The Jewish Music Institute - the first 25 years - a one page summary

JMI has returned us to our music - and returned our music to us

Over the last 25 years, the Jewish Music Institute (JMI) under its Founding Director, Geraldine Auerbach, has made Britain aware of the beauty and value of the music of the Jewish people.

Over **80,000 people** have attended **675 JMI concerts** and recitals in prestigious concert halls during JMI's 10 pioneering Jewish Music Festivals and its annual Southbank Jewish Culture Days. New works have been commissioned and many first UK performances presented. Highlights have included ***Kadish for Terezin*** by Ronald Senator at Canterbury Cathedral in 1986, **Ernest Bloch's** ***Sacred Service*** in York Minster in 1990 – and conducted by Yehudi Menuhin at St Paul's Cathedral in 1995.

There have been groundbreaking events such as a day of Jewish culture in the **Millennium Dome** with 28 acts all day on three stages (9 July 2000) with acts and communities visiting from as far afield as Cardiff and Newcastle. There have been concerts at the Queen Elizabeth Hall featuring 16 cantors and another with 300 choristers – from male and mixed choirs all on stage together. JMI also staged ***Kol Isha***, the first UK concert for women cantors in 2007. JMI presented ***Simcha on the Square*** in Trafalgar Square, the biggest and most public Jewish culture event in the UK in 2006/7/8 and ***Klezmer in the Park*** around the bandstand in Regent's Park in 2009/10, in partnership with Jewish Culture UK members and the Mayor of London.

A full-time lectureship in Jewish music has been established at SOAS, part of the University of London and over **400 undergraduate** and more than **a dozen postgraduate** students have studied an aspect of Jewish music for their degrees. **Over 1400 singers** and instrumentalists have attended JMI's summer schools. **500 scholars** have presented papers on Jewish music at JMI international conferences. **350 prayer leaders** of all denominations have attended Jewish music enrichment sessions for synagogue prayer leaders. Over **1000 children** have performed in prestigious venues, songs specially chosen and composed for them.

Many specialist performing groups have been established, including **Klezmer Bands,** Children's and Youth **Choirs** as well as the precursor of the Shabbaton Choir – the Bnai Brith Festival Singers. 'Rivers of Babylon' specialising in the music of the Iraqi Jewish Community came into being with the encouragement of JMI. They all give regular concerts and workshops in arts festivals and concert halls across the country. Some have won major prizes in international Jewish music competitions through the opportunities for training and performing that JMI has provided.

Lady Solti, Joint President of JMI, hosted an evening at her home in May 2009, to celebrate Michael Haas (right), Director of the JMI International Centre for Suppressed Music (ICSM) receiving the highest cultural award from the City of Vienna for his exhibition on Hanns Eisler - the sixth in a series featuring Austrian composers who fled Nazi tyranny. Dr Karl Weinberger (left) Director, Jewish Museum Vienna presented the award. On that occasion, comedian Barry Humphries launched 'The Spoli Fund' to support the work of the JMI International Centre for Suppressed Music

JMI in partnership with members of JCUK – the association for Jewish culture providers and the Mayor of London presented the largest Jewish cultural event in Britain on 17 September 2006. Walter Goldsmith, Chairman at the time declared: 'My cup is brimming over with joy: Trafalgar Square became truly Jewish for the day with large crowds, beautiful weather and exuberant performances bringing forth an enthusiastic response.'

58 Jewish music projects were kick-started by the **JMI Millennium Award Scheme.** This involved passionate individuals in research and training in different aspects of Jewish music, resulting in books and new music being written, performed or published and new ensembles and performance programmes being created.

Current projects include outreach work in **klezmer and Yiddish** across this country; an international conference on **Israeli music** (28 – 31 March 2011) at the Institute of Musical Research, University of London, with a concert at the Purcell Room on 31 March; the 6th annual JMI European **Cantors' Convention** to be held in Manchester (27 – 30 June 2011); and the Yiddish Language and Song **summer schools** 14 – 19 August 2011.

JMI embraces both the sacred and secular music of Jewish communities of **Ashkenazi, Sephardi** and **Oriental** origin. It also deals with Western Classical music with Jewish connections as well as the music of modern **Israel** and the Middle East and has a section devoted to resurrecting the music of the early 20th century that **Hitler tried to obliterate**.

Its **Jewish Music Library**, the first of its kind in this country, is a priceless archive of recordings, tapes, manuscripts, scores and other treasures available to musicians, scholars, the media and the public. JMI's Newsletters and festival programmes are housed in libraries around the world.

The JMI Website **www.jmi.org.uk** gives the latest details of its diverse activities and contains articles, pictures, reports and reviews on different aspects of Jewish Music. You can also **buy** recorded music and scores of all kinds from Jewish Music Distribution (created originally by JMI) via the JMI web. JMI **arranges** live Jewish music for weddings and parties. Contact us:

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