



Violins of Hope

LIVE AT KOHL MANSION



VIOLINS OF HOPE

Live at Kohl Mansion

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

on texts by **Gene Scheer** (b. 1958)

INTONATIONS: Songs from the Violins of Hope (2020)

(world-premiere recording)

1	Ashes	5. 09
2	Exile	4. 20
3	Concert	6. 35
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Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano

Daniel Hope, violin

Kay Stern, first violin

Dawn Harms, second violin

Patricia Heller, viola

Emil Miland, cello

Sean Mori, violin

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

8 "Quartettsatz" in C Minor, D 703 (1820)

8. 15

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)

String Quartet No. 6 in F Minor, Op. 80 (1847)

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Kay Stern, first violin

Dawn Harms, second violin

Patricia Heller, viola

Emil Miland, cello

Total playing time:

75. 14

Cover image: Marc Chagall, *Blue Violinist (Violoniste bleu)* (1947)



THE VIOLINS OF HOPE

A note about the violins played on this recording

By James A. Grymes, PhD, author of
Violins of Hope: Violins of the Holocaust

VIOLINS OF HOPE is an artistic and educational project comprised of instruments that were owned by Jewish musicians before and during the Holocaust. Some of the instruments in the collection were safeguarded by their owners as they fled Nazi Germany. Others were played in the concentration camps and ghettos, providing a source of comfort for some and a means of survival for others. Regardless of the setting, the instruments represented strength and optimism for the future during mankind's darkest hour. Wherever there was music, there was hope.

Each of the instruments played in this recording has been refurbished by



father-and-son Israeli luthiers Amnon and Avshalom Weinstein, the founders of the Violins of Hope project. Although the instruments make beautiful museum pieces, at the heart of the project is the Weinsteins' commitment to ensuring that the instruments are played again all over the world. Since 2008, the Violins of Hope have traveled to Jerusalem, Sion, Madrid, Maastricht, Monaco, Rome, Berlin, London, Bucharest, Dachau, Dresden, and Auschwitz. In the United States, the project has been presented in Charlotte, Cleveland, Houston, Jacksonville, Sarasota, Washington, D.C., Cincinnati, Nashville, Birmingham, Knoxville, Phoenix, Louisville, Fort Wayne, and San Francisco. As the project has continued to grow, the collection has expanded to include almost ninety instruments. While some of the musicians who once played these instruments may have been silenced by the Holocaust, their voices and spirits live on through the Violins of Hope project.

Auschwitz violin played by Daniel Hope
© Avshalom Weinstein

In this recording, Daniel Hope plays a violin that was once played in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Men's Camp Orchestra, perhaps in the "Concert" that forms the subject of the third movement of *Intonations: Songs from the Violins of Hope*. There were several ensembles throughout the sprawling complex that is collectively referred to as Auschwitz, including a large orchestra in the Auschwitz Main Camp, orchestras in the men's and women's camps of Birkenau, and several other ensembles in the satellite camps. These ensembles were comprised of musicians who were recruited from the prisoner population and required to perform as part of their forced labor. Day in and day out, the German marches and schmaltzy tunes they played formed a macabre counterpoint to the brutal realities of life in Auschwitz. As rewards for their membership in the orchestra, the musicians sometimes received benefits such as additional food and lighter work details. For some, these

small privileges—earned only through their ability to make music—is what saved their lives.

The violin played by Sean Mori was once owned by Elsa Katzenstein (née Koopman), who was an accomplished violinist in Hamburg, Germany before the Nazis came to power. She was a member of the prominent GEDOK association of women artists until it disbanded in 1933, in response to the restrictions the Nazis were imposing on artists. She was also a member of the prestigious musicians' guild known as the Reich Chamber of Music, but was expelled in 1935 when the Nuremberg Race Laws excluded Jews from professional life. In January 1939, just a few weeks after Kristallnacht, Elsa and her husband Paul put their eleven-year-old daughter Ruth on a Kindertransport to Antwerp, Belgium. There, a Christian family cared for her until that summer, when Ruth was reunited with her parents and her older brother Paul as they

immigrated to America. The Katzensteins sold most of their possessions to pay for their journey, but safeguarded this instrument as a beloved possession that they brought with them to New York.

