warlike brutality continues as the choir enters, expressed in part through clashes between the parts and through the use of choral sonorities such as sibilant consonants. These, together with unusual instrumental sonorities,<sup>38</sup> further intensify the sense of roughness and violence. The section does, however, contain more co-ordinated passages which seem to maintain something of the ceremonial splendor of the choir’s intoning of the motto (bars 358-360, p. 33).

**"Like Two Branches" (autograph score), bars 358-360 – male choral parts**

Similarly, in the speech praising the warrior’s valour (see, for example, the bass recitative, bars 317-341, p. 32), the music includes a gentle rhetorical depiction of the “cook’s cauldron” as it boils over (portrayed as the gentle movement of the

<sup>38</sup> In her article on this cantata for *International Choral Bulletin* (Namur, Belgium, October 1996, pp. 13-15), Fleischer points out that she “took great pains” to acquaint herself with the most advanced, sophisticated techniques in oboe and cello playing, studying intensively with oboist Heinz Holliger and cellist Siegfried Palm, which helped her in creating innovative sonorities to serve her artistic vision. She also consulted with the Armenian *kanūn* virtuoso Wartuhi Lepejian, writing a full *kanūn* part, though for practical reasons, she allowed for this part to be played on a piano in all performances of the work to date. She was, however, able to record several specific passages with the *kanūn*, and these can be heard on her 2013 CD *Tsippi Fleischer: Innovated Classics*, alongside a complete performance with a piano.

liquid spilling over the cauldron and dissolving into mist) to represent the hero’s anger. But these orderly frameworks are undermined – sometimes implicitly, in instrumental undercurrents, and sometimes with violent outbursts. Towards the end of this section, the choir seems to reunite, but their unity does not last, and the episode teeters apart and dissipates.

This section, and others like it (including the predominantly instrumental “ballet”) cast doubt on whether innocence is portrayed in this work at all. It certainly contains no pure, distinctive evocations of innocence like those in *Ancient Love* or *Oasis*. That said, Al-Khansā’s love for her brother is, alongside parental and filial and love, the purest and most primal, devoid of the kinds of tension and jealousy which are more usually associated with romantic love;<sup>39</sup> the strike against this love is portrayed with palpable, cruel brutality, which the composer intensifies in her music. Although Al-Khansā did not question (at least in the verses chosen by Fleischer) the warlike ethos which led to her brother’s death (not before he himself killed many others), the music does contain a vivid depiction of this cruel reality. Within Fleischer’s *oeuvre*, this can be viewed as a protest against another factor which threatens human innocence – alongside moments of love and compassion, which emphasize that innocence is indeed precious, delicate and fragile, and is worth preserving and defending.

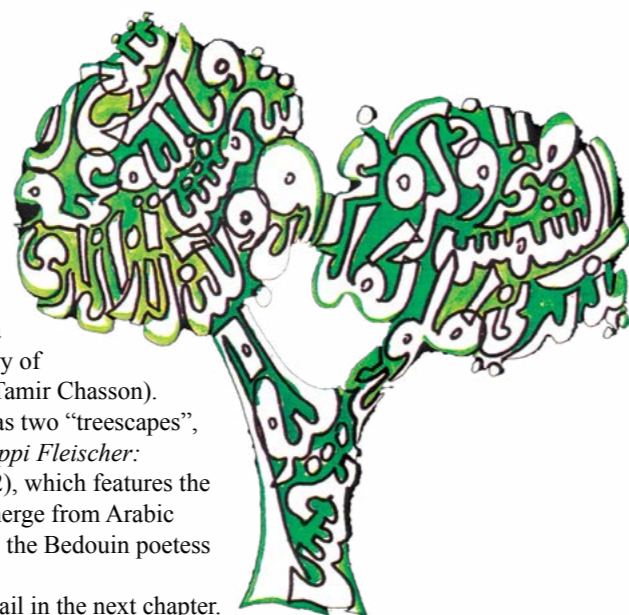
### Summary

The theme of innocence and its loss, in various guises, is a thread that binds much of Fleischer’s creative life, and is not confined to the works explicitly mentioned here. An examination of her entire *oeuvre* reveals a composer who recognizes the many factors which threaten human innocence and happiness – yet who also believes that innocence can, and should, be preserved. Very few of her works touch directly upon cynicism (*The End of the Ways*) or violent brutality (*Medea, Like Two Branches*). Even some of the works where one might expect an extreme depiction of violence (e.g., the first murder in human history, presented

<sup>39</sup> Of course fatal jealousy can arise within a family, a topic Fleischer herself explored in *Cain and Abel*; but this potential for sibling rivalry is completely absent from the text and music of *Like Two Branches*.

in *Cain and Abel*) do not reach the extremes which Fleischer has proven herself capable of, in rare but startling instances.

In general, Fleischer seems to mourn, protest or warn against the loss of innocence, more in sorrow or sober reflection than in anger. Ultimately, her focus is not on fury or sarcasm (though both are present in her *oeuvre*), but instead on compassion, empathy and faith, expressed, *inter alia*, in her quest to bring together disparate, even conflicting musical elements. On the one hand, Fleischer reveals in her works – including those dealing with the loss of innocence – an interest and an expertise in modernist techniques, which often lean towards strident sonorities. But the need to represent innocence itself, to mourn it or offer comfort and consolation for its loss, is often reflected in music reminiscent of ancient styles and sonorities, or of the dance world. Thus, in many of her works, from the late 1970s to the present, one can sense a constant tension between yearning for peaceful innocence and the brutal wake-up call of monstrous cruelty, between despair at the loss of innocence and the belief in its existence and the need to protect and preserve it.



Within Tsippi Fleischer's *oeuvre*, the cantata *Like Two Branches* (sung in Arabic) is considered a breakthrough in Israeli music as well as in the history of vocal music in general (according to the conductor Tamir Chasson). Here is a drawing of the “Two Branches”, depicted as two “treescapes”, featured in the graphic design of the 1993 album *Tsippi Fleischer: Arabische Texturen* (Aulos Koch-Schwann 3-1420-2), which features the cantata's premiere recording. These “treescapes” emerge from Arabic letters drawn from a *Diwan* of poetry by Al-Khansā, the Bedouin poetess whose words form the cantata's libretto. The story of the cantata's creation is presented in detail in the next chapter.

## Section Two: The Composer's Testimonies

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# 07

## Like Two Branches – Testimony and Discussion (2007)

### Editor's comment

On April 13 2007, at 10 AM, the Israeli Women Composers' Forum held a meeting with Tsippi Fleischer at the studio of the late Noa Blass in Tel Aviv, as part of its weekly encounter series. This meeting was dedicated an in-depth discussion of Fleischer's cantata *Like Two Branches* (1989, Op. 24).<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of the meeting, after hearing a recording of the complete work and discussing the work in depth, further works were mentioned. The meeting ended with a 'prophecy' of *Adapa*, the Akkadian grand-opera which was still a dream at the time. Among the participants were two musicians – the percussionist Chen Zimbalista and the conductor Avner Itai – who took part in the cantata's premiere and first recording, and vividly discussed the heroic efforts invested in bringing the work to life.<sup>2</sup> All the participants – most of them members of the Forum – were provided with copies of the full score.<sup>3</sup> The meeting was accompanied by an exhibition showing the different stages of composition, which Tsippi Fleischer referred to during her demonstrations.

The text below is based on a transcription made in September 2021. In editing the text for publication, we have made some corrections and introduced a few clarifications, but kept the conversational tone of the original. Hebrew-speaking readers are invited to listen to a recording of the meeting, available for listening and download as part of the Retrospective Collection section on the composer's website.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The work was composed between 1986 and 1989. The latter year was marked as the composition year, both in the score and in the List of Compositions. The cantata was premiered in 1990.

<sup>2</sup> The performance was included in the albums *Tsippi Fleischer: Arabische Texturen*, currently available on two streaming platform (Spotify and Apple Music) and on the composer's website <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco2003.html>. See also Avner Itai's retrospective commentary on the work on the composer's Youtube channel [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AZ5bQtJ\\_mY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AZ5bQtJ_mY) in Hebrew.

<sup>3</sup> The score, then available only in manuscript, has later been published by the Israel Music Institute (IMI 7872). It is available for viewing only, without download, on the Israel National Library's website <https://tinyurl.com/22tuz4dy> and for viewing and downloading on the composer's website <https://tinyurl.com/like-2branch-score>. See also note 8 below.



<sup>4</sup> The recording is Item 8 in the collection's Events section, <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/RETRO-C.html>. It can be downloaded directly from <https://tinyurl.com/two-branches-meeting>.

### Tsippi Fleischer:

In the 1970s, I felt I needed to write music. I have always been musical, but until then, I didn't know I wanted to write music. It evolved throughout the years, but it has always been important to me that what I do would only be guided by what I feel, by what I can't live without. Actually, as composers we converse with eternity. Here, in this piece in particular, I feel I've really expressed what was on my mind. It is still not so famous, which does not interest me at all, but I'll be happy if we have an opportunity to perform it once again.<sup>5</sup> In this work I've made a statement which can be regarded, both as a summary and as a major breakthrough. A piece of two-three minutes is more difficult to grasp than a 20-minute piece. Here we have 40 minutes, in an excellent performance by Avner Itai and The Cameran Singers, which is also extremely important. It should be mentioned that I majored in Oriental Studies, and for many years I wasn't sure whether I would specialize in this academic discipline or become a musician. At a certain point in my life, I made music my first priority, but Oriental Studies became deeply embedded in many of my compositions. *Like Two Branches* really reflects this, while being very demanding. Just as I demanded from myself, almost 20 years ago, to make my best statement, the performers too needed to be at a very high level, every single one of them, in order to be able to do what I request in the score, without any compromises.

So there we were in 1986, when this notion of being an 'Orientaly-oriented' composer had already been rooted within me. I'd say that it started in the 1970s as an experiment which, though successful, still for me like wandering around in the mist. It came to an abrupt halt in the early 1980s while my compositions were more focused on Israeli landscape as a poetic essence.<sup>6</sup> Just then I got to know György Kurtág while he was still in Budapest; he left almost immediately after that. I fell in love with him, I ran everywhere after him, wherever he was giving a workshop.

<sup>5</sup> At the time of writing, the work had already received two additional performances in Israel, both of which are available online: by the Naked Voices choir conducted by Tamir Chasson in 2008/9 (Spotify and Apple Music; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco200013.html>); and the Moran Singers conducted by Guy Pelc, as part of the Women Composers' Forum Vox Feminae Festival in 2016 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya84-GdTv9s>). The Vox Feminae performance was accompanied by additional films, featuring commentary on the work by Avner Itai (link in comment 2 above); by Naomi Faran, founder and director of the Moran Choirs ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ziv\\_faOZoo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ziv_faOZoo)); and by Guy Pelc (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOqY-dgm6Hk>). A further performance, with the Israeli Vocal Ensemble conducted by Guy pelc, is planned for May 29, 2026, in Tel Aviv, with three live online broadcasts on the same day.

<sup>6</sup> *Scenes of Israel – Six Madrigals* for unaccompanied mixed choir (1981-3, Opp. 9-14); *To the Fruits of My Land* – a suite for solo guitar (1981, Op. 8).

I remember a workshop he gave in Berlin dealing with the art of performance, only performance – they did Bartók's *Divertimento* for strings, a Ravel's *Trio*, a Mozart quartet; and what he managed to extract from every tone the musicians played, intensified my belief that music is something great. It gave me a lot of strength. When a person enters such a process of three, four years of creation, anything like this is captured, as if by a magnet, and becomes extremely influential.

In 1985 I composed *Lamentation* (Op. 16), where I experienced a revolution following my doctoral studies; a miracle happened to me when I took one of my PhD courses with Jan La-Rue and learned his theory directly from him. There, I discovered that sonority was extremely important to me, that I was able to attach to almost anything I desired through that issue – namely through a meaningful sound. Before that, as a musician focused on light music and Harmony, it was very different. It's not that I had stopped loving Harmony, but it was an epiphany. A revolution. It started with *Lamentation* and continued with *Like Two Branches*.

In 1986 my teacher and mentor in Oriental Studies, Prof. Sasson Somekh, said to me, immediately after hearing the premiere of *Lamentation*: look, you've made your way to the East as a composer, as a person in general, you've made your way as a woman – *Lamentation* is actually about the death of a baby of mine, reflected by words of Else Lasker-Schüler; now, he said, you should bring them together. He pushed me hard towards the 6th-century Bedouin poetess Al-Khansā. He really insisted.

Until now I just gave you some biographical background on what led me the piece. The actual compositional process took place between 1986 and 1990, the year of the premiere. Actually throughout the second half of the 1980s I wanted consciously to write music for lyrics in literary Arabic. I worked almost simultaneously on a number of pieces. The first came out in 1987; this was the *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* (Op. 20) with lyrics by Cairo resident, Sallah Abd El-Şabur. Then, in 1988, came *The Gown of Night* (Op. 21), a collage of voices of Bedouin children, and *In the Mountains of Armenia* (Op. 22) with Armenian girls, and then this piece.

In 1986 I came to that Bedouin poetess like a student. I'm only telling you about some of the processes. I actually studied her *Diwan*, I sat down with Yeshayahu Goldfeld, another scholar of Oriental Studies, who specialises in that period, and gradually selected the verses I wanted for my composition. Then I started working

intensely with Avner Itai. Although Avner knew me, he wasn't sure who and what I was, compared to older composers whom he knew better. Still, at a certain moment he really wanted the piece, but then there wasn't enough time. I found myself lacking sleep at night. It's not so healthy, but you take the risk.

**Avner Itai:**

You're used to taking risks.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Correct. I took a risk, I had heart contractions, and I knew that sleeping only two hours, four times a week, is bad, but thank God, I went through it. Then an in-depth process started. It should be mentioned, to Avner's credit – and not every conductor is like this – that he is really interested in every note he is going to conduct. This is greatness, that's the way it should be. However, such greatness is not so common; many conductors would prefer me dead, because what do they need my nagging for? It's enough that I have written the score... It was a rare experience for me, working with a conductor who is so interested, who would sit with me for continuous sessions while we were both studying the text, wanting to know the text in detail, wanting to know every vocal line functioning in the ensemble.

In 1993 a recording of the piece was published on CD by Schwann-Koch.<sup>7</sup> As I said, this is a conversation with eternity. It is worthwhile recording such a piece. As composers we know that the concert itself is sometimes full of mistakes; still it passed and the audience did not notice. But when you look at it as something eternal, you're sitting at home and wish to hear exactly what's written in the score, including the composer's comments, it should be reliable. In a concert it can pass with no problem even if it's not entirely reliable.

I remember how hard I had been working on each detail of the score. It remained as a facsimile, but the parts for the individual musicians were prepared on a computer. The proofreading was very difficult and the copyist said to me – bless

<sup>7</sup> *Arabisches Texturen*, Aulos Schwann-Koch 3-1420-2, <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco1993.html>. The album (which was re-issued in 2003 as Aulos Musikado 66063; see details in comment 2 above) opens with a short spoken *Credo* by the composer, and also includes *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* and one song from *Girl Butterfly Girl*.

your soul, but there is not one normal note in here, I constantly need to look for new, unfamiliar graphics on my computer, sometimes I find it and sometimes not; I told him, okay, what you don't have on the computer, I will do by hand.<sup>8</sup>

That's it. Now we'll go through a process. It is important for me that we all feel comfortable and relaxed. I'm so happy we're here together and we do it properly, without exaggeration but still properly; it means that we'll learn to read this text once, it's not long. We'll read it together and then understand the structure of the piece a little bit, the most important things; then we'll hear it, and still have time for questions. I'm talking about a four-year compositional process, and I kept it all. At the early stages of this process (1987/8), my son was only seven or eight, he was in my duffel bag also during difficult travels when, for example, I needed to see Heinz Holliger – and I didn't give up. Yesterday I opened all those documents and called Avner Itai in the evening. Listen, I told him, I'm excited. I've opened things I hadn't seen for over 20 years. By the way, in 1994, Shula (Shulamit) Feingold carried out an in-depth study of the work at Tel Aviv University, which served as the starting point for several of my own articles.<sup>9</sup>

Our ensemble centres around a chamber choir of virtuoso singers – each one of them actually needs to be on the level of a soloist. This choir is joined by two oboes, a cello, *kanūn*, and mixed percussion instruments. I wanted to learn, I like very much learning from players, as I said to Chen (Zimbalista) at the time, though of course I knew some of it from my studies or from previous compositions. I like the oboe, it's one of my childhood loves. For me, the sound of an oboe piercing the air has always been magical. In this piece I wanted to say so many things, the oboe

8 Tamir Chasson, who conducted the work's second performance (2008/9), wanted his choir to sing from the full score, rather than a vocal score, so that they'll be able to follow the instrumental parts during the rehearsals and performance. Accordingly, the composer produced a facsimile in which the vocal parts were reproduced in a smaller size, to accommodate the instrumental parts. Guy Pelc used this score when he conducted the third performance (2016), and the fourth one (2026) as did the Israel Music Institute (IMI) in its publication. IMI also issued separate, computer-edited parts for the instrumentalists.

9 This refers primarily to Tsippi Fleischer, "The Cantata *Like Two Branches*", *International Choral Bulletin*, October 1996, pp. 13-15, available online on the composer's website: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/24BranchesEng.pdf>.

An expanded version of this paper, with extensive references to Feingold's work, is also available on the composer's website: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/publications/TF-LikeTwoBranchesEng.pdf>.

See also Fleischer's paper "Structural aspects of my music as illustrated in the tape work *The Gown of Night* and the cantata *Like Two Branches*", *Organised Sound* 3/1 (April 1998), pp. 51-59, available online (behind a paywall) on <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1355771898009170>.

was suitable for me, and I felt I needed to learn from the best teacher; that's how I got to Heinz Holliger – the oboe hero. It wasn't easy, but I got to him. I also got to Siegfried Palm, the cello hero. I sat with them, it wasn't in Israel. It all led to such a score where I could be sure I didn't give up anything of what I needed to say. And if I had a question, I had someone I could ask – those two heroes.

Now, let's open the score for a minute, on the page where you see the text in Arabic at the top. First I'll read Sasson Somekh's Hebrew translation. We'll do it briefly; this is exactly what I do with performers, so they can understand what they're singing. Initially get into the atmosphere. Sasson Somekh's translations do not match the original word-for-word, they are not literal. He translates it into eloquent Hebrew, so that Hebrew readers can easily understand the meaning and immerse themselves in the poetic atmosphere. Later you can move to the original text and see all the nuances. We have here six stanzas, my choice after studying Al-Khansā's full *Diwan*.<sup>10</sup>

The 6th-century Bedouin poetess wrote about her two brothers who had died in combat. Here she speaks about one of them, Sakhr, and says:

#### Stanza 1

*Like two branches  
Of the same tree-trunk we grew.  
The branches spread out, the tree  
flourished, fruit ripened –  
When suddenly  
One branch was cut off.  
Nothing survives the cruel hand of Time.*

Because cruel time leaves nothing behind – that's what she really says. This is the philosophy I get up with almost every morning since I got to know this Bedouin poetess. Time is crueller than anything.

10 The texts are given here in Gila Abrahamson's English translation.

**Stanza 2**            *Your swiftly-saddled horse gallops steadily  
While the other horses hesitate,  
Their hooves sliding on rocky lava.*

Here she describes her brother as a war hero – likening him to an animal in a war between animals. Therefore, it's not exactly a eulogy, not lamentation in the regular sense of the word. These are descriptions of heroism.

**Stanza 3**            *You appease the thirsty spear  
You smite the armed horsemen;  
Like a boiling cauldron you seethe  
While their horses wade  
Through a dark stream of blood.*

And now – you're a hero among human beings, she says, cruel. You can see all the nature descriptions from the Arabian Peninsula's desert in the images of this stanza, as well as in the previous one. This language is more developed, full of imagination, than the language of the Koran that came a bit later and started narrowing and limiting the richer, more ancient, picturesque language.

**Stanza 4**            *In the shade of a tree he found rest,  
All night long he [~~the horse~~] lay in the sand  
Then suddenly sprang up –  
Was it a rain-storm that alarmed him?*

**Participant:**

The word "horse" is struck out?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Yes, the horse is struck out, because I wasn't sure whether I wanted it to be a horse or a man. I'll elaborate. You take a text like this, which was actually passed on as an oral tradition and has many interpretations, there you find something interpretive that you like, or you come up with some interpretation of your own; I

intentionally didn't want to limit the meaning here, I preferred it to remain open – either a horse or a man. This is the only place where I deleted a word. I deleted a lot from the *Diwan*, but at this point I made a change within the texts that I had chosen. Here it's the warrior's rest after the hard day he'd had in the desert.

**Stanza 5**            *Every morning at sunrise I remember Sakhr  
And I remember him when the sun goes to rest.  
Wherever I turn, I see a bereaved woman  
Bitterly crying,  
Crazed by grief at the loss of a brother.  
No, they do not mourn a brother  
as you were to me.  
With soothing words I console myself,  
But I swear by God: I will never forget you.  
O, how my heart aches, remembering you.*

In this stanza we have a woman's lament.

**Stanza 6**            *I shall weep for you  
As long as the ring-dove on a branch laments  
So long as stars shine for travellers  
In the dark of night.*

The 6th stanza concludes with the description of irrevocable death, a feeling of eternity – but at night, something quiet ("in the dark of night"). I've already come to terms with the fact you're dead, says the poet, and I'll live with your memory.

The cantata is structured as a kind of large-scale Rondo, where the Stanza 1 serves as the 'refrain' with several variants following its full appearance at the beginning as Stanza 1. There are 10 sections in total; the central section (No. 5) is mostly an instrumental "Ballet". Therefore, the numbering here does not always match the numbering of the six stanzas in Sasson Somekh's translation, which is

the basis for the libretto. The beginning of each section you see here is immediately identical to the first words of Sasson Somekh's stanzas, and that's exactly the way it appears in the score.

1. *Like Two Branches (a)*
2. *Your Swiftly-Saddled Horse*
3. *Like Two Branches (b)*
4. *You Appease Thirsty Spears*
5. *Ballet (instrumental)*
6. *Like Two Branches (c)*
7. *In the Shade of a Tree*
8. *Every Morning at Sunrise*
9. *Like Two Branches (d)*
10. *I shall Weep for You (codetta)*

Let's turn a page in the score – don't be alarmed. There's always a literal translation to English at the top, and the Arabic is large in the middle.

**Participant:**

Wait, is it in Latin script?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Correct, that's the phonetics. For example, Sasson Somekh's stanza 1, which is the refrain, is edited here in three lines of phonetic writing, with the precise literal interpretations. Each line of text is presented here on three levels: English at the top (small), Arabic – phonetics – in the middle (big), Hebrew at the bottom (small).

**I LIKE TWO BRANCHES (A)**  
 p.1 We were <sup>like two branches</sup> on a tree-trunk flourishing <sup>for some time</sup> in <sup>the best condition</sup> for <sup>the growth of trees</sup>  
 Kunna kaḥuṣṣayni fi juthamatin basaḥān ḥīnan ʿala ḥayri ma yunma lahu ṣṣajaru  
 until it was said (that) they grew (in) their roots and (that) fine their growth and ripening the fruit  
 ḥatta ʿidha ḥalla ḥad talat ʿurūkuhuma wataba ḡarsuhuma wastawsaba ḥthamaru  
 Cut off (was) the one (by) hazards of time; is not left behind (by) time a thing and no pity  
 ʿachna ʿala wāḥidin raybu-ẓẓamāni wama yubḥi ẓẓamānu ʿala ṣayin wala yadhuru

**II YOUR SWIFTLY-SADDLED HORSE**  
 p.12 [The enemy's horses] They plod on, and you will stab them; your horse being stone – while <sup>their back legs follow where their front legs tread</sup> and they enter upon rocky lava  
 Yaḥīna wataḥsabuhu ḥāfilan ʿidha tabaḥat waḡhaṣīnar ḥirāra  
 it seems (that) the saddles when he places on <sup>the wild donkeys they try to outdistance</sup> the wild cows  
 kaanna ḥautūda ʿidha ṣaddaha ʿala dhi wusūmin tubāri ṣuwāra

**III LIKE TWO BRANCHES (B)**  
 p.10 We were like two branches...  
 Kunna kaḥuṣṣayni...

**IV YOU APPEASE THE THIRSTY SPEAR**  
 p.28 You appease the spear (and) you kill <sup>the man in</sup> <sup>like the</sup> <sup>of a coofa</sup> <sup>when it boils over</sup>  
 Waturwi-ssināna waturdi-ḥamiyya kamirjali tabbāchatin ḥīna fāra  
 You cover <sup>the horses</sup> <sup>[of the enemy] [in]</sup> dark blood  
 watuḡṣi-ḥuyūla ḥiyāda-nnajiḥi

**V "BALLET" (instrumental)**  
 p.35

**VI LIKE TWO BRANCHES (C)**  
 P.41 We were like two branches...  
 Kunna ka<sup>gh</sup>u<sup>sh</sup>ayni...  
 קִנְנָה כְּאַשְׁמֹנִי ...

**VII IN THE SHADE OF A TREE**  
 P.44 He sits under the warmth of his (arta) tree, he remained [in ambush] hunting [=intending to hunt] the heroes [of the enemy]  
 Tamalabana fi dafi ar<sup>at</sup>tahi fabata yu<sup>kh</sup>anni<sup>su</sup> ab<sup>al</sup>aha  
 וְתַמְלַבְנָא בִּי דַפִּי אַרְתַּיְהִי פַבְתָּא יוֹחַנְנִי־סוּ אַבְלָחָא  
 Did it rage, the evening, upon him, and did it storm?  
 ahaja l<sup>as</sup>iyyu alayhi fathara?  
 הֲאִי־הָאָהָרָה לְאִשְׁיָיְךָ עָלַיְהִי פַתְרָא?

**VIII EVERY MORNING AT SUNRISE**  
 P.51 It reminds me, the rising of the sun, (of) Sa<sup>h</sup>hr - and I will remember every setting of the sun  
 Yudhakbiruni tula<sup>u</sup> ssamsi sa<sup>ch</sup>ran wa<sup>ah</sup>kuruhu lita<sup>ll</sup>i ghur<sup>u</sup>bi ssamsi  
 וְיִדְהַקְבִּירֻנִי תוֹלַא שְׁסַמְסִי סַחְרָן וְאַחְכֻרֻהוּ לִי־תַלְלִי גְהֻרֻבִי שְׁסַמְסִי  
 And yet I never stop from seeing a bereaved woman while she is crying bewailing the day of tragedy  
 Walakin la azalu ara al<sup>aj</sup>lan wabakiyatan tan<sup>u</sup>hu liyawmi nahsi  
 וְאַלְכִּין לֹא אֶזְלֹו אַרָּא אֶלְאֵלָן וְבַכִּיָּתָן תַּנְהוּ לִי־יָוֹמִי נַחְסִי

I see her crazed mourning for her brother; It is not (that) they mourn for (a brother) like my brother  
 araha walihan tabki ach<sup>a</sup>ha wama yabhina mithla u<sup>ch</sup>i  
 אַרָּחָא וַאֲלִיחָן תַּבְכִּי אַחְאָהָא וַמָּא יַבְחִינָא מִיְתְּלָא וְאֲחִי

But I distract my soul <from him> with consolations  
 Walakin u<sup>az</sup>zj nafs<sup>a</sup> anhu kitta<sup>ass</sup>i  
 וְאַלְכִּין אֶזְזַדְּי נַפְסִי אֲנָהּ כִּי־תָאֲסִי

No! By God! not will I forget you  
 fala walkahi la ansataa  
 לֹא! בְּאֵלֹהִים! לֹא אֶנְסָתָא

O, how great my sorrow for him  
 faya lahafi alayhi  
 הֲיָא לַחֲפִי עָלַיְהִי

**IX LIKE TWO BRANCHES (D)**  
 P.57 We were like two branches...  
 Kunna ka<sup>gh</sup>u<sup>sh</sup>ayni...  
 קִנְנָה כְּאַשְׁמֹנִי ...

**X I SHALL WEEP FOR YOU**  
 P.82 For ever will I mourn for as long will soo the dove and so long will shine stars of the night for the traveller  
 Fasawfa ab<sup>at</sup>kaa ma nahat muta<sup>w</sup>wa<sup>kat</sup>un wama ada<sup>at</sup> nujumu<sup>h</sup>ayli lissari  
 פַּסַּוְפָּא אַבְאֲתָא מָא נַחַת מִתְּוַוְכַתּוּן וַמָּא אַדְאֲת נֻגְמוֹתַי לִיסָרִי

In the first phrase – “We were like two branches” – the Arabic syntax is not identical to the Hebrew, “we were like two branches on a tree-trunk, flourishing in the best possible way for tree growth”. I’m reading it once slowly in Arabic, and you read after me, only in order to make you comfortable with the Bedouin poetess’s words, and then we’ll feel better when we meet them during 42 minutes of music. The original text is not long.

The three first lines of the Bedouin poetess Al-Khansā, in Arabic:

كُنَّا كَغُصْنَيْنِ فِي بُرُومَةٍ بَقَا  
 لَمَّا إِذَا قِيلَ قَدْ طَالَتْ عُرْوَتُهَا  
 أَهْنَى عَلَى وَاحِدٍ رَيْبِ الزَّمَانِ وَنَا  
 حِينَمَا عَلَى فَيْرٍ مَا نَمُنُّ لَهُ الْخَبْرُ  
 وَطَابَ عُتْرَتُهَا وَأَشْتَوْتُ الْكُتْرُ  
 يُبْقِي الزَّمَانَ عَلَى سَيْفٍ وَلَا يَذُرُ

Here are the first three lines of the Bedouin poetess Al-Khansā as they appear at the beginning of the score in phonetic transcription and literal translations to Hebrew and English. Note that the phonetic transliteration contains a circle around each consonant we’re not used to. It is accurately repeated in the score under the vocal lines.

**I LIKE TWO BRANCHES (A)**  
 p.1 We were like two branches on a tree-trunk flourishing for some in the best condition for the growth of trees  
 Kunna ka<sup>gh</sup>u<sup>sh</sup>ayni fi jur<sup>h</sup>amadin bas<sup>at</sup> h<sup>an</sup>an ala ch<sup>ay</sup>ri ma yunma lahu<sup>sh</sup>ajar<sup>u</sup>  
 קִנְנָה כְּאַשְׁמֹנִי בִּי־יֻרְחַמְאִין בַּסַּאֲתַּחְאֲנָן אֶלְאֵ אֶלְאֵ חַיְרִי מָא יֻנְמָא לַחֻשְׁאֲרָא

until it was said (that) they grew (in) their roots and (that) fine their growth and ripening the fruit  
 hatta idha q<sup>u</sup>la had<sup>at</sup> talat q<sup>u</sup>r<sup>u</sup>k<sup>u</sup>huma wata<sup>ba</sup> q<sup>u</sup>nar<sup>u</sup>huma wastaw<sup>sa</sup>ha<sup>at</sup> th<sup>am</sup>anu  
 הַתָּא אִדְחָא קוֹלָא הָאֲדַתְלַת קוֹרֻקוּהֻמָּא וַתַּבָּא קוֹנַרְוּהֻמָּא וַתַּוְסָהָא תְחַמְאָנוּ

Cut off (was) the one (by) hazards of time; is not left behind (by) Time a thing and no pity  
 ach<sup>na</sup> ala wab<sup>id</sup>in ray<sup>bu</sup> z<sup>z</sup>am<sup>ani</sup> wama yub<sup>at</sup> z<sup>z</sup>am<sup>anu</sup> ala say<sup>in</sup> wala yad<sup>haru</sup>  
 אַחְנָא אֶלְא וַאֲבִידִין רַיְבֻ זְזַמְאִנִי וַמָּא יוּבַת זְזַמְאָנוּ אֶלְא סַיְיִן וַאֲלָא יַדְחָרוּ

And here is Al-Khansā's entire text, divided according to the work's ten movements. The right-hand column presents the literal English translation; the left-hand column presents Tsippi Fleischer's phonetic transliteration.

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| <p>1. <u>Kunna kaghuṣṣayni (a)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kunna kaghuṣṣayni fi jurthūmatin basakā, ḥīnan 'ala ḡhayri ma yunma lahuṣṣajaru</li> <li>• ḥatta 'idha ḡīla ḡad ḡālat 'urūḡuhuma waḡāba ḡharsuhuma wastawsakāḡththamaru</li> <li>• 'aḡna 'ala wāḡidin raybuḡzzamāni wama yubḡi zzamānu 'ala ṣay'in wala yaḡharu</li> </ul> <p>2. <u>Yaḡīna wataḡsabuhu</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yaḡīna wataḡsabuhu ḡāfilan 'idha ḡābakat waḡhaṣīnaḡlḡirāra</li> <li>• ka'anna lḡutūda 'idha ṣaddaha 'ala dḡi wusūmin tubāri ḡiwāra</li> </ul> <p>3. <u>Kunna kaghuṣṣayni (b)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kunna kaghuṣṣayni fi jurthūmatin basakā...</li> </ul> <p>4. <u>Waturwiṣsināna</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waturwiṣsināna waturdiḡlkamiyya kamirjali ḡabbāḡhatin ḡīna fārā</li> <li>• Watughṣiḡlḡhuyūla ḡiyādaḡnnaḡjī'i</li> </ul> <p>5. <u>"Ballet" (bidūn 'aṣwāt)</u></p> <p>6. <u>Kunna kaghuṣṣayni (c)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kunna kaghuṣṣayni... 'aḡna 'ala wāḡidin...</li> </ul> <p>7. <u>Tamakkana fi dif'i 'arḡātihi</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tamakkana fi dif'i 'arḡātihi 'ahājaḡl'aṣīyyu 'alayhi fathāra?</li> <li>• fabāta yuḡanniṣu 'abḡālahā...</li> </ul> | <p>1. <u>Like two branches [a]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were flourishing, like two tree-trunk branches<br/>For some time, in the best way concerning growth of trees</li> <li>• Until it was said that their roots grew long,<br/>Their growth and their ripening of fruit were fine</li> <li>• Suddenly the hazards of time cut off one [of them] –<br/>Since Time does not leave behind anything, and has no pity [on anything]</li> </ul> <p>2. <u>Your swiftly-saddled horse</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They (=the enemy horses) plod on, and you stab them with your horse being stone (i.e. firm) – While their hind legs follow where their front legs trod and they enter upon rocky lava –</li> <li>• It seems you tie the saddles on wild donkeys trying to outrun wild cows</li> </ul> <p>3. <u>Like two branches [b]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were flourishing like two tree-trunk branches...</li> </ul> <p>4. <u>You appease the thirsty spear</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You appease the thirsty spear, and you smite the armed horseman [You see the] like a boiling cauldron</li> <li>• You cover the enemy horses with a dark stream of blood<br/>(The poetess's image: menstrual blood)</li> </ul> <p>5. <u>Ballet (instrumental)</u></p> <p>6. <u>Like two branches [c]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were flourishing like two tree-trunk branches...</li> </ul> <p>7. <u>In the shade of a tree</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He sits under the warmth of his (arta) tree –<br/>Did the evening rage upon him, and did it storm?</li> <li>• Remaining [in ambush] hunting (=intending to hunt) the enemy horses...</li> </ul> |
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| <p>8. <u>Yudḡakkiruni ḡulū'uṣṣamsi</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yudḡakkiruni ḡulū'uṣṣamsi ṣaḡhran wa'adḡkuruḡu likulli ḡhurūbiṣṣamsi</li> <li>• Walākin la 'azālu 'ara 'aḡūlan wabākiyatan tanūḡu liyawmi naḡsi</li> <li>• 'Arāha wālihan ḡabki 'aḡāha wama yabkūna miḡhla 'aḡi</li> <li>• Walākin 'u'azziḡnnaḡfa (anhu) bitta'assi falā wallāhi la 'ansāka</li> <li>• faya laḡfi 'alayhi</li> </ul> <p>9. <u>Kunna kaghuṣṣayni (d)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kunna kaghuṣṣayni fi jurthūmatin basakā...</li> </ul> <p>10. <u>Fasawfa 'abkīka</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fasawfa 'abkīka ma nāḡat muḡawwaḡatun wama 'aḡā'at nuḡūmuḡllyli lissārī</li> </ul> | <p>8. <u>Every morning at sunrise</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It reminds me, the rising of the sun, [of] Ṣaḡhr<br/>And I will remember him every setting of the sun</li> <li>• And yet I never stop seeing a bereaved woman<br/>While she is crying, bewailing the day of tragedy</li> <li>• I see her crazed [by grief] mourning for her brother;<br/>It is not [that] they mourn for [a brother] like my brother</li> <li>• But I distract my soul &lt;from him&gt; with consolations,<br/>No! By God! I will not forget you!</li> <li>• Oh, my sorrow for him</li> </ul> <p>9. <u>Like two branches [d]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were flourishing like two tree-trunk branches...</li> </ul> <p>10. <u>I shall weep for you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For ever I will mourn for you as long as the dove will coo,<br/>And as long as the stars of the night will shine for the traveller.</li> </ul> |
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The Arab poetess Al-Khansā,  
Arabian Peninsula, 6th century  
English translation: Gila Abrahamson  
Literal translation: Tsippi Fleischer

**Participant:**

Do you speak Arabic?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Yes. I'd like you to hear me and repeat after me, or with me.

**Participant:**

It sounds like an extremely high Arabic.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

It is a very high Arabic, the Arabic of the *Jāhiliyyah*, from the pre-Islamic period. It is poetry at the highest level, with regards to both content and images; it is also feministic, don't forget – this is a Bedouin poetess from the 6th Century A.D. I don't carry this flag of feminism, but somehow it is in me, some kind of feminine power of such a poetess that I could really consolidate with.

**Participant:**

Maybe we should hear you do it all by yourself?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

No, it's okay. I have all the patience in the world for you.

**Participant:**

But it will take so long.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Yes?

**Participant:**

Yes, it gives me pleasure to hear you recite the text.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Okay, I agree. I'll read alone, but it's important to follow exactly. Again, please note, it is literary Arabic; it's the "Bible", the authority. It can be pronounced a bit differently in various countries, sometimes there are big differences in accent compared to the authoritative literary accent, which is the way I read it; it's like the difference in Hebrew accent between the Jews of Yemen and the Jews of Galicia, which, as you probably know, are worlds apart. When we learn to read the text in Arabic, we exaggerate, we emphasize everything; in singing it already sounds less clear. You know it, of course, from the world of opera. We should remember that here we have a virtuoso choir.

The original text by the Arab poetess Al-Khansā was edited in the course of the compositional process, and arranged into ten musical sections.

