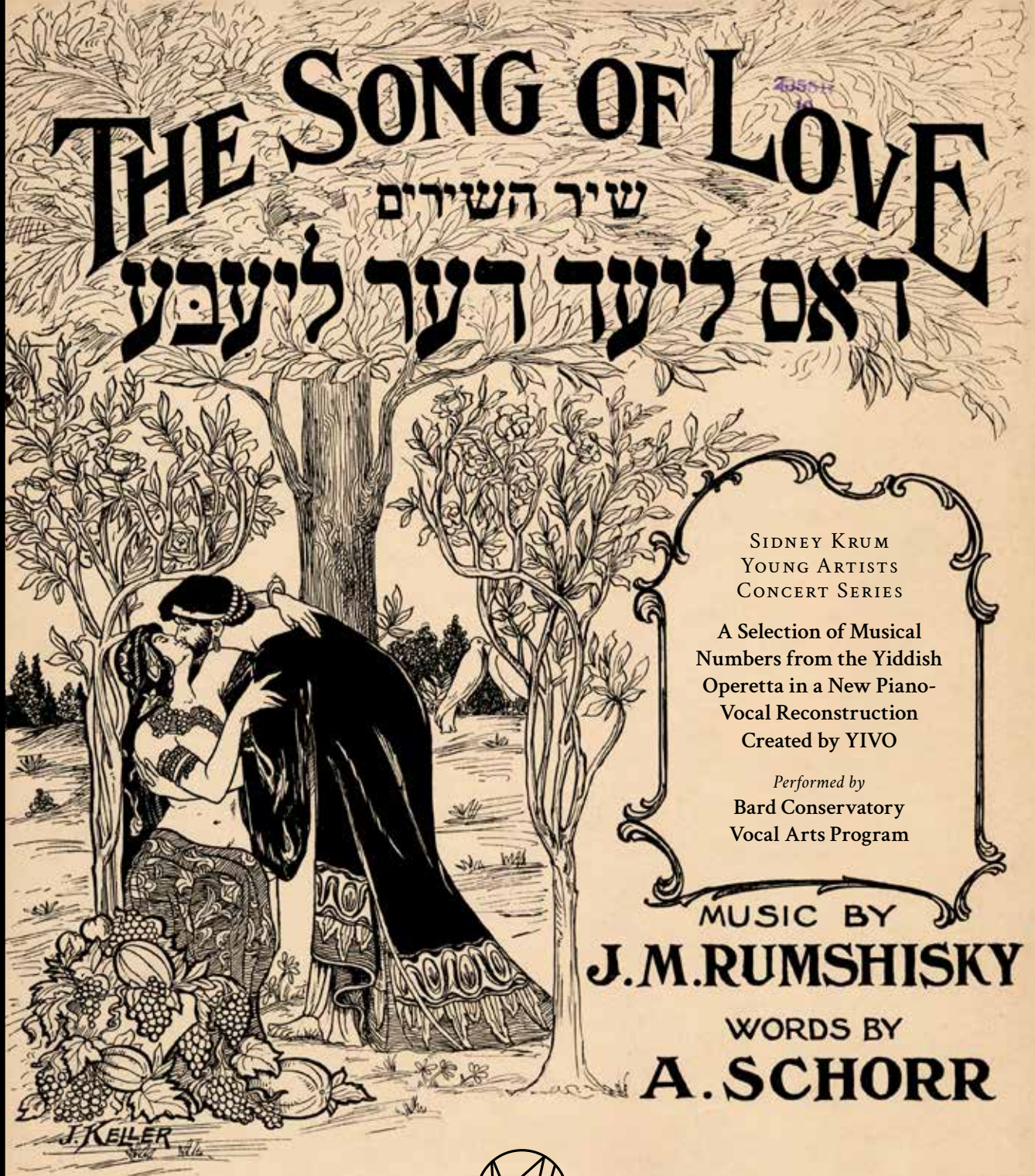


CONCERT PROGRAM

DECEMBER 11, 2023



# THE SONG OF LOVE

שיר השירים

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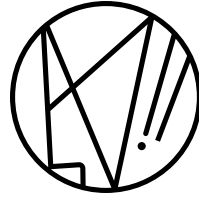
*Performed by*  
Bard Conservatory  
Vocal Arts Program