Second violinist Dawn Harms recorded this album on a violin that was once owned by Erich Weininger, an amateur violinist from Vienna whose story is told in the second movement of *Intonations*. Erich was imprisoned in Dachau, where he risked his life playing in a clandestine orchestra. He was later transferred to Buchenwald, and was released in 1939. He fled Nazi Germany with his violin, becoming one of the last Jews to escape the Holocaust. Erich and 1,200 other Jewish refugees crammed onto the S.S. *Atlantic*, which ran out of coal en route to Palestine. The refugees stripped the boat of any wooden objects that could be burned for fuel. Erich made it to Palestine, where the British Mandate arrested him as an illegal immigrant and sent him and his fellow Jewish exiles to a



Erich Weininger (standing at the far left) and fellow prisoner musicians on Mauritius

prison on the island of Mauritius. During his captivity, Erich once again entertained his fellow prisoners by playing the violin that had accompanied him throughout his odyssey.

The remaining instruments played in this recording came to Israel in the late 1930s. That was when virtuoso violinist Bronisław Huberman rescued their Jewish owners from Nazi persecution by bringing them to Palestine, to establish the ensemble now known as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. By helping not only the musicians but also their family members leave Europe, Huberman saved an estimated one thousand lives. Many of the musicians whom Huberman recruited brought top-quality, German-made instruments with them to Palestine. After the war, when they learned the full extent of the atrocities that the Germans had committed during the Holocaust, they refused to play on those instruments any longer. The violin that Kay Stern plays on

this recording was made by the eighteenth-century German violinmaker Benedict Wagner. Even though the violinmaker was not related to the famously anti-Semitic composer Richard Wagner, its owner wanted nothing to do with the instrument ever again. He brought it to Amnon's father Moshe Weinstein, a violin repairman and dealer in Tel Aviv. Unsellable in Israel, the Wagner Violin and the German-made viola and cello on this recording remained in Moshe's workshop until they were passed to Amnon. In the 1990s, Amnon became interested in the quality and craftsmanship of these German instruments. He even gave a lecture on them at a conference in Dresden for the Association of German Violin- and Bow-Makers. The success of the presentation and Amnon's insatiable curiosity inspired him to begin searching for other violins with connections to the Holocaust. This was the very start of the Violins of Hope project.



Back row (from left to right): Dawn Harms, Emil Miland, Sean Mori, Sasha Cooke, Patricia Kristof Moy, Daniel Hope, Patricia Heller, Kay Stern
Front row (from left to right): Steve Barnett, Preston Smith, James A. Grymes, Amnon Weinstein, Avshalom Weinstein, Gene Scheer, Jake Heggie

INTONATIONS: Songs from the Violins of Hope

Note by Jake Heggie & Gene Scheer

In February of 2017, Patricia Kristof Moy (director of the Music at Kohl Mansion chamber music series) reached out to tell us about the Violins of Hope. She wanted to bring the Violins to the West Coast in 2020 for an extensive San Francisco Bay Area residency with orchestras, chamber groups, schools, community centers, religious organizations and more. As part of this major event, she invited us to create a new composition to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz.

The singers of the Holocaust era are gone, but these restored instruments are still able to sing, vibrate and intone. They have been held by many hands and rested on many shoulders through generations. We saw a rare opportunity: to tell stories of the instruments actually being played. So, we decided that our piece would be a

dramatic song cycle with a solo singer as the spirit and soul of the violins. The cycle would also feature a solo violinist, a quartet of the original instruments – and a young violinist to represent the future. Each song would intone a story from the perspective of the violin itself. This way, we could use music and words to explore the physical and emotional journeys of the instruments.

"Ashes" is told from the perspective of one of the first violins Amnon Weinstein restored. When he removed the case, he discovered it was filled with human ashes. How could this happen? A journey ends and another begins.