**From the score – content of the piece with its ten sections in the composer's handwriting**

C O N T E N T S

Chapter	page	Text (Arabic)		Hebrew Translation
		Phonetic transcription	Original	
I LIKE TWO BRANCHES (A)	1	"Kunna baaghushnayni..."	كُنَّا كُغْضَيْنِي...	כְּבֵרִי יִצְרָח בְּיָדַי...
II YOUR SWIFTLY-SADDLED HORSE	12	"Yahāina wataḥsabuhu..."	يَهَيِّنْ وَتَكْبُهُ...	יְהַיֵּן וְתַכְבְּהוּ...
III LIKE TWO BRANCHES (B)	20	"Kunna baaghushnayni..."	كُنَّا كُغْضَيْنِي...	כְּבֵרִי יִצְרָח בְּיָדַי...
IV YOU APPEASE THE THIRSTY SPEAR	29	"Waturwi (a)ssināna..."	وَتُرْوِي السِّبَانَ...	וְתַרְוִי מַרְיָה נְחִישֵׁי...
V BALLET (INSTRUMENTAL)	35			
VI LIKE TWO BRANCHES (C)	41	"Kunna baaghushnayni..."	كُنَّا كُغْضَيْنِي...	כְּבֵרִי יִצְרָח בְּיָדַי...
VII IN THE SHADE OF A TREE	44	"Tamabakana fi difi artatiri..."	تَمَكَّنْ فِي دِفِي اَرْطَاتِي...	תַּמְכֵּן בְּיָדַי אֶרְטָא...
VIII EVERY MORNING AT SUNRISE	51	"Yudhahairuni tulūu ssamsi..."	يُدْهِئُنِي طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ...	יְדַהֵינִי בְּצֹאת שֶׁמֶשׁ...
IX LIKE TWO BRANCHES (D)	57	"Kunna baaghushnayni..."	كُنَّا كُغْضَيْنِي...	כְּבֵרִי יִצְרָח בְּיָדַי...
X I SHALL WEEP FOR YOU	82	"Fasawfa 'alhaiha..."	فَسَوْفَ أَبْكِيهَ...	כִּי אֶבְכֶיךָ...

[While reading the text, and her own literal translation, to the participants, Tsippi Fleischer made a few comments]

**Regarding the refrain (the first section repeated several times)**

There is actually a whole poem on the word "tree" [šajaru]. The š with the apostrophe on top is pronounced like SH in English (as in 'shoe', 'show' etc.). Fruit and date are the same word, the same root in Semitic languages.

**Regarding the second section**

The enemy horses move heavily, there is a picture here of their hind legs stepping following the front ones, whereas your horses are walking solidly – “your horse is stone”.

Please note that there is a whole image of an animal posture in *Jāhiliy* Arabic; the posture of a sitting camel – is not just sitting, it is this posture and some other postures – and the entire picture can be summed up in a single word.

The poetess goes on describing her brother as a hero when he ties the saddles on his wild donkeys, the zebras (there are several interpretations) – the striped ones, those who race with the enemy's wild cattle. It means you're a hero; comparing a warrior to an animal symbolizes heroism.

**Regarding the fourth section**

And she continues addressing her heroic brother: You're entirely like a cauldron boiling over. Please note this rich oriental imagination. When she says “you're covering the enemy's horses in dark blood”, she means menstrual blood, i.e. she uses her images as a woman.

One passage in this section, with the two words “like a cauldron boiling over” (kamirjali tabbachtin), is sung by Dan Ettinger in a very exposed voice, as a soloist of the Cameran Singers; his voice can be heard well.

**Regarding the fifth section (the ballet)**

All kinds of images from the text inspired me to write an instrumental section which draws these images with the instruments. I remember a couple of dancers in sharwals, insects in the sand, a drunken dancer... all kinds of things. When Avner (Itai) came to our rehearsals he said: I'm coming from an instrument (as you know, Avner was an oboist before he became a conductor), I'm very interested in these picturesque images behind each instrumental sound; he even pressured me to give the players more detailed explanations on the associations that came to my mind while I was composing. As listeners I'll leave it to your imagination to see more and more images and pictures. It is extremely important for true performers to deeply understand what they're doing. Even choreographers sometimes give their dancers images to help them dive into the drama, into the nature of the movements they perform.

**Regarding the seventh section**

The man sitting in the heat under his arta (bush), he homes in, stays in ambush while hunting, that is, he intends to hunt the enemy's heroes. Does the evening erupt and storm? I've learned to recognize that each image in the dry desert that can remind people of wetness or dew drops, light rain, makes the desert people crazy. Perhaps a threatening animal suddenly appears, perhaps rain suddenly starts. You can actually hear these drops with the instruments, the cello harmonics (p. 47 of the score, bar 464 onwards), first with longer tones, later with eighths, as a kind of more fluid drip, still light, jointly with the oboe effects (p. 49, bars 500 to 502).

**Now the women's lament bursts out (a-cappella) – in the eighth section**

When I was in Cairo, I was told that this very lament is known in the Arab world, it's very famous; the way literate English speakers know Chaucer, Milton or Shakespeare. They study this lament. I was very happy to have a good friend in Cairo; I went there often. She did her PhD in Bari (Italy) and teaches vocal technique. Her PhD thesis is exactly about this topic – how to set Arabic texts to modern (artistic) music. I wouldn't have dreamed of meeting such a good friend, a Muslim who made me welcome in her house in Cairo every time I needed an afternoon nap. Her thesis is displayed here in the exhibition.

**Participant:**

Your translation here is so different from the translation we've known before, of Sasson Somekh.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

You like it because you see exactly what the Arabic says.

**Participant:**

Correct.

**Participant:**

Word for word.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

But it would have been much more difficult for you to grasp this complicated thing as a poetic statement without knowing the atmosphere of each phrase in

general from Somekh's translation. Yes, you need to get into the atmosphere first, and then it is preferable to befriend and remain only with the literal translation.

### For the tenth section

Only this verse I want you to read together with me, the Finale, okay? Slowly.

[Here, all participants read the text together. This served a clear purpose, since in the cantata, too, the choir becomes speaking choir at this point, reading out the words in precise spoken rhythms]

We are now going to listen to the entire cantata, with the score. Now you know how the Arabic sounds. The Rondo matter is a bit open, it means I chose what I did for the intermediate sections, but I could have chosen more. The text is quite short, but the composition extends it considerably. The musical writing is very demanding as mentioned, and requires excellent singers, preferably 20, but if there are fewer, only 16, it's also okay. The main thing is that they should be excellent.

I'd like to briefly review what happens with the music.

Each time, the refrain phrase "Like Two Branches" (*Kunna Kaghuṣṣayni*) appears with a slightly different approach; first the fullest version, then the materials repeat and I've allowed them to live in different combinations. "In the shade of a tree" is composed for men's choir only, with instruments; "Every morning at sunrise" is composed for women's choir only, mostly a-cappella, and the instruments infiltrate at the end. The refrain "Like Two Branches" is elaborated very broadly by its final appearance, and then comes the dissolution. Throughout the cantata we feel that when the choir, singing in unison, sounds like a soloist, and when the instruments are given individual solos. In the "Ballet" of course the instruments are the only participants, apart from small vocal interpolations. In a piece of this magnitude I knew, in advance, where the emphases should be – that is, I built the entire composition with sketches, including the choir and the instruments alongside each other. In the final section (the tenth) the choir and the instruments enter a kind of trance, become transparent to each other; the choir speaks, and their rhythms when they read out this verse are in complete accord with the rhythms we have just used when we read it.

There has been here a process I'd like to tell you about: the vocal score was first written as a draft. Everything was in there, and for me it was the complete piece. However, I'm the only person who can understand what I've written. The

instruments are also clearly marked under the voices. Then I wrote the vocal score; afterwards, I did a montage of the vocal score with the instruments. I needed to work more slowly, it was already at an advanced stage. In order to complete the percussion part, Chen (Zimbalista) sat with me and we did it together according to the taste and colour of my choice; this was in Israel. With Heinz Holliger and Siegfried Palm we met abroad; then I was able to complete the oboe and cello parts.

The entire musical material is taken from a single *maqām*, the *Hijaz*; some are my tunes that I actually composed myself in this *maqām*, and some are tunes I found in a book at the American University of Cairo (AUC) [points at the book in the exhibition]: an anthology of tunes written by many people around the Middle East in this *maqām*. I adopted this book very naturally the moment I saw it. It was so happy, as if I have come across a gift. I chose what felt was right for me, but also continued processing my choices, including quarter tones. I already heard in my head the oboe chords, the various cello noises – for example, death throes. This piece is being studied today. Dieter (Dietrich) Schnebel said about it, 1994, at the Hochschule workshop in Berlin: "One of the masterpieces of the late 20th Century". However, when I started it was perceived as a "cantata in Arabic, disturbed, cantata for Battata" (cantata for nothing at all), they laughed at me. I didn't care. I was sure it contained some great truth.

Now, take note! We will see the concluding moment of the men's section, with the calm nirvana, after which the women burst with a cry of lamentation, sung *a-cappella*. The draft matches this particular section in the score, and we were lucky to witness the outburst of the female singers.

Before the completion of the compositional process, the bar numbers and the division into quadrants changed: the women's passage (section VIII) begins in the score in quadrant 55, whereas in the draft it's in quadrant 58. This shouldn't give us any trouble in tracing the compositional process; the draft reflects a most mature version. It already contains everything.

The concluding moment of the men's section, after which the women burst with a cry of lamentation

Handwritten musical score for measures 521-523. The score includes vocal parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), and instrumental parts for Oboe (Ob), Clarinet (Cl), and Violin (V). The tempo is marked 'rit.' and dynamics range from 'pp' to 'ppp'. The piece concludes with the instruction 'attacca'.

Handwritten musical score titled 'VIII EVERY MORNING AT SUNRISE' by Yuchikaki. It features vocal lines for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), and instrumental parts for Oboe (Ob), Clarinet (Cl), and Violin (V). The score includes performance markings such as 'fff', 'ff', 'mf', and 'f', and dynamic changes like 'rit.' and 'attacca'.

A sample from the score followed by the same place in the draft

The place in the score (autograph score)

Handwritten musical score for measures 514-523. The score includes vocal parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), and instrumental parts for Oboe (Ob), Clarinet (Cl), and Violin (V). The tempo is marked 'rit.' and dynamics range from 'mf' to 'pp'. The piece concludes with the instruction 'attacca'.

The same place in the draft

Note: A few details were added – the precise scoring (which are not written into each page of the draft) and the corresponding bar numbers in the score.

AUC's booklet

A number of composed lines I designed at initial stage of the compositional process, while reading the booklet of *Maqām Hijaz* tunes I found at the AUC (American University of Cairo); I wrote at the top "Page of motifs" (in Hebrew).

Listening to the entire cantata continuously,  
with a score for each participant

### Discussion / talk after listening, elaborations

**Participant:**

There are 90 *maqāmāt*, or how many?

**Participant:**

No, there are a thousand.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

We teach 15, canonical, and this is one of them – the *Hijaz*, with the augmented second, similar to the Jewish mode *Ahava Raba*.

**Avner Itai:**

First of all, with all due respect, this is the most difficult piece I've ever performed. Josef Tal wrote two pieces for me, very difficult, but I could read the score and immediately listen to what is written. Here I'm listening and I seriously don't know how to do it. This was of course before I had Tsippi's help. She is taking us to uncharted territories, this is what Tsippi has done for all of us with this piece, it has really been a great help – and shown great daring. Arabic is a difficult language (laughing).

**Participant:**

A bulldozer

**Avner Itai:**

It's not just a bulldozer, she worked with each player, each singer, she was a partner. There are many markings here you don't find anywhere else, you need to know what the composer had in mind, and from the aspect of singing it is very demanding. I did the first of Messiaen's *Cinq Rechants* for 12 voices, it was easy because it's written in a clear way, it's French, not Arabic. We are supposed to know Semitic languages; for a person who speaks Hebrew well, counting to ten in Arabic sounds similar to what we're used to in our native language; and there are quite a few words with identical roots. But this is the only practical connection. It is a foreign language we don't know at all. The two English singers actually found it easier to grasp; they excelled in learning the language, phonetically.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Phonetic memory, just knowing how to imitate the phonemes; what we were trying to do here today is similar – get to know the consonants and vowels a bit.

**Avner Itai:**

I was scared. The whole notion at first was of a kind of opera, right? (pointing to Tsippi) It was just an idea, but eventually this piece grew and evolved. I was getting pages in the mail and trying to study them. I wanted those dense polyphonic things – and they really are quite dense – to come out in the recording, so that listeners could follow the voices. It's written in an imitative technique we are familiar with in music from the Renaissance onwards, imitations where one voice enters after the other with an identical or similar theme. The result is that the homophonic or unison sections stand out immediately to the listener.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Luckily, some of the soloists had an intuitive ear, so it was not required in that case to have a phonetic memory. The main reason is that our ear perceives by hearing the spoken Arabic in the environment where we live. For me, this language, Arabic, is very musical.

**Avner Itai:**

Due to hostility people are not close to the language; it's our loss.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Someone asked earlier how I learned the text. I'd like to answer: It was very interesting, fascinating. I took it, sat down, gathered materials, started to translate, I studied all the interpretations of the verses, made choices slowly, not at once, by elimination. I got a whole book – the *Diwan* of the poetess's great lament. I gradually started extracting things I liked, and after about a month I returned and realized what I didn't like any more, until I reached my destination. I didn't want a lot of verses. My compositional technique was to expand each word. It's a technique I'd already used in my work *Lamentation*; extremely non-verbal, not like a *Lied*; it means selecting a text and then taking it apart, making a whole world from each word, and then a whole world from each sentence.

You need courage as well as a good choir. We used to meet once a week and reached a very high level. I remember we once spoke with Tzvi Avni and he said to

the performers: Guys, but is Bach easy? Is Mozart easy? What are you telling us?

I'd like to mention that Avner is really loyal, he won't tell me to make it easier, he wants to perform it exactly the way it's written. In 2006 I had a similar experience with the Tölzer Knabenchor: Gerhard Schmidt Gaden didn't make any concessions for the choir boys, he fought for each and every sound I wrote.

There was a player whose name I've already mentioned, Vartuhi Lepejian. I met her in the Armenian Quarter in Jerusalem when we prepared my piece *In the Mountains of Armenia* for performance. I needed to compose a short piece for Armenian girls, so I arrived at the location. It wasn't easy, they don't open the gates, but through my contact with Prof. Dalia Cohen I managed it. When I got there I saw that Vartuhi was playing the piano wonderfully. She did beautiful exercises for her choir, she was extremely fluent on the piano. I asked her: Vartuhi, you play so beautifully, what's your story? She needed to teach them the melody I composed. I wrote one line of a melody, and in the recording the young singers repeated it, in layers, while I was conducting quite freely. They received one line for singing, and a number of layers came out on the magnetic tape. Then a clarinet line was added, made of several scale tones, and it was important both to feel and to know where it should be added. First, this Armenian woman needed to teach the girls a relatively complex text with the melody, and then in the recording it could be sung with my conducting cues. The result was quite free. By the way, in a few days this piece will be performed live for the first time, it will take place in Los Angeles.

I asked Vartuhi again, what's your story? She says: Oh, the piano, don't say I play it well, it's just embarrassing, it's my job, I have no choice; my instrument is the *kanūn*, I'm a *kanūn* artist, I have a diploma, composers wrote *kanūn* concerti for me. I opened my eyes wide in amazement. It's as if I'd met her in a dream, right then in the mid-1980s, as I was working on this cantata. I told her, I must hear your playing; I came to her house in Beit Hanina and listened to her. It was outstanding, it didn't sound like the *kanūn* playing we are used to hearing in the Arab world: their music isn't written down at all, they usually improvise either tunes or scales and that's it. Vartuhi, on the other hand, actually received scores and knew how to tune her *kanūn* to extremely virtuosic materials; yes, that's how I got the inspiration from her.

I already told you what happened with her, quite soon afterwards they moved to Australia.

**Participant:**

Apparently there are time constraints, you pick someone to do the solo, and suddenly they can't do it and it feels uncomfortable, then someone else, all sorts of things like that.

**Participant:**

Who is the choir in the performance?

**Avner Itai:**

These are The Cameran Singers, a choir I established.

What we managed to arrange quite quickly with Cameran Singers, was first of all a very organized working procedure; we developed a series of concerts for subscribers, we had six or seven programs a year, and each program repeated six, seven times. In addition, for several years we also worked in the morning and gave concerts at schools. It was a great experience.

**Participant:**

It was dissolved.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

That fantastic choir gave a series of choral concerts, like the Israel Philharmonic does. There was a large enough audience at the Tel Aviv Museum, but in other places it was difficult to bring an audience.

**Avner Itai:**

It was the first time in Israel where it wasn't a once-a-year concert, some occasional *a-cappella* concert; there was a series and all kinds of variations in this or that year. I remember a year of Händel and Bach, when we went from our usual 10 concerts to 80. We gave 80 concerts in ten months. That was an impressive amount, but more importantly we were an address for composers.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

We can see here very oriental things in the score. The rhythms, the bar structure, the meters are constantly altered for the sung phrases that need to adhere to the Arabic language, a completely foreign element for singers who have been singing Western artistic music all their lives. Sometimes during rehearsals Avner was elated.

He worked hard during the rehearsals and everybody with him, improving more and more; in several points of the score we reached very impressive achievements – in the actual rehearsals.

**Avner Itai:**

It is a very difficult piece. I don't know any other places or ensembles which do things like that.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

One always acts first and observes later, it's a well-known phenomenon; that same person doesn't understand how he has done something like that. Each voice sings melodies, then the polyphony leads to a new outcome, a surprising sound, a dissonance. I told Avner: There will be no Umm Kulthum here; there will be textures that, as I feel it, should engulf these raw materials, the melodies we hear in singing voices. In a live performance the audience always perceives something, and the first time they hear it they can only perceive some of the things. That's the initial experience. Then they can return to the piece if the opportunity arises – in a recording, for example, or at another concert.

As to the piano: we had a *kanūn* player, I've already told you about her. If you remember, 1989 was the beginning of the first *Intifada*, and she said to me: "For the Arabs we are Jews and for the Jews we are Arabs, so we'll have to leave the country", in other words, I was left without her.

**Participant:**

Does she live in Israel?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

No, they moved to Australia.

**Avner Itai:**

She was Armenian, wasn't she?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

(Remembering and speaking excitedly):

Armenian from Yerevan; still with my son we managed with all those crazy trips to see people, because a 7-8-year old son wants his mother, his mother wants

him with her, but she needs to be in other places, how do you manage? Transatlantic flights, take your Coca Cola and chocolate, when you wake up and I'm not here, eat it. Luckily he didn't wake up, I passed half a night and then saw Siegfried Palm; with Heinz Holliger I reached the hotel at the last moment and felt embarrassed because I was a bit late and he was already waiting for me. I told my son: sit in the lobby, because he had books with *gematria*, and say that your mom is coming in a minute. When Heinz Holliger saw me, I was only 3 minutes late, but he is punctual and was already waiting for me in the lobby of the New York hotel. I said, I'm sorry, my son will remain here, and he said "No, no, no, don't you know it's a crime?" So we went up to his hotel room. There were two chairs in the room, one was taken by the boy, the other served as a table, and we both sat on the floor. I received a great lesson from him on how to write the oboe part, because in fact what did he do? He gave me all kinds of tips, musical literature that had been written and could be suitable for me, that I simply had to go through, get the pieces with the recordings... amazing things.<sup>11</sup> Here (in the exhibition) there are two books, one written for him and the other for Siegfried Palm. I studied these books thoroughly. There was an entire session with Siegfried. I asked him only one thing after I got to know that wonderful book: Just play the book for me, that's all, I don't need more, I'll understand what's going on. And when I did this work with his book being played for me and recorded on the simplest music cassette, I realized how much I didn't know about the cello.<sup>12</sup>

**Participant:**

From the aspect of orchestration, the sound of the piano with the other instruments and the choir gives a very special effect, very specific, if you think about a piano here replacing the *kanūn*.

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11 Comment by Tsippi Fleischer: This fact is already mentioned twice in this conversation. Here it assumes the character of a real-life story, expanded, in very fluent speech, as a response to a question from one of the participants. Another expansion occurs in a fluent conversation in this unique meeting, described below.

12 The story of the sessions with Heinz Holliger (oboe), Siegfried Palm (cello) and Vartuhi Lepejian (virtuoso *kanūn*), is described in detail in a Hebrew article that Fleischer published in a music education journal in 1999.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

This part is written for the *kanūn*, which is not so different from a piano. You are only used to hearing the *kanūn* on a very basic level, the way it is usually played in the Arab world, but it can reach a piano's level of complexity. Still, we should note, it's not Chopin.

**Participant:**

No, I mean from the aspect of sound, the octaves and unisons of the piano with doublings. The doublings increase the sound of the piano and bring it closer to the intensity of the *kanūn*.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Okay, excellent, this is exactly a *kanūn*, it can easily do it.

**Participant:**

And it gave the same effect with the piano?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

A virtuoso like her and those of her kind can easily do it with a *kanūn*.

**Participant:**

It gave a certain orchestral effect together with the ensemble.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Correct, it sounds quite similar with the *kanūn*, certainly more beautiful with the *kanūn*'s resonance.<sup>13</sup>

But they just left the country. I did whatever I could to bring them, even got actual financial support from a benefactor to fly them in from Australia, but I have her husband's letter not allowing her to come, it was during the Intifada.

**Participant:**

The first Intifada?

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<sup>13</sup> In the CD *Innovative Classics* (2013), which contains Tamir Chasson's performance of the cantata with his choir, Naked Voices, also features tracks 11 - 20 with "samples" from the work allowing listeners to compare the sound of the *kanūn* with the sound of the piano that usually replaces it, which required octave doublings to recapture the *kanūn*'s power and brilliance. See more details and links in note 5 above, page 119.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Yes, 1989.

The role I wrote for her is still written in pencil because I didn't send it to her. It was my first manuscript, completely clean. I used to write then all the roles in pencil, what we now transfer to computer.

**Participant:**

And there are no other *kanūn* players in Israel who could have done it?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

At this level, which is like a concerto where the player reads musical notation and functions *vis-à-vis* an orchestra – sorry, but there aren't any; here in Israel they usually don't read musical notation.

**Participant:**

Ezra Aharon, but he died.<sup>14</sup>

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

What I demand is very complicated, very virtuosic, for the instruments too. But Vartuhi was able to do it. I wrote the *kanūn* part based on her abilities.

It happens a lot, you get an inspiration from performers and then they vanish. I'm telling you, any of you here who is a composer, don't take it to heart. It has happened a few times; I got the inspiration and just said thank you. I wanted Vartuhi to be here and perform the *kanūn* part so much, but after I had composed the piece, the fact that she left me was lesser of all evils because it was most important she would be present while the piece was being composed. There have been many similar instances: when performers vanish, sometimes they don't tell the truth. I am going with someone until a certain moment... You know what life is, they tell stories, it's not a problem to make up a story, they don't want this, that and the other...

At a certain point I was working with a singer and she knew everything I was doing, and the moment she realized she would have to produce it, which was

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<sup>14</sup> Maharani Moreb of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance managed to perform demonstrations in 2013 in the CD *Innovated Classics* (see note 13 above, page 148).

her intention – to produce an opera that was written especially for her, when she understood it would be hard for her to make the production – she suddenly said the piece was bad. At first she said it was wonderful. It was a very difficult moment, at first I didn't understand, it takes time, we are naïve, we just lose our naiveté little by little. This is Christina Ascher from Berlin, a singer who gave me a lot of inspiration, from her CDs, to write the role of Medea. But Isabelle Ganz presented the work's world premiere in Kfar Blum with great success. Afterwards it also received a fantastic production at Oper Köln. In short, being given inspiration or implementing inspiration already within you – that's the most important thing. Later on I had a similar incident with a singer from Cairo who gave me a lot of inspiration and I was afraid to tell him I was Israeli. It took me many years to reveal it to him.

And there were all kinds of similar cases; for example, the actor-singer Doron Tavori who was the first Cain while I was composing *Cain and Abel* (Op. 57, 2001/2). He gave me huge inspiration and then vanished; I won't elaborate.

Right now I'm in the middle of an intense period of composing symphonies. Suddenly there comes Avner Itai and makes a humble request – Tsippi, please write for me and my choir a piece, just a few minutes long, in Arabic. I told him – you know I've decided to depart from it already in 1994, but, Avner, I can't say no to you. If I find a text that I feel is powerful enough, I'll write a short piece of several minutes for your choir. In the meantime, he left the choir. When I wrote it he was no longer with that choir (Collegium Tel Aviv Singers). I stayed with the idea, was enthusiastic, found a great text by the poet Jabra Ibrahim Jabra who was born in Bethlehem (another important issue – choosing a text for composition). I composed one melody as a monody, connected to Jabra's very powerful text against hypocrisy in life; first I wrote the line, a kind of song for the choir which was the first section, then I decided to develop it into a piece where the precise same song will receive various timbre-images by using different instrumental combinations. I didn't realize I was getting into yet another daring project, I'm lucky not to realize that I create something daring every time, so I continue, encounter many problems, and manage to go through the entire process. I said – here there will be the timbre-image of a choir, here of a female singer (one of the performances was with Etty Ben-Zaken) with a small Baroque ensemble, here there will be a harp only, here strings only; but each section, each timbre-image, lasts 3, 4 maybe 5 minutes. How can you perform it all in one concert? Impossible; or nearly impossible. In fact, each section was performed separately in different concerts. Once Avigail Arnheim

held a celebration at the Felicja Blumental Music Center in honour of the Lifetime Achievement Award I received from ACUM in 2003,<sup>15</sup> where we managed to bring it all continuously to one stage.

**Participants:**

Thank you so much.

Thank you, I enjoyed it.

It was wonderful,

Tsippi, thank you.

It was really interesting.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Although it's not so easy, thank you.

**Participant:**

No, no, that's the beauty of it, you know.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

It's all right; the main thing is that we made it through this process successfully.

I'm not anxiously waiting to see if something will or won't "work". I have an entirely different attitude. I don't care about entertainment. In my opinion, and that's the way I understand it, if you say what's important for you to say, there's no way it won't work. No way. It will always work somehow. What does "work" mean? You've said what you needed to say, that's the only privilege we have as composers, say what we wish to say. We have economic difficulties, we are humiliated, it's hard for us in general, but we have a privilege, we can do whatever we want. *Like Two Branches* is a genuine statement that I really wanted to make. Avner and I were so strong, and it saved the day. We managed to fend off all the obstacles and difficulties of preparing the performance. The singers were occasionally mumbling "... Leave it alone, what are you arguing about, what do you want – to go to the management and complain how difficult this performance is for us? It will collapse anyway". When we finished recording I remember saying to Avner – now I can die in peace.

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<sup>15</sup> The event was held in January 2004.

**Participant:**

In the choir's performance we can understand every word.

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

Because we were working on it and Avner did care. He himself knew – studied the text with me at first like a singer, during the early preparations of both of us.

You should know that on stage, during the Cameran performances with this piece, there was always something to look at; it was such an ongoing shock for the audience, because the performers looked so virtuosic on stage – both the players and the singers; you don't have to understand anything to get this. I'd say that this collective virtuosity makes a powerful initial impression, it makes something come out of this highly complex piece. It immediately affects people, even comes as a shock.

It seems to me that when I started with the symphonies a few years later, this entire crazy thing I went through with *Like Two Branches* with the rhythms, the colours, the textures, had a strong and very profound impact on me. Therefore, I see this cantata as an extremely significant breakthrough. It's good I didn't listen to any of the talks around me of all sorts of 'establishment' characters – a cantata in Arabic, crazy, disturbed, "cantata for battata" (after a known joke from Israeli media), sounds like an intentional joke; and the way I didn't give up on meeting Heinz Holliger. How do you even get to such a person?

**Participant:**

I've wanted to ask you this question all morning, how can a young woman composer reach someone like him?

**Tsippi Fleischer:**

First of all I got his home phone number. I could do that since I had good friends (colleagues) in Germany. He is never at home. It was first by phone. His wife, Ursula, is a harpist, she's at home. So I consulted a good friend of mine from New York, a composer who was familiar with my music and especially liked my piece with the Bedouin children, a Jewish guy called Johnny Reinhardt who manages there a whole society of electroacoustic composers; he told me: You know what? Because you travel so much, you need to seize a day when Heinz Holliger is in concert and approach him after the concert. Wait a minute, I think he will be now in New York in a concert, I've seen it in the paper. I said to myself, this is a good

idea, I really travel a lot, I'll try to modify my plans a little bit; Johnny found the ad and apparently the concert was going to take place when I was still in the USA. At that time, I was abroad with my son for several months, both in Europe and in the USA, mostly for my doctoral research. So I went to the concert and left my seven-year-old son at a friends' house not far from Manhattan. Those friends asked me: How can you leave us? What did you come for? Why are you going? I said: I have a good friend in Manhattan; I'll sleep at her place. I must go to a concert. They asked: What is it about? There are so many concerts. I said, there's someone I'm so anxious to meet. It was all so secretive. They asked: Are you sure you'll meet him? I said, no, I'm always prepared for the worst disappointments, I'm used to it; Johnny told me it was customary in New York to see artists on stage. They come to the stage after the concert, you don't need to go behind the scenes; it's normal in New York. I said to myself, so I'll wait. I bought a ticket, sat in the front row, and when the concert ended I immediately got up and stood first in line on the stage. When he came out to the stage I already had some material about myself, I put it in his hand and told him, I'd like so much to talk to him. He said, okay, call the Mayflower (a hotel in New York) tomorrow at 9 AM; after all, he said to himself, she is a composer. He gave me a minimal chance. I called at 9 AM, as he requested. I said to him: Look, I'd like to write a piece, you have something from me here, what I'll be writing now will be different, I'm just so interested in learning from you, can you sit with me for a while? He said okay, but what shall we do? Right now I'm going to the west. I'm going to the west too, I said. We decided to meet, he would be back in New York 10 days later and so will I. If he has the time to see me, it will be one day before my flight back. And that was the story. The singer Marina Levitt was a good friend. She was poor then and studied with a scholarship in the US. I went to visit her and brought some sweaters from her mom. I went back to New York in a delayed flight. He asked me to come to his hotel at 4 PM. I came and we met, that's the story more or less. When we met he gave me all the information. What would've happened if I had given up at that moment and failed to go to that concert? But after I found out it was the standard practice, there's no way you can't control it. It's a choice. Only one thing must happen – after you are born, you die, the rest is a choice. And if by choice there's a chance I can see him, I'm not going to give it up. Another thing can happen: he wouldn't want to see me, wouldn't want to hear anything about me, okay, then nothing can be done. But that hour with him in his hotel room – it was legendary. He gave me a whole list of works for oboe; I

could get it all abroad, amazing things. He told me: “You’re showing me Siegfried Palm’s book,<sup>16</sup> such a book has also been written for me. It will be very good for you, I saw it at Patelson’s Music House, right there on the corner, up at the end, two weeks ago. I can assure you no one has bought it; go there. I’m almost sure you’ll find it. I immediately ran there, it was the morning before the flight, and I found that book. It was crazy. It is a collection of short pieces by contemporary pieces, like etudes for virtuoso players. There are several of these books, which could be described as ‘method books’ or ‘textbooks’ for specific instruments, and it was essential for me to get them.

I’d like to be in this crazy state of mind in a few more years when I’ll need to write an opera in Akkadian, if I’m still alive and well. I already have the libretto; I’m collecting endless sources of inspiration. Right now it’s sitting somewhere in the background, because in the meantime there are so many things I have to do. I know the structure of the opera, how it’s going, according to an Akkadian myth that has (almost) no plot. I’ve solved many important structural issues. It is a ready-made text, not one of those myths that Shin Shifra translated to Hebrew. I don’t want a translation; I want the original. Many operas suffered at first, so what? With the Akkadian opera I might need to go for a recording project, it won’t be before 5-6 years from now; I won’t have the money. I’ve already been to several opera houses, but they would rather do another *Aida* or *Carmen* instead of investing in a crazy idea like this opera of mine. I’m actually talking about a Grand Opera – and in Akkadian! In the meantime, I can try being humiliated in some more opera houses. I frankly say “humiliated” because they do know me, but it’s no use, I have a good reputation, but if it’s not somebody crazy who says “I’m going to do something big and new”, such a production can’t happen in an opera house. I’ll preserve it in a recording, if I can get to it. It’s a dream to be realised in a few years’ time, some other things are on the way, but there’s a bright side to making it happen by yourself, with all your best powers and energy; because the moment you’re in an opera house, opera is less free in style than an oratorio, you need to work with a lot of people including a director, designers of all kinds, they are always looking over your shoulder, cut this, snip that, they try to clip your wings, “we don’t have enough

<sup>16</sup> The two books referred to here – by Siegfried Palm and Heinz Holliger – are part of Breitkopf & Härtel’s series *Pro Musica Nova: Studies for Playing Contemporary Music*. Palm’s book was included in the exhibition that accompanied the encounter transcribed here.

instruments, we don’t have enough money” – so suddenly there are almost no stage-sets, and lots more problems. The moment I do it on my own, although it’s more difficult to pick up financially, even extremely difficult, but at least I can maintain my freedom. I wish that the same thing which happened to me here with *Like Two Branches* – where I kept my freedom to the end – will happen there, because many years have passed and we tend to get “spoiled” without even noticing the traps and the concessions, do you understand what I’m saying?

#### Editor’s Afterword

The Akkadian grand-opera Fleischer discusses at the end of the talk is *Adapa*, which at the time of the meeting (April 2007) was still in the preliminary compositional stages. Fleischer began working on it circa 2000, and completed the composition in 2014.

*Like Two Branches* and *Adapa* both represent stylistic breakthroughs in the composer’s *oeuvre*, and both embody a compelling combination of ancient and modern, of poetic abstraction and dramatic immediacy. The conductor Tamir Chasson, who led the second of four performances and recordings of *Like Two Branches*, wrote that it “re-defines the medium of vocal music in general, and of Israeli music in particular”; he further said that the piece “bursts through barriers” and “challenges all traditions of vocal music through the ages, including everything with which we were familiar in the 20th-century *avant-garde*”. Similar claims can be made for *Adapa*’s relationship with the grand-opera genre, especially in light of its unique production as a video-opera, which the composer and her artistic collaborators brought to completion in 2016 (see the two testimonies on this work below – the interview with me, and the ‘expertise’ documenting aspects of the compositional process). The opera indeed made a huge impression on its viewers and listeners, as the responses documented at the end of the interview testify.

The unique style of *Like Two Branches* also deserves to be examined in greater depth. A good starting point would be the vision for future research outlined by the late Shulamit Feingold after the completion

הטקסט של הקנטטה - מקורו (רקז"ו)<sup>(1)</sup>  
 הקנטטה מבוססת על טקסט המקראי מתוך ספר קננה של המשלח הקדושה  
 הקדומה הנכונה, אשר נאצרה בחצי האי ערב בין השנים 585-595 לספירה לפנה"ס.  
 יש היוונים בה את המשלח הקדומה התלוקה בילוי.  
 שבתה מייצגת את השורה הקדומה הקדומה-אויסלמית - שירת הג'אזאלה -  
 שמשלבה המאמתיים העליונים עם אור הקדומה המערבית. קלאסיקה מערביה  
 השורה הקדומה אלוטו המערבית - בתכונה ובשפתה הברזילאית.  
 שירת הג'אזאלה מבוססת על משקלים פואטיים קדומים, אלו שיר משקל  
 יחסי טקסט מוסקרה

אשר לתיאור הקצב, היו אלו הצלילים והצלילים השונים של הנכונה -  
 "תמונת מלחמה נמרצת" אשר משלבו את התעניינותה והפכה את הצלילים  
 של ציפי פליישר: "אין צליל יקוולטם שכולו תחושה אחת אלא נראה  
 לאווירת החיים בתוך האי עם לשון האסלאם, הוא בווקא השפיעה  
 ביצירה". אלוטו של הטקסט, הצלילים, המצלילים והפעולות - מלחמה  
 החיננית, הם שקבעו את המוסיקה, צורתה הפופלית, פקן המלחמה, פליישר  
 והתוצאה.  
 בסוף זה נכסה לדקדק אתה יחסי טקסט - מוסיקה במישורם של -  
 אל הפן התכלי: האויסלמית, האווירה, ועולם האסכולות הקדומים אולם  
 בה פוסט-קולוניאליזם המוסיקלי: המצלילים השונים.

(1) כפי שכתב פליישר "היינו" (Kum-nā Ka-ghus-may-ni) (שון על משקל אל-ג'סו)  
 על משקל טבח מאב, גיש בו וסוגות סיפוריים אפיים (אם כי לא  
 קדומים אלוטו בטובה קדומה)  
<sup>(2)</sup> mus-taf-i-lum | fā-i-lum | mus-taf-i-lum | fā-i-lum  
 | | | |  
 Kum-nā Ka-ghus-may-ni fī fur-thū-ma-tin ba-sa-kā.  
 (אפשר לומר כי התמונה חזרה מלחמה).  
 שורה זו היא מייצגת מאב ונכונה מאב, שדומת בספרה למשקל השיר המוסקלי.  
 בתחילתה מביא השיר תואר מקורי של אלוטו מלחמה דמית בין אלוטו מאב  
 של צלילים מתוך אלוטו הג'זל. יש אלוטוים כי נראה כי הלוטו חידוש בשורה הקדומה.  
 הבימויים הצלילים הברזילאיים והפואטיים, ובעניינם הם המלחמה = ברמזות ספר מלחמה, המייצגת  
 אלוטו ואלוטו אלוטו, ובעניינם האלוטוים והפואטיים הם המלחמה = המלחמה הגדולה ובר  
 את השיריות ואלוטו הלוטו נכר למעשה אלוטו, נראה חוצי בשורה של הנכונה.

of her research project, "Tsippi Fleischer: An Israeli Composer in an Ancient Semitic World – the Cantata *Like Two Branches*" (BA project supervised by Dr. Yehudith Etzion, Tel Aviv University, October 1994). After the completion of this project, the composer documented a conversation in which Feingold made the following suggestions, which could be used as a plan for further analysis:

We will meet together with my supervisor, Dr. Yehudit Etzion, because we need to complement and expand on issues that were missed out in the paper I have submitted:

- a) There is a need to continue to develop the description of the work's rhythmic world, to better understand it as a whole through an examination of its temporal components. I have already made an initial examination, but it should be pursued further – for instance, the soprano's capricious line in the women's lament, starting at bar 524. To sense the very outburst of this lament, we should start reading at bar 517; but the main point is from the bar 524 onwards.<sup>17</sup> As a result of rhythmic patterns throughout the work, there emerge both an atmosphere and a sense of colour, for instance in the *glissandi* in the cello solo passage in page 40 in the score.
- b) A detailed tonal analysis should be introduced, achieved initially through listing the chords and other vertical entities that emerge: the work contains a lot of linear writing, which also leads to a vertical texture resembling harmonic sonorities in many places. This requires a step-by-step, meticulous enumeration of all the "chords". It would be worth the effort!

