

**Welcome to The Ocean County Center for the Arts**  
**Access Arts Series at The Strand**  
Sunday, November 12, 2006

Lakewood resident and Citizen of the Year 2006, **Maestro Wilbur Wittemann** introduces the greater Lakewood arts community to special guest **Ron Benvenisti**, a world class keyboardist who will be speaking and performing (with Wilbur on Trumpet) on music's ability to break cultural boundaries, as well as a special presentation on "The Torah's Music".

**1: Breaking Cultural Boundaries**

A traditional Jewish melody to Psalm 126, as sung before Grace After Meals at the Sabbath table. This melody is attributed to Josef Rosenblatt, (1882-1933) a Ukrainian born Cantor and Composer, however there is some confusion as to whether this melody for "Shir Hama'alot," which is probably the one most commonly sung in American homes, was composed by Rosenblatt or by another famous *chazzan*, Pinchas Minkowsky, who was the Chief Cantor in Odessa. The tune is representative of the musical influences popular around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: an amalgam of blues, jazz and the revolutionary harmonic influences Chopin while still being faithful to the traditional qualities of Jewish Liturgical Music.

The melody and harmonic structure lend themselves to a variety of contemporary interpretations. For our exercise in "breaking cultural boundaries", we will demonstrate the ease with which this staple of Jewish liturgy translates to Afro-Latin Jazz, a seemingly polar extreme. The melody and harmonic structure remain unchanged. It maps perfectly into the Salsa style. The tune was simply orchestrated and arranged in the new style.

To demonstrate, Ron has programmed some of the arrangement into his keyboard, and he and Maestro Wittemann will play along with it live.

**2: Torah Music - "The Bible Sings?"**

There is a Kabbalistic tradition (Jewish mysticism) where each letter of the Hebrew Alphabet represents a note in the diatonic (7 note) scale. What if the sequence of letters in a Biblical passage were mapped to those notes? What would it sound like? This has been a focus of mine for several years. The Jewish assumption is that the Bible is a divine document, written by G-d. Wouldn't be interesting to see what this "sounded" like? Would Genesis actually sound like the soundtrack of the Creation?

According to the tradition, the letters are only mapped to the 7 notes of the scale (ABCDEFG), but there are actually 12 notes if you include the sharps and flats. I have resolved this problem by including, what are called the 5 final letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, so that the mapping of the notes conforms to the full scale. Prior to the mapping of the 5 "accidentals", as they are called in musical terminology, the music derived from the text seemed disjointed and inaccessible. Only when the accidentals were also mapped did the text come alive with music that could be accessed and appreciated. It is this technique that will be demonstrated in the sound examples played today: The text of Genesis, Psalm 1, Moses' Song of the Sea, and three variations from the Book of Lamentations.

To hear more, please go to [www.soundassets.com](http://www.soundassets.com)

Genesis represented as a straight letter sequence:

בראשיתבראאלר יסאתהשמיסואתהארץוהארץהיתההוובה  
ווחשךעלפניתהווסורווחאלר יסמרחפתעלפניתהמיסויאמרא  
להיסייהיאורויהיאורויראאלר יסאתהאורכיתובויבדלא  
להיסיבינהאורובינהחשךויקראאלר יסלאורי וסולחשךק  
יאמראלר יסייהירקיעבאלילהויהיערבויהיבקר יוסאחדו  
תוךהמיסויהימבדילבי וןמיסלמיסויעראלהיסאתהרקיעו  
יבדלבי וןהמיסאשרמתחתלרקיעובי וןהמיסאשרמעללרקיעו  
יהיכן ויקראאלר יסלרקיעשמיסויהיערבויהיבקר יוסשנ  
יויאמראלר יסיקו והמיסמתחתהשמיסאלמקו וסאחדותראהה  
יבשהויהיכן ויקראאלהיסליבשהארץ ולמקוההמיסקראימ  
יסתדשאהארץדשאערבמזריסויראאלר יסכיתובויאמראלה  
יעזרעעץפריעהפרילמינואשרזרעוובועלהארץויהיכן ו  
תוצאהארץדשאערבמזריעזרעלמינהוועץעהפריאשרזרע  
ובולמינהוויראאלר יסכיתובויהיערבויהיבקר יוסשלי  
שיויאמראלהיסייהימארתברקיעהשמיסלהבדילבי וןהי וסו  
בינהלילהוהיולאתתולמועד יסולימיסושניסוהי וסלמאו  
ץויהיכן ויעראלהיסאתשנירתברקיעהשמיסלהאירעלהאר  
המארתהגדליסאתהמאורהגדללממשלתהי וסואתהמאורהקט  
ןלממשלתהלילהואתהכוכביסויתןאתסאלהיסברקיעהשמי  
סלהאירעלהארץ ולמשלבי וסובלילהוולהבדילבי וןהאורוב  
ינהחשךויראאלר יסכיתובויהיערבויהיבקר יוסרביעיו  
יאמראלר יסישרצוהמיסשרץנפשחיהועוףיעופףעלהארץע  
ריסאתהתנינסהגדליסואתכלנלפנירקיעהשמיסויבראאל  
ףכנףלמינפשהחיההרמרתאשרשרצוהמיסלמינהסואתכלעו  
הוויראאלר יסכיתובויברךאתסאלר יסלאמרפרוורבו ומל  
אואתהמיסבימיסוהעוףירבבארץויהיערבויהיבקר יוסח  
מישי ויאמראלהיסתוצאהארץנפשחיהלמינהבהמהורמרוח

# HEBREW ALEPH-BET NOTE MAPPING

Ron Benvenisti

Musical notation for Hebrew letters א through ח. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef staff contains whole rests in all four measures. The bass clef staff contains notes for each letter: א (A), ב (B), ג (G), ד (D), ה (E), ו (F), ז (C), and ח (C#). The letters are arranged in pairs across four measures: א ב, ג ד, ה ו, ז ח.

Musical notation for Hebrew letters ט through ס. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The bass clef staff contains whole rests in all four measures. The treble clef staff contains notes for each letter: ט (D), י (E), יא (F), יב (G), יג (A), יד (B), טו (C), and טז (C#). The letters are arranged in pairs across four measures: ט י, יא יב, יג יד, טו טז.

Musical notation for Hebrew letters טז through טו. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The bass clef staff contains whole rests in all four measures. The treble clef staff contains notes for each letter: טז (C#), טזא (D), טזב (E), טזג (F), טזד (G), טזה (A), טזו (B), and טזז (C). The letters are arranged in pairs across four measures: טז טזא, טזב טזג, טזד טזה, טזו טזז.

Musical notation for Hebrew letters טזח through טזט. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The bass clef staff contains whole rests in all four measures. The treble clef staff contains notes for each letter: טזח (D#), טזט (E#), טזי (F#), טזיא (G#), טזיב (A#), טזיג (B#), טזיד (C#), and טזיז (C#). The letters are arranged in pairs across four measures: טזח טזט, טזי טזיא, טזיב טזיג, טזיד טזיז.

# Genesis 1-256 D S6

Grave, Glorioso

Torah Text  
Arranged by Ron Benvenisti

♩ = 42

The musical score is written for seven instruments: Oboe, Violins, Tympani, Harp, Viola, Cello, and Guide. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. The Oboe part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Violins part has a whole note chord in the first measure, followed by two more whole notes in the second measure. The Tympani part consists of a series of six eighth notes, each marked with a triangle symbol. The Harp part has a single asterisk in the first measure and rests in the second. The Viola, Cello, and Guide parts all have rests throughout the piece.

3

The musical score is written in 3/8 time and consists of two systems. The first system includes a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The piano part features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, and two additional staves in bass clef. The key signature remains two sharps throughout.

The musical score on page 5 consists of seven staves. The first two staves are a grand staff with a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The second staff contains a bass line with chords and eighth notes. The third and fourth staves are also a grand staff, with the third staff having a treble clef and the fourth a bass clef. The third staff has a few notes and rests, while the fourth staff has a more active bass line. The fifth and sixth staves are another grand staff, with the fifth staff having a treble clef and the sixth a bass clef. The fifth staff has a few notes and rests, while the sixth staff has a bass line with eighth notes. The seventh staff is a single bass clef staff with a few notes and rests.