In "Exile," we have the perspective of Erich Weininger's violin. Exiled from Germany, on a ship with Palestine at last in sight, Erich and the other refugees suddenly realized there was no more fuel for the furnace. The boat was sinking. The call went out to use any and all wood on the ship to feed the furnace. Erich wondered if his beloved violin

was just another piece of wood to feed the flames.

"Concert" tells the harrowing story of Henry Meyer when he was ordered to play a concert in the gas chamber where family and friends were murdered every day. To survive, he apologizes to the violin and plays a waltz while an undertow of emotion pulls him down.

"Motele" tells the story of 12-year old Motele Schlein, a child prodigy with a promising career cut short. After his family was murdered, he was randomly selected to entertain at the Nazi Officers Club. He devised a plan to avenge his family. Week by week, he smuggled gunpowder in his violin case to create a bomb in the basement of the Officers Club.

"Feivel" is a story of legacy. An older man, distraught from the losses of the war, gave his violin to Feivel Wininger so

he could make a living with music. Feivel went on to save many people, generations that thrive thanks to the kindness of that old man, his violin and the music of hope.

"Lament" is a solo movement for string quartet. Here, the instruments intone a song without words.

"Liberation" was inspired by Paula Lebovic's recollection of the Liberation of Auschwitz on January 27, 1945.

Quartets by Schubert and Mendelssohn

Note by Kai Christiansen, musicologist

Franz Schubert's 12th string quartet, the Quartettsatz in C Minor (D 703), is often regarded as the first of his mature works. Composed in December 1820, it inaugurated a series of quartets that are masterpieces of the genre. As its German nickname implies, the Quartettsatz ("Quartet Movement") is but a single movement. Schubert intended to write more but, for reasons unknown, left the quartet unfinished. Much like the famous "Unfinished" Symphony with which it has much in common, the Quartettsatz is celebrated for what it is, complete unto itself. In strong contrast to his earlier quartets, here Schubert reveals the full technical and dramatic means of his mature style with signature contrasts between dark, impetuous agitation and bright, sublime lyricism.

Characteristically, the shifts in theme and mood are accompanied by unusual, affecting key changes creating music that is a vividly charged amalgam of restlessness and serenity. The work lay fallow until long after Schubert's death untimely death at the age of 31 in 1828. The manuscript eventually came into the hands of composer Johannes Brahms, who edited and published the quartet in 1870.

Felix Mendelssohn's final string quartet, Quartet in F Minor Op. 80, is a dark tour de force celebrated for a blistering intensity that James Keller calls "combustible." A dark, driving mood sustains unrelentingly across three of the four movements ending with a virtuosic conflagration of musical angst. The inner slow movement alone offers some repose: a heartbreakingly lyrical elegy, a sorrowful song without words. Ostensibly more than just abstract chamber music, connections to his personal life seem compelling. The quartet was composed in 1847, when Mendelssohn

was famous and successful by every measure, but overworked, exhausted and in desperate need of rest. Out of the blue, word arrived that his older sister and musical soul mate, Fanny, had died suddenly at the age of 42. Devastated, Mendelssohn fled to Switzerland, where he composed this string quartet and dedicated it to her memory. Just two months later, in November 1847, Felix followed her fate and died of a stroke at the young age of 38.



Sasha Cooke
© Stephanie Girard

Two-time Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano **Sasha Cooke** is sought after by the world's leading orchestras, opera companies, and chamber music ensembles for her versatile repertoire and commitment to new music. She has premiered works by Mark Adamo, Mason Bates, William Bolcom, Pierre Jalbert, Laura Kaminsky, Lowell Liebermann, Nico Muhly, John Musto, Marc Neikrug, Kevin Puts, Joby Talbot, Augusta Read Thomas and Michael Tilson Thomas. She has sung at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, English National Opera, Seattle Opera, Opéra National de Bordeaux, and Gran Teatre del Liceu, among others, and with over 70 symphony orchestras worldwide, frequently in the works of Mahler and Berlioz under such leading conductors as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Gustavo Dudamel, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Edo de Waart, Trevor Pinnock, Harry Bicket, Michael Tilson Thomas, Riccardo Muti and Sir Mark Elder. Sasha is a graduate