When the composer testified to me that she "used the *hijaz maqām* with some further developments", she has drawn us into a meticulous melodic-harmonic analysis; that is, she arouses our curiosity for

<sup>17</sup> See music examples on pp. 138-140 below.



an examination, and a detailed listing of her usage of tones which expand upon the basic *hijaz maqām*. If it is done diligently, we will receive a comprehensive list of the *maqām*'s pitches, as well as their transpositions, and the notes added to the basic *Hijaz* line. This will enable us to continue and dig deeper into Fleischer's developmental procedures of the *maqām*, as we do when analysing the development sections in classical sonata form.

c) There is a need to prepare a detailed inventory of the percussion instruments used and their functions within the work. Each and every appearance of percussion instruments merits analysis: noting and describing what they do, and where; what are the compositional techniques applied in Fleischer's employment of percussion. This challenging analysis should probably be done with the assistance of a professional percussionist, who would help us examine how their timbres merge with the timbres of voices and other instruments, in each and every occurrence. The composer described this as the "perfume" they spray upon the sound. Chen Zimbalista said that he worked intensively with the composer on each percussion entry in the work; that is, he reported that he and Fleischer determined exactly each point of occurrence – the identity of the instrument, the type of timbre, the pitch area, the dynamics, the actual note where applicable. He referred to Fleischer as "a veritable percussion chef".

d) A detailed inventory of vocal developments should be prepared; all the phrases that open outwards from the unison and fold back - will be listed, as well as the way the unison is thickened up. This can be connected admirably with the tonal analysis (see paragraph 'b' above).

**To all these comments by Feingold, Tsippi Fleischer adds:**

After the initial, tentative forays of the 1970s, followed by the composition of *Like Two Branches* (a process that lasted from

1986 to 1989), and even later, in the 1990s and 2000s, I had a clear working strategy. Feingold's reference to "thickening" is something of a signpost, pointing directly into my achievement in *Adapa*, where I worked consciously at thickening the individual tone (!), focusing each scene on the huge expansion of one note.



Tsippi Fleischer in a meeting with György Ligeti (right) and André Hajdu (left), Bar-Ilan University, Israel, December 1991

## Adapa - Another World

### 1. Uri Golomb interviews Tsippi Fleischer about *Adapa*

**1. When did you first decide to write an opera based on the Myth of Adapa? Did the idea arise while reading the myth, or have you already considered writing a full-length opera in Akkadian, or another ancient language?**

I remember exactly the year in which the idea first sprung within me: it was in 1999, when I was hell-bent on composing my computerised oratorio *At the End of the Ways* (setting a text by Uri Zvi Grinberg), based on the voice of singer-actor Doron Tavori. By this time, I'd also conceived the idea for my opera *Cain and Abel*, to a libretto by Yossefa Even-Soshan – another work largely inspired by Tavori. At this point in my creative development, I focused primarily on writing chamber operas. The first was *Medea*, composed to a libretto by Rivka Kashtan in California in 1995 and premiered in Kfar Blum in 1997. *Cain and Abel* followed: it was completed in 2001, received its first performance in a superb studio recording (starring Doron Tavori, David Sebba, Chen Reiss and Adi Even-Or) and its stage premiere in 2002, at the Israeli Music Celebration in Jerusalem and at Tempus Fugit – an Israeli Biennale for Contemporary Music in Tel Aviv. My yearning for opera had already taken hold in every fibre of my being, realised at first in chamber media (*Cain and Abel* was already on a larger scale than *Medea*), but by then I'd already developed an appetite for a *grand opera*, featuring a full-fledged choir, soloists, and symphony orchestra.

Thus, the idea already germinated in 1999, but I knew I wasn't quite ready for it then, that I need to experiment on smaller scales first. The successes of my two chamber operas – first in Israel, then in Germany (Oper Köln's 2004 production of *Medea*) and Austria (a 2005 production of *Cain and Abel* by MusikWerstattWien, beside the Theater an der Wien) – further whetted my appetite.

During this period, my good friend Prof. Shlomo Izre'el gave me his book on the Akkadian myth of Adapa, and casually asked me: "Why don't you compose an opera on this subject?". His question fell on fertile ground, and

the seeds were sown for an *Adapa* opera in Akkadian (the myth's original language) and on the large scale that I so fervently wished for. Having thus been caught up by the idea, I began my in-depth investigation of this myth, on which I'll happy to elaborate later in this interview.

**2. To what extent, and in what ways, did your earlier work in ancient languages – especially the multimedia cycle *Old Stories*<sup>1</sup> – serve as prelude or preparation for *Adapa*?**

Musicologists are probably better qualified than me to answer this question. It requires an in-depth study of the four multimedia works known collectively as *Four Old Stories* – on their own, and in comparison with *Adapa*. For myself, I can only say that was indeed powerfully drawn to composing in ancient Semitic languages, as already demonstrated in *Four Old Stories* – and that this desire was further satiated in my work on *Adapa*. But I cannot point to a clear cause-and-effect or a conscious progression. *Four Old Stories* – which can be viewed broadly as a cycle – emerged in 1993-1995; each of the four works was composed separately, breathlessly, 'in the moment'. The *Adapa* project was completed about two decades later, in 2016 (I marked the composition as complete in 2014, but there was still creative work to be done on the premiere production), following a long trail of fascinating events over many years. The multimedia aspect, which had already been an integral part of *Four Old Stories*, has undergone a quantum leap in *Adapa*. In *Four Old Stories*, I'd simply declared my avoidance of pure, unadorned music. In *Adapa* I was dragged, or rather drawn into, an operatic project with unprecedented visual dimensions, as I will elaborate later. Perhaps my tendency to dig more deeply and intensely into all aspects of my work is part and parcel of the process. People tend to return to what's dear to them, constantly seeking to improve, as Naomi Shemer used to say; and this statement perfectly describes my obsessive tendency for digging deeper into my materials. A prominent example of this can be heard in compulsive, almost nit-picking treatment of Dan Pagis's poems in *Saga Portrait* (Op. 53, 2002).

<sup>1</sup> The cycle *Four Old Stories* contains four multimedia works: *The Goddess Anath* (Op. 26, 1993); *The Judgement of Solomon* (Op. 27, 1995); *Appeal to the Stars* (Op. 28, 1993-4); and *Daniel in the Den of Lions* (Op. 29, 1995).

In terms of the pitch-world, both *Four Old Stories* and *Adapa* emerge from the same prolonged process of intensification which my musical language had gone through for many years; I will expand on this point in my answer to question 8.

**3. Your two previous operas are based on familiar myths, yet both contain a “twist” which deviates from the original; but you’ve also written myth-inspired works which remain closer to the original, such as *Daniel in the Den of Lions*, *The Judgement of Solomon*. To what extent did you remain faithful to the original myth in *Adapa*? Where did you change it, and why?**

I would begin by making a clear distinction: *Daniel in the Den of Lions* (in Coptic) and *The Judgement of Solomon* (in Biblical Hebrew) both respond to myth – but they are not operas. The same holds for *The Goddess Anath* (in Ugaritic) and *Appeal to the Stars* (in Akkadian). In *Medea* and in *Cain and Abel*, I have immersed myself deeply in the operatic genre, which presents composers with a plethora of options, challenges and constraints, which easily lead one towards that special “twist” which often sweeps the composer’s mind and conception – and then sweeps the audience as well. The librettists for *Medea* and *Cain and Abel* both approached the respective myths in a very particular way, which openly deviated from the familiar narrative. Rivka Kashtan drew on existing yet unfamiliar versions of Medea’s story, and sought to present her, not just as a heinous murderess but also as a shaman who found herself in mental anguish in a foreign land – an approach which rendered the opera exceptionally attractive. This holds even more strongly for Yossefa Even Shoshan’s feminist take on the Cain and Abel myth, which introduced two female characters – the two lambs, who serve as the brothers’ sacrifice.

We must mention here the art of theatrical production and its contribution: as often happens in this genre, the opera is only a starting point, an invitation to construct entire worlds around the interpretation of the written libretto and music.

Here, in a nutshell, is what happened with the two operas.

*Medea*’s premiere production in Israel was imbued with a pastoral spirit, bathed in midnight lights, staged on the lawns of Kfar Blum (the kibbutz which hosts the annual chamber music festival where the production took

place), and the exterior walls of the auditorium functioned as the walls of Corinth. In Cologne, the action revolved around a refugee railway car where the restless Medea sat and from which she finally, in an act of desperation, hurled a grenade at the audience (during this period there were several attacks by female suicide bombers in Israel). The premiere stage production of *Cain and Abel* in Israel exuded the dazzling atmosphere of ancient ritual; it was a colourful production, replete with oriental-looking theatrical accessories. The Vienna production, on the other hand, aimed for minimalism – both in the use of colours and accessories, and in the erotic movement of the characters, who always remained close to the ground.

All this demonstrates that opera affords a wide scope for interpretive action. Not for nothing was I drawn to it, even before fully entering it: even in some of my earlier works, I have approached ancient myths and gave them a renewed, often theatrical treatment, equipped only with my own creativity and compositional tools. In *Adapa*, however, I went much further: the almost-magical allure of the genre’s myriad possibilities drew me so much that I have taken over the interpretation of the myth to a much fuller extent, and firmly led the production.

The most distinctive alteration I made to the original myth is central to its dramatic progression: I turned the South Wind into a feminine force which battles the protagonist, Adapa, until he can no longer resist her. At first, during the opera’s fourth and central scene, Adapa rejects her advances and finally breaks her wing – an act that symbolizes utter desolation, the breaking of cosmic life. Conversely, his copulation with her at the end of the opera symbolizes earthly fertility. This is a conscious change I made to the original myth.

**4. One crucial difference (at least as I feel it) between *Adapa* and your earlier treatments of myth is its distant, monumental character. *Dramatis personae* are not as fleshed out as in *Medea* and *Cain and Abel*; instead, they behave like symbols or archetypes. Was this your aim? You also mentioned Wagner as a model for operatic treatments of ancient myths – could you elaborate on this?**

I indeed aimed at this more archetypal presentation. I would say that you noted a major trend in *Adapa*, both in my treatment of the myth and in the source

materials. I eagerly seized the opportunity to treat such an ancient myth, so succinct in its poetic dimensions, and imbue new life into it, stretching it to wider, almost unprecedented dimensions of colour and movement, both musically and visually. For example – tracing the hours of the day through the different colours which dominate different scenes.

In a sense, I sought to achieve something reminiscent of Wagner's musical epics. I did not treat him as an explicit model, but I mention him as a *locus classicus* of operatic treatments of ancient myths, as if to say to myself – why can't this be done with our own region's myth, by a local, contemporary composer. I did not explicitly imitate Wagner. I must also mention the immense inspiration I drew from Akkadian (a local language – the most ancient Semitic tongue) and its percussive character.

I have become heavily involved in modifying and re-interpreting the ancient myth, an involvement, and not just as a composer: I am responsible for the video premiere of the opera, issued in 2016, where I am credited with “concept, scenario and direction”. I loved being reunited with “my own ancient Middle-Eastern totality”, as I wrote in the CD booklet, and in this context, I withdrew from the human dimension into the abstract dimension. As I further wrote in CD booklet:

Nothing here is exactly what we are accustomed to in human dimensions – the tragic, dramatic, terrifying social differences (for example, the class wars in society, as presented in the clash of cultures in Mozart's operas). Here, the sorrow is more mythic than human. The naked nymphs (whom I envisaged at the beginning of the opera while composing) form a mythic primordial entity, whereas the ripples on the sea are sensuous. The seductive women floating on the sea (the South Wind) represent sharpness, power, brightness, simplicity, almost primitiveness – and not the accepted feminine quality of gentleness. I tended towards both cosmic and erotic mind-sets in which, philosophically, the end of life is also its beginning.

**5. The opera was first presented, and currently exists, as a video opera, though the possibility of presenting it as a “conventional” opera remains open. At what point did you decide to turn it into a video opera – was this a decision made during the compositional process, or only after the score's completion?**

The decision to present the work as a video opera was a case of “making virtue of necessity”. This unique medium made several key aspects possible: the realization of constant movement; the special use of colour which connected each scene symbolically to a different hour of the day; the use of close-ups which helped turn the singers' costumes into part of the scenery; integrating the orchestral instruments into the visual drama through close-ups which illuminate their musical-theatrical significance; the use of the three major protagonists' body parts – especially their faces; turning the single chorus into three choirs through costume changes; etc.

When I first conceived of this opera in 1999, I began by constructing the initial dramatic infrastructure for my interpretation of the myth, and I offered it to several opera houses. Doors were opened, as I was already an internationally renowned composer, but they soon shut down again – because of the ever-present, frightened shock: How come? What sort of language is that? What kind of story is this? How can we entice the audience to come? How can one invest so much money in such a large-scale experiment?

Then I found myself, several years later, facing the decision to present the work as a video opera, producing it myself with a skilled team of trusted colleagues in Israel and Europe, and drawing primarily on the sound recording. The plan was to add most of the visual elements in post-production; it was necessary, however, to film the recording sessions themselves. In 2004, after I had decided upon this path, I withdrew to the Princess Hotel in Eilat, isolated myself there for several days, and constructed the sequence of 11 scenes with the sung replicas by the soloists (the three main protagonists) and the choir – based upon the myth as documented and edited by Shlomo Izre'el. By this point, I had already decided to add *Adapa's* “Copulation” with the South Wind to the myth, and I knew that this event will be part of the opera's 11th and final scene.

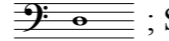

I should emphasize that I knew, from the very start, that the video version would represent a particular artistic concept – this was never meant to be a standard video production, merely a documenting a stage production. Thus, while most productions place the instruments in the orchestral pit, my production of *Adapa* turns them into actors, part of the stage action.

**6. To what extent do you consider the visual images in the video production an integral part of the opera?**

The visual imagery is an integral part of the video-opera production as I staged it. At the time of writing, in viewing this opera, we connect to the music through this genre, which introduced several innovations into the world of opera. All of this came into being through fantasy, as the process unfolded – not through a prior declaration of intent: I did not set out to create the work within this audio-visual genre. I should therefore stress, unequivocally, that the work can be staged in a more conventional way in the future – I would have no objections to any opera house or producer creating their own theatrical/visual interpretation, arising from their own imagination. Through the Israel Music Institute, we have published a proper, full-fledged score. The visual images are therefore integral to the premiere production, which can now be viewed online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhkbT9gHoLE>), but this does not preclude a new approach to the notated, published opera, which always remains available. I can only attest that approaching Akkadian as a sung language is challenging, rewarding experience in and of itself. Anyone who has no fear of risking these deep waters is welcome to take the plunge.

**7. The opera is scored for a full symphony orchestra, as befits as “Grand Opera”, yet it does not usually adopt the sonorities of the Western-symphony tradition. A similar gap can be sensed in the recent symphonic version of your song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*. What were your models and ideals when orchestrating this opera?**

In *Adapa*, I indeed sought to preserve the typical transparency of my orchestral language, despite employing full symphonic resources. One notable means of accomplishing this was the total separation between woodwinds and strings, though the combination of these two sections is essential for creating the ripples upon the sea in the opening scene. Note also what each of these sections does

during the Scene 4 (“Earth Requiem”), to support the vocal effects produced by the choir. Here, I made extensive use of quarter-tones, in the strings and woodwinds alike, combining this with a one of the guiding principles for the entire opera – namely the creation of *thick halos around individual notes*. In many of my works, I have developed the technique of doubling individual notes – and their adjacent seconds – with unisons and octaves; in *Adapa*, I have expanded this technique in several ways, including the use of orchestral quarter tones. Moreover: each scene is completely dominated by a single note: for examples, Scene 6 – the Sea God’s grand monologue – is focused around  ; Scene 2 – Adapa’s aria of submission to his God – is dominated by , which henceforth becomes “Adapa’s note”. Each of these notes is immediately followed by its surrounding halo.

You mentioned the symphonic version, sung in Arabic, of my song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*. The sound world I have brought to bear on this early work (1977/2012) reveals typical features of my orchestral writing which crystallised over the years (compare, for instance, with my *Fourth Symphony*, Op. 51, composed in 2000): obsessive doublings in the orchestra; deliberately hollow, fourth- and fifth-based harmonisations; using a specific sonority – in this case the harp – which constantly doubles the melodic line. In *Adapa*, as I already noted, the single dominant note in each scene is echoed, doubled by fourths, fifths and octaves, and extended in other ways. I should also note my expansion of the sound world through the unabashed use of natural noises – such as the dry rustling leaves, the grinding of stones, and water poured into basins – as new percussive elements. The existing orchestral percussion, for all their richness, seemed insufficient.

**8. What were the ideals which guided you in shaping your sound world, and how did you implement them in practice? In your notes you mention “Tsippi’s sonority”, which first emerged in your cantata *Like Two Branches*, and evolved through *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* and *Victoria*, culminating in *Adapa* (without mentioning *Four Old Stories*, which I always regarded as the most distinctive precedent for *Adapa* in your works). I would be grateful if you could elaborate on this.**

I should emphasize that *Four Old Stories* can be viewed, in retrospect, as part of the very air I breathe – especially in regards to the extra-musical, cultural contemplation of the ancient Middle East, and my yearning for the essence it evokes, which exerts a powerful, mythical-dramatic allure for me. Even prior to this, in the 1970s, I had begun to experience the joyful inspiration of the spiritual worlds which would later find expression in *Adapa*. The path towards my sound world had already erupted then, in the 1970s, albeit unknowingly. Perhaps it would be best if I could present actual musical examples from each of these works, from *Girl Butterfly Girl* (1977) through *Like Two Branches* (1986-1989) and *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo* (1987) and later *Victoria and the Men* (2001/2005). The children's opera *Oasis* (2010) is suffused with fourth- and fifth-based cells, but I will not draw upon it here. The ideals which informed all of my compositional acts will be mentioned explicitly – and they all culminate in *Adapa* (2014). This opera also represents a further stylistic leap, already mentioned in my answers to the previous question.

All the works discussed here are sung in Semitic languages – Arabic, Hebrew and Akkadian; my affinity with those languages intensified over the years. Each music example below is followed by an explanatory, analytic note.

**Example 1: *Girl Butterfly Girl*, original Eastern version (1977) – Song No. 1, bars 50-52 (from the Master Score)**

Tempo primo ♩ = 72

50 *mf* *mp*

Voice  
wa - dha - ta şub - ħin

Nai or Vln.  
*mp* *p*

Qanun or Ud  
*mf* *p*

This modestly-texture version, consisting solely of three melodic lines, reflects my initial forays into realising the sensation of quarter-tones through the use of major and minor seconds, especially vertically: C-sharp/C-natural; F-sharp/G-sharp; F-sharp embraced by E and G-sharp. The perfect fifths, too, are quite exposed. In this particular song, fragments and pitch-cells of Arabic *Maqāms* or modes, are joined together. In this music example, for instance, the predominant melodic line (as heard in the voice) sounds exactly like a descending Phrygian tetrachord.

**Example 2: *Girl Butterfly Girl*, original Western version (1977) – Song No. 1, bars 50-52 (from the Master Score)**

Tempo primo ♩ = 72

50 *mf* *mp*

Voice  
va - ye - hi ha - bo - ker

Flute  
*mp* *pp*

Piano  
*mf* *mp*

In precisely the same spot, in the Western version, the harmonic richness allowed by the piano further emphasises the aforementioned chromaticism through octave doublings, filled with fourths and fifths, which further underline the harmonic directionality explained above. In the Eastern instruments (Example 1), the final note in the lower voice was a C-quarter-flat played on an Eastern instrument; here it's been rendered as a B-natural. In the Eastern version, this note formed an “untuned” fifth with the sung F-sharp; here, this becomes a perfect – and doubled – fifth, which merges with the glowing sung voice above it. Furthermore, the C-sharp in this final chord continues the C-sharp/C-natural octave doubling in the first two measures, and adds

the chromatic timbre of a vertical major second combined with the B in the lower octave. This forms the initial hint at the use of fourth- and fifth-based cells as a means of filling in hollowed octaves, a feature which will become increasingly prominent in my harmonic language.

Example 3: Like Two Branches, bars 616-622

**60**  
**616** *Brillante, energico* ♩ = 132 *rit.* *A Tempo*

S. *ff*  
 - tta 'i dha ki - - la ka -

M.S. *ff*  
 - tta 'i dha ki - - la ka -

A. *ff*  
 - tta 'i dha ki - - la ka -

T. *ff*  
 - tta 'i dha ki - - la ka -

Ob. I *ff*

Ob. II *ff*

Kan. *ff*

Vcl. *ff*

Tars natural *ff*

**619** [a shift]

S. *f ff*  
 - d - ki - - la ta - lat 'u - ru - - ku - hu -

M.S. *f ff*  
 - d - ki - - la ta - lat 'u - ru - - ku - hu -

A. *f ff*  
 - d - ki - - la ta - lat 'u - ru - - ku - hu -

T. *f ff*  
 - d - ki - - la ta - lat 'u - ru - - ku - hu -

Ob. I *f ff*

Ob. II *f ff*

Kan. *f ff*

Vcl. *f ff*

Tars natural *f*

The cantata *Like Two Branches* (1989) marked a major breakthrough. The initial, hesitant explorations matured into confident, even bold strides.

The pure octave/unison in bar 616, in both the choral singing and instrumental playing, leads to a harmonic 'fan' of fourth- and fifth-based cells, enclosed within an octave frame in several registers. In this work, I felt that the exotic dimension of my harmonic language received its vindication. Any third-based sonorities are clarified and consolidated. The Spirit of the East also arises from the Arabic text, with its prominent emphatic (guttural) consonants. The unusual chamber ensemble (two oboes, *kanūn*, cello and tar drums) which supports the virtuoso choir, as well as the consistently a-symmetrical metric alterations, contribute to the distinctly non-European sound-world. The "breakthrough" involves the development of a consistent harmonic-melodic-rhythmic style, sustained throughout the 40-minute cantata sung in the beautifully poetic Literary Arabic of the sixth century; a style which was shaped through an extended, fascinating compositional process in 1986-1989.

**Example 4: *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo*, version for mezzo-soprano, 2 violins, viola & piano, Section D, bars 181-189**

The musical score for Example 4 consists of two systems of staves. The first system covers bars 181-184, and the second system covers bars 185-189. The vocal part (Mezzo-Soprano) is written in a 3/4 time signature with various metric alterations (6/4, 4/4, 5/4, 3/4). The instrumental parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Piano) are also in 3/4 time with similar metric changes. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 120$  is shown at the beginning of the first system, and  $\text{♩} = 84$  is shown at the beginning of the second system. The vocal line includes the lyrics: 'a - lla - ti min ag - li - ha ha - dam - tu ma ba - nay - tu. The second system includes the lyrics: min - 'ag - - - li - ha. The piano part features a complex harmonic structure with many tied notes and a 'hysterical mood' instruction. The score is marked with a box containing the number 182 at the start of the first system and 185 at the start of the second system. An arrow points to the right at the bottom right of the page.

187

M. S.  
kha - - - rag - tu min 'ag - li - ha su - lib - tu

Vln I  
p f

Vln II  
p f

Vla  
p f

Pno  
f

While working on *Like Two Branches*, I was also intensely involved in the composition of *Ballad of Expectd Death in Cairo* (1987). In one exhilarating moment, the stylistic phenomena which were already prevalent in my musical language emerged all the more powerfully to express the despondent, turbulent soul of the Cairo-based poet Sallah Abd el-Şabur. The composition was largely syllabic, and the poet's deepest, most personal desires inspired a supple melodic line. In his waning days, the poet speaks of his own poetry as a destructive mistake. Against the *glissando* singing and the leaps which seem to express the soul's innermost cries, the strings project fast thundering rhythms, supported by the piano. During the climax of this phrase in bar 189 (on the word "şulibtu" – "I've been crucified"), the instruments' expression is somewhat mollified, contrasting with the vocal line which reaches a *fortissimo* on its highest note. All these features were deliberately intensified through the use of octaves, fifths and fourths – both horizontal and vertical – and this harmonic device serves to enhance the expression of horror through a particularly penetrating sound. We've moved far away indeed from the thirds of traditional harmony, which would have sounded too soft and comfortable. At the time, I noted that this is piece is akin to an *opera seria* aria.

Example 5: *Victoria and the Men*, bars 59-65

59  $\text{♩} = 72$   
mp-mf

Vic.  
ha ha

Gtr. I  
(p+)

Gtr. II  
(p+)

Gtr. III  
slow  
(p+) with flat index's flesh

Gtr. IV  
slow  
(p+) rasg. with side of index's flesh

Vcl.  
quite slow

Perc. I  
Congas (+improviz.)

Perc. II  
Congas (+improviz.)

Perc. III  
Vib.  
(Vib.)



2

63 *mf-mp*

ha (a)

Gtr. I

Gtr. II

Gtr. III

Gtr. IV

Vcl. *gliss.*

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III (Vib.)

By 2005, I had composed several song cycles, symphonies and operas, gaining greater sophistication in my treatment of sonority and orchestration, while also creating several instances of internal operatic struggle. Both developments facilitated the intensification of my dramatic expression.

All this fed into my composition of the operatic scene *Victoria and the Men*, which takes place in the same Eastern world, this time infused with my increased capacity for sophisticated development. Towards the end of the scene, the

main protagonist, Victoria, sings an a-symmetrical, seemingly spontaneous, wordless vocalise. The four guitarists lean on the notes she sings, enhancing them with octave doublings and various seconds in complex combinations, as well as constant rhythmic counterpoints. Two percussionists create a doleful rhythmic movement; the third, who plays actual pitches, enriches these rhythmic units with a sonority that corresponds with the guitars' sound. The cello *obbligato*, which penetrates the texture with its intense timbres, shines above all of them, playing the most prominent counterpoint to the sung voice, without deviating from the prevailing intervallic language (unison, octave, seconds, fourths and fifths).

If *Girl Butterfly Girl* represented initial, hesitant explorations of an emerging a musical language, *Like Two Branches* signifies the consolidation of that language. In *Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo*, fragments of this language were deliberately used to focus emotional expression, whereas in *Victoria and the Men* all these elements melted into a sophisticated sound-world which does not lose, even for a moment, the exotic whiff which became so characteristic of my language.<sup>2</sup>

2 The full score of *Victoria and the Men* can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/k5y5pkn4>. The scene can be viewed here: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/video40a.html>. An audio version is available for listening and download here: <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/disco2009.html>.

Example 6a: Adapa, Scene 5, bars 1-8 (from the vocal score)

SCENE 5  
DUET OF ANU AND ILABRAT (DUET IN ARIOSI)  
(Bass) (Men Choir)

ANU Ist.

♩ = 60  
(Xyl.)  
*mp*  
(B. Cl., D. B.)  
(Tuba, D. Bn)

3 Anu Bass *mf*  
A - Why

5 Anu Bass *f* *mp*<sup>x</sup>  
MMI

7 Anu Bass - A - MMI

Example 6b: Adapa, Scene 5, bars 18-29 (from the vocal score)

18 (♩ = 60) *mp* *f*  
Anu Bass SE - BET U - MI -  
seven days  
*short slow trill*


(B. Cl., D. B.) *mp* *f*  
*mp* (Tuba, D. Bn)

21 (♩ = 60) *f* *ff* *f* *ff*  
Anu Bass A - NA MA land  
toward land  
(Xyl.)  
(Trbs)

25 *f* *ff* *f* *mf* *f*  
Anu Bass - MA - TI -  
(Xyl.)  
(B. Cl., D. B.)  
(Tuba, D. B.)

28 *mf* *f* *mf* *fff*  
Anu Bass LA not  
(Trps Flz.)  
*ff*

A full-fledged revolution took place in 2014! Yet it had its precedents. This time, I was operating within the much larger dimensions of Grand Opera, using vast forces and presenting sung Akkadian (the most ancient Semitic language, already used in my piece *Appeal to the Stars* from *Four Old Stories*) for an entire hour. Within this context, my highest timbral ambition was to achieve the greatest enrichment of the individual note which forms the focal point within each of the opera's 11 scenes. The temporal dimension allowed me to extend and prolong that note – or the notes leading to or away from it, or which shadow it with specific intervals. Yet through it all that note never loses its position as the scene's focal point. The distinctive atmospheric characterization of an ancient, distant world which draws us in with its imaginary character, is typical of this grand opera, which does not emphasize the psycho-dramatic aspect. The Akkadian language, whose sharply percussive character is clearly enunciated by the singers, is of major importance to creating this atmosphere.

I have chosen to present two segments from the beginning of the fifth scene, revolving around the *basso profundo* character of the Sky God, Anu. The enriched focal point of this scene is . I have drawn the musical illustration here from the vocal score; however, the instruments have clearly been pointed out, enabling us to follow the orchestration.

The rhythmic and orchestral patterns are particularly clear in the beginning (the first segment), and are further developed later (as illustrated in the second segment). Distinctive outbursts which deviate from this standard can be discerned in the fanfare-like effect of the trumpets in bars 18, 20, 21 and 29, and in the surprising, even somewhat frightening, vocal outburst in bar 29: yet this sung B is only a second away from the main note, A, surrounding it with a halo of seconds, which belongs to the 'halo principle' – a firm, typical feature of my musical language in this opera. For rhetorical purposes, this second is expanded as its notes are placed in different octave registers.

## *Adapa* - Another World

### 2. Said about *Adapa*

#### in the Composer's Lifetime

(Edited alphabetically by speaker's last name)

*The following statements were gathered after several screenings of the video version of *Adapa*, prior to that version's uploading to Youtube:*

- *The world premiere screening at Asia Hall, Tel Aviv Museum, as part of the Israeli Music Celebration, October 7, 2016*
- *The screening at Jerusalem National Library, November 14, 2016*
- *The screening at Tel Aviv Cinematheque, May 24, 2017*
- *The screening at Tel Aviv University, Rosenberg Bldg., June 18, 2017 (part of a study day moderated by Prof. Shlomo Izre'el)*
- *Additional screenings in Israel and abroad*

---

Astounding, pioneering, light years away from what is heard today and what you yourself have done so far, in every way possible. In your own way, you are constantly and persistently determining your unique niche in the world of artistic music.

#### **Dr. Astrith Baltsan**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv University*

---

It is different – there is no such thing in music. There is no such thing at all. It does not resemble anything. You have created something totally new, from every aspect; including an entirely new visual-musical medium. You've created a primordial language which has not existed before. I'm lost for words. Primal and futuristic, and my senses are in shock.

#### **Eyal Bat**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv Museum*

---

Diving into a world; all the senses float in it and move into a different existence. I am still inside the 'trip' we have experienced thanks to you and your cooperative partners in this world. What a gift to the soul! And finally, a consolation: Adapa, like us, has not gained eternal life... but one of us really did earn immortality. Even your 70th birthday seems like an irrelevant coordinate.

**Noga Eshed**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv Museum*

---

The music and video are wonderful, as is their combination.

**Dr. Gila Flam**

*Following the screening at the National Library*

---

Very moving. The beautiful video added to the impressive music – their combination was a veritable work of art. Fine craftsmanship on the highest level in each medium and in their combination.

**Prof. Harai Golomb**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv Museum*

---

Very impressive. The opera offers a fascinating, sometimes hypnotic combination between the abstract and the immediate. Unlike your earlier myth-based opera, *Cain and Abel*, here there is hardly any sense of confrontation or interaction between the characters; Adapa's role – the closest thing to a representative of humanity in the myth – is sharply characterized, but the other characters are portrayed as archetypes, important for what they represent rather than for their role in the actual story. Text and music allow us to imagine ourselves into the myth, decode its relevance for each of us – and thus fulfil what has arguably been the true role of myth in human society. This effect is aided and intensified by the music's sensuous power and original palette. The concluding scene is especially seared into the memory: while

justifying its name as a hymn of fertility, it does not generate an unambiguous happy ending, providing instead a conclusion which is simultaneously gloomy and optimistic.

**Dr. Uri Golomb**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv Museum*

---

My impression is that a world is being created in the course of this piece. I loved the way you have chosen to change the myth about death to an incentive for life.

**Judith Katz** Installations artist

*Following the screening at Tel Aviv Cinematheque*

---

A work of genius.

**Danny Orstav**

*Following the debut screening at Tel Aviv Museum*

---

One of your most successful compositions, in strictly musical terms, moving constantly between opposite poles: realism and surrealism; the mythological and the avant-garde; the clear and the vague; the concrete and amorphous.

**Prof. Ruben Seroussi**

*Following screening at the Composition Seminar, the Buchman-Mehta School of Music, Tel Aviv University, November 5, 2016*

---

I enjoyed it immensely. It was wonderful how you recreated the myth from the phonetic sounds of the ancient Mesopotamian language. Adapa's vocal part aroused genuine curiosity, and transferring everything to a language of screen and sound was such a right thing to do, in this Age of Screens that we live in! And how it moves all the time – an opera in motion: it was fascinating to see the movements of

the actor's mouth, or a camera closing on a thread of fabric. I suddenly realized that the moving sets were the fabrics in the choir's costumes. Music and performance were both superlative. This is a perfect work of art. I remember that I also loved the combination of music and visual images in *Daniel in the Den of Lions*, where I also remember the special treatment of the eyes.

**Sara Shoham**

*Following the screening at Tel Aviv Cinematheque*

---

Your new opera is SO original!

**Nancy van de Vate**

*(President of Vienna Modern Masters CD label, October 2016, after receiving the CD)*

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Tsippi, I have just finished watching *Adapa* for the third time this week. A vast, extremely profound experience, and undoubtedly the most wonderful Israeli opera I have ever heard or seen.

The music is, of course, first and foremost, but the entire production is extraordinary, full of content, a variety of colours, and breath-taking beauty.

The special sound you have created for each scene, the orchestration, the wind instrument choirs, the archaic/modern melodies, the harmony that leads confidently from one tone to another, from phrase to phrase... there are not enough words to describe how mesmerized I was by the piece, from beginning to end.

I am actually speechless. This piece should to be studied and there should be a way to distribute it around the world in every possible forum.

A real wonder.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

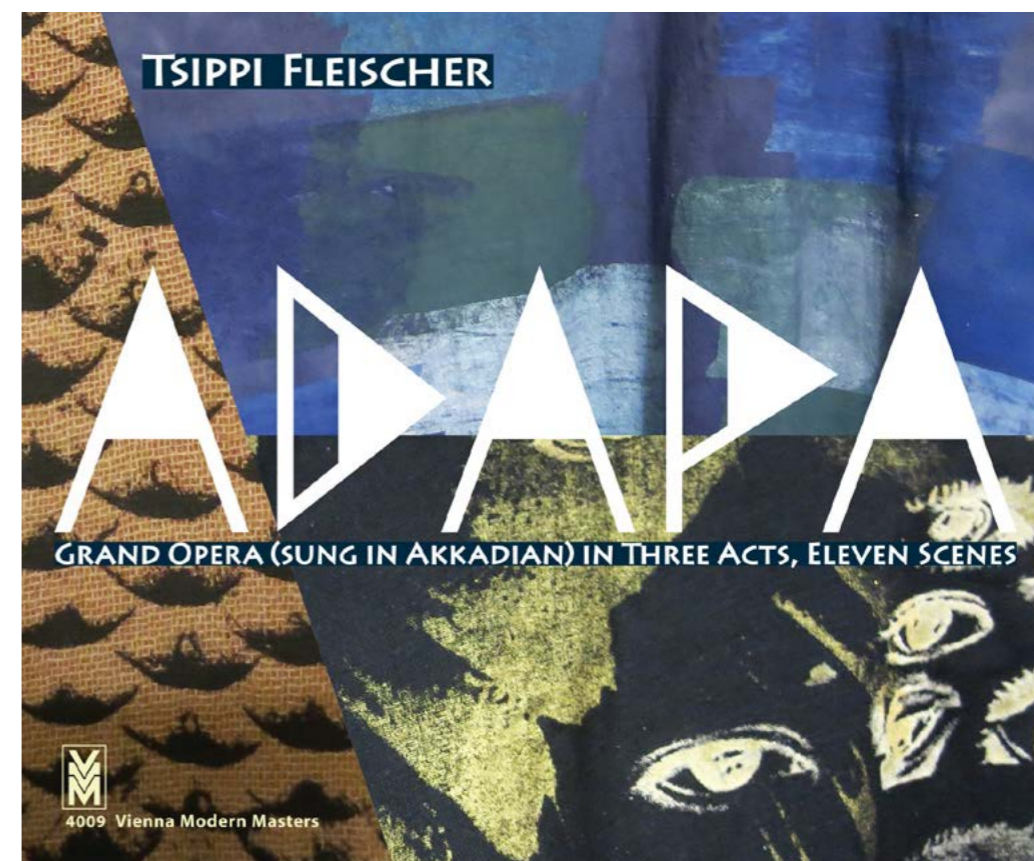
**Dr. Avishai Yaar**

*Following late viewing (July 16, 2021)*

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# Adapa - Expertise

From the Depths of the Compositional Process



Libretto: Shlomo Izre'el (Israel), after the Akkadian source

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

### Scene 2

### Scene 3

## ACT TWO

### Scene 4

### Scene 5

### Scene 6

## ACT THREE

### Scene 7

### Scene 8

### Scene 9

### Scene 10

### Scene 11

## **Adapa, Adapa meets the South Wind**

**Overtura pastorala** (orchestra only, pictorial)

**Adapa has just arisen from the bottom of the sea; he sings for Ea, his master/creator**

**The South Wind arrives; Adapa confronts her**

## **Drought and desolation: Adapa prepares to ascend to Heaven**

**Earth Requiem (Hymn of the Painful Earth)**

**Duet of Anu and Ilabrat (men's choir)**

**Ea's long (misleading) Aria of Guidance**

## **Adapa ascends to Heaven, tours around, descends to Earth**

**Adapa ascends to Heaven** (orchestra only, pictorial)

**Duet of Dumuzi and Gizzida (men's choir) with Adapa**

**Anu and Adapa converse in Heaven**

**The tour of Heaven; Adapa descends to Earth**

**The South Wind arrives again: Adapa copulates with her in the course of Earth's "Hymn to Fertility"**

Tsippi Fleischer

**Adapa – Expertise**  
From the Depths of the Compositional Process

The Musical Construction

(notes from the composer's kitchen, while the pot is bubbling)

Abstract:

The musical style of the work indicates developments in Tsippi Fleischer's musical language: the sound is richly thickened, giving the work an exotic atmosphere. Each protagonist receives his or her own pitch: Adapa receives **f**, Ea the God of the Sea receives **d**, and Anu God of the Heavens, **g**. Each individual pitch is thickened with layers of horizontal quarter tones and vertical layers of fourths; this preference for the fourth interval is characteristic of the composer's musical language. The orchestra is prominent and dramatic – in the depiction of Adapa's ascent to the heavens, for example, or of a tour through this mysterious space. The choirs, soloists and orchestra portray the roles of gods and forces of nature. The image of the main protagonist, Adapa, is more human.

Each scene is clearly dominated by a central pitch. In the opening Abstract, the central pitches of the three main protagonists were marked.

In the following diagram, still in the composer's handwriting, we see how she plans this pitch centrality in every scene. Central pitches are shown here for all the protagonists and images that filled her mind, scene by scene, throughout the opera's composition.

Also noted at a very early stage were the lengths of the sung pitches allocated to each of the three main protagonists: relatively short for Adapa, medium for Ea, long for Anu.

Very early stage of planning the score:  
the composer marks the central  
pitches of the various scenes one after  
the other, in her own handwriting

Note: The scene numbers appear inside double squares

The image shows a page of handwritten musical sketches. At the top, there are six staves of music. The first staff has six scenes marked with double squares containing numbers 1 through 6. Below each scene, there are notes and labels: 'Orch', 'Adapa', 'Fisher men', 'South Wind', 'Adapa', 'Anu', and 'Ea'. There are also some musical notes and symbols on these staves. Below the first staff, there are several more staves, some of which are empty. There are handwritten notes in Hebrew and English, including 'pitch', 'pitch sketch', and '16.2.14'. The handwriting is in black ink on a white background.