MUSIC BY  
**J. M. RUMSHISKY**

WORDS BY  
**A. SCHORR**



YIVO INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH



# SHIR-HASHIRIM

*Dos lid fun libe*

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AN OPERETTA BY RUMSHINSKY AND SHOR

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December 11, 2023

SIDNEY KRUM YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT SERIES

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Performance materials reconstructed by  
RONALD ROBBY, MAX FRIEDMAN, ALEX WEISER

Performance materials edited by RONALD ROBBY

Performance materials transcribed from archival manuscripts by MAX FRIEDMAN

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Program booklet design by ALIX BRANDWEIN

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## PROGRAM NOTES

*Shir-hashirim* literally means Song of Songs. The operetta, by composer Joseph Rumshinsky and librettist Anshel Shor, was of course titled after that great biblical paean to love and erotic desire. But if the Hebrew Bible's Song of Songs is, in religious tradition, often understood allegorically, the same can hardly be said for this stage work, which was about a cast of characters helplessly and thrillingly falling in love with one another even when — maybe especially when — they knew it was not going to work out.

At times glossed in Yiddish as *Dos lid fun libe* and in English as *The Song of Love*, it was written and first produced in 1911, at the opening of the fall season at one of the several theaters still below Houston Street on the Bowery, which is where Yiddish theater had been centered in New York before the biggest companies began moving up to Second Avenue. Much later in his life, Rumshinsky, whose innovations would go on to shape the Second Avenue musical stage, was still proud enough of *Shir-hashirim* to declare that it was the “first modern Yiddish operetta.” In his memoirs, he wrote that he and Shor, who was also an innovator, were inspired in no small part by the profusion of dalliances, serious love affairs, urgent infatuations, and serial marriages that appeared to be endemic to the Yiddish theater world — not only between actors and their admirers but also between the actors themselves.

Clearly, though, that is only half the story. Rumshinsky and Shor were at the time both employed in a theater that was run by the actor Jacob P. Adler, a pillar of Yiddish theater. He was by all accounts a mesmerizing tragedian, and the theater he was then managing was a bastion for literary plays, the “better” dramas that the intelligentsia idealized. As Adler's music director, Rumshinsky wrote arrangements, created and conducted incidental music, and composed the occasional song. Shor served as a jack of all trades: actor, script doctor, lyricist, set designer, and he had even directed for Adler. For

Rumshinsky, being a part of Jacob P. Adler's successes was gratifying, but he wanted to write an *operetta*. In his telling, it was he who convinced Shor earlier that spring to collaborate on what Rumshinsky later characterized as “the first modern musical comedy on the Yiddish stage.” It was *Dos meydl fun der vest* (The girl from the West), a farce about a Jewish widow from Texas(!) who travels with her daughter to New York to find a groom for herself. But a condition that a good prospect placed on a suitable match was that his bride cannot have a daughter; so, naturally, the comedy requires that the widow's daughter dress as a son. As one critic put it, you can guess the rest...

The lure with which Rumshinsky attracted Shor to write this gem was Dora Weissman, a vivacious soubrette who would play the part of the trouble-making daughter. Shor, Rumshinsky knew, had a longstanding crush on Weissman and would not be able to resist the opportunity to work with her. The two conspirators wrote the show and convinced Adler to let them produce it in his theater. It was a big hit, and all, including Weissman, received ample recognition in both the press and at the box office.