of Rice University, The Juilliard School and the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Program. Most recently she appears on five recordings, including *L'enfance du Christ* with Sir Andrew Davis and the Melbourne Symphony on Chandos, Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* on PENTATONE which won the 2019 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* with Osmo Vänskä and the Minnesota Orchestra on BIS, Michael Tilson Thomas' *Meditation on Rilke* with the San Francisco Symphony, and *Sasha Cooke LIVE*, a collection of her performances from the Music@Menlo chamber music festival released on their label. Sasha lives in Texas with her husband, baritone Kelly Markgraf, and their two daughters, Evelyn and Julia.

Daniel Hope has toured the world as a virtuoso soloist for 30 years and is celebrated for his musical versatility as well as his dedication to humanitarian causes. Winner of the 2015 European Cultural Prize for Music, Hope appears as soloist with the world's major orchestras and conductors, also directing many ensembles from the violin. Hope has been an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist since 2007 and serves as Music Director of the Zurich Chamber Orchestra and San Francisco's New Century Chamber Orchestra. He is artistic director of the Frauenkirche Dresden and is the president of the Beethovenhaus Bonn. The youngest ever member of the Beaux Arts Trio during its final six seasons, today Hope performs at all the world's greatest halls and festivals. He has worked with conductors including Kurt Masur, Valery Gergiev and Christian Thielemann, as well as with the world's greatest symphony orchestras including Boston, Chicago, Paris, London, Los Angeles and Tokyo.



Daniel Hope
© Nicolas Zonvi

Devoted to contemporary music, Hope has commissioned over thirty works, enjoying close contact with composers such as Alfred Schnittke, Toru Takemitsu, Harrison Birtwistle, Sofia Gubaidulina, György Kurtág, Peter Maxwell-Davies and Mark-Anthony Turnage.

Daniel Hope has penned four bestselling books published in Germany; he contributes regularly to the Wall Street Journal and has written scripts for collaborative performances with the actors Klaus Maria Brandauer and Mia Farrow. In Germany he presents a weekly radio show for the WDR3 Channel.

Violinist **Sean Mori** is a scholarship student of Ian Swensen at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-College. He was a quarterfinalist in the 2018 Menuhin Competition, and has performed on NPR's "From The Top," Steinway Society's Young Artists Concert,

San Francisco Chamber Music Day, Symphony Parnassus, and has performed Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the Nova Vista Symphony. Playing the piano he has won First Prize at the National Fischoff Competition and the Pasadena Chamber Music Competition.



Sean Mori
© Carlin Ma

Kay Stern is the Concertmaster of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, a position she has held since 1994. Stern is a Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and an artist and faculty member of Festival Napa Valley, the Blackburn Academy and Classical Tahoe. Stern has served on the faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Music Academy of the West. She has served as assistant to Dorothy DeLay at the Aspen Music Festival and assistant to the Juilliard Quartet at the Juilliard School.

As founding member and first violinist of the Lark String Quartet, she has performed and given master classes throughout the United States, Europe and Asia.

Kay attended the Juilliard School as a student of Dorothy DeLay. While at Juilliard, she received full scholarships for her Bachelor, Master's and Doctoral degree programs. Her concerto and chamber music recordings can be



Kay Stern
© Shaleah Feinstein



Emil Miland
© Sisto Flores



Dawn Harms
© Katherine Briccetti



Patricia Heller
© Shaleah Feinstein

heard on Phillips, Nonesuch, Innova, MusicMasters, Koch International, Gramavision, Arsis and Albany Records.

Dawn Harms' diverse career ranges from being a chamber musician, violin soloist, and concertmaster, to being a music director and conductor. She is a first violinist in the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, Associate Concertmaster for the New Century Chamber Orchestra, and Co-Concertmaster with the Oakland Symphony. She teaches at Stanford University, and is the conductor of the pre-college string orchestra at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Dawn is in her seventh season as Music Director and conductor of the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony, and has conducted the San Francisco Opera orchestra twice, in two concerts that only featured the orchestra. She has also performed chamber music with Lynn Harrell, Jake

Heggie, Frederica von Stade and Nadja Solerno-Sonnenberg.