Cont. next page →

Adapa - Expertise

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the piece 'Adapa'. It consists of several staves with notes, rests, and various markings. Annotations include 'Orch', 'Ten's', 'Bar's', 'Anu', 'Fa', 'South Wind', and 'Adapa'. There are also some numbers in boxes (7, 8, 9, 10, 11) and some Hebrew text. The score is written in black ink on white paper.

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise



The women's choir portraying the nymphs, filmed from behind a gauze/veil

**ACT ONE**

**Adapa; Adapa meets the South Wind**

**First Scene - "Overtura Pastorala"**

Orchestra only, pictorial

The entrance of the women's choir at its end, which was noted by the composer as a dance of nymphs (naked?) hovering over the sea

Quote from the composer's sketches: "A kaleidoscope of themes and elements in subtle polyphony, in ritornelli (similar to minimalism), clusters with internal movement, creating a somewhat hypnotic, mantra-like atmosphere".

A number of sections have been marked detailing the ripples of the waves. These are the waves of the Persian Gulf coast, 5,000 years ago. When the composer wrote that "the sea is full of secrets" she depicted it musically using fleeting entrances of solo gestures in the wind instruments' replicas, or in exotic percussion instruments taken from nature – for example, two sandstones from the sea knocking against each other. All this activity hovers here and there over the orchestra, moving in long lines containing submerged quarter tones (the quarter tones are almost indistinguishable because of the ongoing breathiness of the lines; the strings are very helpful in orchestrating this pastoral expression).

**Attached below:**

The composer's handwritten manuscript, pages 192-193 of the Expertise, are noted as part of the draft of the first scene, both in her initial handwriting.

Page 194 below is taken from the full score where we see the orchestral lines: pay attention to the trills and ritornelli in the strings and with them, to a similar layer in the oboes, intensifying the ripples of the sea. The last illustration of the notes for this scene [page 195] is taken from the vocal score after the women's choir, the nymphs, begin to sing. The purple color of the thin fabric they are wearing blends with the blue of the sea. See the picture on the previous page.

Handwritten musical score for 'Adapa' with dynamic markings and annotations. The score is divided into measures 1-30 and 31-40. Annotations include 'pitch level', 'dynamics', and 'non symmetrical entrances'. A diagram shows 'Vc1' and 'Ct' parts.

Measure 1: *du rech one continue*

Measure 2: *perc 3 ~mp/mf*

Measure 4: *1/2" perc 2*

Measure 7: *mf*

Measure 10: *mf*

Measure 12: *perc 2 mp*

Measure 14: *perc 2 mf*

Measure 17: *perc 2*

Measure 20: *mf*

Measure 22: *f*

Measure 24: *mf*

Measure 27: *mp*

Measure 31: *mp*

Measure 34: *mf*

Measure 37: *mf*

Measure 39: *mf*

Measure 40: *mf*

Annotations: *pitch level*, *dynamics*, *non symmetrical entrances*, *dynamics suggestive with pointing*, *life level*, *level*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *perc 2*, *perc 3*, *perc 4*, *perc 5*, *perc 6*, *perc 7*, *perc 8*, *perc 9*, *perc 10*, *perc 11*, *perc 12*, *perc 13*, *perc 14*, *perc 15*, *perc 16*, *perc 17*, *perc 18*, *perc 19*, *perc 20*, *perc 21*, *perc 22*, *perc 23*, *perc 24*, *perc 25*, *perc 26*, *perc 27*, *perc 28*, *perc 29*, *perc 30*, *perc 31*, *perc 32*, *perc 33*, *perc 34*, *perc 35*, *perc 36*, *perc 37*, *perc 38*, *perc 39*, *perc 40*.

Diagram: *Vc1*, *Ct*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *perc 2*, *perc 3*, *perc 4*, *perc 5*, *perc 6*, *perc 7*, *perc 8*, *perc 9*, *perc 10*, *perc 11*, *perc 12*, *perc 13*, *perc 14*, *perc 15*, *perc 16*, *perc 17*, *perc 18*, *perc 19*, *perc 20*, *perc 21*, *perc 22*, *perc 23*, *perc 24*, *perc 25*, *perc 26*, *perc 27*, *perc 28*, *perc 29*, *perc 30*, *perc 31*, *perc 32*, *perc 33*, *perc 34*, *perc 35*, *perc 36*, *perc 37*, *perc 38*, *perc 39*, *perc 40*.

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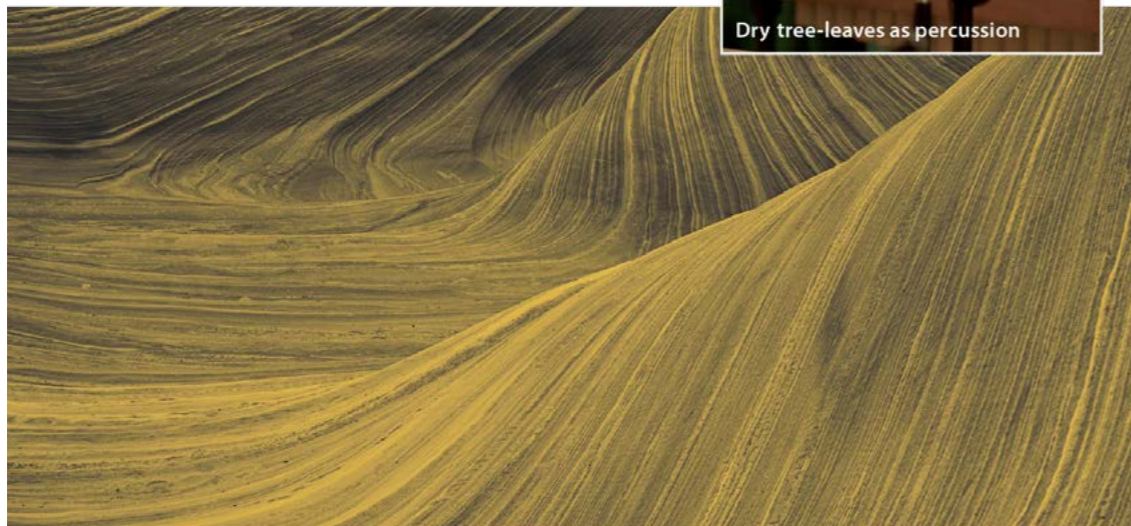


## Second Scene

**Adapa has just arisen from the bottom of the sea;  
he sings for Ea, his master/creator**

This is one long aria for Adapa.

Quote from the composer's sketches: "In direct continuation of the first scene (this sense of continuity is caused by the calming orchestral accompaniment after the nymphs disappear), I build patterns in Adapa's voice with vocalises (within the context of the text, of course), with notes from the countertenor's best high pitches, and with a vocal line that constitutes a variable motif moving around itself, around the pitch . The short note durations, the eighth and quarter notes, will stand out in the vocal line, but the crises (the anti-madness responses) of long sounds with very short edges will also be prominent. The orchestration shows the duality of the harp – chimes - glockenspiel "block" (noted in orange in the sketch) vis-a-vis the cyclical "block" of the English Horn and the oboe, in their radiance (this block is written in turquoise). The instruments always form the body that corresponds with Adapa's pitches. The harp reinforces the limits of the melodic ductus (e.g., the same central pitch **f**) in hollow octaves, and in the sketch one sees the blocks of sound noted in pencil – (i.e., a neutral color) that thicken the **f**."



Here are three illustrations from the draft to illustrate this (bars 39-41 have been highlighted) – these bars as well as the sections that follow appear on the right-hand side of the tattered sheet of notes (note the orange and turquoise). At this early stage the vocal line is already precise and complete, including the Akkadian text. Here is the draft page where bars 39-41 appear and you can see a little of the continuation. The contralto vocal line already appears on the upper staff, and the lower staff contains hints of the accompanying texture.



Bars 39-41 from the vocal score: the path from sketch to vocal score is faithfully charted (many hints for orchestration are noted in the piano part – this is the way the composer works):

Adapa  
C. Ten.

39 *mp* TA - KA E - - - LLU  
(4) your spell (spell) - holy

(Cl.)  
(E. Hn) *p*

40 *mp-mf*

41 *f*

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Bar 39 is derived from the full score and brings in most – but not all – of the orchestra. More winds join the selection we see here; the string orchestra develops the thickening around the central pitch **f** (e.g., the **g<sup>b</sup>** that even merges with the beginning of the melody), **e**, **e** with a decorative trill on **f**; **a** is the fifth that functions as a somewhat empty shadow (perfect fifth) of **e**, which is important in thickening the **f** from below. Note that the very beginning of Adapa’s motif strongly emphasizes the movement around the central **f**. In the sketches, the composer wrote that this theme would strongly mark Adapa’s entrances, even though it may appear in transpositions. In the end, she almost entirely stopped herself from including such transpositions throughout the opera.

“TAKA ÉLLU” (Akkadian) means the magic words of the spell. Literally this translates to “spell-holy” following the Akkadian syntax. In modern English, the expression is “holy spell” (the adjective before the noun) – and in context: your holy spell, Master (Adapa is praising his god here – Ea the God of the Sea).

Section Two: **The Composer’s Testimonies**

39

Ob. I *mp*

E. H. *p* *pp*

Cl. I *mp*

Tuba *p*

Adapa C. Ten. *mp*  
 (4) TA - KA E  
 your spell

Vln I *p*

Vln II *p*

Vla *p*

Vcl. 1,2 *p*

Vcl. 3,4 *p*

D. B. *p*

*nonsymmetrical moving pitch by quarter tones and less than quarter, no trem.*

### Third Scene

#### The South Wind arrives; Adapa confronts her

The scene consists of three sections:  
**The South Wind Arrives; The Meeting Between Adapa and The South Wind; The Struggle**

In the first part, the percussion and brass wind instruments are very prominent – this is a stormy orchestral passage. At the beginning of the duet between the South Wind (the women’s choir) and Adapa, the special theme of the South Wind stands out in the sparkling, powerful singing of the women’s choir: a melodic movement in clusters of seconds in three voices with the now familiar nature of the orchestra continues until Adapa enters with the sung gestures we now know well from the second scene. His entrance this time is brief, but his presence grows significantly in the third section – the struggle: a very stormy melodic line confronting the orchestra that continues to represent the South Wind (this time without the women’s choir).

Let us look at the beginning of the scene (bars 1-5). We will follow the particularly interesting rhythms of the Temple Block in the draft (highlighted with a yellow marker) and immediately afterwards we’ll look at the same place in the full score. The Temple Block rhythms are also highlighted here in yellow marker. Note: We have a double rhythmic counterpoint set against the thunderous Temple Block rhythms:

the three double basses etc., and the wind instruments .

Here is the section of the draft and immediately after it, the same section of the full score. In the draft you can clearly see the rhythm symbols in the double-basses beneath the Temple Block, and it also appears in words in the draft – for the two trumpets and the two trombones: the rhythms, the syncopations also occasionally create a sense of some kind of symmetry (secondary, of course) and this is an important body ... and clearly their doubling, as needed, syncopations on a background of percussion instruments and double-bass ... going wild with asymmetry and an octave jump in the trumpets (marked with a light pink marker in the draft). We have thus sharpened our examination of the draft, focusing on the points mentioned above.

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Excerpt from the draft (the beginning of Scene 3)

Handwritten musical score for a scene titled "[THE SOUTH WIND] ARRIVES". The score is written for a full orchestra and includes the following parts and markings:

- Tempo/Style:** *Allegro* and *Agitato*.
- Time Signature:** 4/8.
- Key Signature:** A major (one sharp).
- Measure Numbers:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Instrumentation:** Flute (Fl), Clarinet (Cl), Bassoon (Bsn), Trumpet (Tp), Trombone (Tbn), Percussion (Perc), Violin (Vn), Viola (Va), Cello (Vcl), Double Bass (Cb).
- Annotations:**
  - Handwritten notes in Hebrew and English, such as "Perce...".
  - Red and yellow highlighting on specific measures.
  - Arrows and brackets indicating musical relationships or dynamics.
  - Boxed sections containing text, possibly lyrics or performance instructions.
- Page Markers:** "Draft" and "3" in a box at the top right.

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Scene 3, the same place in the full score  
(Scene 3, Bars 1-5)

# SCENE 3

## THE SOUTH WIND ARRIVES, ADAPA CONFRONTS HER (total 3:00)

### I THE SOUTH WIND ARRIVES [ORCHESTRA]

A

♩ = 68

2

3

4

5

The musical score is for the orchestral piece "I THE SOUTH WIND ARRIVES [ORCHESTRA]". It is in 4/8 time with a tempo of 68. The score includes parts for Tpt I, Tpt II, Trb. I, Trb. II, Timp., Perc. (Wood Block and Temple Block), and D. B. (Double Bass). The percussion section is highlighted in yellow. The score is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *ff*, *mf*, and *molto vib.*. The score is divided into five measures, with bar numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 indicated above the staves.

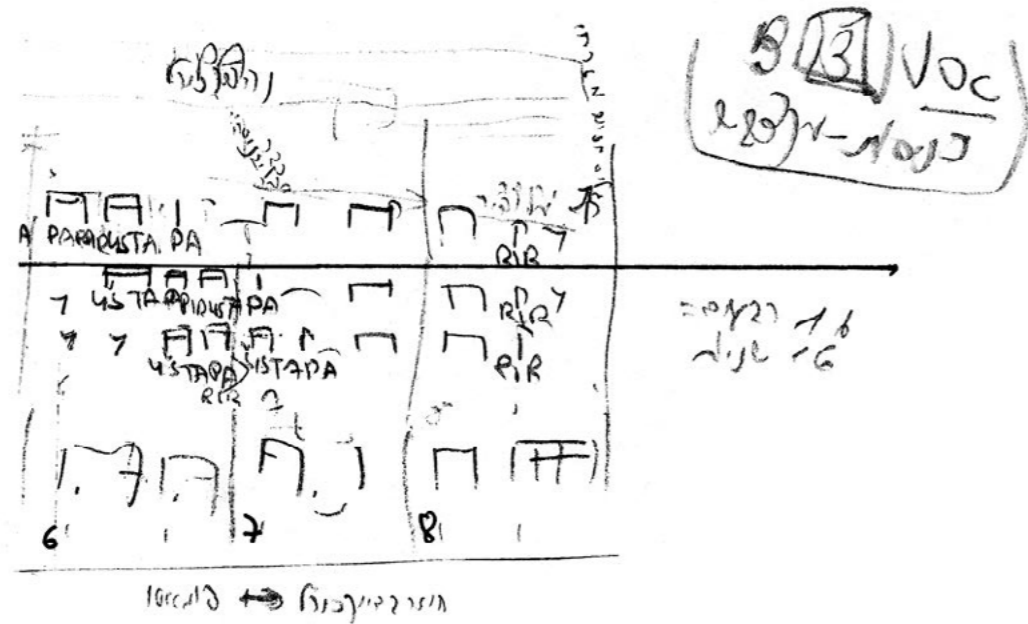
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We saw an excerpt from the draft of the beginning of the first section of the Temple Block is highlighted with a yellow marker.

During rehearsals it turned out that the trumpets could not play a precise octave jump in ascending glissando, so their glissando was eventually marked to Oleg Stasuk): we will still mark something parallel that is quite precise and aesthetic. I'm sure the trumpet players will know what to do.

The second place chosen from the third scene shows the exact location of the vocal entrance of the “sparkling, powerful women’s choir”. In the draft, bars 6, 7 and 8 present the motif in its authentic location (i.e., its location while constructing the sketch of the passage). These bars then become bars 36 (with an upbeat in bar 35), 37 and 38 in the full score and in the vocal score. This is a very energetic fugato: at first, we have the three bars with the vocal texture. The drawing shows the passage from the draft:

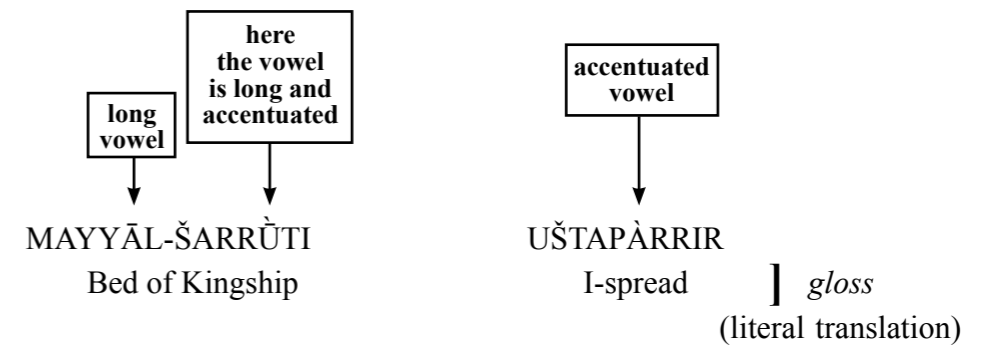


And here we immediately see the same place in the vocal score: bars 36 (with an upbeat in bar 35), 37 and 38 [immediately below]. The outburst of the South Wind begins with a different theme\*



on the word MAYYĀL- chordal and then imitative; Then the motif we're already familiar with from the draft comes in on the word UŠTAPĀRRIR this time in fugato-stretto. \*\*

The Akkadian word UŠTAPĀRRIR means “I padded”. Before this word two more words appear, MAYYĀL-ŠARRŪTI, meaning “royal bed”. The short Akkadian sentence in precise linguistic transcription also shows the length of the vowels and accentuation:



\* In this score ˘ is a standard caesura; ˆ is a snatched breath; ˆˆ is an even more snatched breath.  
 \*\* TF: I made a note at the top of the page to remind myself to emphasize the strong, percussive pronunciation of the double consonants in Akkadian during rehearsals.

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II  
DUET (BETWEEN ADAPA AND THE SOUTH-WIND)  
Women Choir sings the South-Wind's part

**B** 31  $\text{♩} = 68$

S. (8+9) MA - YYA - L ŠA - RRU - TI MA - YYA - - -  
Bed of kingship Bed

M. S. MA - YYA - L ŠA - RRU - TI MA - YYA -  
Bed of kingship Bed

A. MA - YYA - L ŠA - RRU - TI MA - YYA -  
Bed of kingship Bed

(Vib., Chimes)

35 *mf* 36 37 38

S. - LA UŠ-TA - PA-RRIR UŠ - TA - PA - - - RRIR  
I - spread

M. S. - - - LA UŠ - TA - PA - RRIR PA - - - RRIR  
I spread

A. - - - LA UŠ - TA - PA - RRIR PA - - - RRIR  
I spread

*f* *mf* *mp*

In the Akkadian syntax the direct object precedes the word containing the subject together with the predicate – the verb “I spread / padded”. These are the South Wind’s words of seduction that burst out suddenly. She’s radiant with mythical femininity, as she tries to seduce Adapa to sleep with her. Translated into modern speech the words read: “I have spread a royal bed”.

It is worth mentioning the very prominent percussive statement in the way Adapa’s voice rings out:

LĀ TAKAŠŠADINNI (“you shall not overpower me, South Wind”) from the third section of the scene, in which Adapa’s bold singing stars against the South Wind – this is the stormy music of the orchestra (the South Wind forcibly grapples with his body) as he risks his life in his struggle with her.



The image of the raging sea reflected in the turbulent sounds of the symphony orchestra (The South Wind in the third section of the scene)

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**Act Two**

**Drought and desolation; Adapa prepares to ascend to Heaven**

**Fourth Scene**

**"Earth Requiem" (Hymn of the Painful Earth )**

**A very picturesque scene performed by a mixed choir with a profusion of effects, to amplify the sights of the drought and the sense of desolation; this is after the wing of the South Wind was broken in the previous scene**

The Akkadian text received multilayered compositional treatment. The thematic material consists of constantly repeated lower and upper pedal points, in solos on parts of the text (for example, the word ŠÁPLIŠ , meaning “below”, ELĒNU, meaning “above”, and most importantly the South Wind itself – ŠÚTU). One could say that each word as I saw it – both in terms of what I literally saw with my own eyes, and in my perception of the myth itself – became an expanded world that I expressed through breaking down words and syllables and through repetitions. In my composition I was so mesmerized by the images of the ancient mythological text that I even painted the same word with a number of different thematic images. And that is not all: basing my choices on the strongly phonetic nature of the words, I chose a specific voice for each word. For example, I chose baritones to sing the word ŠÁMMU, meaning “grass”. The words of the text are like beads on a necklace – one can play with their order at any point. Therefore, the chronological order of the composition (meaning, what we hear first and what we hear later) is not at all faithful to the order of the sentences in the given mythological text. My desire to heap up the images of the desert, to flood the eye and ear of the listener / viewer of the opera, is what determined the flow of the music, while making maximum use of the choirs available to me. In this scene I used the mixed choir, with solo voices from within the choir “tearing” away from it upwards or downwards. The large structure includes two repetitions of the entire selection of text lines and words . We can really feel when the second part begins; I made sure to keep the first line of text at the beginning of each of the two parts.

SEBET – ÚMI                      ŠÚTU  
seven days                      the South Wind ] *gloss* (literal translation)

Let us approach the special language of this scene with the following examples that will illustrate my explanations above.

Here are bars 20-24 from the sketch page: the words chosen for the entrance of the high voices of the women at this point, deliberately brightly penetrative through singing parallel seconds

TS'ĒRU    PALKÚ  
Steppe    wide ] *gloss* (literal translation)

– are very visible in the sketch, and there is even a sharp solo burst marked on the word PALKÚ in a winding glissando (beginning on the g).

Note: It was my custom to note bar lines in the sketches that became “final”, i.e., relevant to the score. I used the word “bottom” (encircled by a rosy line) for the motorics of background images or pedal points in different “formats”.


Let's look at the same bars in the vocal score: the voices of the soprano and the mezzo-soprano move in parallel seconds. In the end, the conductor asked not to split the sopranos and mezzo-sopranos, but to let the sopranos sing the g etc. and the mezzo-sopranos, the f etc...; the voices sing a descending line in a melodic leap of a minor third or augmented second. Meanwhile a mezzo-soprano soloist sings the steep glissando. In this way, we can observe the vocal pedal point better here. And what is it? A whistle similar to the effect of a desert wind (bars 20-22).

The consonant S from SEBET ÚMI also serves as one of the prominent pedal points.


Turning to the orchestration for this moment (which can be well understood from the vocal score): in bar 19 a fast and free movement of clarinets and bassoons playing quietly *p*, like a rustling background, accompanies a long

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decrecendo in the choir in bar 19 (this is a fourth); whereas in bars 20-24 certain wind instruments are chosen to double the voices. The main pitch in this scene is g. It stands out everywhere.

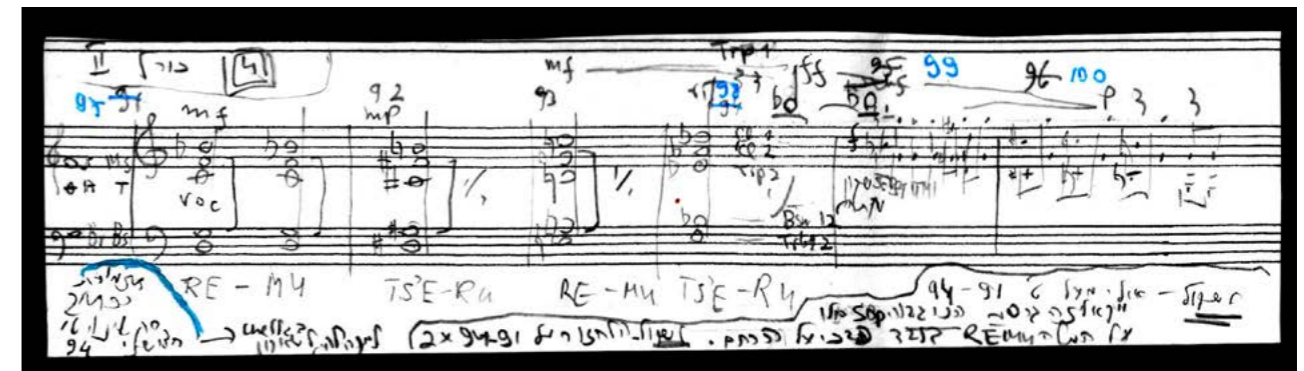
See immediately a special marking at the beginning of the staves showing the “setting” in which the the high voices of the choir, will sing – here for example for the sopranos it shows  around the high g (according to the accompanying arrows). Also look at the surroundings of the low g in the bass clef, realized in the instruments of the orchestra – in the following sample from the vocal score:



In bars 90-94 the transition begins from the first subsection to the second subsection of the scene. In the “connecting chorale” performed by the wind instruments in complete cohesion with the choir, g is the basic pitch from which the fourths ascend, and from which the low fourth  in the orchestra descends. The words chosen for the composition of the chorale are actually RĒMU – womb – and TS'ĒRU – the wide steppe.

This happens in bars 94-98. And then a new melodic sequence breaks out in a lively movement of eighth notes – the “bottom” which will be present throughout the scene, a recurring motif, a shifting pedal point, or in other words, a very energetic bottom.

Here's the sketch, bars 94-100



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Here are the same bars in the vocal score:

**II**  
♩ = 74

94 95 96 97 98

S. RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb from (32) from (28) steppe

M. S. RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb steppe

A. RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb steppe

Ten. RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb steppe

Bar. RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb steppe

Bass RE - MU TS'E - RU RE - MU TS'E - RU  
womb steppe

(Winds) *mf* *sub.mp* *sub.p* *p* *mf*

99 100

S. SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

M. S. SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

A. SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

Ten. SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

Bar. SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

Bass SE - BET U - MI SE - BET U - MI ŠU - TU A - NA MA - TI MA - TI  
seven days S. - Wind toward land\_

(Fl.) *f* *sub.mp* *sub.p*

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I decided to end the quotes from this scene with a bonus – to present two “illustrations” (quotations) from the Autograph Score; the bars are numbered with a yellow marker. Sample B is adjacent to Sample C – as you see in the score.

**Sample A**

ŠŪ-TU (the “South Wind”) as “bottom” is prominent in the first subsection of the scene: the word is composed as a vocal effect.

**Sample B**

The words SEBET UMI (“seven days”) as “bottom” are also very prominent in the first part of the scene. The composed text is whispered in a very clear rhythm – it sounds out strongly despite the *p* dynamics.

**Sample C**

The words in the rapid-tone-succession UL-’IZZIKK’A (“did not blow”) intensify the pain of the earth on which the wind did not blow – a sequence that repeats simultaneously in all the parts, like a frenzied chorale, each voice moving forcefully over two pitches. The singers were asked to improvise all the syllables of the text below the staff singing rapidly over the individual two pitches assigned to each singer.

**Fifth Scene**

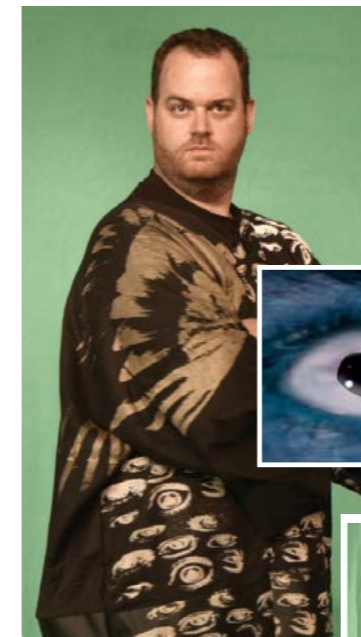
**Duet between Anu (God of the Heaven - Basso Profondo) and Ilabrat (Men's Choir)**

where Anu’s anger is prominent: he wonders why the South Wind is not blowing. Ilabrat tells him what happened. In a fury, he commands that Adapa be brought before him.

Anu sings long pitches. I built a chromatic motif for his character, in which the words are “scattered” within note durations of six quarters, five quarters, and four quarters. The crescendo and decrescendo increase the tension in his words.

In the first illustration for this scene, we see bars 1-9 from the sketch. The orchestral entrance is immediately marked with hints to the instruments that are about to perform the orchestral accompaniment. Thematically it actually already presents the crescendo and the decrescendo of the chromatic motif (albeit in bars of only 4/4 quarters, i.e., whole note duration values). As we can see from the sketch, at that stage the composer wanted to include a glissando of an ascending octave for all the instruments involved. Here is the sketch for bars 1-9; this time, the singing line and the essence of the orchestration both appear in the bass clef.

Anu’s central pitch is **a**




God of the Heavens (Eyal Edelmann)

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With the entry of the vocal line, the sung text is also noted: AMMÍNI (= why) broken down into syllables (an expansion of the word-breaking that I used throughout the opera).

Handwritten musical score for vocal line. The score is on a five-line staff with a treble clef. It shows a vocal line with notes and rests, and a xylophone part below it. Annotations include "Anu 1st", "J=68", "8:00", and "28-29-30-31". The lyrics "A - M M I - NI" are written below the notes. The xylophone part consists of a series of notes, some of which are highlighted in yellow.

On the page from the vocal score for the same place in the score, I already noted the main points of the orchestral rhetoric in the treble clef: the same pattern appears in the xylophone  that fills the quarter with seconds, in a stormy repetitive rhythm. In the bass clef I wrote the low pitch that serves as a pedal point on the a that is so central to the scene. Alongside the pedal point, I wrote rising chromatic pitches, moving up one pitch, bar by bar. When Anu enters on his central pitch (upbeat to bar 5), the atmosphere is thematically very ripe for his entrance. Here are bars 1-8 in the vocal score:

SCENE 5  
DUET OF ANU AND ILABRAT (DUET IN ARIOSI)  
(Bass) (Men Choir)  
ANU Ist.

♩ = 60  
(Xyl.)

Printed musical score for Scene 5, Duet of Anu and Ilabrat. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of several staves. The top staff is for the xylophone (Xyl.) with a tempo marking of ♩ = 60. The second staff is for the Bass (Anu) with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The third staff is for the Men Choir (Ilabrat) with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The fourth staff is for the Bass (Anu) with a dynamic marking of *f*. The fifth staff is for the Men Choir (Ilabrat) with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The lyrics "A - M M I - NI" and "(33) Why" are written below the notes.

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We will now look at the full score to get a deep, almost visceral sense of the dread portrayed here. The strings are laid down in prolonged chords that include quarter tones around the a (in shades of my favored fourths). The now-familiar pattern appears in the xylophone, and is reinforced by the trombone which sounds as if it is emphasizing each quarter. But notice, Anu's rage here is accompanied by a very syncopated pattern. He and the pitches that manifest with his arrival always appear on the first beat or in a brief anacrusis to it (see this surprise immediately at the entrance of his singing in the anacrusis before the 16th note in bar 5). However, at this point the pitches appear in 16th notes that "irritate" as they are constantly syncopated, to the point of dizzying the senses with restless hemiolas. See in the following illustration bars 1-6 in the full score.

SCENE 5  
DUET OF ANU AND ILABRAT (DUET IN ARIOSI)  
(Bass) (Men Choir)  
(total ca 6:00)

1  $\text{♩} = 60$  ANU Ist. 3

B. Cl. (Cl. II) *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

D. Bn. (Bn. II) *p*

Trb. I, II *mp/mf*

Tuba *pp*

Timp. *mp*

Perc. 1 Xyl. *mp/mf*

Vla. 1,4 *p*

Vla. 5,6 *p*

Vel. 1,2 *p*

Vel. 3,4 *p*

D. B. *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

---

4 5 6

B. Cl. (Cl. II) *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

D. Bn. (Bn. II) *p*

Trb. I, II *mp/mf*

Tuba *pp*

Timp. *(mp)*

Perc. 1 Xyl. *mp/mf*

Anu Bass *mf* *f*

(33) Why A - - - - - MMI

Vla. 1,4 *(p)*

Vla. 5,6 *(p)*

Vel. 1,2 *(p)*

Vel. 3,4 *(p)*

D. B. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

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And how can we not look at something from Ilbrat the slanderer, who tells Anu what happened, in the form of a thunderous male choir singing in prominent clusters:

Here's a small excerpt from the Autograph Score (and underneath the sketch): the men's choir tells how Adapa broke the wing of the South Wind. Note how the word KAPPÁŠA (her wing) is sung:

The compression of the word divisions into syllables constantly increases, as if Ilbrat wants (that's how I composed it) to further ignite Anu's wrath. It begins with part of the word (KA- -P), amplifies its essence (KA-- PPə) with percussive additions within the phonetics of the Akkadian word itself, until it reaches the powerful display of the full word including its division of syllables:

**SKETCH**

**VOCAL SCORE**

Ilbrat

## Sixth Scene

### Ea's long (misleading) aria of guidance

In a long psycho-dramatic text, as implied by its title (this is the longest libretto sequence in the opera), Ea convinces Adapa not to eat "the bread of death" and not to drink "the water of death" that will be offered to him in Heaven - they symbolize life that ends in death. But in Heaven they will later offer him bread of life and water of life in the sense of eternal life, and he will refuse them; he will remember Ea's commandment too well in this scene:

LĀ-TAKKAL "Do not eat"! LĀ-TAŠATTI "Do not drink"!

I remember how one long evening the composition just seemed to flow from within, almost in one breath. That is why the vocal line in the sketch is already advanced, as it burst out for me simultaneously with the dramatic text; I inserted pointers here and there with inferences to the orchestra, but remained closely tethered to the rapid-flowing composition of the vocal line.

I immediately knew that Ea's basic pitch, for a baritone singer, would be and I even noted the central d pitch at the top of the draft, powerfully shadowed by an upper or lower b.

Here is that moment of fluent writing – on the sketch page up to bar 34! The sketch is actually a draft for the vocal line at the most advanced level and the entrances of instruments and chordal timbre blocks have also been marked.



In the next example, we see the beginning of the scene in the vocal score, up to bar 18. I suggest comparing the vocal line in this example, note for note in comparison with the sketch (which is a draft of the vocal line). It emerged from under my hands “with a kiss”. The orchestration is indicated in the piano score.

SCENE 6  
EA'S LONG (MISLEADING) ARIA OF GUIDANCE

♩ = 64

2 3 4 5  
A-DA-PA A-NA PA - NI  
(39) Adapa (40) to presence

6 7 8 9  
A - NI ŠA - RRI AT - TA TA - -  
of Anu king (Hns) you will go

10 11 12 13 14  
- LLA - A - NA ŠA - ME TE-LLI - MA  
to heaven (Hns) you will ascend (Vln)

15 16 17 18  
A - NA A - NA ŠA-ME (E) I - NA  
(41) to heaven when  
free pitch  
free pitch, a little higher than in b. 17

All that remains now is to enjoy looking at the beginning of the full score. Here are bars 1-7, where the orchestra, with its elongated notes, provides a solid foundation for the whole homophonic image of the continuous texture. Depictions in the percussion (glockenspiel, marimba, xylophone) and wind instruments (tremblings in the tuba and bassoons, for instance) will show up later to expand the dramatic reverberation in the words of the singer of this long aria. The first baritone entry (bar 3) is strengthened by the cymbal.

SCENE 6  
EA'S LONG (MISLEADING) ARIA OF GUIDANCE  
(total 9:00)

♩ = 64

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Bns I, II  
mp < mf > mp < mf > mp

Hns I, II, III  
mp < mf > mp < mf > mp

Tpts I, II  
mp < mf > mp < mf > mp

Trb. I, II  
mp < mf > mp < mf > mp

Tuba  
p < mp > p < mp > ppp

Perc. I  
Cymb. (middle)  
mf

Ea Bar.  
mp  
(39) A - DA - PA A - NA PA - NI A - NI ŠA - RRI  
Adapa to presence of Anu king

Vln I  
1-6 mp < mf > mp < mf > mp p

Vln II  
7-10 mp < mf > mp < mf > mp p

Vla  
1-4 mp < mf > mp < mf > mp p

Vcl.  
5-8 mp < mf > mp < mf > mp p

D. B.  
1,2 mp < mf > mp < mf > mp p  
3,4  
5,6

Adapa - Expertise

**Act Three**

**Adapa ascends to Heaven, tours around, descends to Earth**

**Seventh Scene**

**Adapa ascends to Heaven (orchestra only, pictorial)**

Adapa starts to pull away from the Earth. He rises higher and higher into the sky until he reaches the entrance to the temple of Anu, God of Heaven. While ascending to heaven he sees some visions of a vibrant earth-world

It is very interesting to see how the scene with the ascent to Heaven was constructed around strict adherence to the duration of the musical phrases. The resulting gradation creates an veiled pattern of triolas within the meter of  $\frac{15}{8}$ .

These triolas, connected by slurs into metrical phrases according to my decisions within the composition here, form the infrastructure for constructing rhythmic verses that “disintegrate”, constantly shortening the slurs and producing a sense of climbing that represents Adapa’s gradual disengagement from the Earth. It feels as if initially, the force of gravity makes it hard for Adapa to pull away. As he overcomes it, we feel that the ascent gains momentum and the dynamics increase accordingly: we began in the area of *mp* and ended at *fff*.

A continuous harp sequence decorates all of this with fixed and measured entries. The whole incremental progress is like an act of the forces of nature moving and increasing in their systematic motion until Adapa reaches the sky, without any need for an *accelerando*.

And with the strict adherence to this gradation, we’ll see a very precise bar count on the page which is all sketch / Timeline / Layout (this is my wording in the sample page that will be immediately available to the reader).

“Visions (or sights) of the vibrant Earth beneath” are drawn in fragmented tones in the brass wind instruments. I even took care to note their dynamics on the page. See below.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the Seventh Scene. The score is organized into measures 1 through 12, with a total duration of 30 seconds. The notation includes rhythmic stems, slurs, and dynamic markings. Annotations include 'Adapa ascends to the Heaven (Orch.)' and 'Total 2:00'. Dynamics range from *mp* to *fff*. The notation includes rhythmic stems, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Adapa - Expertise

The replica in the two trumpets, the two trombones and the tuba is well marked on the general sketch page of the scene; see it here in a close-up photograph from the same sketch page:

There are a number of replicas in the wind instruments that were all planned and sketched out. Please note the sketch in the previous page, it includes entrances of wind instruments replicas in bars 5-6 and 10-11.

Here is the sketch of the first replica, in bars 5-6, in a close-up photograph.

Now we'll look at the actual notes in the next page above Adapa's picture. Later, in page 232, we'll see the same bars in the full score.




Adapa ascends to Heaven

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

The page with the full score in the following illustration brings the first entrance of the replica in the winds in all its glory, with the entire orchestral background.

ACT III

ADAPA ASCENDS TO HEAVEN, TOURS THERE, DESCENDS TO EARTH

SCENE 7 (ORCHESTRA ONLY)

ADAPA ASCENDS TO HEAVEN

(Total 2:00 = 120")  
each bar 5"

No Perc.  
Stable dyn. – Vc, Db, Bsn, Hrn (low pitch): Earth Drone, permanent  
Fl, Ob, Cl, Vln, Vla (middle and high pitch): The Ascending, permanent  
Trp, Trb, Tuba – Images (utterances)  
Hrp – Signal ('stressed' points on beat)

This bonus is surely the best way to end the presentation of Adapa’s ascent scene: here’s a note from the composer’s kitchen from early Saturday morning, July 5, 2014 on how she planned the stages of its construction:

The metronome-driven writing of the layout (according to the composer’s instruction to herself here) accentuates the pace of the compositional process. The work of composition then penetrates into the world of pitch and orchestration, and finally the composer plans the layers in which the layout will be set down (the strips required to plan and write the scene), without overlooking the quartal nature (the centrality of fourths ) of the “Earth”: the element in the cosmos, from which Adapa ascends to Heaven.