Riding on that success, Rumshinsky and Shor turned to their next project, *Shir-hashirim*, an operetta about opera, that is, about opera and passions. Its plot is nominally about Leon, a married, middle-aged, successful opera composer (whose role, ironically, is non-singing). He is feverishly at work on a new opera, *Shir-hashirim*, and has fallen in love with Lily, the new opera's young prima donna. Lily is an orphan who was adopted by Leon's uncle, but she is also the sweetheart and presumed fiancée of Leon's own son, Dave. Working with Leon, though, Lily has fallen under the spell of the older, much-admired, and masterful musician, declaring her love for him in return — yet continuing to address him as Uncle. (Remember, though. He is not actually her uncle; he is her adoptive father's nephew, whatever that relation

would be called.) And if that were not complicated enough, understand that Dave is also a singer, and he, too, has a role in his father's opera. He plays Lily's lover!

That combustible melodrama may sound like Greek tragedy, but don't worry. Everything works out, and the action is leavened with humor by two superb comic foils, Hymie and Rosa, who, along with Dave, Lily, and some non-singing characters, are all enmeshed in interlocking romantic fantasies and love triangles. Rumshinsky later wrote that this operetta's leitmotif — that was the word he used — was love itself.

These are the principal musical numbers of *Shir-hashirim*, reconstructed and performed this evening:

***“Boyes, hit op di meydlekh”*** (Boys, take care of the girls) is a humorous scene for Hymie, Rosa, and chorus. It develops the characters of Rosa and Hymie as well as the nature of their relationship. It also establishes the contrast that will develop between their song-and-dance deliveries, and the operatic voices of Lily and Dave.

***“Damenrekhte”*** (Ladies' rights) is a humorous solo for Hymie. The Jewish Lower East Side was a hothouse of political ferment in that era. Socialism, the labor movement, and workers' rights were openly discussed in newspapers and the arts — far more commonly than they were in America's English-language journalism — and so too were marital relations, birth control, Russian literature, and free love. Is it any wonder that women's rights would surface as a topic for satire? This was neither the first nor last time they would be the subject of Yiddish popular music.

***“Dos lid fun libe”*** (The song of love) is Lily's aria from Leon's new opera. Though the composer does not sing, he sits at a piano on stage and plays the aria's introduction, which beckons to Lily offstage. This aria is more akin to what we actually would call a leitmotif, as it recurs numerous times, in whole or in part, over the course of the operetta, with different characters singing it at different plot inflection points. Its main idea seems to be that secret love is intoxicating.

***“Hofenung zise”*** (Sweet hope) is the duet from the new opera that Dave and Lily must rehearse again. The scene begins with Lily singing an Italian salon piece, but in a short and amusing interpolated dialog, Dave complains about the Italian and requests that they sing in Yiddish so that the “older folks” in the audience will understand it. This was in 1911! The same thing might have been said fifty or even a hundred years later, but for different reasons. What the singers actually switch to here is *daytshmerish*, a stylized register of Yiddish that imitates Modern German, as was the convention in much of Yiddish theater in the nineteenth century. The exciting conclusion of Lily and Dave's aria seems as though it could have been by Richard Strauss, so German is it, both musically and linguistically, with the aria's love-struck characters bidding one another *auf Wiedersehen*. The joke is that it was Anshel Shor himself who, just in 1908, had created a sensation with another operetta that is considered to be the first to have abandoned *daytshmerish* in favor of Yiddish as actually spoken.

***“Pitselekh kinderlekh”*** (Tiny tots) is another duet for the bickering comic foils, the would-be lovers Rosa and Hymie. Its stirring refrain has some of the most stylish poetry among any of this operetta's lyrics.

The **Terzett** is a trio for Lily, Rosa, and Dave. The women have become aware that Dave has declared his love to each of them, and they are demanding he choose one or the other. He suggests blindfolding them to see which one can catch him in the dark. Innocently into the scene's climax walk Dave's grandfather Arn and Arn's brother Moyshe — Moses and Aaron! — two characters who do not have their own songs to sing but all along have been providing arresting spoken commentary on aging and eros. (It is Moyshe who is Lily's adoptive father.) The two blindfolded women grab the two old men and then discover their error, whereupon they all sing a rousing refrain about doing just as one pleases, the rest of the world be damned.