Dawn plays on her cousin Tom Waits' albums *Alice*, *Blood Money*, and *Bad As Me*. She also has two solo albums, *The Black Swan* and *The Hot Canary* that can be found on cdbaby.com or www.dawnharms.com

Violist **Patricia Heller** studied viola with Lee Yeingst of the Denver Symphony, then Max Aronoff and Toby Appel at Philadelphia's New School of Music. She studied the New Approach with Kató Havas in England and has been a member of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since 1986.

While studying at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music Patty joined forces with composer Duane Heller. As the Heller Highwater Duo they performed music for viola and piano in the many places they lived before settling

in the Bay Area. The duo was proud to be able to commission several new works for the ensemble.

Patty now makes her home in Daly City. She frequently appears with her little Celtic band The Scottish Thistles and now performs with her daughter, cellist Julia Heller, in a new iteration of the Highwater Duo.

Violist Patricia Heller is honored to join the Violins of Hope project and share the resonance of these remarkable instruments with our hurting world. She usually plays a viola made in 1896 in Vienna at Atelier Carl Zach & Co.

Cellist Emil Miland is an acclaimed soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. He made his solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony at 16, the same year was selected to perform in Rostropovich Master Classes at the University of California in Berkeley. A graduate of the New England Conservatory, he

has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and Chamber Music America. A member of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since 1988, he also served as founding Principal Cellist of the New Century Chamber Orchestra for a decade.

His many recital collaborations include performances with Jamie Barton, Catherine Cook, Sasha Cooke, Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Marilyn Horne, Ann Moss, Frederica von Stade, and the late Zheng Cao and Lorraine Hunt-Lieberson. Ms. von Stade asked Miland to play for her at her farewell recital in Carnegie Hall. He is featured on numerous recordings, including Heggie's *The Faces of Love: The Songs of Jake Heggie*, and the 2013 release *Here/After: Songs of Lost Voices*. New works have been composed for Miland by Ernst Bacon, David Carlson, David Conte, Candace Forest and Lou Harrison. Mr. Miland usually performs on a cello made by Giovanni Grancino in Milan 1718.

"Arguably the world's most popular 21st century opera and art song composer" (*The Wall Street Journal*), **Jake Heggie** is best known for his acclaimed operas *Dead Man Walking*, *Moby-Dick*, *It's A Wonderful Life*, *Great Scott*, *Three Decembers*, *Two Remain* and *If I Were You*. Heggie's operas and nearly 300 art songs have been performed extensively on five continents and championed by some of the world's most beloved artists. *Dead Man Walking* – "the most celebrated American opera of the 21st century" (*Chicago Tribune*) – has received 70 international productions and two live recordings since its San Francisco Opera premiere, making it the most widely performed new opera of our time. Heggie was the 2016 keynote speaker for the National Association of Schools of Music and has delivered commencement addresses at Northwestern University and the Eastman School of Music. He is also a frequent guest artist at festivals, universities and conservatories internationally. He lives in San Francisco with his husband, Curt Branom. www.jakeheggie.com



Jake Heggie
© James Niebuhr



Gene Scheer
© Tony Ryan

Gene Scheer's work is noted for its scope and versatility. With the composer Jake Heggie, he has collaborated on many projects, including the critically acclaimed Dallas Opera world premiere, *Moby-Dick, Three Decembers* (Houston Grand Opera), and *To Hell and Back* (Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra). Other works by Scheer and Heggie include *Camille Claudel: Into the fire*, a song cycle premiered by Joyce DiDonato and song cycle *Iconic Legacies: First Ladies at the Smithsonian* featuring Susan Graham. His most recent piece with Jake Heggie featured the mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke and violinist Daniel Hope earlier this year entitled *INTONATIONS: Songs from the Violins of Hope* and operas for the San Francisco Opera (*It's a Wonderful Life*) and *If I Were You* (Merola Program). Mr. Scheer worked as librettist with Tobias Picker on *An American Tragedy*, which premiered at the Metropolitan Opera as well as *Thérèse Raquin*, (Dallas Opera). Mr. Scheer collaborated with composer Jennifer