Adapa - Expertise

Eighth Scene

**Duet of DUMUZI and GIZZIDA (men's choir) with Adapa**

They wait for him at the gates of Heaven, and when he arrives they question him playfully.

These gods (secondary characters in this opera) divide their time between Earth (in times of fertility) and Heaven (in times of drought).

Within the plans for the composition, I hardly allowed myself to develop the atmosphere of humor within the sanctum of the ancient myth. The color of the tenors and baritones immediately caught my ear for the musical discourse of the male choir, which also represents the two gods throughout the scene in chordal togetherness, in the somewhat high sonority of their singing. The orchestral accompaniment here also moves in relatively light and high timbres with cornets, bassoons, violins and violas. I also added a walking bass for more effect, using the genre of jazz to help create the atmosphere I was looking for.

I'll just point your attention here to the visual aspect - a frame of purple ("sunset purple") and many circular movements that almost remind us of circus stunts. Everything happens at the time of day that suits the development of the drama. Adapa has already ascended to Heaven, and it's now twilight, before night falls in the next scene with its darker colors.

We'll follow the actual process of composition. Here, on the next page on the left, is how I formatted the manuscript sheet before I began to compose, and to its right you can see a clear formulation of the world of pitch:

pentatonics around the axis of g – in the ascent both from the pitch and the ascent to it. Squares were marked with a yellow marker inside the planning note which is dated 11.7.2014.

A very important sketch: the pentatonic mirror in terms of the world of pitch for the scene, revolving around the g.



Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

See how the texture functions, illustrated here with a page from the draft (bars 19-23). For the baritones and tenors, I decided that one singer in each voice would be the leader. At this point I marked Adapa himself as an option to lead the tenor voice, but I eventually ruled this out in favor of his entry later on in dialogue with Dumuzi and Gizzida.

Two clarifications to this draft page: at the end of the glissando in bar 22 there is a note with the initials “f.p.o.a.” meaning “free point of arrival”; the meaning of the mocking words of the two clowns (this is the image that came to my mind from the world of theater) is as follows:

ANNA-MĀNNI      KĀ-EMĀTA  
 For whom thus      you are changed ] *gloss*  
 (literal translation)

The Akkadian form of address NĀRARU is used by Dumuzi and Gizzida for the English expression of fear (something like “help!”). It appears at the beginning of the sung lines, in the two pages from the vocal score presented immediately below. We will look at the syllable RA which is greatly expanded in its compositional treatment. Its syllables are taken apart, extended, broken, rapidly repeated, melismatically elongated, and even given the vowel ə on the N, heralding the full pronunciation of NA in bar 11. This technique is also used to emphasize the same syllable in the middle of the word – see the Rə in bar 16 derived from the same RA.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the piece 'Adapa'. It consists of several staves. The top four staves are vocal lines: Tenor Lead, Tenor Line, Baritone Line, and Baritone Lead. The vocal lines contain lyrics in Akkadian (A-NA MANNI, KA, MA, TA) and English ('the whole word'). There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'f.p.o.a.' and 'mf'. Below the vocal lines are instrumental parts for Piccolo, Cornet, Bassoon, and Viola. The Piccolo part has a circled section. The Cornet and Bassoon parts have notes with accidentals. The Viola part has notes with accidentals. At the bottom, there are more staves with handwritten notes and musical symbols, including a large bracketed section and some numbers like '12' and '= 21 C'. The page is numbered '19' at the top left and '23' at the top right.

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

Vocal Score

7 *f* = 70 8 9 10 *mf* *free point of arrival* *... = quick free rhythms along with NΘ repetitions*

Ten. Lead. NA NA NΘ

Ten. Line *mf* NA NA NΘ *... = quick free rhythms along with NΘ repetitions*

Bar. / Bs Line *mf* NA NA NΘ *... = quick free rhythms along with NΘ repetitions*

Bar. / Bs Lead. *f* NA NA NΘ *free point of arrival* *mf* *... = quick free rhythms along with NΘ repetitions*

(61) (Picc.) *f* *mf* *mp*

(Bns)

11 *f* 12 13 *mf* 14

Ten. Lead. NA - - - RA - - - RU help

Ten. Line *mf* NΘ NΘ RU *free point of arrival*

Bar. / Bs Line *mf* NΘ NΘ RU *free point of arrival*

Bar. / Bs Lead. *f* NA - - - RA - - - RU help *mf* *f* *free point of arrival*

(Vln) *mf* *f* (Picc.) (Cornet) (Vln) *mf* *f* (Vla) (Bns)

15 16 17 18

Ten. Lead. *mf* *mp*

Ten. Line *mf* NA RA RΘ RΘ *mp*

Bar. / Bs Line *mf* NA RA RΘ RΘ *f* intonative speech *3*

Bar. / Bs Lead. *mf* *mp*

(62) ET-Θ-LU guy

(Vln) *mf* *8va*

(Bns)

19 *f* *free point of arrival* 20 *mf* 21 22 *free point of arrival*

Ten. Lead. A - NA MA - NNI KA E - - MA for whom you are changed *free point of arrival*

Ten. Line *mp* ANA (the whole word) KA E - - MA you are changed *mf* *free point of arrival*

Bar. / Bs Line ANA (the whole word) KA E are changed *mf* *free point of arrival*

Bar. / Bs Lead. KA E are changed *mf* *free point of arrival*

(Picc.) *mf* (Vln) *mf* *8va*

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

We have tracked the creation of the sonic image of Dumuzi and Gizzida's singing through the stages cooked up in the composer's kitchen in its planning and in the draft, and finally in the vocal score. Now let's look at Adapa's entrance in bars 66-69; We now recognize his thematic quality in his entrance, with the octave jumps. Dumuzi and Gizzida respond very scornfully, (bars 70-71); during the filming and recording, I asked them to smile at each other while affectedly stammering their own names in these two bars.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system, starting at bar 64, features Adapa's entrance on C. Tenor. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 70. The score includes parts for Violin (Vln), Viola (Vla), and Bassoon (Bn). Adapa's line begins with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *mp* dynamic. The lyrics "DU-MU - ZI" are written below the staff. The second system, starting at bar 68, features the vocalists' response. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 90. It includes parts for Adapa C. Tenor, Tenor Lead, Tenor Line, Baritone/Bass Line, and Baritone/Bass Lead. The lyrics "GI-ZZI-DA" and "Gizzida" are written for Adapa. The vocalists' response is marked with *mf* dynamics. The score also includes a part for Cornet (Comet) with a *f* dynamic.

All Ten's and Bar's responding (as individuals) to each other, in free quick speech, each one in his most convenient level of pitch

The experience of tracking the vocal language will now be replaced by following one of the most prominent elements in the orchestral work of this scene - the role of the cornets. And most importantly, they appear right at the beginning.

Here is a piece of pink paper that was on my desk, with the opening line of the cornets in the first bars of the scene, the moment of the birth of these first bars. I had written it down on whatever I had to hand so it would not be lost:

A photograph of a piece of pink paper with handwritten musical notation. The notation is written on several staves and includes various musical symbols, notes, and dynamics. The paper is slightly crumpled and has some red markings on the left edge. The handwriting is in black ink and appears to be a draft or a working score.

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise



Ninth Scene**Anu and Adapa converse in Heaven**

This scene depicts a long conversation between Anu the God of Heaven and Adapa.

The now completely musically formed characters of each protagonist are very prominent at the time of this encounter.

Adapa's story provokes Anu's anger. After Adapa refuses to eat and drink in Heaven, he is told by Anu: "You shall not be given life (meaning Eternal Life), you inferior human being."

For those who know Hebrew, it is interesting to listen to the shared semiticorigins of Akkadian and Hebrew here.

AYYA	NÍŠĪ	DÁLLĀTI	
Alas	humanity	Inferior !	] gloss
			(literal translation)

The scene is built of alternating entrances (=subsections) of the two protagonists, from A to G.

I chose two places from this dialogue to present here. I well remember the first rehearsal in Berlin for this scene when the two soloists met. I was amazed at how different they were as they sang the replicas of the scene in one continuity. It was wonderful to observe the transition from planning to reality, especially since the act of composition here had flowed so fluently for me. It was not at all difficult to adhere to the motifs I had already designed for them in the previous scenes - Scenes 2, 3 for Adapa and Scene 5 for Anu. The now familiar musical gestures adhere to the familiar textual elements.

Let's look at the relevant page in the draft, bars 1-12. Adapa enters in bar 9. Page 246 here below. The text sung here in Akkadian is very clear in the compositional process in the draft, including Adapa's entrance until bar 12 (the numbers 67, 68, 69 in the draft are the running line numbers of the Akkadian libretto right from the beginning of the opera):

<u>ANU:</u>	ÁLKA	ADAPA	
	Come,	Adapa	] gloss
			(literal translation)

AMNĪNI	ŠA-ŠŪTI-KAPPÁŠA	TÉŠBIR	
Why	Of South-wind her wing	You broke?	] gloss
			(literal translation)

Or in modern English: Why did you break the wing of the South Wind?

<u>ADAPA:</u>	BĒLI	
	My lord	] gloss
		(literal translation)

And the continuation:

ANA-BĪT	BĒLIÝA	INA-K'ÁBLAT	TÁMTI	NŪNI	ABĀR	
To house	of my lord	in-middle	of sea	fish	I was fishing	] gloss
						(literal translation)

I wish to point out that the word IŠTÉBIR in the sketch that we will see immediately is composed with an emphasis on the R. The word that appears here in the score is actually TÉŠBIR ("you broke"), sung by Anu. I apparently really identified with Adapa's fear after breaking the South Wind's wing and the almost physical way in which he experienced its effect. In the stormy process of composition, the word IŠTÉBIR (which means "I, Adapa, broke") found its way into Anu's words. Later on, I 'corrected' the mistake. Ultimately, it's important to understand that the root ŠBR is composed with an emphasis on the consonant R to enhance the effect of breaking the wing of the South Wind.

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

SCENE 9  
ANU AND ADAPA CONVERSE IN HEAVEN

From the composer: the music-style-characters which were already designed for Anu (Scene 5) and Adapa (Scenes 2, 3), Adapa also with correlation with Ea (Scene 6) - are being kept in this scene.

A. Anu

**70** *Basso profondo* *mf*

Anu Bass

(67) A - L - KA A - DA - PA  
Come, Adapa

(Trps) (Xyl.)  
*mf-mp* (Strings) *mf*

(Tuba, D. B.) \* this G♯ reflects G♯ in the full score

no gliss. *f* *(mf)* *f*

Anu Bass

(68) A - - - MMI - NI ŠA - - - ŠU - - - TI  
why the South - Wind

(Trps) (Xyl.)  
(Tuba, D. B.)

*ff* *f* *mf* *f* *sub. ff*

Anu Bass

(69) TƏ KA - KA-P(h) KA - PPA - ŠA TEŠ - BIR - RRRR...  
her wing you broke?

(E. Hn) *mp*

B. Adapa

Adapa C. Ten.

(69) BE - LI (70) BE - LI A - NA BIT - - - BE - LI - - - YA  
my lord, to house - of - my - lord

(E. Hn) (Hns) *mp* (Hns)

(Strings)

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

Handwritten musical score for Adapa and Anu. The score is written on multiple staves, with lyrics in both Indonesian and English. The music is annotated with various performance instructions, including dynamics like *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *sub. ff*, and articulation like *no gliss.* and *mf-mp*. The score includes parts for Anu Bass, Anu Bass, and Adapa C. Ten. The lyrics are: (67) A - L - KA A - DA - PA / Come, Adapa; (68) A - - - MMI - NI ŠA - - - ŠU - - - TI / why the South - Wind; (69) TƏ KA - KA-P(h) KA - PPA - ŠA TEŠ - BIR - RRRR... / her wing you broke?; (70) BE - LI BE - LI A - NA BIT - - - BE - LI - - - YA / my lord, to house - of - my - lord.

Here is the same place in the full score, but it is cut by Adapa's entrance on the word BĒLI in the full score. We can enjoy elements in the accompanying orchestra such as the thundering patterns of syncopated 16th notes in the xylophone and trombones accompanying Anu, and the allusive idiomatic introduction in the English Horn in bar 8 before Adapa's entrance in bar 9. All in all, in this dialogue we have subsections from **A** to **G**, in this scene that is entirely dedicated to the duet between Anu and Adapa.

Item No. 81

SCENE 9  
ANU AND ADAPA CONVERSE IN HEAVEN  
(total 6:00)

A. Anu

1 ♩ = 70 2 Flz. 8va-----, 3 4 Flz. 8va-----,

Picc. (Fl. I) *mf*

Fl. II *mf*

B. Cl. (Cl. II) *mf*

D. Bn (Bn II) *mf*

Tpt I *f* *mp*

Tpt II *f* *mp*

Trb. I, II *f* *mf*

Tuba *f* *mp*

Timp. *mp*

Perc. I Xyl. *mf*

Perc. II Trgl. *f* Trgl. *f*

Adapa C. Ten.

Anu Bass Basso profondo *mf* *f* *no gliss.*

(67) A - L - KA A - DA - PA Come, Adapa

(68) A - - - MMI - NI why

Vla 1,2,3,4 *mf*

Vla 5,6 *mf*

Vel. 1 *mf*

Vel. 2 *mf*

Vel. 3,4 *mf*

D. B. 1,2 *mf*

D. B. 3 *f*

From the composer: the music-style-characters which were already designed for Anu (Scene 5) and Adapa (Scenes 2, 3), Adapa also with correlation with Ea (Scene 6) - are being kept in this scene.

B. Adapa

5 6 7 8 9

Ob. I

E. H.

B. Cl. (Cl. II) *(mf)*

Bn. I

D. Bn (Bn II) *(mf)* take Bn

Hn I *mp*

Hn II *mp*

Hn III *mp*

Trb. I, II *mf*

Tuba *mf*

Timp.

Perc. I Xyl. *(mf)*

Perc. II Chimes (Tubular Bells) *mp*

Adapa C. Ten. *mp*

Anu Bass *(mf)* *f* *ff* *f* *mf* *f* *sub:ff*

ŠA the ŠU - - - TI TƏ her KA - KAP(h) wing KA - P - PA\_ ŠA\_ TEŠ - BIR - RRRRR..... you broke?

(69) BE - LI

Vln I 1-6 *p*

Vln I 7-10 *p*

Vln II 1-4 *p*

Vln II 5-8 *p*

Vla 1-4 *(mf)* *p*

Vla 5,6 *(mf)* *p*

Vel. 1,2 *(mf)* *p*

Vel. 3,4 *(mf)* *p*

D. B. *(mf)* *unis.*



The second place I chose to present from this scene is the sentence that ends the scene, sung by Anu as he announces to Adapa “you will not live”; it is composed in a special technique of elongation.

Let’s look immediately at the draft page (in sketch form) in bar 70 and onwards, the same words are prolonged by lengthening the rhythmic values

Ā LA BALT’ĀTA

Not you live ] gloss  
(literal translation)

[since you refused to eat and drink] you will not live, meaning that you will not live eternal life

Not you live eternal life

This is the section that ends the scene, section **G**. It begins in bars 70-78, libretto line no. 81.

And then Anu emphasizes the lowliness of human beings, saying ĀYYA NĪŠĪ DĀLLĀTI - bars 80-89 (90), libretto line no. 82. These words were quoted in the opening explanatory paragraph, page 244, and in essence summarize this scene. The composition technique for instilling messages through deliberate elongation continues here.

We can immediately see the draft page which mainly centers around Ā LA BALT’ĀTA, but at the end for the first time, Anu’s harsh and humiliating words to Adapa appear, ĀYYA NĪŠĪ DĀLLĀTI in eighth notes. We then see the page with this entire excerpt in the vocal score, with the words sung by Anu expanding from eighth notes to quarter notes, then in combinations of half-notes and quarter notes, and finally in whole notes.

There is a kind of *ritardando* composed within the body of the notes both in libretto and in the score; this is section **G** which concludes the scene. Then the relevant page from the vocal score is presented.



Adapa - Expertise

Handwritten musical sketches for the vocal line of 'Anu'. The sketches are organized into three vertical columns, each representing a different section of the piece. The notation includes vocal lines with lyrics and various performance instructions such as dynamics (mp, mf, f, p), articulation (accents), and phrasing. The lyrics are written in a stylized, handwritten font. The sketches show the composer's initial ideas and revisions for the vocal melody and its relationship to the piano accompaniment.

### G. Anu

speaking in same permanent pitch of voice

70 *mp* 71 *mf* 72 a little higher 73 74

Anu Bass LA BALT - 'A - TA LA BAL - T - 'A - TA

(81) not you - live non legato tutti (Trps - mute) *mp-mf*

75 a little higher *f* 76 77 78 79 80 *f* = 64

Anu Bass LA BAL - T - 'A - TA (82) A-YYA A-YYA NI - ŠI DA - Alas humanity

81 inferior (Glock., Chimes, Hp) no trem. *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

82 *mf* 83 84 *mp* 85

Anu Bass - LLA - TI A - YYA A - YYA NI - ŠI DA - LLA - TI

86 *p* 87 88 89 *ppp* 90 senza (non) rit.

Anu Bass A - YYA NI - ŠI DA - LLA - - - TI

The musical score for 'G. Anu' is presented in a standard format with vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff, and the piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clef). The score includes various dynamics, articulation marks, and performance instructions. A yellow box highlights a specific section of the score, including measures 80-85, where the vocal line features a melodic phrase and the piano accompaniment provides a rhythmic and harmonic support. The lyrics are written below the vocal line, and the piano accompaniment includes detailed notation for the piano, including chords and melodic lines.

Adapa - Expertise

### Tenth Scene

#### The Tour of Heaven. Adapa Descends to Earth

Anu takes Adapa on a tour of Heaven which is full of mystery and mysticism - we hear this in the sounds of the replicas in the wind instruments on a background of a sustained string-orchestra playing an exotic cluster. In the second part of the scene Adapa gradually descends to Earth.

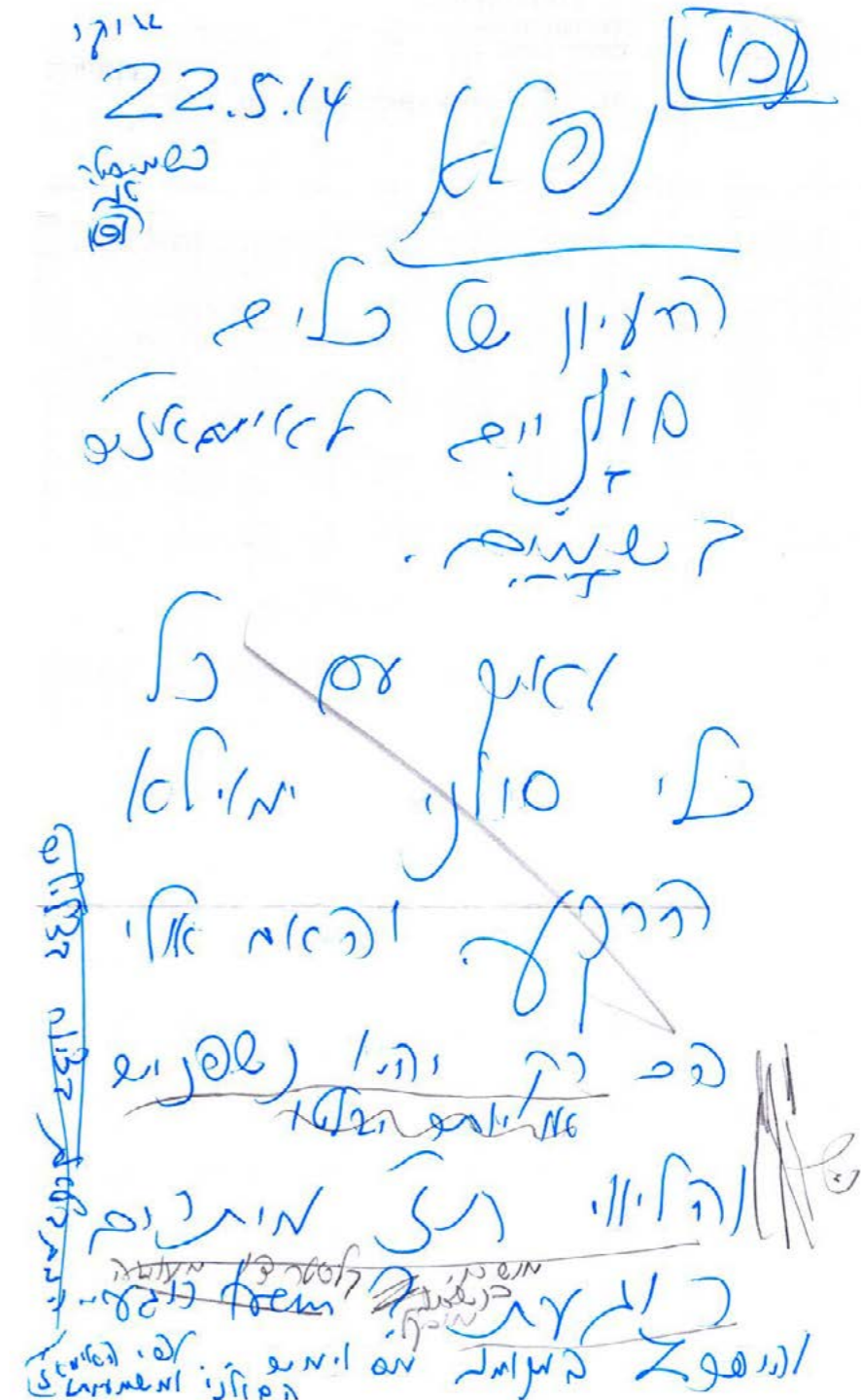
(the musical elements rely on those that were used for his ascent to Heaven - see below).

As he descends to the ground, Anu's last words resonate in his ears.

While gathering inspiration for composing Adapa's tour of the sky I immersed myself in a somewhat insane, nocturnal atmosphere; here is a note I wrote for myself while clinging like a madwoman to the visions and images that swept me into the composition:



And that's how I birthed the music itself - here's a bigger piece of paper that reveals the emerging idea for the solo instruments. The deletion shows an idea I gave up, but lower in the page the texture glowed in my mind. This is a verbal sketch. page: the whole texture is already marked here in words.

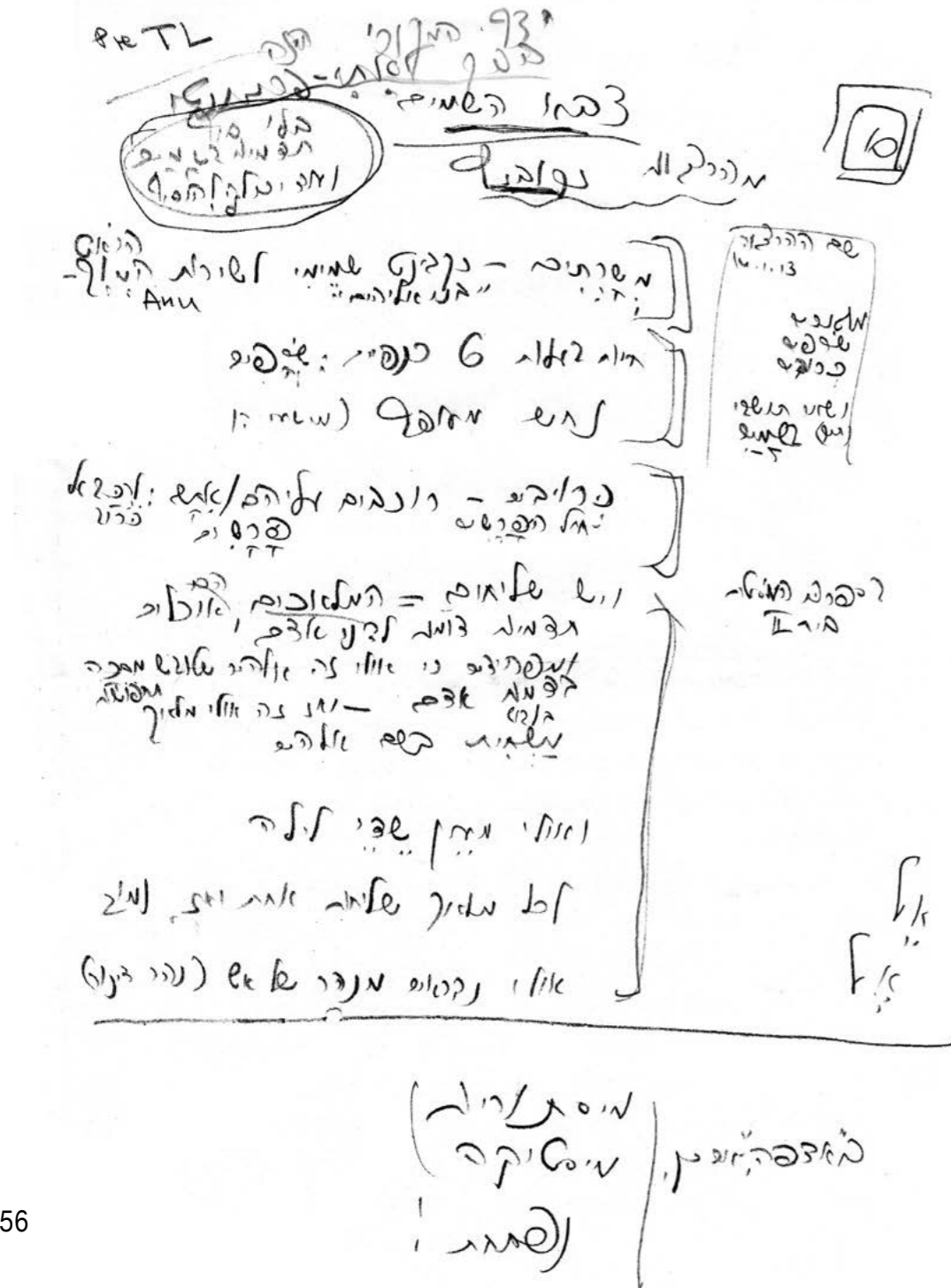


Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

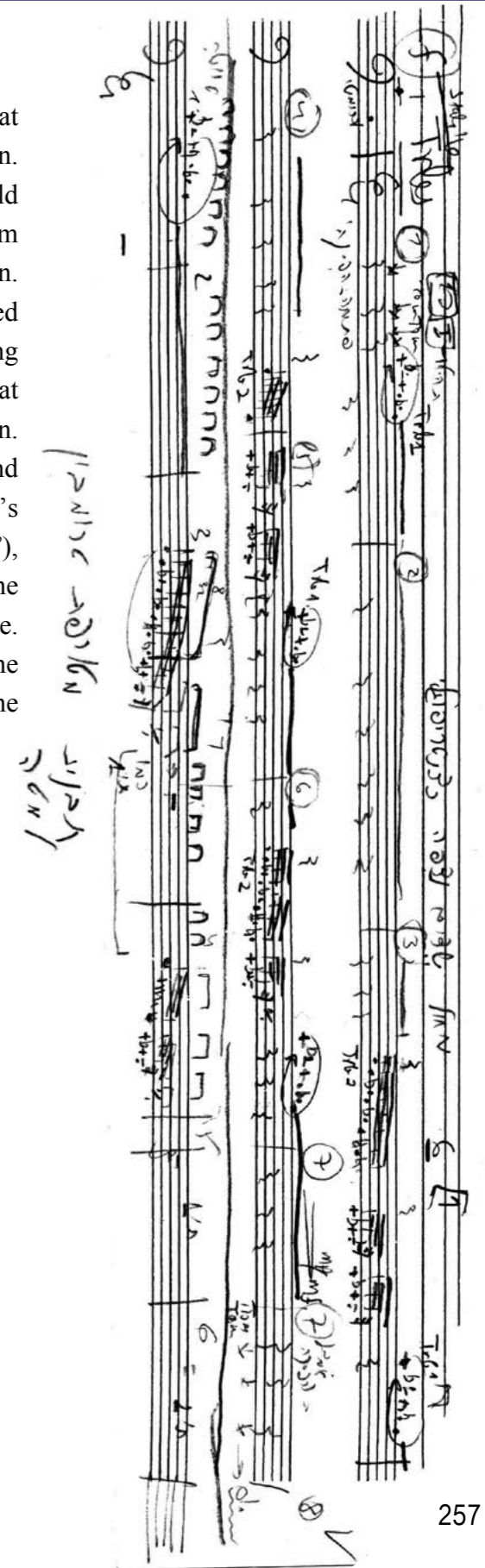
And then came a lecture by the renowned Israeli Biblical scholar Yair Zakowitz (within one of his routine series) on the Army of Heaven. I ran to the lecture as I was already wrapped in that cloud of inspiration: I also felt a deep connection with the visions presented by Zakowitz and opened up more and more inside myself as I moved forward in the compositional process. These are notes I made for myself during the lecture.

Adapa - Expertise



Various images are revealed here that were part of the process of composition. They formed part of my conceptual world and do not obligate anyone else, but I'm more than happy to allow the reader in. The visual designer of the video opera used his own vision of the music in presenting the replicas in the wind instruments that transmit images in every possible direction. Here is the first of the series of wind instrument images I created in my mind's eye (I called it "Demon Dance Observed"), and it has accompanied me from the moment it was created on the sketch page. Look at the two trombones that depict the "Demon Dance Observed" (here on the right side).

Adapa - Expertise



And here we see the demon dance observed inside the Autograph Score, with the static string orchestra.

**Autograph Score**

1 = 90 | 6 | 4 | total: 3:00

Oleg: occidentals  
h#b etc. will  
always stay  
in strings

2 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

10 I

Trb 1

Trb 2

Tom  
soft mallet(s)  
mp

Vl 1-5.  
1 6-10.  
p

Vl 2  
1-4. 5-8. 1-4.  
p

Vla 1.  
1. 2.  
p

Vla 2.  
3-4. 5-6.  
p

Vc 1.  
2.  
p

Vc 3.  
4.  
p

unison  
Cl

sounds

Adapa - Expertise

SCENE 10

ANU TAKES ADAPA ON A TOUR OF HEAVEN; ADAPA DESCENDS TO EARTH

And here is the full score! This entire section has no vocal score because it is purely orchestral. Since this is the score for the conductor's use, it is meticulous with regard to notation.

**I TOUR OF HEAVEN**  
(total 3:00)

1 ♩ = 90      quick      2      3      quick      4

The score is for a 6/4 time piece. It includes parts for Trb. I, Trb. II, Perc. II (3 Toms), Vln I (1-6), Vln II (7-10), Vla (1, 2; 3, 4; 5, 6), Vcl. (1, 2; 3; 4), and D. B. The first staff (Trb. I) has a tempo marking of ♩ = 90 and a 'quick' section. Dynamics range from *f* to *pp*. The string parts (Vln I, Vln II, Vla, Vcl., D. B.) are marked *p* and feature long, sustained notes with hairpins.

*Adapa - Expertise*

*Adapa - Expertise*



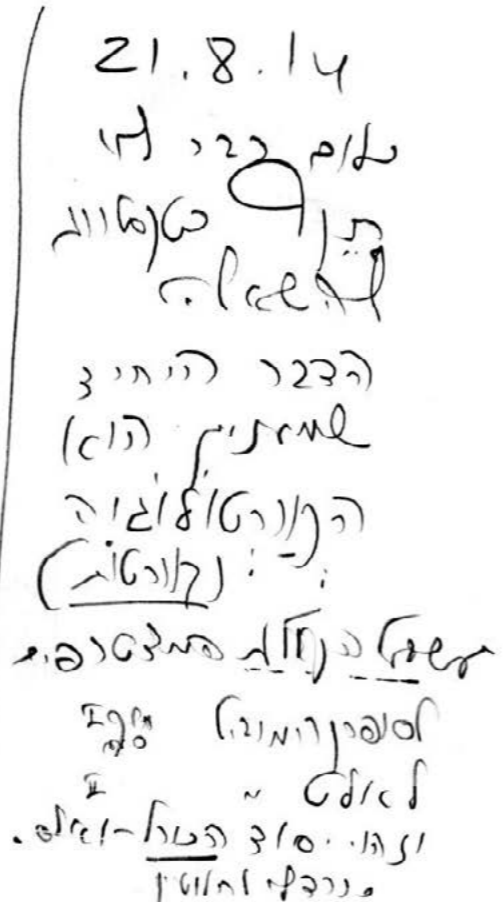
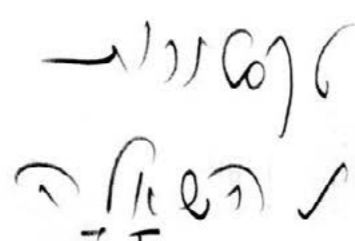


And we move on to the Finale.

Here are notes I made for myself in the sketches. In a photocopy of the note for “**Illustration 2**”, you can see how I mark textures to be borrowed. In a photocopy of the note for “**Illustration 3**”, I indicate more precisely that I want to use my favorite fourths, especially in an accompanying part, and when I start composing the basis of the chordal waltz-chorale will really stand out.

**Illustration 2**

**Illustration 3**



Here is something I would like to share with my readers. In the very early stages of the composition, I wondered: would the “Hymn of Fertility” be like an inversion of the music of “Earth Requiem” in the fourth scene? This was even before the “Earth Requiem” was composed. And here, surprisingly, when composition had ripened, the text of “Hymn of Fertility” was similar (in reverse) to the text of the “Earth Requiem” and immediately called for an entirely new motif.

Here’s an example of a text from the opera libretto that will demonstrate the “paradoxical closeness”:

**Fourth scene:**

ŠÁPLIŠ UL-ÍLLIKA MĪLU INA NÁGBI  
 Below not-come flooding from spring ] gloss  
 (literal translation)

In modern English: Below - no flooding came up from the spring

**Eleventh scene:**

ŠÁPLIŠ ÍLLAKA MĪLU INA-NÁGBI  
 Below comes flooding from spring ] gloss  
 (literal translation)

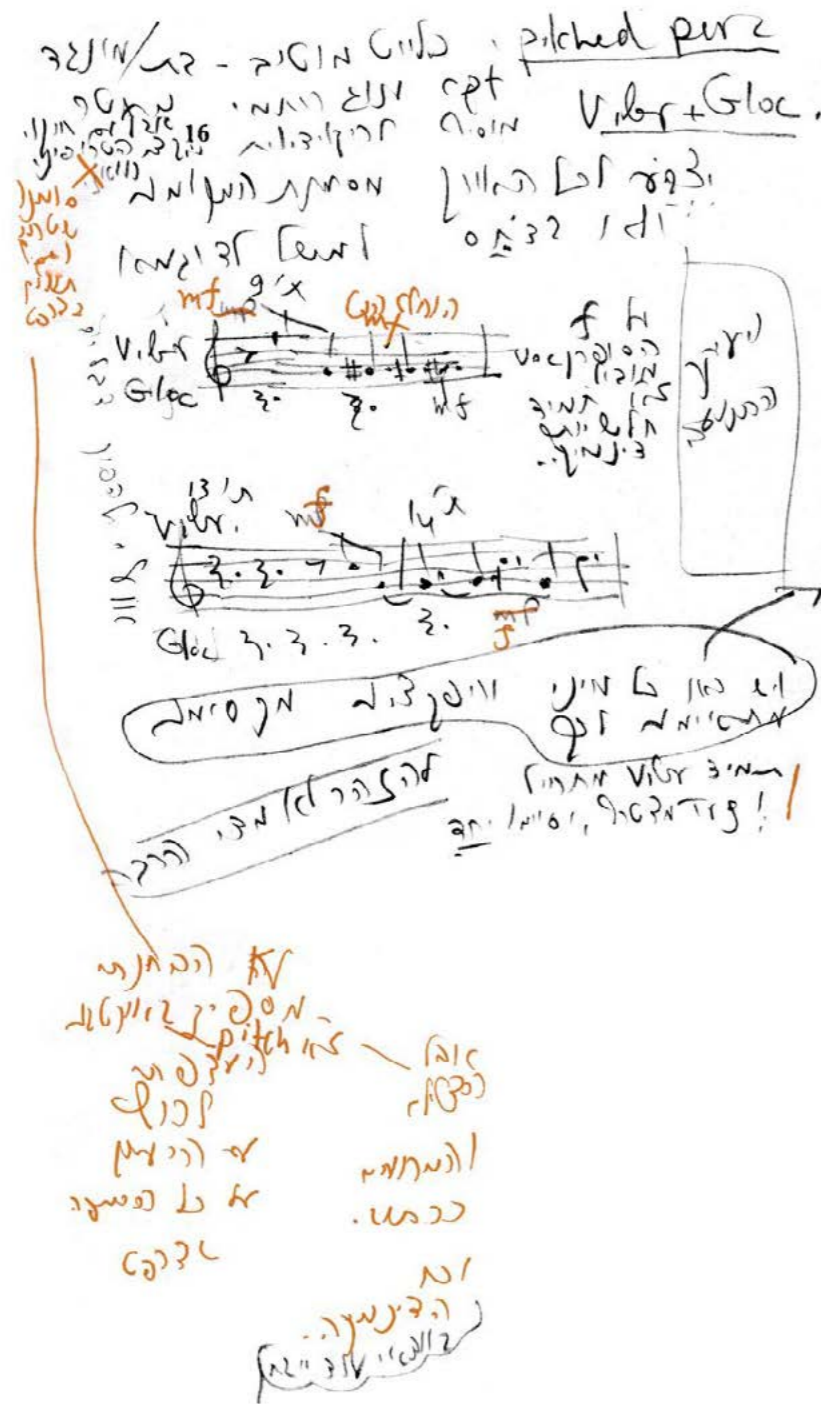
In modern English: Below - flooding comes up from the spring

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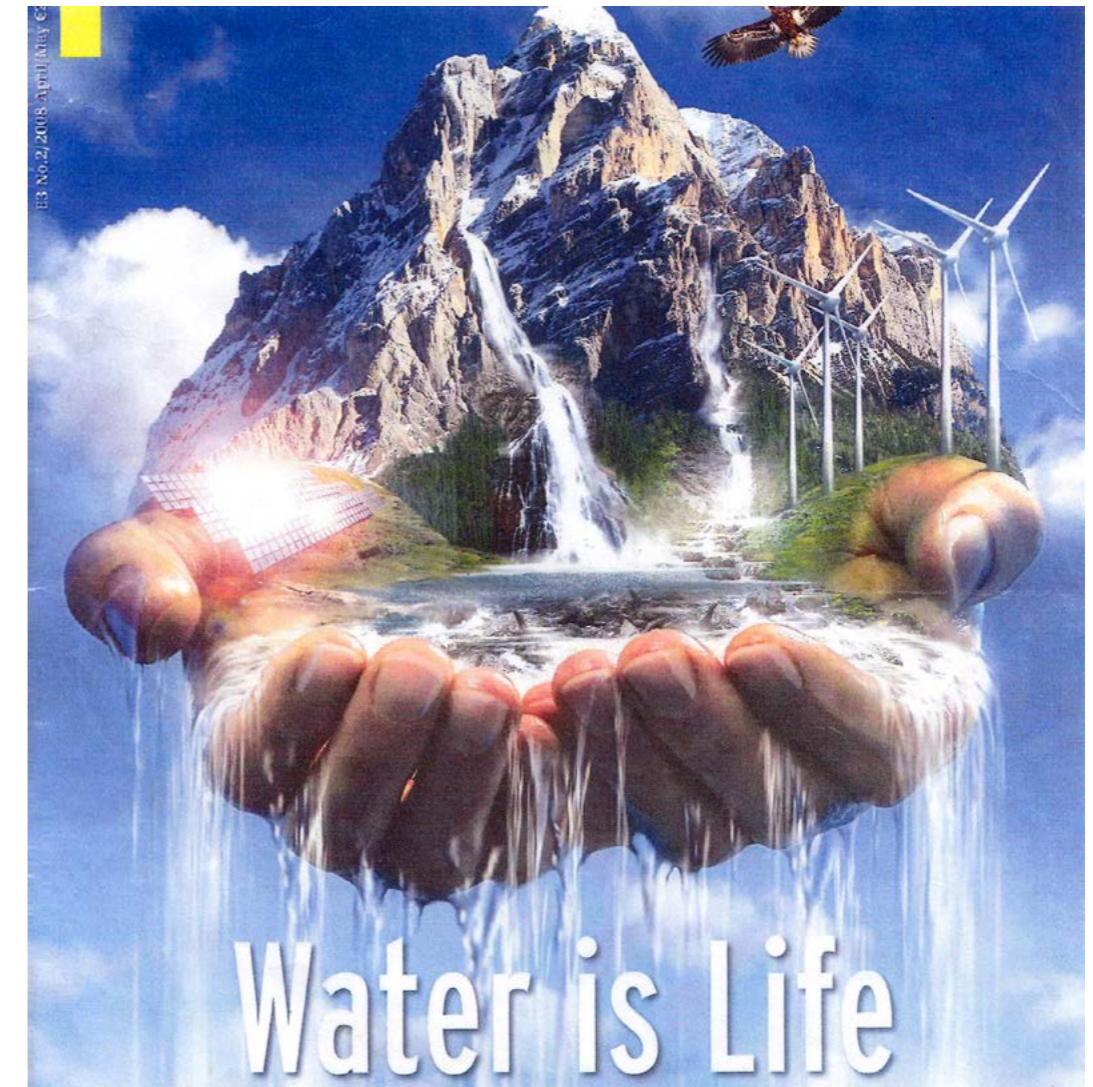
“Illustration 4”

is another sheet of paper: I chose the dark brown color in the sketches for the “unit” of the Vibraphone with the Glockenspiel, I assigned a contrapuntal sub-motif to these two percussion instruments that was composed easily, while making the sketches. You can see that moment with everything I wrote about the quality these pitched percussions are intended to give to the texture.