**“Men tor nit”** (That's not allowed!) is Rosa's *kuplet*, that is, a kind of bantering strophic song that was long a fixture on the Yiddish stage. Rosa sings it after having argued with Lily, and it is about how tiresome the hypocrisy can be of those who presume to offer moral instruction.

The **Gavotte** is hardly one in the sense Bach would have understood the term, but it is one in the way nineteenth-century composers had begun using the word more loosely. Rumshinsky was certainly aware that Massenet had written his “Gavotte,” so titled, for the prima donna and chorus in his *Manon*. And maybe Rumshinsky even knew the gavotte in Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon*, or those in more than one operetta of Gilbert and Sullivan. In Rumshinsky's Gavotte, Lily takes the stage as this operetta's undisputed prima donna, as it offers an operatic tour de force in which she and the chorus respond to one another in close dialog as they navigate their way to Lily's thrilling high C at aria's close.

**“Fun vigele bizn keyver”** (From cradle to grave) is an older-style song, shorn of influences from the American milieu. Musically, it combines some cantorial rhetorical declamation with a kind of “folk” style that emerged in the nineteenth century as Yiddish writers and musicians sought to develop a literature in the modern European sense, but one that emanated from the spirit and experiences of the common people among Eastern European Jewry. From evidence in manuscripts, it is clear that this song was initially intended for the first act of the operetta rather than the last, sung by Moyshe and Arn as they contemplated how quickly life passes. It combined idealized nostalgia both for youth and — with the show's American audience in mind — for the Old Country and its ways. For whatever reasons, a change was made and the song was given to Dave, who, though he sang in two big ensemble numbers, had not had his own solo. The shift of this song to the last act remedied that, and the idea was that for the final refrain, Moyshe and Arn joined him, singing across the generations. For this performance, we have suggested the whole ensemble join Dave at the end as a sentimental gesture, one worthy of the heart-on-its-sleeve Yiddish theater.

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<sup>1</sup> Every child raised in Yiddish knows *me(n) tor nit!* as the functional equivalent of “that's a no-no!”, “that's off limits!”, “don't do that!”, or simply, “that's not allowed!”

## ABOUT THE CREATORS

**Joseph M. Rumshinsky** (1881–1956) during his lifetime was called the dean of Yiddish theater composers. Born in Vilna, as a young boy he became a *meshoyrer*, a synagogue choirboy, where he was known as Yoshke the *notn-frezer*, that is, he devoured the scores. Soon enough, he was conducting choirs, and before he was twenty had already begun conducting music for theaters on the road. In 1899, he settled in Łódź, Poland, where he helped found the Hazomir choral society, which he conducted for over three years, studying and performing the classic oratorio literature of Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn. To avoid military conscription, though, he fled the Russian Empire in 1903 and went to London. There, he has recounted, he took private lessons from Ebenezer Prout, an esteemed figure in later Victorian musical culture and an authority on oratorios, which were held in particularly lofty regard in Britain of that era.

Rumshinsky arrived in New York in July of 1904 and promptly began building a career. He taught piano lessons, made sheet music arrangements of Yiddish songs, including some originals of his own, and found work as a conductor of theater orchestras, where he occasionally wrote some music as needed. Within a few months, he was conducting in the pit for a Yiddish troupe in Boston, with whose leading lady, Sabina Lakser, he fell in love, and they married in December of that same year. “At the close of the play, the audience was invited to stay and witness the ceremony,” ran a notice in the *Boston Globe*.

In New York again, he resumed teaching piano and arranging sheet music until he finally broke into the theater scene, conducting and composing. In the 1908–1909 season, he became what we might call music director, conducting and writing music, at one of the large houses on the Bowery that had been presenting Yiddish theater for a generation. One of its managers that season was the distinguished actor Jacob P. Adler, who took a liking to Rumshinsky, and the next season

took him along as his music director on an extended tour. Returning to New York, Adler took over the Thalia Theatre for two seasons, and it was there that his music director, Rumshinsky, came into his own as a composer, writing, among other things, the operetta *Shir-hashirim*.