Higdon on an operatic adaptation of Charles Frazier's novel *Cold Mountain* for the Santa Fe Opera. The opera won the International Opera Award for best world premiere in 2016 and was nominated for a Grammy for Best Opera Recording. For the Dallas Opera, Mr. Scheer wrote the Grammy-nominated oratorio *August 4, 1964* with composer Steven Stucky and Everest, written with composer Joby Talbot.

INTONATIONS: Songs from the Violins of Hope

for mezzo-soprano, solo violin, youth solo violin and string quartet

Music by Jake Heggie
Texts by Gene Scheer

Inspired, in part, by the book "Violins of Hope: Violins of the Holocaust – Instruments of Hope and Liberation in Mankind's Darkest Hour" by James A. Grymes
(Published by Harper Perennial. Used by permission.)

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Special gratitude to Amnon Weinstein and Avshalom Weinstein, founders of the Violins of Hope project; and to Patricia Kristof Moy, executive director of Music

at Kohl Mansion, for her vision, passion and guidance in conceiving of and commissioning this new work.

First Performance:
January 18-19, 2020 at Kohl Mansion, Burlingame CA
Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano
Daniel Hope, violin
Sean Mori, youth violin
String Quartet: Kay Stern & Dawn Harms, violins; Patricia Heller, viola; Emil Miland, violoncello

L'Dor Vador - From Generation to Generation
In recognition of the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz, and to the memory of those who found strength, solace and hope in music during the Holocaust

I. Ashes

When they told him not to pray,
Told him to forget,
When they told him not to hope,
He played the violin.

Who touches me now?
Who opens me like the Torah
Searching for answers
And beneath a carved piece of spruce
Finds only ashes?

Whose ashes? Whose hands?
Who will listen if I sing again?

They told her not to pray,
Told her to forget,
Told her not to hope...

How could it happen?
I was never meant to be an urn for ashes.
I was crafted, carved, created,
Born to intone and vibrate
To thread yesterday, today and tomorrow

With inextinguishable song.

When they told us not to pray,
Told us to forget,
When they told us not to hope,
We played these violins.

II. Exile

Erich picks me up nervously,
As he did on the cattle car to Dachau,
On the march to Buchenwald.
He takes me in his hands,
Touches a string
And I cry like Isaac in Abraham's arms.

Twelve hundred exiles on a ship
In the middle of the ocean
On our way to the Promised Land.
But the ship is listing, drifting,
And the call goes out:
"All the coal is gone!"
"We must feed the furnace!"
"Find every piece of wood!"

"Tear up the floorboards, the railings,
the walls and the doors!"

"Rip the ship apart!"
"Every piece of wood into the furnace now!"

"Is it time to let you go?" he asks me.
"Are you just another piece of wood to fuel
the fire?"

Erich is gone. I am still here.
Now, every time someone picks me up
And draws a bow across these strings,
Part of me is back in Erich's hands,
And I cry again like Isaac in Abraham's
arms.

III. Concert

"Play something romantic," the
Commandant orders.
"Something from before all this."
The officers are all seated.
They tap their feet as they wait for the

concert to begin.

Henry looks up at the showerheads
That have never shed a drop of water.
We know why.
Here in the gas chamber, everything but
murder is a lie.
"Forgive me," he whispers to me.
"But if I play, I will not die today."

Together we soar and sing
Of walks along the Rhine, hands
intertwined.
The tune rolls forth like a wave.
Henry must be brave.
So no one can see beneath the wave,
Where a riptide pulls him down.

Before all this?
Before you stole the future? Before you
killed my brother?
Before you ripped children from mothers?
Before the glass was broken? The temples
and bodies burned?
Before you forced me to stand and play

In the place where each day you murder
thousands?

Yitgadal v'yitkadar sh'mei raba b'alma
div'ra chirutei,
v'yamlitch malchutei...