“Illustration 5”

I suddenly came upon a publication that embraced the power of flowing water as a source of life, as energy. This image filled me with passion and strengthened in my heart the statement that formed the basis for this opera when I composed it, especially the Finale.



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The score was constructed from variants of the 9/8 bar division.

I built a number of “rhythmic patterns” in the texture bringing out the contrast between the rather chordal choir and counterpoints with riffs (small repeating sequences) of the orchestral instruments. All of this in combination gives a sense of delicate dance movements, as a symbol for life that continues (as opposed to eternity that dissipated and vanished).

Look now at “Illustration 8” – p. 91 from the vocal score, demonstrating the above counterpoint, “a sense of delicate dance”: the instrumental parts are represented in the two staves for the piano.

ŠŪTU – This is the South Wind:

Section 1

While the Hymn is being sung by the Vast Mixed Chorus, visions of fertility arise and are observed ; Adapa copulates with the South-Wind

Section 1

While the Hymn is being sung by the Vast Mixed Chorus, visions of fertility arise and are observed ; Adapa copulates with the South-Wind

Tempo: ♩. = 60

Measures: 69, 70, 71

Vocal parts: Sop. (Leading Voice), M.S., A., Ten., Bar.

Piano parts: (Glock.) 8va-- (Winds), (Timp.) ped. (light)

Lyrics: A-NU-MMA now, ŠŪ - U - TU - U

To the pianist: you may always repeat long bowed notes

“Illustration 9”



To get a sense, for a moment, of a different composition for the same word we met in the fourth scene – see this place in bar 5 (from the vocal score):

Illustration 9

Annotations: clear high speech, ~ octave f

Vocal parts: S., M.S., A., Ten., Bass

Piano parts: (Vla), (low Strings and Winds) ped. (light)

Lyrics: ŠŪ - U - WUW, TU - U - WUW

Adapa - Expertise

Let's return for a moment to the roles of the instruments. They were built according to an initial sketch of rhythm patterns marked on a note (a total of 7 sequences). We will focus now on the second pattern - TKB: ט.ק.ב.

Here is "Illustration 10"

This is a very penetrating look at the underlying (deep) structure of the rhythm.

Note: When I note "reminder to Erasure" for myself in the margin (in Hebrew), I'm referring to the rhythmic development toward removal, calming. This is the compositional technique in my work *Erasure*, Op. 69. My comments to myself regarding this development were noted next to the seven patterns on the left, vertically along their entire length.

Hymn 11 ח.נ.נ

bottom

"Illustration 11"



We will see from the above preliminary sketch ("Illustration 10"), and from the sketch relating to the parts of the instruments ("Illustration 11"), how TKB is realized in bar 13. At the bottom of this sheet of paper ("Illustration 11") there's a hint that the voices will sing the word IZZIKK' AMMA here (the Akkadian for "blows" or "blew", meaning the South Wind blows again, we are now in bar 72 – marked in turquoise, the color of final bars – of the "Hymn of Fertility").

Indeed, this is exactly what we see in the "Illustration 11". The word to be sung - IZZIKK'AMMA – was clearly written in the sketch in bar 12 which later becomes bar 72. Remember – the sketches are written in relatively small sections and then they connect to larger sections. In scene 11, 60 bars relating to the arrival of the South Wind have been added (the first section of the scene) and they were "pasted" into the large structure I built in the "Hymn of Fertility" that I eventually placed immediately afterwards. This is why bar 12 becomes bar 72.

Adapa - Expertise

The following illustration (“Illustration 12”) is taken from the draft pages. Note well the boundary of bars 13-14. TKB [2,1,2] continues to be marked (in yellow) and is well realized in the role of the “unit” of the winds group (flutes, oboes, horns) and in the strings. You can also see the vocal parts (together) clearly on this page.



And now how can we not take a look at this moment in the full score (“Illustration 13”), having internalized the entire process through the draft? Important Note: near the final bar numbers in the manuscript handwriting the difference of the 60 added bars has accumulated.

These are the 60 bars of the first part of the scene. Bar 13 originally became bar 73 and so on. Both numbers appear in the draft, but only the final numbers appear in both published scores (full and piano vocal).

“Illustration 13”

For the whole choir:  
Each singer in his/her natural voice individually speaks this whole word quickly several times by his/her individual intermissions

Adapa - Expertise

After looking at sketches, let's go on to the great experience – the PLAN page. This is "Illustration 14" Part One from which I think it all started. It was on one happy date 7.12.2013 (not long after the end of the book launch celebrations for my book on Matti Caspi), when I managed to "sweep" Matti Caspi out of my consciousness in favor of *Adapa*. This page was written in Brno on 17.3.2015 (I even noted "Election Day in Israel" on the top right). The composition plan was very precise, and the order of the scenes I set down at the time, composing the draft happened as the mood took me. "Illustration 15" is the completely authentic sheet of paper in which I documented the completion of composing each scene in the

draft from mid-December 2013 (the PLAN page in the previous illustration) to mid-September 2014. I even noted the "wonderful residencies" which I found so conducive for composition.

The first people whom I told that I had completed the draft, that the composition was done, are listed here. The first to hear the news were Jan Sitař (producer) and František Poul (Czech soundman). They both went hand in hand with me during those cathartic days. From mid-September 2014 to February-March 2015, time was devoted to composing the vocal score. Unbelievably, it took quite a long time.

Adapa - Expertise

Adapa - Expertise

"Illustration 14" Part One

An immaculately precise composition plan for the opera.

Brno (2013-4)  
17.3.2015  
(Election Day in Israel)

63:00

Orch	1	Overtura Pastoralia	3:00	I 10:00
Cont. Ten. + Orch [at the end Women Ch]	2	Adapa	4:00	
Women Ch + Adapa (C. Ten.) + Orch	3	South-Wind meets Adapa, at the end breaks...	3:00	
Mixed (vast) Ch + Orch	4	Earth Requiem	8:00	II 28:00
Bass + Baritone + Orch	5	Anu 1st laborat Anu 2nd	8:00	
Baritone + Orch	6	Ea - big guidance aria	4:00	
Orch	7	Adapa ascends	2:00	III 25:00
Men Ch (in Gths) + Adapa + Tenor + Bars	8	Dumuzi + Gizzida + Adapa	4:00	
Bass + Cont. Ten + Orch	9	Anu and Adapa	6:00	
Orch (in the middle Tacet + Cont. Ten, 4 bars speak.)	10	I Big four in the sky II Adapa descends	3:00 3:00	
Women Ch + Orch	11	I South Wind	2:00+	
Mixed (vast) Ch + Orch		II Hymn of Fertility	5:00	

6:00+

2016 Sessions

1st day 13 June Monday	2nd day 14 June Tuesday	3rd day 15 June Wednesday	4th day 16 June Thursday
Chor + Orch	Chor + Soloists + Orch	Soloists + Orch	Orch. (C. Ten.)
Mixed Ch + Orch 4 8:00	Women Ch + Adapa + Orch 3 3:00	Bar. + Orch 6 12:00	1 2:00
Women Ch + Orch 11 I 2:00	Orch + Women Ch + overlap 1 1:00	Bass + C. Ten + Orch 9 6:00	7 2:00
Mixed Ch + Orch 11 II 5:00	C. Ten 2 4:00	Bass + C. Ten + Orch 10 20"	10 I 3:00
Women Ch + Orch 11 III 2:00	Bass + Men Ch (Bass) + laborat 5 8:00	ambience + a cat maximum	10 II 3:00
Women Ch + Orch 11 IV 2:00	C. Ten + Men Ch (Tenor, Bar.) + Dumuzi + Gizzida 8 4:00	AYYA NISIN... nifn ja 2:00	
Women Ch + Orch 11 V 2:00	Women Ch + Men Ch + C. Ten 12 2:00		
Women Ch + Orch 11 VI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 VII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 VIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 IX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 X 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XIV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XVI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XVII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XVIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XIX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXIV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXVI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXVII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXVIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXIX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXIV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXVI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXVII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXVIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XXXIX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XL 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLIV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLV 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLVI 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLVII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLVIII 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 XLIX 2:00			
Women Ch + Orch 11 L 2:00			

15 min. Video      20:00 min (+?)      18:00 min (+)      10:00 min (+?)

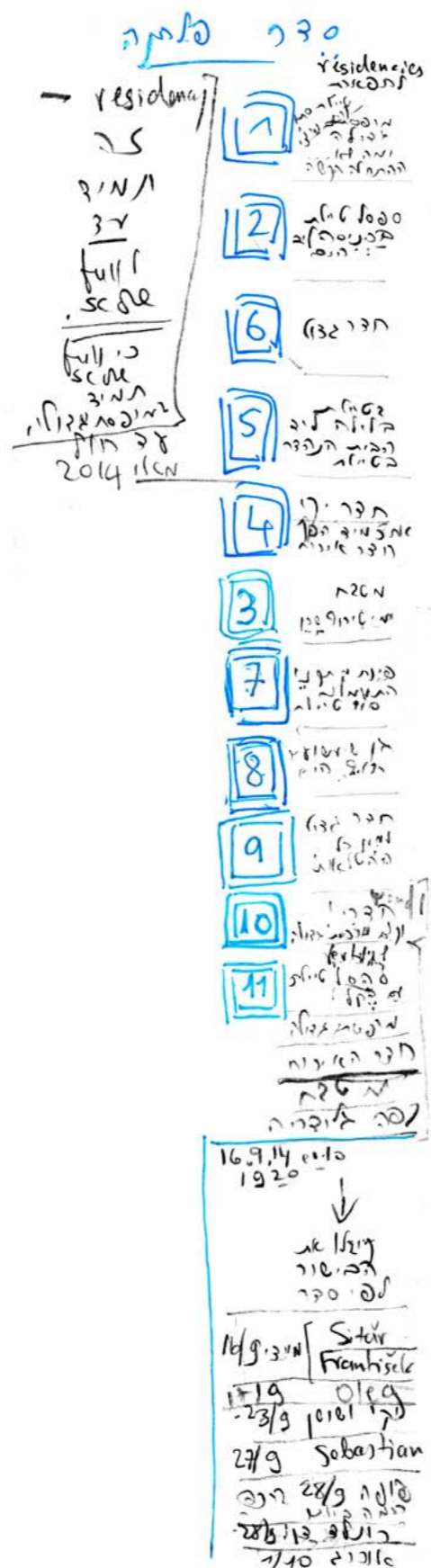
"Illustration 14" Part Two

The pre-planned recording schedule

This document is presented for the benefit of conductors and performers

“Illustration 15”

The following note is particularly piquant: I reveal to my readers both the order of the composition and the “residencies” I chose – each scene and the physical place I went to, to compose. It was a tremendous life experience. This is the authentic note that travelled with me – and this is how I made notes after drafting the composition of each scene. The “full score” I write on the left side of my note is my autograph manuscript version of the full score, which preceded the computerized copy. I chose to compose the draft in all kinds of places in my surroundings. The autograph copy was written on neat A3 pages on a big desk in the large balcony, which is my home studio.



And in conclusion, we have also highlighted Robert Black’s comments on the expansion of orchestral sonorities, shown within the context of his excellent review. We have also enclosed the table of contents from the issue of *Journal of the IAWM* (International Alliance of Women in Music) which featured this review.

“Illustration 16”

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Adapa - Expertise

**Tsippi Fleischer: *Adapa***

A Grand Opera (sung in Akkadian) in Three Acts, Eleven Scenes. Shlomo Yiz'el, libretto; Stefan Goergner, countertenor; Ammon Seelig, baritone; Eyal Edelmann, basso profundo;

The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra and Czech Ensemble Baroque Choir, Petr Vronsky, conductor. Vienna Modern Masters no. 4009 (2016)

ROBERT BLACK

Tsippi Fleischer is an Israeli composer with a deep interest in language and ancient mythology. Her recent opera *Adapa* is a striking work, based on the ancient Mesopotamian myth of the mortal figure *Adapa*, who visits the heavens, refuses the gods' gift of immortality, then returns to earth to mate with the South Wind. The opera is sung in the long-dead language of Akkadian, a Semitic language last spoken in the fourth century BC in what is now southern Iraq and Syria. The opera conjures a world both ancient and modern, strange and familiar, calling to mind Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913), while remaining fresh and exciting to the ear.

Fleischer's opera runs just over an hour, is divided into eleven episodes, and features three soloists: *Adapa*, sung by counter-tenor Stefan Goergner; Ea (God of the Sea), sung by baritone Ammon Seelig; and Anu (God of the Heavens), sung by basso profundo Eyal Edelmann. Additionally, there are three choral groups—women's choir, men's choir, and mixed choir—who portray various gods, nymphs, and the role of the Earth.

The vocal demands made by Fleischer are significant, though far from those consolidated by the coloratura and bel canto traditions of most Western opera. Fleischer calls upon the voice to exhaust its formal sonic range rather than melodic capabilities. Barks, growls, slurs, warbles, and other vocal effects share equal time with scalar melody. Likewise, the orchestral instruments are frequently used outside their traditional ranges and are played with non-traditional techniques to achieve unusual sounds (think here of *Le Sacre du printemps'* opening bassoon part in an ultra-high register). And, in cases where traditional orchestral instruments cannot provide the appropriate sonic color, Fleischer employs non-traditional means to achieve her required sounds; for example, the opening of Act Two ("Hymn of the Painful Earth"), which is set in the desolate, sun-burnt desert and uses the crackling of amplified dry leaves as percussion to provide a sonority of barren desiccation.

Harmonically, Fleischer's opera does not adhere to traditional Western rules of tonality. Quartal harmony, clusters, and compound chords are more pervasive than tertiary, tonic-dominant formulations. Fleischer achieves harmonic ambiguity, but without that Debussy vagueness. Instead, ambiguity here is bold, and the seeming atonality asserts a kind of consonance whereby whole-tone harp passages in Act-Two, recognizable modal passages in Scene Eight, and major triads near the opera's close actually sound dissonant in the overall musical context. The composition is complex, but not complicated: Fleischer creates a coherent musical universe that is extraordinarily rich and surprising, while sounding primordial and unpretentious.

The vocal performances are strong. Stefan Goergner's portrayal of the opera's title character tackles difficult intervals in disjunct melodic lines, subtle and powerful by turns, in a range rarely heard in male vocalists. He handles the part comfortably and convincingly. The orchestra and choirs are balanced, recorded and mixed with precision, and the overall sound quality of the recording is outstanding. Even in passages with the aforementioned dry leaves as percussion, the sound is balanced and engineered so that the various frequency ranges of the instruments and voices do not compete with each other, but find their own aural space.

A real bonus, however, is the recording's accompanying booklet. More than just a libretto and guide to the tracks, the booklet is abundant with production photos, score excerpts, and composer commentary that provide added dimension to the musical experience. Fleischer includes her thoughts on the compositional process, sharing both concrete and abstract inspiration—the percussive sound of the Akkadian language and the various shades of blue that she aligns to the opera's scenes, for instance. She also provides a brief essay into what she considers the musical essence of the work, drawing from both Classical and Romantic musical traditions with an emphasis on the

interval of the fourth. She cites, too, her influences, which include the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki, the composer and filmmaker Mauricio Kagel, the choreographer Merce Cunningham, and the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. Finally, Fleischer includes excerpts from her diary, which documents the "vivid memories of the cathartic process" of writing the opera. None of this written material is necessary to appreciate the opera, but it should be appealing to those interested in the creative process.

*Adapa* is a powerful musical experience. The score is colorful and unpredictable and sustains one's attention throughout its narrative. Fleischer's choice of using the extinct language of Akkadian summons a level of wonder that amplifies the mysterious, primeval quality of the music and fantastical action of the story. *Adapa* is an impressive achievement and one that stands as a welcome addition to our contemporary operatic repertoire.

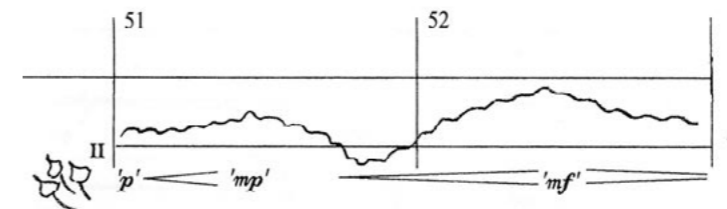
Robert Black is an independent scholar and songwriter. He holds BFA and MA degrees from Kent State University and a PhD from the University of Washington (Seattle). Additionally, Dr. Black has studied music composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. His portfolio includes original music for plays by Aristophanes, Brecht, Picasso (yes, Pablo Picasso!), Sartre, and Shakespeare. He has recently completed a two-act opera based on James Joyce's *Ulysses* and is currently working to arrange its premiere.

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2019

Let's focus for a moment on pages 47-48 from the full score: A fourth scene for the arid, hurting soil, two excerpts of the role of the "Dry Tree Leaves" in bars 51-57 and 60-61.

In bars 51-52 there is an important explanation of how it is played and how it sounds ("Illustration 17A"). In bars 53-57 it is possible to understand the integration of the dry leaves element into the exotic vocal sound as a whole. Robert Black chose to emphasize this in his article reviewing this opera.

"Illustration 17A"

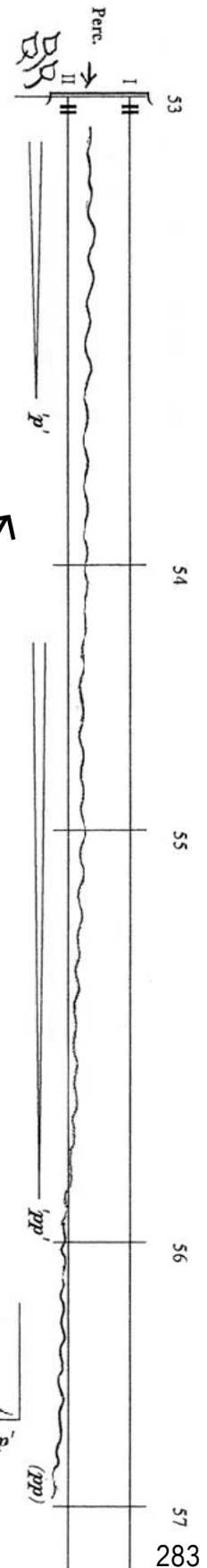
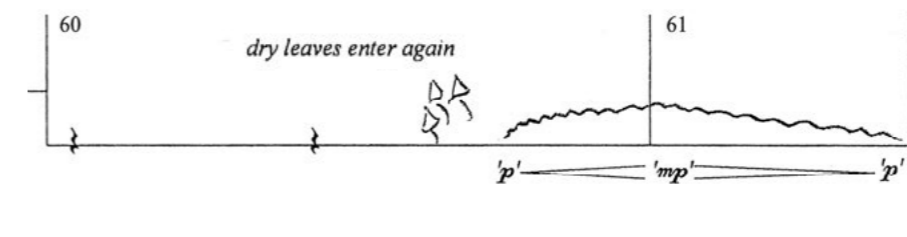


Dry tree-leaves rustling by rubbing (supplied by composer for the recording).

From the composer: the graphic curve signifies process of some kind of quasi-dynamics plus timbre.

Technical instructions for the dry leaves: strong amplifying should be used close to the hands of percussionist

"Illustration 17B"



Adapa - Expertise

## Tsippi Fleischer - Music Education Corner

### Education to Humanity through the Chorales of Bach

#### Editorial comment:

This paper is based on a project proposal which Fleischer submitted in 1973, during her studies for Master's Degree in Music Education at New York University. The text has undergone minor revisions in preparation for its publication.

#### 1. Introduction

This project deals with the subject of Harmony taught to professionals. The aim is to impose on them – in spite of their professional tendencies – educational aspects that would remind them that they are human beings above and beyond their vocation as musicians. This implicit purpose is a “secret” that teachers should keep to themselves, and depends on the teacher's belief in this essential truth. It can never be designated explicitly on the blackboard, or declared out loud, or mentioned as the topic of a lesson.<sup>1</sup> It can also never be a finite topic with a definite beginning and end; rather, it is an ongoing project, an underlying theme which should emerge naturally in any treatment of the Bach chorales – analysis, harmonization etc.

Maybe this project seems quite imaginary; but even if those who look at it this way are not persuaded that this whole idea can be translated into more practical terms, I feel this should not stop me from sharing this vision, which for me has already turned into a simple daily reality!

#### 2. What does it mean?

After I'd completed envisioning and describing the vision of the integrative class,<sup>2</sup> and was faced with the prospect of presenting my educational ideas regarding Bach's chorales, I happened to meet a friend who had never studied music formally, and only occasionally attended concerts or listened to recordings of

<sup>1</sup> Lesson and not Lecture, since Harmony studies relate to teaching skills (like a language), and is not therefore taught as a frontal lecture.

<sup>2</sup> This was an earlier project I had planned as part of my studies at NYU, serving as the basis for an article, in which I constructed a unique classroom in terms of structure and of content alike.

classical music. I introduced my main points, as written in the opening section of this paper, and immediately her questions started to flow. Our conversation helped me in explaining my ideas and focusing my thoughts. Here is an almost verbatim report of our dialogue.

#### **Question:** Why Bach's chorales and not, for instance, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony?

**My answer:** No doubt, one of the reasons for reaching such an idea is my own teaching experience. It is easier to learn from miniatures, such as Lieder, sonatas, or in our case chorales. They are like concise, self-contained microcosms. The chorales are only an example, but a very effective one, of this sort of literature. It does not mean that you cannot find all this richness somewhere else, and rely on that as a basis for the same aims, but 'technically' it is much easier to see the whole picture through a short piece.

As to Harmony – in spite of their brevity, each of Bach's chorales is a whole world unto itself, containing a harmonic essence which could form the basis for a whole piece of any size. This microcosm reflects the whole meaning of musical development, of generating musical expression and excitement. It shows how to create tension and resolution, consciously or unconsciously, and how move from a state of initial obscurity or haziness to ever-greater clarity. We experience a sense of hesitation as the composer gradually reveals his secrets, and we also sense the many harmonic colors he creates. All this is contained in just a few musical phrases, notated on two staves.

#### **Q:** Isn't a chorale built on a subject and its development?

**A:** No. A chorale is built on harmonic progression; let us say, when you listen to it you will hear a sequence of chords, while the melody is hardly recognized as the highest line. The rhythm is very static<sup>3</sup>. If we take the chorales as the basis for understanding the whole of “Tertian Harmony”, we should remember that harmony is only one of the elements on which a piece of music is built. Besides harmony there are melody, rhythm, orchestration, form, etc.

Bach's chorales in their narrow texture contain a whole world, but this world is still expressed only by harmonic progressions.

<sup>3</sup> I have deliberately avoided a detailed explanation.

**Q: Do the chorales relate to one another? Is the book of Bach's chorales one piece of music or are they taken from different pieces and put together into one book?**

**A:** The chorales were gathered together after Bach's death from many different sacred pieces. Most of his church cantatas contained chorales – usually, but not always, at the end. His Passions and Motets also include many chorales. They are usually sung by a four-part choir, doubled by the orchestra (that is, the orchestral instruments play exactly what the choir sings, in unison). This is the image of the chorale that inspired the use of chorale melodies in later works, for example by Beethoven and Brahms.

**Q: So what is the basic definition of a chorale, in Bach's music?**

**A:** It is a hymn from the Lutheran church, which was also sung by the congregation at the church. The melodies are usually not by Bach – some are by Luther himself, some by later composers. They usually have several verses of text, all set to the same melodic line. In Bach's chorales, which appear in most of his church works, often as the final movement, this pre-existing melody appears on the top line – the soprano; the other three voices (alto, tenor, bass) provide the harmonies, which are Bach's own. As I noted earlier, the orchestra usually just doubles the voices. Bach often provided several different harmonization to the same chorale melody, and these different harmonies usually reflect the texts of the different verses.

**Q: Now I understand less, I even don't understand at all. What do you mean by "Education to Humanity through the chorales of Bach"?**

**A:** I want to bring the student to an active state, so when he or she reads a chorale, they will struggle by themselves and wonder about all the aesthetical-psychological problems. I would like them to experience the issues involved in harmonizing a chorale – that is, in taking the melody and adding the harmonies beneath it, as Bach did – as deeply as possible. Then it will not differ from any other problem in life you overcome. It always involves a process filled with experience: here you have to be careful, there you are afraid, here you intentionally hide something, and you hesitate, here some tension is growing and increasing – and there you create these tensions and try to resolve them.

**Q: How do others teach chorale harmonization as a subject?**

**A:** Those colleagues whom I criticize most turn it into a boring technical exercise in Harmony. Others at least make their pupils internalize this music by singing. But even this is a very superficial approach: it helps students internalize the sound correctly, but they never get the wider perspective – the ideas, emotions and psychological states contained in the chorales.

### 3. Examples

I have chosen two chorales from Volume I (*371 Four-Part Chorales by J.S. Bach*). I will analyze them exactly as I do it in class.<sup>4</sup>

This analysis could be done only with graduate students who have already been harmonizing chorales in Bach's style for a while.

#### The method of analysis:

- A. Ductus and key problems. Many of the basic dilemmas can already be discerned by looking at the chorale melody in the soprano, even before we examine Bach's harmonization.
- B. General harmonic structure. We examine this by considering every cadence as the conclusion of a harmonic phrase, written in some tonality, built according to the rules of Tertian Harmony, with its own independent life.
- C. A detailed investigation of the harmony, treating each phrase as a tonal and harmonic world unto itself.
- D. General comments and summary.




<sup>4</sup> In the analyses below, I have emphasized phrases which refer to the humane aspects of Bach's decision-making (with regards to harmonic progressions) which I particularly wanted to emphasize in my way of teaching.

**Chorale No. 10:**

“Aus tiefer not schrei ich zu dir”



The image shows the piano accompaniment for Chorale No. 10, arranged in two systems. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex harmonic texture with many accidentals and chromaticism.



**A. Ductus and Key Problems (Luther's melody, as notated in Bach's soprano part)**



The diapason extends between  and the tonal center seems to be ; the dominant is .



These conclusions are drawn from an examination of the soprano melody alone. The tonality is minor-modal, and contains no leading tone. Such a “scale” seems to cause quite a few problems during the process of harmonization. The tonal centers, as deduced from the soprano line, are shifting all the time (**b**, **e**, **a**, **g**...), and this in itself creates a sense of underlying tension.



**B. General Harmonic Structure (Cadences)**

First  : A Dominant Rest 

Second  : A Dominant Rest 


Third  : An Authentic (regular) Cadence 

Forth  : An Authentic (regular) Cadence 

Fifth  : A Dominant Rest 

The chorale's first and last phrases both end on the same dominant rest (Am → E), which again stresses the uncertainty of beginning and end. As already noted, the soprano's melody is entirely modal with very typical ductus directions and formulas; the lack of a leading tone makes it difficult to establish a strong dominant. The need to resolve these features in each phrase by means of the Tertian Harmony system clearly leads to some consequential conflict during the process of harmonization. Bach intensifies this tension through his use of varied tonalities and his choice to end the first and last phrases in the dominant.




**C. Detailed Harmony Research**


 “Independent Tonality – A minor”

$V_2^{#4}$  I<sup>6</sup> VII<sup>#6</sup> I VII<sup>6</sup> III VII<sup>6</sup> V  
**D T D T T I<sup>#6</sup> D**



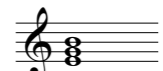

A “Harmonic Introduction” starts on the Dominant This is the main content of the phrase

The VII6-III are a slight hint of the modal mood.

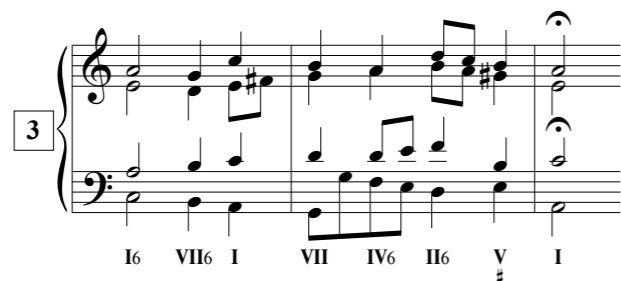
The opening notes  establish the tonality of A minor as a complete “field”; but the following notes  introduce this triad  which may be considered as G or Em after completing the third note of the chord. The harmonization of this phrase approaches A harmonic minor scale – with the dominant at its beginning and at its end; this already gives a feeling of an “Open Harmony” with **no obvious statement** of the Tonic; the VII (mainly) and III (modal because of the g in the melody) add to this **sense of uncertainty or instability**.



Again – general tonality – Am

The structure is similar:  points to Am, but not so obviously, because the E is missing from the melody;  can be considered again as  or . The modal area expands by means of the secondary degrees – VII, III, VI; only the first and last chords definitely represent the major dominant of the key Am, with the leading tone g♯.

Due to the presence of the two Am keys – modal (natural) and harmonic – and the way they are “mixed up” with each other, **our mind gets more and more mixed up**. We could look at this phrase as belonging to two “complex” keys, but without the need of talking about modulation – the two keys are already “**mixed up**” with each other.



The doubling of notes within these two chords gives for a moment the feeling of the G major key. We can be “almost sure” that we have reached this key – the feeling is quite strong at this point. The doubling of c and g stresses the fourth and first notes of G major.



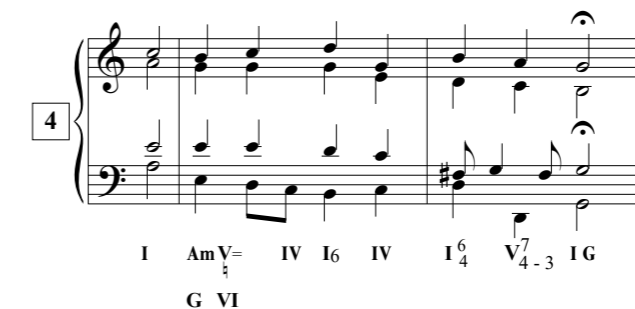
When we read this place we really get to some psychological hesitation – maybe this phrase is going to end in this way:



Of course, that is not the actual resolution – the phrase receives a different ending – but that special place with the marked doublings could have “**turned the tide over**”, causing the harmony to deviate to an entirely different direction (i.e., G major).



However, after this moment of **uncertainty**, Bach immediately **decides to remain in the “safety” of his “home”** (Am key), using a doubling of the note a and turning the f♯ immediately to f♯ (IV6).



At last we have reached the key of G major. We therefore feel quite “safe” and **relaxed**, because of all the prior allusions. The minor dominant is the best place for making this modulation evident. Yet, the doubling of the note of e in that modulatory chord means that the existence of the new key is still **not quite certain**; it is proven finally by getting to the G major Tonic after an authentic full cadence (IV → I 6/4 → V 8-7 → I).

G IV=   I   V   VI   III   VII<sup>b1</sup>   IV<sup>6</sup>/<sub>4</sub>   V<sup>6</sup>   I   V  
 Am III   #   #   #   #   #   #   #   #

The key of G is considered the Dominant of C major, the natural parallel to Am. In the second chord the a is doubled, so it could be considered as belonging to Am key. We therefore experience another moment of **vagueness**, which is **clarified** in the next two chords of E (major dominant) and the F = the VI degree with the doubling of the triad (a) which is the Tonic of the key:

Still the point of the Subdominant (or minorization) was never emphasized in this chorale. That's the explanation for the Gm chord (first inversion): minorization of the seventh in order to **put in some of this special color** and **re-balance** the three functions (Tonic, Subdominant, Dominant) of the A minor tonality. In any case, the perpetuum-mobile shifts between the Tonic (which is kept in mind almost all the time) and the Dominant (always marked at the endings of phrases) is the most effective Harmonic movement.

**D. General Comments and Summary**

This chorale represents a constant continuity of tension. We can never be sure what key we are in. The relative constancy of the Dominant (E major) points to the key of A harmonic minor; but there is only one phrase where you feel this type of **relaxation** by getting to the tonic Am (the third one), and till the ductus is

that modal one with the diapason (might be considered as hypo-aeolian). The conflict between the needs and nature of such a melody and the orbit of Tertian Harmony is never resolved here. There is no chance **for some sudden crash** or surprise, no chance for **a clear ascent towards a definite point of climax**. The “inner struggle” does not open the way to such possibilities; it carries on until the end with no means of reaching a resolution either, **no way of calming down**.

**Chorale No. 62:**

“Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten”

**A. Ductus and Key Problems**

The tonality is quite obvious: B harmonic minor .

The first phrase begins and ends on the Dominant, but the feeling of the Tonic is very basic. The closing of the second phrase clearly points to the Tonic (B minor). The interval of the triad appears in the third phrase. This could be interpreted as or as – the “door” is open for both possibilities. At last we have got to the clear abbreviation of the fifth which allows a definite summation of the tonal quality of B harmonic minor.

**B General Harmonic Structure (Cadences)**

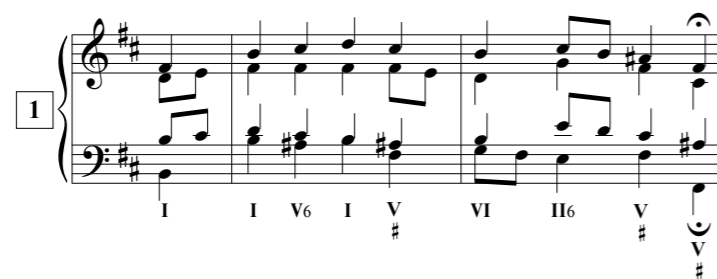
- First ☺ : Harmonic Dominant Rest of B minor scale.
- Second ☺ : An Authentic Cadence with the Leading Tone on the Tonic of B minor.
- Third ☺ : An Authentic Cadence on the Tonic of D = parallel major.
- Fourth ☺ : Returning to B minor and again a full authentic cadence on the B minor Tonic (Leading Tone in the Tenor; the last chord – the *Tierce de Picardie*).

The harmonic movement is a completely Classical one, which could serve as an example for the harmonic system governing Baroque and Classical music:

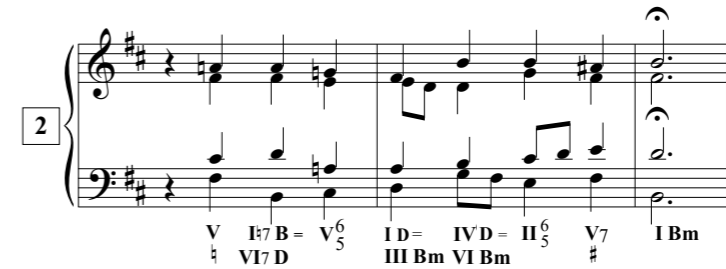
1. The Tonic – Dominant relations (while opening is on the Dominant and the clarifying of the Tonic comes afterwards);
2. The deviation to the Parallel Major;
3. The return to the Tonic.

This harmonic structure is common currency in the music of Bach and his contemporaries, and also underlines the Sonata-Allegro structure which emerged later in the 18th century and served as basis for main movements in concerti, symphonies, sonatas, *et al.*

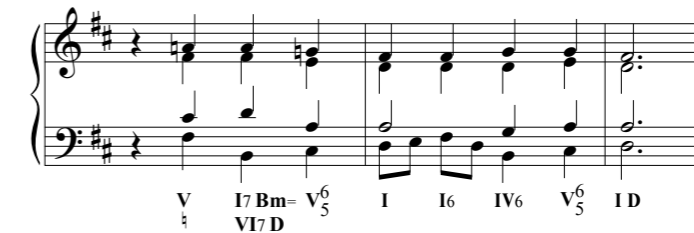
**C Detailed Harmony Research**



This is quite a regular phrase moving from the Tonic to the Dominant in the Tonal key B harmonic minor. The doubling of **b** in the sixth scale degree only emphasizes the feeling of the tonal center.



The most interesting phrase in this chorale is due to modal deviation; the minorization (**a**, **g**) turns the whole area to the D major key. The phrase **could** have received a completely different ending – for example:



I have invented this possibility, of course – it involves a change in the pre-existing soprano line. Yet, when we are in the chord of Bm7 we feel like “**caught in a trap**” of secrets. Eventually we discover that we don’t really know where we are going; the sound is very natural, and very irregular in terms of Bach’s chords. We rarely find in Bach’s music a harmonization by minor 7<sup>th</sup> chords.