In the first half of the 1910s, now a capable operetta composer, he worked in various theaters. In 1913, his operetta *Khantshe in amerike* put “American rhythm” on the Yiddish stage for the first time, as theater historian Zalmen Zylbercweig characterized it. In 1916, actor-producer Boris Thomashefsky lured Rumshinsky to his theater when he agreed to expand the orchestra by enlarging the string section and adding oboe, bassoon, French horns, harp, and timpani to what had until then been Yiddish theater’s invariably meagre pit ensemble. Rumshinsky remained with Thomashefsky for three seasons, writing landmark Yiddish operettas, such as *Dos tsebrokhene fidele* (The broken violin) and *Di khaznte* (The cantor’s wife), works in which timbre and orchestral color, according to the aspiring young composer Sholom Secunda, became revelatory new compositional elements.

In the 1919–1920 season, Rumshinsky struck out on his own, and with the writer and editor Gershom Bader, a descendant of rabbis and himself deeply learned, wrote *Dem rebns nign* (The rabbi’s melody), a sympathetic and multi-dimensional portrait of Hasidic life and its encounter with modernity. It was a sensation, making it possible for Rumshinsky, a composer, to be a marquee attraction, his name on a par with the celebrity actors appearing in the shows. He wrote a string of thoroughly competent and ingratiating operettas, exemplified by *Di goldene kale* (The golden bride), an operetta that was superbly reconstructed a decade ago by the former Harvard music librarian Michael Ochs and performed in two seasons of the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene in New York. It had originally premiered at the beginning of 1923.



At the end of that same year, when a young singer-actress-comedienne named Molly Picon appeared in New York, Rumshinsky wrote music for her vehicle *Yankele*, and, as they say, a star was born. The two promptly collaborated on another musical, this time with Picon writing the lyrics that she and the other cast members sang. From that moment, it seemed, they could do no wrong. With Picon's manager-husband, Jacob Kalich, the three formed a partnership and sailed through the remainder of the 1920s with Rumshinsky writing the music, Picon starring (and writing the lyrics), and Kalich producing and directing one uncontested triumph after another. Some of their many shows included *Dos tsigayner meyd* (The Gypsy girl) in the 1924–25 season; *Molly Dolly* and *Katinka* in 1925–26; *Dos mamele* (The little mother) in 1926–27; *Reyzele* and *Oy, iz dos a meyd* (Oh, what a girl!) in 1927–28; *Dos tsirkus meyd* (The circus girl) and *Hello Molly* in 1928–29; and *Dos meyd fun amol* (The girl of yesterday) in 1930–31, their last season together.

The Depression years hit Yiddish theater hard, not only because audiences had less money to spend, but also because in the 1920s, with America's turn to isolationism and xenophobia in the wake of the First World War, a sudden halt and been imposed on immigration. With no stream of Yiddish-speaking immigrants replenishing the audience pool, the public for Yiddish theater began contracting markedly. Added to that was not just a move to the outer boroughs of New York City, but to the suburbs and beyond as a new generation also abandoned Yiddish in favor of English. The Lower East Side of Manhattan had been one of the most densely populated urban centers in the world, but it now began losing its constituency for Yiddish theater. Gone were the enlarged orchestras, and gone was the alchemy between Rumshinsky and Picon. But in 1936, Rumshinsky teamed up with the wonderful comic actor Menasha Skulnik, opening with the comedy *Fishl der gerotener* (Fishl the success). Now well into his fifties, Rumshinsky

was at the height of his expressive powers. And New York Yiddish theater music, that is to say, the style so influenced by American popular music — but at the same time more self-consciously and, perhaps surprisingly, more *skillfully* Jewish in its deployment of modal and melodic elements — was also in its mature phase. With younger composers, epitomized by Alexander Olshanetsky (1892–1946) Sholom Secunda (1894–1974), and Abraham Ellstein (1907–1963), now also all cross-fertilizing each other's work, the 1930s became a kind of zenith in the development of that mature musical style of New York Yiddish theater. In 1938, still writing for Menasha Skulnik, Rumshinsky created perhaps his most enduring song, “Sheyn vi di levone” (Beautiful as the moon), with a particularly beautiful lyric by Chaim Tauber.