The concert in the gas chamber is over.
There is even some applause...

(Violin Solo)

4

IV. Motele

Motele was nine years old
When I became the beat of his heart.
We had no secrets.

He played Mendelssohn like a master that
night.
I still feel the touch of his fingers
The weight of his bow.
Bravo, Motele! Bravo!
His family stood and cheered with the

crowd.
Oh, how proud! Oh, how proud!

Now, now he is twelve.
All his family is gone.
So young, but not alone.
I am with him.

Even as he is forced to perform
For the men who murdered his family.
But, we have a secret.
And Motele is not alone!

For weeks and weeks in the case where he
keeps me
He's been smuggling gunpowder.
Little by little, patiently, slowly,
Over time he has built a bomb in the
basement
Of the Officers' Club.
And tonight is the night.

Again I feel the touch of his fingers,
The weight of his bow.

They applaud, shouting "Bravo!"
He goes to the basement (Bravo!)
Lights the fuse (Bravo! Bravo!)
And runs like the wind to the edge of the
forest
To watch the explosion and hear their cries
As the horror dies and dies and dies...

He closes his eyes
Holds me close and quietly strums.
In his heart, he hears his mother and father
Whispering "Bravo, Motele! Bravo!"

Motele is not alone.

5

V. Feivel

Pull the bow across my strings
I will sing and there they will be
Family and friends together again
Listen! These are not simply notes you hear,
But the voices of eternity.

When the old man could not longer play,

Could no longer read.
He said: "Feivel, take my violin,
Make music to feed your family.
I have lost everyone. It's all over for me."

Feivel takes me in his hands,
Thanks the old man.
Promises to share what he is paid
As soon as he can.

At the first wedding, Feivel is on fire.
He plays and we sing all night
Of love, of weddings,
Of children multiplying,
Dancing toward the promise of Jerusalem.

Pull the bow across my strings
I will sing and there they will be
Family and friends together again
Listen! These are not simply notes you hear...
Paid in loaves of bread,

Feivel runs to give the old man
The portion he had promised.

But, there on the table is a bottle of poison.

And he remembers the old man's words:
"I have lost everyone. It's all over for me."

How I wish the old man could see
That with me, his violin, Feivel saved
seventeen souls.
Their descendants will sing of love, of
marriage,
Of children multiplying,
Dancing toward the promise of Jerusalem.

Pull the bow across my strings
I will sing and there they will be
Family and friends together again.
Listen! These are not simply notes you hear,
But the voices – the stardust – of eternity.

VI. Lament (string quartet)

7

VII. Liberation

Is it over? Finally over?
Did we survive again?

A tired soldier gives him a piece of bread,
and says:
"Open your eyes. Arise, my friend,
the liberation has begun."

Is it over? Can it really be over?
For a moment?...
Yes, but for a moment only.
The past is a clock without any hands.

When the wheel of history comes round
When hatred is chanted and screamed
– again –
When innocents are blamed – again –
When the gun is loaded
When the match is lit
Let someone – someone – pick me up
And let me sing again ... to remember.
Remember...

(A young violinist walks to the stage
playing a solo and joins the ensemble for
the finale.)

Remember this:
When they tell us not to pray
Tell us to forget
When they tell us not to hope
We will play these violins.

Also available
on PENTATONE



PTC 5186 836



PTC 5186 515



Acknowledgments

PRODUCTION TEAM

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Recording, mixing, and mastering producer; digital editor **Steve Barnett** (Barnett Music Productions, Minneapolis, MN, USA)

Recording, mixing, and mastering engineer **Preston Smith** (Perfect Record, St. Paul, MN, USA)

Recording coordinator **Nicole Foland**

Liner notes **Jake Heggie & Gene Scheer, James A. Grymes & Kai Christensen**

Recording photography **Matthew Washburn**

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This album was recorded live at Kohl Mansion, Burlingame, CA, January 18-19, 2020

Daniel Hope appears courtesy of Deutsche Grammophon GmbH

A San Francisco Classical Recording Company production



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