**Bach is still in a dilemma.** He does not yet want to give too clear an indication of the B minor key, in which he already knows that he has to complete this phrase. **We feel quite a “sharp freshness”** by having D major as a temporary Tonic – **it is really astonishing!**

We are “handed back” to the B minor key, still quite gradually, by the chord that makes B serve as a tonal center again (doubled triad of the G major chord, which serves as the sixth scale degree). From then on, the feeling of the main key is very basic.



At last we should mention that it was only “**a game of shifting shades and colors**” built on the foundation of the B minor key. There was no modulation to the parallel major.

Finally, there comes the expected modulation to D major. Evidence for this new key is provided through almost the entire phrase. **We feel relaxed.**

The way back to Bm key is quite simple and again very expected. The Tonic Center is felt very strongly all through the phrase.

**D. General Comments and Summary**

This chorale is a perfect example for the complete balanced atmosphere that any self-respecting piece of Western tonal music could create. The role of Harmonic angles and directions was explained before.

**4. Conclusions**

Is it possible to educate for humanity? We are born as human beings and cannot deny it.

Still, without paying too much attention to it, I found myself one day in a philosophical trance while analyzing Bach's chorales; it happened again and again, often while my students and I were engaged in solving some musical problems that the chorale reveals. Those were not lectures given as a summary of a lesson, or a "life-altering truth" given theoretically by a prophet. The nuances of thoughts or feelings were delivered very spontaneously as part of the whole atmosphere. Directness and simplicity were paramount.

Then I started believing I could still do it! I could still direct people to such aims, people whom I'd never intended to guide through such paths through our joint (shared) stay, which was supposedly dedicated to a strictly professional learning process (that is, the study of Harmony). Then I remembered the aspects in the study of music which may help people through music (and which we talked about in the course)<sup>5</sup>, and how strongly they correlate with one another:

1. Concepts;
2. Skills (habits);
3. Repertoires.

Here, too, concepts possess the most effective advantages, taken through by such a secret project, correlated with professional technical skills and human habits. These are not explicitly stated in an organized curriculum. Instead, they are kept in mind during the entire year; every now and then there are moments of getting to that high point of "identifying" with Bach in the process of creation and pulling some energy in order to experience sensitively all human emotions, movements, thoughts, and feelings Bach was involved in. It is a great privilege to have such moments, even once every few weeks; and experienced mentors will always remind themselves of this special project.

These "little drops" seep into your bloodstream, simmer in your unconscious, float at some point towards the surface, and submerge into the unique essence of active humane values.

<sup>5</sup> We shouldn't forget that this way of dropping points without any order (but with the direction of a teacher) and collecting them afterwards into a whole mass of information, is a certain method of teaching used and recommended by my teachers from NYU, and I realize that it is a perfect one!

**Approval****Zipporah Fleischer: Education to Humanity through the Chorales of Bach**

*Your project has been worked out on so many levels that both of us were thrilled when we read it. You have demonstrated intelligence and judgment in your presentation. We might point out that, as you explore the functions within the phrases of the chorales, you should also extrapolate and examine the function of the chorale itself in the context in which it appeared. The function may be for aesthetic reasons (inherent in the design of the music) and for non-aesthetic reasons (textual and other extra-musical considerations). An examination of the role of the chorale in the larger works can serve to give greater perspective and insight into the harmonic function of the chorale. You have done an excellent job of treating the chorale in detail – and in building a rationale that supports your approach. Our greatest concern is that you don't spread yourself so thin that you can't continue to produce with such quality as your graduate study continues. As you may well imagine, the doctorate will demand much more of you in terms of thoroughness and scholarship (documentation). We have entered an Incomplete-Phasing for the 2-point course that you were unable to participate in completely. We will work out the details of completing the requirements when you come to New York. One of the highlights of our visit was to see you in your "other" role, as an arranger-performer – but we are placing our bets on you as one of the real future guiding forces in the music education scene once you have completed your doctorate! Our very best wishes to you, and we look forward to the time when you will be here in New York. Shalom!*

**Tsippi Fleischer - Music Education Corner****On Teaching Harmony****A. Introduction**

Below, I offer excerpts from thoughts, formulations and conclusions that I have written down for myself in 1987, alongside data accumulated during the many years (1966-1990) in which I taught a three-year course entitled "Traditional Harmony". Looking back now, in February 2017, at the notes I had written for myself 30 years earlier, I am more aware than ever of a huge dichotomy: "Tsippi is just crazy about Harmony" (Yehudit Cohen's words at the time) as opposed to "Tsippi is crazy about exotic 'additive' music" (me writing about myself in a few words, looking over my compositions).

The 25 years I had spent teaching traditional harmony led to my desire to write a textbook on the subject, reflecting the meticulous pedagogic methodology I had developed. I ended up writing a somewhat different book, developing a method of song harmonizations, thereby creating a permanent codification of this aspect of my work, preserving it in detail for the benefit of all those studying music as a profession. My planned book on teaching harmony was abandoned – but we now have an opportunity to sample some of the waters from that spring.

I could talk about the dynamics of line development, about the temperamental character of a cadence, about the immediate whole-tone scale association aroused by listening to the Lydian mode – issues that emerged from my students' questions. All this was mixed in with emotional, philosophical and ideological aspects; these constantly nurtured the methodological path. And there is no such thing as not answering a student's question. After all, these are people engaged in learning music as a profession.

I always wanted to teach harmony to a homogeneous class – such as violinists, singers, or guitarists ... something that never happened. But it's still worth it! It's never too late. In such a group, currents will always rise from the depths, and all students within such a group will be immensely strengthened as they pursue their respective paths.

**B. I gave people life – defining a student...**

“You’ve given people life!” This is something I’ve been hearing for decades, even until today, from students who graduated from my harmony courses. “We felt that harmony is life and life is harmony”, they say. I still meet some of those who, at the time, were among the youngest of my students during the 1980s; some of them, whom I taught in the 1970s, were much older than me (they called me “Wonder Girl”). It is clear to me that, in teaching harmony in the utmost depth, I have nurtured souls and shaped a solid foundation that enabled students to analyze the literature of Western artistic music – to understand the secrets of that light-filled edifice built thanks to the great composers.

Who is the ideal student? Someone who has the *desire*, who has been endowed with a spiritual *personality*, and who has *talent*. Without the first two qualities, talent will fade until it disappears completely, as if it never existed. The first quality, in and of itself, is sufficient to allow for considerable achievements, though the complete absence of talent will create many obstacles for the students. In the opposite case – talent without the desire – art will suffer a permanent loss of potential. Personality is the real core controller, keeping the balance between the other two qualities, moderating them, guiding them into coexistence, and guaranteeing the formation of an artist of the highest caliber.

A few years ago, on reading my monograph on Matti Caspi in its expanded edition, my teacher and mentor Yitzhak Sadai told me: “In your approach to Matti Caspi’s songs you have built an analytical model that every musician should adopt”.

**C. The encounter with the student**

The encounter with the student is what anchors and stabilizes each of them – before they study, after they study, or even when they’re not studying. Sometimes I advised a student to study alone, without a teacher. How did I develop or build up a person who was lost and came to me for advice? Many made the journey to my home to seek my advice. *The needs of the student are sacrosanct*, I engraved on my soul. While teaching, I could clearly follow the development of each individual student, even within a group.

I diagnosed every student I received in terms of two kinds of hearing abilities: gravitational and atmospheric. Those with *gravitational hearing* (able to break down a mass of sound correctly, harmonic-chordal in the professional jargon), tend to discern everything that moves functionally. Those with *atmospheric (linear / melodic) hearing*, tend towards painting or Impressionism. People with the second kind of hearing usually have a lot of inspiration, and although they are extremely talented it is difficult to teach them. One could even call them “the problem-talents”. There is something not quite grounded in these people. And from this point I moved on to teaching scripts.

**D. Teaching harmony - what does that mean?**

Teaching harmony means *education through teaching music*. All students discovered themselves – regardless of their starting point. Through my teaching, they were carefully exposed to new discoveries, without destroying all they had acquired in the past; I was very strict with myself concerning this aspect in the course of my teaching. I communicated with the student’s soul: you can continue to cling tightly to the side of the coin that is already yours, but don’t be afraid of the other side, of the new fragment of the world that’s pervading your consciousness! Be strong enough to stand up for who you are, for what you love, for your madness! And be completely open and totally brave in every possible reaction you present to me, your teacher; you must be happy with any addition that brings you exactly what you were looking for, which was vague and is now becoming clearer. It is so illuminating. This is how I encouraged my students on their path to learning. My response *after examining every exercise in harmony* (including very technical ones) and correcting all the errors was a kind of *therapy* for the student – “it’s healthy”, they would tell me, and reiterate over and over again that “life is harmony and harmony is life”. When I checked their exercises, even those of beginners who have only started their journey, I immediately discerned the soul whose life-journey, whether professional or personal, I had begun to affect. I always tried to improve and tone down my comments while critiquing their work. While doing so, I unintentionally came across a way of resolving mental issues relating to instability or difficulty in concentrating. I say “unintentionally” since they themselves, to my joy, confessed to me that “you resolve my mental issues”, “you teach me how to concentrate, no-one taught me that in elementary and high school”. Bach’s Chorales

helped in the way I analyzed them with my students (see my article “Education to Humanity through the Chorales of Bach”, reprinted above): as we followed Bach’s harmonization process we unveiled his own mental process.

I was fortunate to teach the history of music to several groups of students (due to “scheduling constraints” rather than anything deliberate). *The orderly process* – beginning with the study of harmony and proceeding to familiarity with composers according to their eras – led to the desired orientation in the richness of tonality (Bach, Beethoven) and in its explosion (Bartók, Debussy). In light of this in-depth acquaintance with the great composers, my students were able to understand their path both freely and with focus. See what one of my students (now the composer Roni Yedidya) wrote, as part of his response to a question dealing with the classical era, when he was just beginning his studies in theory, harmony and the musical literature:

What characterizes Mozart is his lightness. Mozart, unlike Beethoven, has a light pen. Despite Mozart’s external failure in his war against the thickets of society, in the depths of his creative soul he was the winner. For Mozart, the struggle does not find expression in creation as with Beethoven. The struggle for Mozart ends before writing the work. In the work itself there is a sense of victory, of lightness and of control of the material. Humanity was the source and content for Mozart’s works. He achieved perfection in his operas *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*. He was influenced by the Opera Buffa and Opera Seria genres. He brings lighthearted and serious characters into his operas and handles them with love.

The course of Beethoven’s life is the opposite of Mozart’s. His path was initially shrouded in gloom, but by the end he was acclaimed as an artist with unsurpassable victories. In Beethoven’s life, the principle of individuality triumphed. Beethoven was the first musician to make a living from his printed works. His works served as source for his subsistence. If Haydn had to remain a composer to the courts of princes and suffer for his entire life, if Mozart fought throughout his life against the constraints of society and failed, then Beethoven, due to his enormous personality, stands out as a free and independent man in the world. Beethoven never held a position, he was solely a creator.

Beethoven’s piano sonatas are even deeper than his symphonies. His last sonatas accompanied him to the bitter end. In the sonatas we find great power, the full force of an orchestra. One of the most prominent sonatas is the *Pathétique*, in which we feel a subjective personal tone – the early budding of the Romantics.

Beethoven wrote nine symphonies. In his Ninth Symphony he broke away from symphonic structure, making him the first of the Romantics. He brought in human voices singing text from a poem by Schiller. Instead of the second part – which should be broad – the second part here is more like a minuet. Even in his *Missa Solemnis*, Beethoven adds in a romantic tone – summoning the Ruler of the World to justice.

In fact, I believe it is correct to move with the same music history teacher from orderly studies of harmony along this certain path of analyzing composers’ works throughout the different periods in the history of Western music.

In the mid-1980s, when I was already working hard on my compositions (it was while composing *Lamentation*, Op. 16), I noted the reflections that came to mind – *the difference between composition and teaching*:

A reminder: the teacher must not encourage excessive admiration for any particular composer, even a composer that the teacher really likes [for me, for example, Anton Webern]. This is a disaster – over-subjectivity on the teacher’s part. In teaching, *the student is the subject, the teacher is the object* – that is, the shape of music, the image of something that belongs to a theory that withstands all tests of time and era. And if he is a serious creator, pursuing his own unique path – he must involve his students as little as possible in this process. Such involvement will harm their development. This is necessary to bring advanced groups of students to the point of writing compositions based on advanced harmonic content, until they find or invent (!) their own harmonic world, with or without poetic text. A bold, progressive harmonic world (perhaps under the influence of Debussy, Bartók, Scriabin ...).

At the end of that musing I even arrived at the idea that the students would compose – not as “students of composition” but as students of harmony, harmonization of songs and music history.

**E. Each lesson is a work of art**

My students and I would spend time in a sacred space, which we would enter once a week for 90 minutes. In those hours the strands of all intertwined in the blossoming of each individual, and the students became happier from week to week; and then I too became more joyful. It was important to achieve the correct dose – emotional, philosophical, ideological – and all this within the curriculum. I built the work-process naturally and thoroughly, knowing that a consistent methodical approach is the secret of success, and good order helps toward clarity in understanding what leads to what, what builds what; then the student can relax. It really happens that way.

It is most desirable, even essential, that the same group of students study for three years with the same teacher, breathing with the teacher's terminology (sometimes different instructors use different terms to define the exact same phenomenon), and then a gradual-organic percolation occurs in the student's perception. In this way, students can absorb and internalize large amounts of materials they've been taught. The teacher creates something out of nothing, engages in a constant creative process, and lives the experiences that the student goes through. Therefore, the greater and more "stable" the inspiration in this act of creation, the "better" the work. It is built from molecules that accumulate, and sometimes spontaneous discoveries may arise – one of process's most wonderful characteristics. This is my ideology in education, this is my credo. I think it stems naturally from a basic desire to give.

From the heights of the methodical path in the study of harmony with me: when they reached the final stages, *all the students* were required to harmonize a melody from a Bach chorale, completely on their own. They did it without any pretensions, with great effort, as it is no easy task. Although these harmonizations were not particularly good, and I held back in my criticism, the goal was achieved: thanks to this challenge, when they later analyzed Bach's harmonizations, they felt a strong affinity with them, identifying with the challenges that Bach himself faced and with solutions he found, that delighted their eyes and the ears. Sometimes they even found points of weakness in Bach, and that too was legitimate!

**F. Terminological insights I gathered during my lessons**

These shone and bloomed integrally, from my own imagination, during the lessons. I have accumulated some of them for the sake of this article. These are examples from the actual teaching process, a glimpse into the lessons themselves.

**(1) From theory to harmony, regarding the construction of chords for 4 choral voices**

I used to present the intervals in one organic progression from the consonant to the dissonant, showing how they become increasingly dissonant as we move along a single continuum: the unison, the octave, the fifth, the fourth, the major sixth, the minor sixth, the major third, the minor third, the major second, the minor second. The tritone stands halfway along the way, the *diavolo in musica*.

In "Naked Triads" (the three notes of the triad) we first got to know the raw material and then we began to examine "what could be done with it" in harmony (meaning when studying harmony), moving towards as detailed an understanding as possible of what we hear.

In appreciation of the vital importance of the moment when studies begin, the point of entry into world of music that will instantly open up stimulating, unlimited horizons: Any such line (soprano, alto, tenor, bass in writing the harmony exercises) indicates or represents in miniature all the lines we see at this level in the score ... even an electronic line is a line!

**(2) The connection of a degree to itself**

This is the closest connection, when the movement is only of an ascent or descent in the soprano. The alto line is therefore shared between the two adjacent chords.

Schematic description:

In the transition from closed (Cl) position to open position (Op): the upper sound always rises, i.e., expansion;

In the transition from open position to closed position: the upper sound always descends, i.e., contraction:

Cl->Op ascent in the soprano

Op->Cl descent in the soprano

The closed position is associated with instrumental playing. I consistently made the following demand of my students: any progression that is filled in writing in four voices (open or dense spacing), according to bass specified by the teacher, including the bass patterns – must be played; This is how I led the student's ear in the right direction.

(3) Teaching II6, VII6

From the notebook of one of the students.

**II6**

II6 appears instead of IV as a subdominant in a cadence. The third, which appears in the bass, must be doubled. In this way, we emphasize the fourth note in the scale and thus its degree as the subdominant in the scale. The chord should begin with an octave or a third, meaning the octave/basic tone in the soprano.

II6    I    II6    V    I  
The basic inversion

**VII6**

This positioning of the VII degree softens the sonority of the tritone hidden within it, and the overall effect is much gentler, which is why this degree is used. This degree serves as the Dominant. The leading tone should not be doubled. The fifth can be doubled but this is not desirable. It's preferable to double the bass. The degree in this form usually appears in the beginning of phrases.

I    VII6    I6    I    VII6    III    II    VII6    I6    IV    VII6    I  
T    (D)    T    T    (D)    T    SD    D    T    SD    D    T

(4) The dominant-seventh type of chord

Raising the third occupies a central place in the dominant seventh on the fifth degree: first the dominant type of chord with the third (leading tone) and then the seventh that increases the tension. The dominant-seventh chord has precisely this structure, which can be built on any degree as a strong leader to the next degree. In a minor scale the effect of raising the third will be even more poignant.

I talked a lot about the tonic as a vacuum which attracts everything into it – primarily the dominant with the leading tone. These two “sergeant majors” are no match for the sensitive, multifaceted and multilayered meaningful subdominant.

**G. The exercises I composed for my students**

(1) Executing figured bass in writing and playing (with a dominant-seventh type on all the degrees)

I wrote these exercises rapidly on a chalk board, and then asked the students to copy them out for me for the book I would write about teaching harmony (this happened in 1987). Here is a small selection, presented according to the kind of exercise.

(2) Soprano composition according to a progression for 4 voices given by me (again with a dominant-seventh-type on many degrees)

“Composition through a Harmonic Progression” by Tsippi Fleischer; students were asked to write an aria on this basis.

The progressions that include the dominant-seventh-type chords on many degrees are without a doubt the most interesting material in the development of possibilities within tonality, before moving on to learning modulations (exclusively by playing). This is a relatively late stage in study. The tonal drama takes on increasingly sharp colors, as I explained for my students while exposing them in class to a constantly increasing tonal richness.

(3) Sopranos given for harmonization in writing only, using root triads and first and second (six-four) inversions

This exercise represents a relatively early stage in study, connected to the authentic cadence. This is how we used it in notation – the given soprano is written on the upper staff with stems pointing upwards, with an empty staff prepared beneath for filling in the three lower voices.

**H. Two examples of composed works**

(1) "Something" by the Beatles

This is an analysis of a pop song using the rules of traditional harmony. The power of the bass line is noticeable, and so, by contrast, are the doublings that undermine the sense of tonality. You can see and hear this well in the piano performance that I notated while analyzing this song in 1975.

**Part I**  
Very slowly - Heavy Beat

**Part II**

from the beginning  
Improviz. Orches. (solo)  
+ Elect. Guitars  
bars 1-9; then singing  
from the beginning Part I (x2)

(2) "Etude with a pinch of Hijaz"

This exercise represents a creative form of practice. The student (then a new immigrant) was enthusiastic about getting to know the world of the *maqāms* (*maqāmat* in Arabic), and on her own initiative composed an etude for a solo guitar with hints from a *Hijaz maqām* ("a pinch of *Hijaz*", as she defines it). This was in 1994, when I was already teaching a seminar called "Arab - West", which dealt with phenomena representing the interface Arab and Western elements in Israeli music literature, both folk / popular and artistic. Students could choose a compositional exercise as a subject for their paper. The hints to a *Hijaz maqām* appear with the backdrop of a harmonization of octave intervals and melodic chromatics.

**Etude with a pinch of Hijaz by Rita Kachamovich (August 1994)**



Applying Fleischer's Harmony creed to the Popular Song repertoire in her textbook *Harmonization Of Songs*, which presents her method.



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## List of Compositions

This list covers all of Tsippi Fleischer's concert music, divided by ensembles and genres. In each category, works are listed by opus numbers, from first to latest. The information included here is based on the official list of compositions on the composer's website – <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/compositions.html>. These online lists also include links to further information: full or partial scores for viewing and downloading; recordings for streaming and downloading; information on performances around the world; and videos about the works, including full-length productions of many multimedia and stage works. We should mention that all of commercial CDs featuring the Fleischer's music – and many non-commercial recordings as well – are available for streaming and downloading on the composer's website; many are also available on Spotify. Information on many works, including scores for most of them, are also available through the composer's website on the National Library of Israel, parts of which can be viewed online.

Our list also includes links and QR-codes for online scores of works discussed in detail in the text. Wherever possible, we referred readers to complete scores available for download on the composer's website. Where no such scores were available, we linked instead to scores available for viewing only through the National Library's website.

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## Orchestral Music

### **A Girl Named Limonad**

op. 3 (1977): Poem for ChO  
2,2,2,2 – 2,2,0,0, perc(1),hp & str  
Dur.: 15'

IMI 6269

Score can be viewed on

<https://tinyurl.com/54fu9xwz>



### **נערה ושמה לימונאד**

### **Symphony No. 1: Salt Crystals**

op. 33 (1995), for SO  
pic,3,a-fl,2,2,a-sax,2 – 4,2,0,0, timp,perc(3),hp & str  
Dur.: 10'

IMC 872

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

### **סימפוניה מס' 1: גבישי מלח**

### **Symphony No. 2: The Train**

op. 48 (1998/9), for SO  
2,2,ehn,2,b-cl,2 – 4,2,2,1, timp,perc(5) & str  
Dur.: 11'

IMI 7242

### **סימפוניה מס' 2: הרכבת**

### **Symphony No. 3: Regarding Beauty**

op. 49 (1998/9), for SO  
pic,2/a-fl,2,ehn,3/pic,b-cl,2 - 2,2,2,1, timp,perc(5),hp,cel,pno & str  
Dur.: 17'

IMI 7243

### **סימפוניה מס' 3: אודות יופי**

### **Symphony No. 4: A Passing Shadow**

op. 51 (2000), for ethnic ww, ethnic perc(1) & ChO  
0,3,0,0 – 0,0,0,0, hp & str  
Dur.: 25'

IMI 7265

Available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/7ry2tuhm>



### **סימפוניה מס' 4: צל חולף**

**Symphony No. 5:  
Israeli-Jewish Collage**

op. 54 (2002/3), for MagT & SO  
3/a-fl,3/ehn,3/a-sax,3 - 4,3,3,1, timp,perc(3),hp,pno & str  
Dur.: 18'  
IMI 7537

Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/3bn9sr2r>

**סימפוניה מס' 5:  
קולאז' ישראלי-יהודי****Symphony No. 6:  
The Eyes, Mirror of the Soul**

op. 73 (2011)  
4 singers (S,A,T,B), 2 vlms, 2 vlas, 2 vcls, 2 dbs, 2 prepared pnos  
Dur.: 20'  
MS

Available for download on  
<http://tinyurl.com/568aft25>

**סימפוניה מס' 6:  
עיניים, השתקפות הנפש****Symphony No. 7:  
A Dream of Later Days  
(a gift for my family) -  
Choral Symphony**

op. 77 (2015)  
4 singers (S,A,T,B), 2 vlms, 2 vlas, 2 vcls, 2 dbs, 2 prepared pnos  
Dur.: 20'

Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/2krbe6tf>

**סימפוניה מס' 7:  
חלום אחרית  
(מתנה למשפחה) -  
סימפוניה כוראלית****Chamber Music****Ten Fragments  
for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon**

op. 15 (1984)  
Dur.: 10'  
IMC 270

Dedicated to György Kurtág  
Available for download on  
<http://tinyurl.com/sce92yu4>

**עשרה רסיסים  
לאבוב, קלרינט ובסון****War**

op. 23 (1988), for b-cl/ca-cl/a-sax & perc(1)

Dur.: 6'

Fue 4010

Commissioned by, and dedicated to, Duo Contemporain, Amsterdam

**מלחמה****Strings – Bow and Arrow**

op. 30 (1995)

Tocatta for solo vln, string ensemble (vlms & vlas) & Arab drums

Dur.: 3'45"

Fue 4020

**מיתרים - קשת וחץ****Spielmobil**

op. 34 (1995): 10 miniatures for org & hp

Dur.: 13'

Fue 4030

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

**שפילמוביל****Hexptychon – Piece No. 3**

op. 38 (1996/7), for str qrt

Dur.: 4'30"

IMI 7175/III

From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem "I'm Sick of You", composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California, and Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/mv7dehav>

**הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 3****Hexptychon – Piece No. 4**

op. 39 (1996/7), for str qrt & hp

Dur.: 4'

IMI 7175/IV

From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem "I'm Sick of You", composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/hxkucyph>

**הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 4**

**Fibonacci Dance**

op. 59 (2005), for ChE  
2 fls, ob, cl in B, bn, tpt in C, tuba, perc(2), 3 vlins, 2 vlas, vcl & db  
Dur.: 5'  
IMC 3820

**מחול פיבונצ'י****The Animals' Wish**

op. 74 (2011), for ChE  
Narrator, fl, cl, bsn, vln, vla, vcl  
Dur.: 7'  
IMC 4094

**החיות רוצות**

Available for download on  
<http://tinyurl.com/2t4pv3ny>

**Music for Solo Instrument****Girl Butterfly Girl**

Op. 4 – version for piano duo  
Dur.: 8'  
IMI 6228-VII  
See also under Vocal Works  
Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/yuvhnma9>

**נערה, פרפר נערה****Resuscitation**

op. 6 (1980): 5 miniatures for vcl  
Dur.: 6'  
IMI 6569  
Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/4yr2rnxf>

**התאוששות****To the Fruits of My Land**

op. 8 (1981): Suite for guitar  
Dur.: 10'  
IMI 6414

**סוויטה לפירות הארץ****In Chromatic Mood**

op. 19 (1986), for pno  
Dur.: 3'45"  
Fue 4050  
Also included in the anthology *25 plus Piano Solo: 25 Years of Women in Music*  
(Fue 4660)

**במצב רוח כרומטי****Hexaptychon – Piece No. 5**

op. 40 (1996/7), for hp  
Dur.: 4'50"  
IMI 7175/V

**הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 5**

From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem "I'm Sick of You", composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California, and Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/cruwjyv5>

**Hexaptychon – Piece No. 6**

op. 41 (1996/7), for pno 4-hands  
Dur.: 4'30"  
IMI 7175/VI

**הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 6**

From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem "I'm Sick of You", composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California, and Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/mwadexxn>

**Erasure**

op. 69 (2009): Two movements for vln  
Dur.: 10'  
IMI 7877

**מחיקה**

Vocal Music**Sabbath Song**

שיר שבת

(no opus number, 1970) for V &amp; pno

Text: Avraham Bar-Oz (H)

Dur.: 2'30"

Fue 7840 (English transliteration and translation)

Published in the anthology *Weihnachtslieder von Komponistinnen*, Vol. 2

Can be viewed on

[https://www.nli.org.il/he/scores/NNL\\_MUSIC\\_AL997009165962505171/NLI](https://www.nli.org.il/he/scores/NNL_MUSIC_AL997009165962505171/NLI)

MS (Hebrew original and notes)

Can be viewed on

[https://www.nli.org.il/he/scores/NNL\\_MUSIC\\_AL997009165963505171/NLI#\\$FL162122657](https://www.nli.org.il/he/scores/NNL_MUSIC_AL997009165963505171/NLI#$FL162122657)**Girl Butterfly Girl**

נערה פרפר נערה

op. 4

for S or Mez with alternative instrumental ensembles

Texts by Lebanese and Syrian poets: Fuad Rifka, Shauki Abi-Shakra, Muhammad al-Maghut, Unsi al-Hajj (Ar), (H)#, (E)#, (Fr)#, (Sp)#

Dur.: 10'

Master score: Oriental Ver for S, vln &amp; oud (or nai);

Western Ver for S, fl &amp; pno: IMI 6228-I (1977).

Available for download

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6rmzy9>

Ver for S, recs &amp; hpd: IMI 6228-II (1977/1989)

Ver for Mez, fl &amp; gui: IMI 6228-III (1977/1992)

Ver for Mez, fl &amp; pno: IMI 6228-IV (1977/1987)

Ver for S &amp; ChE (fl, cl, bn, pno, vln, vla, vcl): IMI 6228-VIII (1977/2011)

Ver for S &amp; SO: IMI 6228-IX (1977/2012)

Other, unpublished versions, are available at the National Library in Jerusalem (Mus 121 A, files 2, 3, 4, op. 4). See also under "Music for Choir a Cappella".

The composer has granted performers significant flexibility in the choice of arrangements and sung languages, above and beyond the variety of published and unpublished versions.

**Ballad of Expected Death in Cairo**

בלדה על מוות צפוי בקהיר

op. 20 (1987)

Text: Sallah Abd-el-Sabur (Ar)

Dur.: 15'

Ver for T, 3 vlns &amp; pno, op. 20a: IMC 265 I

Ver for Mez, 2 vlns, vla &amp; pno, op. 20b: Fue 7610

**Mein Volk**

עמי

op. 32 (1995), for S/Mez &amp; gui

Text: Else Lasker-Schüler (G)

Dur.: 2'35"

IMC 871

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

**Hexptychon – Piece No. 2**

הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 2

op. 37 (1996/7)

for A, baroque ob, hpd &amp; baroque vcl

Text: Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (Ar)

Dur.: 5'

IMI 7175/II

From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem "I'm Sick of You", composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California, and Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/bdzx3ed5>**As a Diamond,**

כיהלום

op. 47 (1998), for A, Bar &amp; SO

2,2,2,2 - 4,1,1,1, perc &amp; str

Text: Yehuda Amichai (H)

Dur.: 3'

IMI 7174

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, the Artists' Quarter, Safed

**At the End of the Ways**

op. 50 (1998-9), for Bar & vcl  
(elaborated as a computerized oratorio)  
Text: Uri Zvi Grinberg (H)  
Dur.: 14'  
MS  
Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/2asfubxx>

**Lead Life I**

op. 52 (2001-2):  
Cycle of five songs for female voice & pno  
See titles and poets' names under *Lead Life II* (opp. 60-64) below, page 325  
Dur.: 35'

Song No. 1: Fue 6530, available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/26ru4k6d>



Songs Nos 2-5: MS, available for download on:

<https://tinyurl.com/43w3htwp> (No. 2)



<https://tinyurl.com/mryw56de> (No. 3)



<https://tinyurl.com/y9c6jdan> (No. 4)



<https://tinyurl.com/9mtjk9bu> (No. 5)

**Saga-Portrait**

op. 53 (2002), for Mez & MagT  
Text: Dan Pagis (H)  
Dur.: 23'  
MS. Available for download on  
<http://tinyurl.com/yt2wcbwc>

**בקץ הדרכים****סאגה-פורטרט****Lead Life II**

opp. 60-64 (2005)  
Ver for S, fl/a-fl, ob/ehn, hn, vcl, perc(1) & hp

**1: Weltschmerz**

op. 60  
Text: Else Lasker-Schüler (G)  
Dur.: 7'  
IMC 3821  
Available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/264t234u>

**צער העולם****2: Two Family Songs:**

**I Gave you an ancient heart of gold**  
**Nothing is as it seems**

**שני שירים משפחתיים:**

**נתתי לך לב זהב**  
**שום דבר אינו מה שהוא נראה**

op. 61  
Text: Shin Shifra (H)  
Dur.: 6'  
IMC 3822  
Available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/b2r2tdm3>

**3: Le ciel est, par dessus**

op. 62  
Text: Paul Verlaine (Fr)  
Dur.: 8'  
IMC 3823  
Available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/m7y33n66>

**שם השמים מעל הגג****4: Waltz of the Devil**

op. 63  
Text: Esther Kunda (E)  
Dur.: 3'  
IMC 3824  
Available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/manwz8rh>

**ואלס השטן****5: Kupite Luk**

op. 64  
Text: Genrix Sagpir (Ru)  
Dur.: 2'  
IMC 3825  
Available for download: <https://tinyurl.com/6r7bsr3s>

**קנו בצל**

**The Mother**

op. 65 (2005), for A &amp; 4 fls

Text: Rahel Yona-Michael (H, Ar), after Sami Michael's *Pigeons in Trafalgar**Square*

Dur.: 5'

MS

האם

**Abhorrence**

op. 68 (2007), for S &amp; StrO

Quasi-text by the composer

Dur.: 1'30"

MS

שאט נפש

**Moderna**

op. 70 (2010), for S, oud, vcl &amp; pno

Text: Iman Mersal (Ar/Heb trans. by Sasson Somekh)

Dur.: 4'

IMC 4034

מודרנה

**Two Songs of Pain and  
One Song of Joy**

Op. 78 (2016)

Voice, db &amp; electronics

Text: Tsippi Fleischer (H)

Dur.: 5'30"

MS

שני שירי כאב  
ושיר שמחה אחד**Mein Herz Niemandem**

Op. 79 (2018)

Voice &amp; pno

Text: Else Lasker-Schüler (Ger)

Dur.: 1'

MS

ליבי לאף אחד

**Girl Butterfly Girl – A New Flutterby**

נערה פרפר נערה - ריחוף חדש

Op. 80 (2019)

pno, vln, vcl, voices &amp; MagT

Text: Lebanese and Syrian poets, from the song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*, Opus 4

Dur.: 5'

MS

Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/38u6wycr>**Music for Choir and Instrumental Ensembles****Lamentation**

op. 16 (1985)

for S, women's chorus, 2 hps &amp; perc(1)

Text: Else Lasker-Schüler (G); (H) by Yehuda Amichai

Dur.: 18'

PEER 3143 (German version)

Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/y66wdp87>

PEER 3144 (Hebrew version)

Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/yc47ntfw>

קינה

**Like Two Branches**

op. 24 (1989)

Cantata for mixed choir, 2 obs, vcl, pno (or qanun), tar-drums &amp; perc(1)

Text: Al-Khansa (6th cent.) (Ar)

Dur.: 40'

IMI 7872

ACUM Encouragement of Composition Prize, 1994

Available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/like-2branch-score>

כשני ענפים

**Oratorio 1492-1992****אורטוריה 1492-1992**

op. 25 (1991)

commemorating the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of Jews from Spain

for S, mixed choir &amp; SO

3/pic,2/ehn,2/b-cl,2 - 4,2,3,1, timp,perc(3),hp,6 guis,6 mandolas &amp; str

Text: medieval sources (H), (Sp), (Ar)

Dur.: 22'

IMI 6921

Israeli Public Council of Art and Culture Award, 1993

**Avoth Yeshurun****מחזור שלושה שירים  
למילים מאת אבות ישורון****Song-Cycle**

op. 58 (2004)

for mixed choir &amp; ChE: 4 fls, 2 obs, b-cl &amp; db

Text: Avoth Yeshurun (H)

Dur.: 5'

MS

**Ancient Love (Die älteste Liebe)****אהבה עתיקה**

op. 67 (2006)

for youth choir &amp; lute

Text: Song of Songs 1; ancient love songs in various languages

Dur.: 8'

Fue 7660

Commissioned by, and dedicated to, the Tölzer Knabenchor

Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/4deza3zw>**Avram: An oratorio  
portraying the birth of monotheism****אברם - אורטוריה  
על הולדת המונותאיזם**

Op. 72 (2011)

for women's chorus, 3 hps, 5 vlms

Meta-text in Hebrew, Arabic and Greek compiled by Tsippi Fleischer

Dur.: 20'

IMC 4162

Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/4exdxjda>**Music for Choir a cappella****נערה-פרפר-נערה ("חלמה נערה") -  
שיר מס' 4**- **Song No. 4**

מתוך המחזור נערה-פרפר-נערה

from the song cycle **Girl-Butterfly-Girl**

Op. 4

Version for mixed choir a cappella (1977/1992)

Text: Unsi al-Hajj

Dur.: 3'

IMI 6228-V (Arabic)

IMI 6228-VI (Hebrew)

**The Clock Wants to Sleep****השעון רוצה לישון**

op. 7 (1980)

for children's chorus or women's chorus

Text: Miriam Yalan-Shteklis (H)

Dur.: 7'

MS

**Scenes of Israel – Six Madrigals****שישה מדריגלים לנוף הארץ**

Each madrigal is dedicated to a different region in Israel

כל מדריגל מוקדש למקום אחר בארץ

(opp. 9-14 (1981/3

for mixed choir a cappella

The *Madrigals* were published by the Israeli General Workers' Federation's Cultural and Educational Enterprises. When the publishing house was disbanded, the composer regained the copyright. Scans of each madrigal, based on the original publications, are available for download on the composer's website.

**1. No Hand Has Touched You  
To the Mountains of Edom****1. יד לא היתה בך  
להרי אדום**

op. 9

Text: Arnon Ben-Nahum (H)

Dur.: 7'

MS (previously CEE 358)

Winner of the 1st Annual Cambridge Madrigal Singers' Choral Composition Competition, Newtonville, Massachusetts (USA), 1998

2. **Don't Belittle the Tears of Today**  
To Tel Aviv  
op. 10  
Text: Bat-Sheva Sheriff (H)  
Dur.: 1'20"  
MS (previously CEE 359)
3. **Like a Soft Light**  
To Jerusalem  
op. 11  
Text: Yoram Ben-Meir (H)  
Dur.: 4'30"  
MS (previously CEE 360)
4. **From the Salt of your Waters**  
**is the Salt of My Blood and My Tears**  
To the Mediterranean and Dead Sea  
op. 12  
Text: Uri Zvi Grinberg (H)  
Dur.: 4'30"  
MS (previously CEE 361)
5. **Two Eagles and a Single Fig Tree**  
To the Lower Galilee  
op. 13  
Text: Esther Raab (H)  
Dur.: 2'15"  
MS (previously CEE 362)
6. **There God's Garden Flourishes**  
To the Sea of Galilee  
op. 14  
Text: Yaacov Fichman (H)  
Dur.: 9'15"  
MS (previously CEE 363)
2. אל תזלזלו בבכי המודרני  
לתל-אביב
3. כמו האור הרך  
לירושלים
4. קמלח מימיך  
הן מלח דמי ודמעי  
לים התיכון ולים המלח
5. שני עיטים ותאנה אחת  
לגליל התחתון
6. גן אל שם נטוע  
לים כינרת

**Girl Butterfly Girl**

**song no. 4** – Ver for choir a cappella  
op. 4 (1977/1984)  
Text: Unsi al-Haj (Ar), (H)#, (E)#  
Dur.: 3'  
IMI 6228/MArr

## נערה פרפר נערה

**Hexptychon – Piece No. 1**

op. 36  
for mixed choir a capella (1996/7)  
Text: Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (Ar)  
Dur.: 5'  
IMI 7175/I  
From a series of six short pieces after Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's poem 'I'm Sick of You', composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California, and Jerusalem Music Centre

## הקספטיכון - הצללה מס' 1

Available for download

<https://tinyurl.com/59spdazf>

**We Shall Lie Naked**

op. 55 (2003)  
for A, Bar, male chorus & live electronics  
Text: Pinhas Sade (H)  
Dur.: 3'15"  
MS

## נשכב עירומים

**A Letter from Naguib Mahfouz,**

Op. 75 (2012)  
for vocal quintet or 5-part cappella choir  
Text: Naguib Mahfouz (sung in Arabic, Hebrew, English, German, French)  
Dur.: 6'  
IMC 4161  
Available for download on <http://tinyurl.com/yck3j4j3>

## מכתב מנגיב מחפוז



**Electronic Music**

See under other categories for works combining electronic and acoustic media

**In the Mountains of Armenia****בהרי ארמניה**

op. 22 (1988)

MagT of Armenian girls, nar & cl

Text: Hovhanes Thumanian (Armenian)

Dur.: 2'43"

MS

Selected to represent Israel in UNESCO's International Rostrum of Composers competition in Paris.