Rumshinsky continued writing operettas through the 1940s and even into the early 1950s, though audiences continued shrinking and opportunities for performances were dwindling. But besides the theater, throughout his career Rumshinsky also wrote liturgical music in Hebrew as well as stand-alone Yiddish songs that were inspired by religious tradition. In 1949, he completed a full-length opera, *Ruth*, with a Hebrew libretto, but his efforts to have it performed were never successful.

With his first wife, Sabina Lakser (who died in 1927), Rumshinsky had a son, Murray, who became a composer and arranger with careers in what remained of Yiddish theater as well as in the broader American musical scene. In 1974, it was Murray Rumshinsky who presented his father's extensive papers, including a great many manuscript scores, to UCLA, where they continue to offer a rich resource for scholarship in Yiddish theater music.

**Anshel Shor** (1871–1942) was a playwright, lyricist, and actor who also had success as a theater manager, director, and all-around man of the theater. He was born into a Hasidic family in Galicia, when that region, stretching from Krakow in present-day Poland across and beyond Lviv in present-day Ukraine, comprised the northeast corner of Austria-Hungary’s frontier with the Russian Empire. When he was still a young child, his family moved to Lemberg (now Lviv), where, in his late teens, he began frequenting the theater that had recently been opened in that city by Yankev-Ber Gimpel (c.1840–1906), one that quickly became an epicenter in the transnational development of Yiddish theater. (Gimpel himself became the patriarch of a theatrical and musical dynasty that included his son Adolf, whose arrangement of the music to *Shir-hashirim* is one those upon which the present reconstruction is based.) Shor’s first entrée to the world behind the curtain came when a comedic actor at Gimpel’s theater accepted a humorous lyric that Shor had written. After a time with a wandering troupe in the Balkans and Constantinople, Shor became a prompter at Gimpel’s, and all the while he was trying his hand at playwriting. In the later 1890s, it is known that, while on the road as a prompter, he wed the actress Yetta Samuilov in Budapest. Married at least twice before and described by theater historian Zalmen Zylbercweig as “one of the first prima donnas on the European Yiddish stage,” she was respected and well-liked by her fellow actors, and would have been older than Shor by ten or more years.

In 1900, he, or perhaps the two of them together — the record being unclear — came to America as part of a troupe brought over by the playwright and producer “Professor” Hurwitz, a colorful figure whose wildly successful operettas, despite frequent critical scorn, had been a box-office mainstay for more than a decade. Seemingly immediately, Shor became a right-hand staff member, working as an assistant director and writing lyrics for Hurwitz productions. In 1901, they staged *Ben hador* (Son of his generation), another of the “historical operas” for which Hurwitz was well known. Shor wrote its lyrics, and its music was by composers Perlmutter

and Wohl, a team whose star was rising rapidly, though their coming pre-eminence would eventually be eclipsed by that of Rumshinsky. In the meantime, *Ben hador* was an enormous success, but it also represented a kind of last hurrah for Professor Hurwitz, spelling the end of his dominance. For Shor, on the other hand, his position with Hurwitz served as a launching pad for the exceptionally varied theatrical career he would have in America.

By 1910, Shor was working for actor Jacob P. Adler, principally as his stage manager, but also with myriad other chores and responsibilities, and Adler also gave Shor opportunities to direct. Very much a success, Shor had become much in demand, when, in the spring of 1911, he and Rumshinsky collaborated on the comedy *Di meydl fun der vest* (The girl from the West). Then in the fall, they created the romantic operetta *Shir-hashirim*, and as winter approached, the comedy *Vayber* (Women). The three back-to-back hits, all in the space of less than a year, further cemented Shor’s stature as a playwright and man of the theater, just as it did much to establish Rumshinsky as a leading composer.

For more than a decade, Shor managed the Yiddish productions at Philadelphia’s Arch Street Theatre, the most important Yiddish venue in the “provinces,” and at various times he had similar responsibilities at various theaters in Newark, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, all the while continuing to write plays. His *New York Times* obituary says he wrote “nearly fifty.” Besides being held in high regard for his own work, he was respected for his canny judgment and was apparently busy as a script doctor, advising others. His obituary in the *Forverts* quoted a prominent actor saying Shor was an “insurance policy” for any company or production: if he was associated with it, success was guaranteed. These successes were partly because of his shrewd judgment, but also partly because of his willful nature, insisting on what he saw as necessary. According to the same obituary, he was known, “half in jest but half seriously,” as “the Bismarck of Yiddish theater.”

By all accounts, Anshel Shor had been smitten with the saucy actress Dora Weissman from nearly the beginning of his time in America, and for ten years, ever since she had appeared in the three Rumshinsky-Shor triumphs — *Dos meydل fun der vest*, *Shir-hashirim* (in which she played the coquettish Rosa), and *Vayber* — Shor had been wooing her. What is not clear is when (or if?) he had ever divorced his first wife, who, advertised as “Mrs. Shor,” was also acting with Adler’s company even at the time *Shir-hashirim* was staged. The first Mrs. Shor may well have been among the reasons, at least initially, why Dora resisted Anshel’s pleas to marry him for as long as she did. We will probably never know the whole story or exact chronology, but the fact is that, for whatever reason, Dora did relent, and in 1921 the two married and, according to his *Forverts* obituary, were regarded as an “ideal couple” by colleagues.

At the end of the 1920s, they embarked on an extended European tour, but in its second year, he became seriously ill and was hospitalized for many weeks before being able to return home. Some two years later, they undertook yet another big tour, this time to South America. His years-long obsessive work habits and then the strain of the tours took their toll, though, and he finally had to slow down through the 1930s, until his death in 1942.

Dora Weissman’s career continued for years after her husband’s death, and in the postwar years, she taught acting and appeared increasingly in English, including in a few Hollywood feature films but especially in the new medium of television. Among her roles was that of the recurring character Mrs. Herman in the much-beloved Jewish-dialect sitcom *The Goldbergs*.

## A NOTE ON THE RECONSTRUCTIONS

The primary document used in these reconstructions was a so-called Direction score found among Joseph Rumshinsky's papers, which are held by UCLA. The manuscript has all the lyrics and melodies, along with mostly complete choral cues and some occasional ones for harmonization, orchestration, or dialog. It appears to have been used for the original staging in September of 1911, because instead of the characters' names, it is the original *actors* whose names we read at every cue. Instead of "Lily" each time, we see "Mrs. Zuckerberg" (Regina Zuckerberg); instead of "Rosa," we see "Dora" (Dora Weissman), etc.

Also among the composer's papers is a manuscript for a rehearsal piano, which provided the basis for the piano part in these reconstructions. Though its writing is very simple and bare-bones, we expanded upon it only in a limited way, such as where we knew that the pit orchestra provided an ornament or fill of some sort between vocal phrases, or when we knew the orchestration had additional necessary harmonic information. Orchestra parts also sometimes helped us to better understand the character of the music, or to correct obvious errors in the piano part. One of the sets of orchestra parts we made use of in those ways was among the composer's papers.

We were also able to study in detail several Direction scores and sets of orchestrations that had been made in Eastern Europe. By the turn of the twentieth century, the tremendous wave of American Yiddish theater being created in New York was being assiduously studied and copied in Eastern Europe. A significant amount of this European-generated material miraculously survived and is now in the music collection of YIVO's Vilna Collections, comprising items originally collected by the Esther Rachel Kaminska Museum, which had been devoted to Yiddish theater. In 1927, that collection was given to the YIVO Institute at its headquarters in Vilna. Alas, YIVO would be seized by the Nazis, who destroyed much of what they confiscated. But a

part of their plunder was warehoused and, in 1947, against all odds, was rescued from oblivion when occupying U.S. forces discovered the large Vilna archival cache at the Offenbach Depot — the collection site in West Germany for a vast quantity of looted books and archival material that had been recovered — and it was ultimately shipped to YIVO's new headquarters in New York.