**Ethnic Silhouettes,****סילואטים אתניים**

opp. 42-46 (1988-1998)

A series of magnetic tapes based on voices of ethnic groups around the world, with short clarinet interludes (performed by Barbaros Erköse and consisting of quotations from Anouar Brahem's *Conte de l'incroyable amour*)

Dur.: 17'58" (incl. cl interludes)

MS

**1. The Gown of Night,****1. גלימת הלילה**

op. 42 (orig. op. 21, 1988)

Collage of voices of Bedouin Children (MagT)

Text: Muhammad Ghana'im (Ar)

Dur.: 2'42"

Sketch published in an article in Bulletin no. 6 of the Archive of Israeli Music, Musicology Department, Tel Aviv University, 1994

Selected to represent Israel in UNESCO's International Rostrum of Composers competition in Paris, 1989

First Prize (jury and radio listeners) in the 3rd International Electro-Video Clip Competition (ACREQ) in Montreal, Canada 1992

**2. Souls Consumed****2. נשמות נשרפות**

op. 43 (1996/7)

Collage of voices of old Eskimo women

Dur.: 1'10"

**3. Ramblings on a Volcano****3. בעקבות הוולקאנו**

op. 44 (1997)

Composed in co-operation with Rajmil Fischman at the Electronic Studio, Music Department, Keele University, UK

Computerized elaboration of Georgian men's voices combined with programmed material based on the human voice (FOF)

Dur.: 4'45"

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Keele University, UK

**4. Towards Eternity****4. אל הנצח**

op. 45 (1997)

A looped fragment of Georgian men's voices with db

Text: Excerpt from a Kahetian drinking song from eastern Georgia (Georgian)

Dur.: 4'49"

**5. Bird in the Forest****5. ציפור ביער**

op. 46 (1996)

A Croatian girl's voice with 2 recs & 3 hns

Text: Croatian folk song (Serbo-Croatian)

Dur.: 2'15"

**Ikh Zing vi a Feygale,****איך זינג ווי א פייגאלע**

op. 66 (2005)

Soprano in several voices (MagT)

Text: Pinhas Sade (Yi)

Dur.: 1'35"

MS

Opera, Ballet and Stage Music**Alei Kinor (Upon a Fiddle)**

עלי כינור

op. 1 (1974)

Musical in 9 scenes

Libretto: Ada Ben-Nahum, after Sholom Aleikhem (H)

13 actor-players &amp; ChE: vln, trb, perc(1) &amp; pno (trb replaces tpt and db)

Dur.: 90'

MS

Commissioned by the Beer Sheva Theatre

**A Fistful of Life**

חופן חיים

op. 2 (1976)

Ballet music for 2 vlns &amp; 2 fls

Choreography: Yonat Osman-Klar

Dur.: 20'

MS

Commissioned by The Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company

**Rattles, Baskets and Kindling**

מכתשים, סלים, זרדים

op. 5 (1978)

Ballet music for voices &amp; ethnic perc

Text &amp; choreography: Sara Levi-Tanai

Dur.: 25'

MS

Commissioned by The Inbal Dance-Theatre Company

**Iron and Wool (Myth)**

ברזל וצמר (מיתוס)

op. 17 (1985)

Ballet music for V &amp; MagT (fl &amp; vln)

Choreography: Ruth Eshel

Dur.: 25'

MS

**Moments in Time**

זמנים

op. 18 (1986)

Ballet music for V &amp; MagT (vln &amp; fl)

Choreography: Ruth Eshel

Dur.: 30'

MS

**Four Old Winds / Stories**

ארבע רוחות

Opp. 26-29

A series of four multimedias sung in old Semitic languages

1. **The Goddess Anath**

1. האלה ענת

op. 26 (1993),

for woman's voice, vln, pno, perc(1) &amp; dancer

Text: the myth of the Goddess Anath (Ugaritic)

Choreography: Ruth Eshel

Dur.: 4'30"

IMC 865

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Brahms Haus, Baden-Baden

2. **The Judgement of Solomon**

2. משפט שלמה

op. 27 (1995)

Operatic scene for children's chorus, fl, vln, trp, hn, drum &amp; MagT

Text: I Kings 3, 17-28 (H)

Choreography: Ruth Eshel

Dur.: 6'

IMC 866

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence Grant, Jerusalem Music Centre

Available for download on  
<https://tinyurl.com/25p549uc>

**3. Appeal to the Stars** **קריאה לכוכבים**

op. 28 (1993-4)

6 women singers (3 of whom also play a-recs, zurne, drums, iron-sticks &amp; palm-tree branches)

Text: Babylonian prayers to the gods of the night (Old Babylonian)

Dur.: 15'

Fue 6520

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Brahmhaus, Baden-Baden

Dedicated to Ensemble Belcanto Frankfurt/ Dietburg Spohr

**4. Daniel in the Den of Lions,** **דניאל בגוב האריות**

op. 29 (1995)

Video-art for Bar, men's chorus &amp; str qrt

Text: Daniel 6, and verses from Psalms 2 &amp; 3 (Coptic)

Director: Dina Hoffman

Dur.: 20'

IMC 868

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

**Masks and Pipes****מסכות וחלילים**

op. 31 (1995)

Ballet music for 11 recs (MagT)

Dur.: 3'20"

IMC 870

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

**Medea****מדיאה**

op. 35 (1995)

Chamber opera in seven scenes for Mez &amp; ChE: fl/rec, cl/b-cl/a-sax, vcl &amp; perc(1)

Libretto: Rivka Kashtan (E, H, Classical Greek, Georgian)

Dur.: 60'

IMI 8594

Composed with the support of a Composer in Residence grant, Montalvo Arts Center, California

**Victoria**

op. 56 (2001/4)

Four continuous scenes from a chamber opera in progress

S, Mez, 4 guis, perc(3) &amp; vcl

Libretto: Roni Keinan (H), after Sami Michael's novel

Dur.: 20'

MS

**ויקטוריה****Victoria and the Men****ויקטוריה והגברים**

op. 56a (2001/5)

One scene from a chamber opera in progress

S, 4 guis, perc(3) &amp; vcl

Libretto: Roni Keinan (H), after Sami Michael's novel

Dur.: 6'

IMC 3819

**Cain and Abel****קין והבל**

op. 57 (2001/2)

Grand Chamber Opera in five scenes for S, Mez, 2 Bars &amp; ChO:

6 recs, 1/a-fl, 1/ehn, 1/b-cl, 1 hn, perc(1), hp, hpd, lute &amp; str (3 vlins, 2 vlas, vcl &amp; db)

Libretto: Yossefa Even-Shoshan (H)

Dur.: 70'

IMI 8595

Hebrew full score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/34y8yx65>

Hebrew vocal score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/bdczj2wj>

English full score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/yvmvj2nm>

English vocal score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/yecz9n8>

**Oasis****אואזיס**

Op. 71 (2010)

Children's opera in four acts for children's chorus (incl. 6 soloists) &amp; ChO:

fl/pic,ob,2 cls,gui,4 vlns, vcl, db, perc(1)

Libretto: Yael Medini (Hebrew original)

Gila Abrahamson (English version)

Tsippi Fleischer &amp; Adina Stern (German version)

Dur.: 40'

IMC 4165 (Hebrew)

Full score available for download on

<http://tinyurl.com/46wuj3mv>

Vocal score available for download on

<http://tinyurl.com/ytrkknk9>

Fue 2601 (English)

Full score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/27w9uhmr>

Vocal score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/ymjnupea>

Fue 2582 (German)

Full score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/3vvk9rrj>

Vocal score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/3e8u2pa5>**Adapa****אדפא**

op. 76 (2014)

Grand opera for CT, Bar, B, mixed choir, women's choir, men's choir &amp; SO:

2 fls (1 pic.), 2 obs (1 ehn), 2 cls, 2 bns, 3 hns, 3 tpts, trb, tuba, perc(2), hp &amp; str

Libretto: Shlomo Izre'el (sung in Akkadian)

Dramaturgy: Yossefa Even-Shoshan &amp; Tsippi Fleischer

Dur.: 65'

IMI 8373

Full score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/mtx5vps7>

Vocal score available for download on

<https://tinyurl.com/djhbcfd>

## Concise Catalogue of the Composer's Archive at the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem

The Tsippi Fleischer Archive at the Music Department of the National Library of Israel (NLI), Jerusalem – the most comprehensive collection of the composer's work – was donated to NLI by the composer in 2008; its number in the Music Department is MUS 0121. The Archive includes many testimonies on the composer's creative processes as well as manuscripts, in words and music, of many of her works. It also includes pictures, letters, documents and newspaper clippings featuring reviews, articles and interviews with and about Tsippi Fleischer. In addition, all the recordings of her works are available at the Sound Archive at NLI's Music Department. Some of these materials – including many scores – can be consulted or streamed through the NLI website. For more information, see: <https://www.nli.org.il/en/discover/music/musicians/tsippi-fleischer>

This Appendix lists all of the Archive's sections, and provides a brief description for each of them. A full catalogue is available at NLI.

- MUS 0121 A **Scores** (a – published and unpublished; b – draft/manuscript; c – sketches and creative process). The section is headed with a "Cat." file providing fuller details.
- MUS 0121 B **Lists** (compositions, CV including publications, activities, stages of Archive transmission).
- MUS 0121 C **Sketches from the Doctoral Dissertation; full Dissertation (in English) – original manuscript.**  
[Brown file]
- MUS 0121 D **Collection:** A short and varied introduction to the entire Tsippi Fleischer Archive, chronologically edited.
- D1 **Articles** written about the composer, and a few by the composer (including writings on music education): 5 files, arranged chronologically.

D2 **Documentation.** Various publications in documents featuring several of the composer's works: 5 files, arranged chronologically.

The entire section is intended for continuous consultation – both as a preliminary introduction to the Archive, and for additional information for readers more familiar with the Archive as a whole, yet still wishing to seek additional information.

- MUS 0121 E **About the Opuses:** files arranged by opus numbers; in each Opus, the folders are placed chronologically, with the most recent items on top.
- MUS 0121 F **Letters: 10 files in Hebrew, 6 files in English** (arranged alphabetically, in Hebrew and English, by names of people and institutions) + **"Separated Listing"**: A detailed inventory of titles for each folder, and explanatory notes on each letter.
- The composer started keeping originals of her letters in 2012; i.e., the first photocopy was sent to the recipient, and the original sent to the NLI Archive! Letters sent to the composer were sometimes included together with their envelopes.
- This section also includes correspondence on music education, as well as a folder of correspondence with Haifa University following the death of Fleischer's husband, the linguist Prof. Aharon Dolgopolsky.
- There are some deliberate cross references with section E, when a particular correspondence is distinctly associated with a specific composition. In some cases, there was an overlap between the names of individual correspondents and those of the institutions they represent; in such cases, the Library used its judgement on whether to catalogue these under a personal or institutional heading. Thus, although correspondences

with both Raffi Shiniak and Yeshayahu Tadmor are related to Fleischer's work at the Levinsky College of Education, correspondence with the former was placed under Levinsky whereas correspondence with the latter was included under his own name.

“**Separated listing**”: A comprehensive list of the items in each file, including context/explanatory note for each letter.

- MUS 0121 F1 **Additional Correspondence**: Two folders in Hebrew, one folder in English (arranged as in F above, including separate detailed listings).
- MUS 0121 G **The ‘Composers tracing their Roots’ Project (1983-1988)**.  
5 folders: a complete list of all activities, testimonies on the concerts, selections from an “album” documenting audience responses, several special publications, and several copies of the associated music cassette.  
The “album” is being prepared for delivery from the composer's home to MUS 0121 G (2025, 2026).
- MUS 0121 H **Pictures** (sub-sections: childhood photographs; portraits; opuses; special items). Pictures of the composer are included in the various sub-sections. The envelopes in which the pictures are located include notes on each picture. The section's catalogue includes opus numbers; readers can therefore cross-reference with section E for additional information.
- MUS 0121 I **Contracts** (sorted by Opus numbers)
- MUS 0121 J **Posters** (arranged chronologically. Each folder includes a list indicating the event associated with each poster within). The section's catalogue includes opus numbers; readers

can therefore cross-reference with section E for additional information.

- MUS 0121 K **Awards** (arranged chronologically by date of award presentation).
- MUS 0121 L **The Hebrew Song Forums at Levinsky College of Education (now the The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate), 1992-1998**.  
These Forums featured performances of many Hebrew songs, whose texts and music were distributed to the participants. These booklets are presented in the folders, arranged methodologically: historical topics, prominent artists, and thematic headings. This section's catalogue includes alphabetical listings of songs and composers.
- MUS 0121 M **Matti Caspi**: Photocopied examples of song manuscripts that Tsippi Fleischer prepared for her book *Matti Caspi: The Magic and the Enigma*. These examples are drawn from the book's first manuscript.
- MUS 0121 T **Students' Papers**: A selection of papers by students and pupils in various Israeli institutions – from high schools to colleges and universities which feature music studies. Arranged alphabetically by authors' surnames.
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## Selected reviews

Fleischer does not settle for acquainting herself with the sound world [of Arab music]; she also takes on herself the task to study Arabic language and culture. [...] the Arabic language's acoustic values inspire her to employ the appropriate techniques.

**Prof. Amnon Shiloah** (1990)

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Fleischer has a knack for taking strong texts and setting them to music. Expressive and communicative – her music never upstages the words.

**Raymond**, Review of the CD album *Tsippi Fleischer: Vocal Music*, *American Record Guide* (July/August 1993)

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It is clear that Tsippi Fleischer brings a wide range of study and experience to her vocal composing. [...] [E]ach work functions in its own idiosyncratic sphere, served by composerly considerations.

**Elizabeth Lauer**, Review of the CD album *Tsippi Fleischer: Vocal Music*, *ILWC Journal* (June 1994)

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This is a fascinating recording – a synthesis of Eastern and Western musical languages by a skilled and imaginative composer steeped in the multiple cultures of the Middle East but also highly trained in contemporary Western musical idioms. Hers is an eclectic style, combining melodies based on the various Arabic *maqamat* (melodic scale forms) and Western melodic ideas, juxtaposing folk-like dance rhythms with contemporary Western metric and rhythmic devices, and

placing side by side the colorful sounds of Middle Eastern instruments such as the kanun and tar drums and the traditional (and sometimes not so traditional!) sounds of the oboe and Western string instruments. The vocal writing varies widely: simple chant-like melismas contrast with pulsating choral tone clusters and dense choral polyphony. [...] Clearly, Tsippi Fleischer has a distinctive musical voice. Deeply imbued with the histories, languages and music of several peoples, she brings a unique perspective to the East/West cultural dialogue.

**Myrna Nachman**, Review of the CD *Arabische Texturen*, *IAWM Journal* 1/2 (October 1995), pp. 42-43

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Tsippi Fleischer [...] reflects the cultural pluralism of the Land of Israel. She combines her knowledge of the indigenous culture of her homeland with a firm foundation of Western culture. [...] Fleischer's style – personal yet international, ancient yet contemporary, traditional yet avant-garde – flows freely and naturally in the several works recorded on this CD.

**Deon Nielsen Price and June Ottenberg**, Review of the CD album *Israel at 50*, *IAWM Journal* 6/3 (November 2000), pp. 66-67

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Fleischer regularly finds suitable partners for her tonal images. She is particularly drawn to the “untamed”, such as the coarse, guttural voices of Bedouin children; or the raw sounds of youths playing the shofar. [...] We have been given an edifying glance into the workshop of a composer whose creative powers form a bridge between Jewish and Arabic cultures, as signified by the cantata *Like Two Branches*. An inexhaustible rhythmic energy and an abundance of tonal imagination and preconditions of the creativity of a composer who realizes by artistic means what has yet to be achieved politically.

**Gerhard Schroth**, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (July 2003)

Sometimes, beauty hides behind grey walls. [...] The composer Tsippi Fleischer has reflected the history of music: musical fusion of tradition and current influences, extending into the charming sound, creates a broad stylistic-dramaturgic, as well as formal spectrum.

Review of *Cain and Abel*, *Der Standard*, Vienna (April 2005)

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Fleischer does not for a moment disregard time and place – they are intrinsic to her personal and collective, existential, political and cultural being – the “here and now” in which she lives and creates. The extensive diversity which marks her works, this multi-vocal compilation of place and of nation, the rich mosaic of traditions, languages, musical scales, rhythms, landscapes, and so on – all these combine to stress the dynamic, open-ended, ultra-polyphonic “here and now” that is ever sensitive to the “other”, or, one might say, the utopian “here and now” of a lover of culture, and of mankind.

The field of vocal elements is broad and heterogenic. Tsippi Fleischer walks through this field, her field and ours, the Israeli field, gathering and binding together bouquets of sounds. She plucks them by their very roots.

**Dr. Gideon Ofrat**, speaking on the occasion of the launch of the double-CD album *Lieder* (Art Songs), Tel Aviv, 5.12.2009

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As I continued to listen, I was repeatedly amazed at the variety of sonic landscapes Fleischer is able to create, both with manipulations and combinations of vocal sounds, as well as with limited and unusual instrumental forces, continuously in the service of expressing the emotional impact of the text. [...] the tonal and emotional impact of the music was more than enough for me to intuit the content and meaning. Yet [...] knowing the background and the translation definitely enhances the meaning of the music. [...] Fleischer has thoroughly “curated” this

collection of her most recent vocal works so that they may be studied and understood as a vital contribution to twenty-first-century music.

**Janet Morrow King**, Review of the double-CD album *Lieder*, *IAWM Journal* 16/2 (2010), pp. 32-35

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Fleischer is known for combining Israeli/Jewish musical influences with others of the same region, as well as her musical depiction of the maternal-feminine subconscious, and the practice of deriving musical textures from her treatment of language and natural acoustics. While these elements are present in each piece on this album, the disc features a new approach to text-setting, which Fleischer describes in her program notes: “not a continuing text set to music, but rather a para- or meta-text of my own devising – a collection of words and syllables plucked out of powerful sources of inspiration”.

[...] This album is a finely crafted piece of work. [Fleischer’s] attention to detail and depiction of extra-musical ideas is superb. I particularly enjoyed her use of text-setting throughout the movements. The program notes were helpful in fully experiencing her choices in an occasionally challenging and thought-provoking musical language, but the pieces may be enjoyed on their own as well.

**Eva Kendrick**, Review of *The Box of Late Opuses*, *IAWM Journal* 19/2 (November 2013), pp. 34-35

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The most substantial work here is the oratorio *Avram*, in which Fleischer’s multi-culturalism adds up to a musical work which displays a definite stylistic signature. The work successfully communicates ancient times – the eras before and during the rise of monotheism – through slowness, the frequent use of unison textures, hints at an Arab sound-world and Mid-Eastern sonoric gestures through the effects created by an ensemble of women’s choir, three harps and violins. This work is a

natural continuation of Fleischer's life work, reflecting the experiences of a composer who grew up and lived her whole life in a mixed Israeli-Palestinian city (Haifa), assimilated the Semitic languages and even studied them, listened to the varied musical revelations of the Middle East, and expressed her cultural and social interest in all of these aspects and phenomena in her music. To a large extent, she succeeded in imbuing genuine content into the search for Israeliness in music.

The disc as a whole is also a credit to Fleischer's phenomenal productions skills, gathering dozens of performers – singers, players, conductors – from the four corners of the Earth to create a perfectly-realised final product. And, as noted earlier, there is more to come.

**Noam Ben-Ze'ev**, Review of *The Box of Late Opuses*,  
*Ha'aretz*, March 15, 2013

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Tsippi Fleischer is one of the major composers of her generation in Israel and the first internationally established woman composer in the Middle East. She has developed a distinctive compositional voice influenced by the rhythms and inflections of Semitic languages. The three works presented on *Oasis* span a wide range of both style and expression.

*Erasure* (2009) is a [...] compelling work [which] takes the listener on a journey from the most vigorous life force to what the composer describes as “a gradually vanishing world” evoked by a “development-through-fading” form. Fleischer uses an imaginative range of violin techniques as motives spin out in reverse, towards a reductionist kernel or essence. The effect is both moving and intriguing. [...]

*Moderna* (2010) sets a minimalist text by the Egyptian poet Iman Mersal, who now lives in Canada. Combining Arabic and Hebrew, the three poems, “Soul”, “City”, and “Sex”, offer dark commentary on modern life. Fleischer's setting mirrors the intensity of the texts [...] Mersal and Fleischer share a commitment to crossing boundaries and meeting a lived truth in spite of cultural pressures against such collaboration. [...]

The CD's title composition, *Oasis* (2010), is a thirty-minute children's opera, which takes Fleischer further into her boundary-crossing journey. [...] the opera is set in an imagined biblical Sinai desert. Yael Medini's libretto, translated into German for this commission, portrays Israelite and Bedouin children who forge a bond of friendship when the Bedouin youths offer water to the desperately thirsty Israelite children and their parents. The opera is an allegory for peaceful cooperation, with the backdrop of contemporary Arab-Israeli relations hovering close by. Fleischer's writing is most effective in the half-sung, half-spoken Mantra of Wandering sections. The overlay of solo flute arabesques, tube whistling, percussion, and instrumental punctuation, all of which accompany the chorus, creates a sense of wandering in vast desert spaces. Here one feels the effect of Fleischer's immersion in the Sinai desert while composing the opera, as described in her notes.

**Meira Warshauer**, Review of the CD *Oasis*, *IAWM Journal* 19/1  
(Spring 2013), pp. 36-37

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I had expected more pieces like Tsippi Fleischer's cross-cultural *The Gown of Night*, an electronic collage that uses the singing, speaking, and whispering voices of 20 Arab school children from Rahat. The short text, which begins evocatively with “The Gown of Night envelops the desert”, rises to become the single clear voice of a young girl. The piece seems ahead of its time for 1988, partly because its cultural implications remain very much alive in Israel today.

**Huntley Dent**, Review of the CD album *Composing Israel: The First Three Generations*, *Fanfare* 47/3 (January/February 2024)

See also the response to the grand opera *Adapa*, following the interview in the “**Composer's Testimonies**” section, pp. 183-186 above.

## Reference Letters for Prizes and Awards

### Letter of Recommendation from Aharon Yadlin for the 5766/2006 Israel Prize

1 Rosh Hodesh Heshvan

2.11.2005

To: The panel of judges for the 5766/2006 Israel Prize in Music.

I hereby nominate Dr. Tsippi Fleischer for the 5766/2006 Israel Prize in Music.

Dr. Tsippi Fleischer represents a unique combination of composer, scholar and educator, and is highly deserving of this prize.

The broad diversity and scope of Fleischer's *oeuvre* is expressed on three levels:

- a. The breadth of the musical genres from the minimal single instrument (*Resuscitation* for violoncello solo) to the heights of opera (the grand opera *Adapa*).
- b. The choice of the finest Israeli and world poetry as a firm basis for her work (Avoth Yeshurun, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Yaakov Fichman, Yehuda Amichai, in addition to Paul Verlaine, Else Lasker-Schüler, Al-Hansa and ancient texts – *The Judgment of Solomon* in Biblical Hebrew, *Appeal to the Stars* in Akkadian, *The Goddess Anath* in Ugaritic) – the list is endless.
- c. The ability to mix rare and unique musical timbres in vocal and instrumental ensembles. For example: an ensemble consisting of a soprano, women's choir, two harps and percussion (*Lamentation*), or a chamber chorus, two oboes, cello, mixed setting of drums and alternating piano and kanun (the cantata *Like Two Branches*). A further example: an orchestra with ancient instruments in a modern-style opera (*Cain and Abel*).

Dr. Fleischer's broad education as a linguist and as a scholar of Middle Eastern studies, together with her impressive sensitivity to musical timbre, have shaped a unique and very powerful musical language.

Tsippi Fleischer's works have long brought her international acclaim. She has received enthusiastic reviews in Israel and abroad, and there is no doubt that she is an excellent ambassador for Israel's artistic statement to the world. In addition to her work as an extremely productive composer, her scholarly work and multifaceted educational activity must also be considered. There is no doubt in my mind that all the above make her a deserving candidate for the Israel Prize in Music.

Sincerely,

Aharon Yadlin

Former Minister for Education and Culture

Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Prime Minister's Prize for Composers

**Letter of Recommendation by Ruth Talgam for  
the 5766 / 2006 Israel Prize**

To: The panel of judges for the 5766 / 2006 Israel Prize in Music

Honored Judges,

It is my great honor and pleasure to nominate the musician (composer, musicologist and educator) Dr. Tsippi Fleischer as a suitable and deserving candidate for the 5766 / 2006 Israel Prize in Music. Her work is outstanding among the third generation of art-music composers in Israel, and addresses different audiences in Israel and worldwide. Her works have long brought her international acclaim. Mr. Aharon Yadlin partners with me in this nomination.

Over many years, Tsippi Fleischer has been combining sources of inspiration drawn on local national cultural with an innovative and uncompromising ability for artistic expression. As a sensitive artist, she responds to the human complexity of her surroundings, binding to the shores of the Mediterranean the heritage of Jewish immigrants who came here from a wide geographical area, ranging from Germany to Morocco, together with early cultures of the ancient East, with added depth and color contributed by her education as an Orientalist and a Linguist. She melds all these together with polished compositional techniques, routing them through her own unique paths.

In an earlier layer of her work, she sought the best manner and mode of expressing her perspective and state of mind as she began to shape her musical language in the 1970s and early 1980s (e.g., her musical *Alei Kinor* based on a story by Shalom Aleichem, her song cycle *Girl Butterfly Girl*, the suite *To the Fruits of My Land*, the choral cycle *Scenes of Israel – Six Madrigals*). In the middle layer, she expanded the choice of ensembles for her works to a cantata (*Like Two Branches*, 1989) and an oratorio (*Oratorio 1492-1992*, commemorating the expulsion from Spain) and even moved, with the crystallization of her language, into integrating electronic elements in her work (e.g., *The*

*Gown of Night* and *In the Mountains of Armenia* for children's voices on magnetic tape; the cycle *Ethnic Silhouettes* containing *The Judgment of Solomon, Daniel in the Den of Lions and other works*). In the third layer, which began a decade ago and is still in full flow, she is broadening the scope of her composition still further, to include genres like the opera and the symphony, thereby enhancing her expressive range alongside her broad worldwide distribution. This is demonstrated in the operas *Cain and Abel* and *Medea*, and in five symphonies so far – culminating in the *Fifth Symphony: Israeli-Jewish Collage*, a powerful simulation combining the Kol Nidrei prayers for Yom Kippur and the sounds of shofars with a symphony orchestra.

Alongside her creative output, Tsippi Fleischer has accomplished decades of intensive work in research and education. It is her vision to instill music in the next generation of different cultures, and from kindergarten to musicology and composition students, and she has been doing this for over 40 years (1966-2006). See, for example, her comprehensive article “Children's Songs – Old and New”, published in *Hed-Hagan*, a quarterly journal distributed to thousands of kindergarten teachers (Vol 4, 5761 – June 2001). As an educator, she has recently shared her study methods with many people in her two-volume tome *Harmonization of Songs*. This universal treatise includes a comprehensive anthology of *Zemer Ivri* [Hebrew Song] throughout its history, the fruit of exhaustive research. While working on her unique musical monograph on the style of Matti Caspi, she is completing her research of the musical-historical development of *Zemer Ivri*, which determines once and for all that *Zemer Ivri* should be seen as an organic whole, a true reflection of all the events in the Yishuv in pre-state Israel and in the State of Israel throughout 120 years of Zionism and beyond.

When I was a member of the Department for Music in the Israel Council for Culture and Arts, many years ago, I had already recommended Tsippi Fleischer as the best ambassador in conferences in China and Finland for original local composition expressing a mixture of cultures.

*Hexptychon*, a relatively late work, already clearly demonstrates the maturity of the language she has formulated.

Tsippi Fleischer's combination of creativity, research and education throughout her life makes her unique in Israel's musical landscape, and one can view this combination as the essence of her life's work. Her activities and her contribution to Israel's culture, with the international renown they have gained, make her a deserving candidate for the Israel Prize.

Sincerely,

Ruth Talgam

(retired Judge)

Formerly Chairman of the Board of the Israel Music Institute

Formerly member of the Department of Music in the Israel

Council for Culture and Arts

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**Letter of Recommendation by Prof. Moshe Zuckermann  
for the 2015 EMET Prize in Music**

19.4.2015

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I am hereby honored to nominate the composer Dr. Tsippi Fleischer as a candidate for the 2015 EMET Music Prize. Usually a letter of this kind requires a detailed inventory of the candidate's achievements, but in the case of Tsippi Fleischer, the totality of her creative work and the scope of her activities is so abundant, so rich and so unique, that such an inventory seems inherently superfluous. Instead I would like to focus certain aspects of the candidate's exceptional *oeuvre* and dwell on their unique qualities.

First of all, Tsippi Fleischer's creative work is interdisciplinary. It not only combines different artistic mediums but also regards the act of integration as a statement of content that goes beyond the spectrum of the work itself. The choice of texts in archaic languages or in Arabic (alongside the obvious use of Hebrew) embodies an essential openness to heterogeneous cultural layering, both in terms of the trans-historical timeline and in terms of sensitivity to the cultural range of Israel's geopolitical context. This is not a trivial matter – we find here a humanist view expressed, not in mere surface declarations, but rather in Tsippi Fleischer's devotion to the heterogeneity of humanity, in her attentiveness to the excluded, forgotten or mysterious "otherness".

Secondly, in contrast to certain avant-garde approaches, Tsippi Fleischer destabilizes the ideological hierarchization between the "high" and the "low" by denying the very essence of this ranking as such. She relates to the object with which she is working, not according to its hierarchical status, but rather in accordance with its underlying internal logic. She thus deals with these objects according to their intrinsic nature, and in so doing she respects them as they are. She displays the hoarseness of Bedouin children from the town of Rahat as very interesting raw material for a highly contemporary work of art; she reveals the mastery of a song written by Matti Caspi not as a work written in the language of

contemporary artistic music but according within its proper context. The excellence of the work thus becomes the excellence of Tsippi Fleischer herself who adheres to the principle of excellence.

Thirdly, notwithstanding Fleischer's thematic and stylistic heterogeneity, her approach does not result in incoherent eclecticism. On the contrary, the greatness of her music is expressed more than anything else in the organic whole that she manages to create (as a composer) from heterogeneous materials prone to disintegration and dispersal. Alongside the prominent Dionysian element of Tsippi Fleischer's musical works, she does not abandon the disciplined Apollonian approach to her materials. In the 20th century, this essential aspect of artistic creation has all too often been "betrayed". To me, Tsippi Fleischer most convincingly indicates the need to return to the principles of composition underlying this aspect. I believe that this too constitutes a breakthrough.

Each of these attributes would have been sufficient, in itself, to exalt Tsippi Fleischer's creative *oeuvre*, but the picture would not be complete without mentioning her extraordinary pedagogical work. This is not a routine addition to her activity as a composer, as it is for many in various fields of art who are forced into this direction (often for reasons of livelihood), but a real educational fervor, based on a fervent belief in the necessity for bringing young people closer to the world of art in general and to the unique world of music in its many layers, styles and fields. One has to see Tsippi Fleischer in action in this field, as well as in her processes with various performers on her works, in order to understand the inner passion and abundant vitality of this important creator and teacher.

For all these reasons, I would like to nominate Dr. Tsippi Fleischer as the most deserving candidate for the 2015 EMET Prize in Music.

Sincerely,

Prof. Moshe Zuckermann  
The Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas  
Tel Aviv University

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**Letter of Recommendation from Dr. Uri Golomb for the  
5785 /2025 Israel Prize in the Opera and Theatre Category**

Raanana, 5.11.2024

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To whom it may concern,

I am honoured to recommend the composer Dr Tsippi Fleischer for the 2025 Israel Prize for her achievements in the field of opera. Fleischer's theatrical writing – which includes, *inter alia*, four operas, ballet music and several multimedia works – forms a fascinating and diverse *oeuvre* which combines the ancient and the new. Most of her stage works draw on ancient myths, some of them sung in their original, long-dead languages. Fleischer, however, rewrites these myths and imbues them with new meaning, making use of innovative, groundbreaking combinations from the realm of multimedia, verging on the formation of new genres. These innovations are placed in the service of profound emotional and intellectual messages, relating to topics at the heart of her artistic creation: the desire to bridge contrasting worlds and to find the common denominator between rival cultures; and confronting the constant tension between the loss of naïve belief in human goodness – and the insistent belief that good and innocence still exist, and can and should be preserved and protected. In a review of her opera *Cain and Abel* (*Der Standard*, Vienna, 12.4.2005), this opera was said to have "reflected the history of music: [her] musical fusion of tradition and current influences, extending into the charming sound, creates a broad stylistic-dramaturgic, as well as formal spectrum". This holds true of her dramatic *oeuvre* as a whole.

The universal themes in Fleischer's operas have found their expression in their reception in Israel and abroad; recently, the two main arias in *Cain and Abel* received renewed exposure thanks to their separate publication by the Israel Music Institute, followed by a series of performances in Israel. The opera *Medea*, first presented in Kfar Blum, received wide coverage and critical acclaim when it was revived at Oper Köln (April 2004; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-koln.html>);

the same was true of the European premiere of *Cain and Abel*, produced by MusikWerkstatt-Wien (April 2005; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-vina.html>). The children's opera *Oasis*, which takes place against the backdrop of the Israelites' wanderings in the Sinai Desert following the Exodus, was presented in Germany (November 2001; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-karl.html>), Slovakia (May 2013; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-bratislava.html>) and Austria (March 2016; <https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-graz.html>), even prior to its Israeli premiere in March 2018 (<https://www.tsippifleischer.com/ac-telaviv18.html>); and each production provided different emphases.

Even prior to her first full-scale opera, Fleischer created *Four Old Winds/Stories* – a cycle of four multimedia works with a distinctly operatic dimension, intended, as the composer put it, “to introduce the Middle East to the Western world in its proper perspective, as the cradle of civilization”. The texts and inspirations for the works in this cycle represent a wide variety of epochs and languages, but they also share a link to the mythologies of the Middle East – both thematically, by drawing on the region's myth, and in their mythical ambience, which evokes the region's richness and ancient splendour. The most ambitious work in this cycle is *Daniel in the Den of Lions*. The initial inspiration for this work was a limestone tablet depicting the eponymous Biblical episode at Cairo's Coptic Museum, which the composer discovered in one of her many visits to Egypt in the 1990's. The work presents the familiar Biblical myth in Coptic, and reflects the deep connection that Fleischer forged with this unique, persecuted Egyptian community. The singing of the Israeli artists, which evokes the voices of Coptic monks, is incorporated into a filmed version, directed by Dina Hoffman in collaboration with the composer, and for which Fleischer returned to Egypt for a series of tours and photo-shoots. The visual images – combining pictures from Coptic monasteries (including their underground labyrinths); vivid, even violent pictures from the camel market on the outskirts of Cairo; and films of the musicians in Coptic monastic garbs – create a disturbing, surrealistic atmosphere. They do not always connect directly with the Biblical narrative, but they reflect the connection between the epic, awe-

inspiring myth and the rough, violent here-and-now, a combination also evoked by the music itself.

Beyond its own impressive, powerful character, *Daniel in the Den of Lions* foreshadows many aspects of Fleischer's future development as a dramatic artist – as do the other three works in the *Four Old Winds* cycle. Her first full-fledged opera, *Medea* (libretto: Rivka Kashtan) is based on less-familiar versions of the myth, in which Medea does not commit the most heinous crime attributed to her by Euripides and his successors – i.e., the murder of her own children. Indeed, in the opera, it's the Corinthians who torment Medea, kill her children off-stage and blame her for the murder, even enlisting Euripides himself to help spread their libelous propaganda. The opera is written for a very small ensemble: a single singer who portrays Medea, and four actors-instrumentalists who portray the Corinthians. Despite, or perhaps because, of the small scale, the opera succeeds in conveying the passionate drama and Medea's own complex character, which combines brutality and vulnerability.

Even more radical is Fleischer's approach to the myth of the first homicide in *Cain and Abel* (libretto: Yoseffa Even-Shoshan). This version returns the Biblical narrative to a world in which the lines between man and beast are blurred. This primeval world is imbued with innocent harmony, but as the drama progresses, new and threatening elements are introduced into it – the hitherto-unknown emotions of hate and envy, physical violence, and eventually the murder itself, which shatters the idyll throughout the world. The music brings together archaic and modern elements, and combines mythic distance, erotic sensuality and dramatic immediacy. This opera, like *Medea* before it, received contrasting theatrical productions in Israel and abroad, testifying to their dramatic potential.

The combination of opera and video-art, which Fleischer had already used brilliantly in *Four Old Winds/Stories*, reaches its peak in the filmed version of her grand opera *Adapa*, written in Akkadian. The opera draws on an ancient myth which survives only in partial, contradictory fragments, and was first reconstructed by the scholar Prof. Shlomo Izre'el, who also wrote the libretto. Fleischer's music is above

all atmospheric. In each scene, viewers and listeners sense that they are seeing part of a giant fresco which cannot be absorbed in one glance, and therefore unfolds gradually, through the music, before our mind's eye. This feeling is intensified in the composer's cinematic version of the opera. As in the multimedia works in *Four Old Winds/Stories* – especially *The Judgement of Solomon* and *Daniel in the Den of Lions* – here too Fleischer and her collaborators in the film's creation and editing, have created a series of fascinating visual images, which intensify the musical drama and the epic-mythological sensation. The opera also contains dramatic struggles and humane characterizations, and the music powerfully communicates moments like the confrontation between Adapa and the South Wind, and the wide gap between the desolation of the “Requiem of the Earth” in the middle of the opera and fragile, precious optimism of the concluding “Hymn of Fertility”.

Fleischer's operatic-theatrical *oeuvre* – which this survey only touches upon – is a whole greater than the sum of its parts. By rewriting ancient myths – some familiar, some obscure – Fleischer explores themes relevant to us in the here-and-now. She does so using a musical language that connects the ancient and the new, the complex and the accessible; some of her works breach the confines of the operatic genre and create new, surprising and exciting combinations of the worlds of theatre, cinema and video-art. Her achievements earned her wide recognition in Israel and abroad, and I am happy to recommend her for the Israel Prize.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Uri Golomb

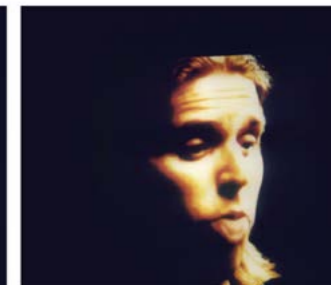
The conductor Avner Itai with Tsippi Fleischer (right) and Sara Levi-Tanai (left)



Avi Jacobson (bass) as one of the monks



The baritone Dan Ettinger (now renowned as a conductor) as Daniel



Images from the video-art world premiere of *Daniel in the Den of Lions*, Beit Gabriel, Israel, 1996