The surviving European musical arrangements of *Shir-hashirim* often replaced Rumshinsky's harmonies with European sonorities, and though Anshel Shor had deliberately written many Americanisms into the libretto, the Eastern European parts replaced them with Yiddish that would be understood in that part of the world. Nonetheless, the European scores provided invaluable corroboration of many details, helped us triangulate a multitude of ambiguities we encountered, and built our confidence in the choices we did make.

For the libretto, besides the lyrics found in all these various scores, we made extensive use of a complete script of *Shir-hashirim* that had been copied by hand circa 1912 and is now held among the Papers of Anshel Shor and Dora Weissman at YIVO. Whether it was his or hers, or when he or she (or they) came into possession of it, is not possible to determine. Anshel, of course, wrote the play, so it is easy to assume such a copy of the script would have been his, and if it was, that would lend it some authority (even though he was not its actual copyist). But as mentioned, Dora played Rosa in the original production — and likely did in some subsequent stagings, as well — so the script could also conceivably have been hers, which would diminish our confidence somewhat in its authority, though by no means fatally so. Whatever the case, though, the song lyrics in it correspond very closely to those in Rumshinsky's Direction manuscript at UCLA, so the two sources strongly corroborate one another.

Corresponding less closely to either of those manuscript sources but nonetheless very useful was a seemingly complete libretto, including all the dialog and song lyrics, published in Warsaw, undated but probably in 1913. The problem with it, and the reason we say “seemingly complete,” is that it was a pirated edition, compiled and published without librettist Anshel Shor’s knowledge or permission. Theater script piracy was an ongoing phenomenon in those years. It is thought that actors, musicians, or others who had participated in productions of American Yiddish stage works would then travel to Europe — some were going to visit or work, others who had been guests in America were returning home — and some would inevitably carry prompt books or notes they made, or maybe just their memories, and they would sell their versions to publishers in Poland, where many, many such scripts were published. The published *Shir-hashirim* differs in many respects from the manuscript version among the Shors’ papers. Besides eliminating all the Americanisms in the language, much as the European musical manuscripts also did, entire scenes and entire songs are added or omitted here and there in the Warsaw edition. That said, though, much of it does reliably record *Shir-hashirim* as we think Shor originally wrote it and as it appears to have been performed under the supervision of Shor and Rumshinsky. But whatever the drawbacks, the pirated edition is, in any event, an enjoyable read!

In addition to all that archival material, sheet music of a selection of musical numbers from the operetta was first published in 1911, in New York. Yiddish popular sheet music can be very unreliable in its details, but taken together with the many manuscripts, it was often of great help for quickly solving problems.

Lastly, commercial recordings of a number of the selections from *Shir-hashirim* were released on 78rpm discs in the 1910s and ‘20s. Then, in the late 1940s, Rumshinsky himself

supervised and conducted live radio broadcasts of music from his operettas. An air check of the *Shir-hashirim* broadcast was donated to Library of Congress by record producer and Yiddish radio scholar Henry Sapoznik. The singing is very good, with diction that is much clearer than that of the old 78s, though all the songs were revised and abridged for the occasion.

*Shir-hashirim: The Song of Love (1911)*  
Music by Joseph Rumshinsky  
Book and lyrics by Anshel Shor

**DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

Leon Oppenheim..... *a famous composer*  
Anna Oppenheim..... *his wife*  
Dave Oppenheim..... *their son*  
Arn Oppenheim..... *Leon's father*  
Moyshe Oppenheim..... *Arn's twin brother*  
Lily..... *adopted daughter of Moyshe, and Dave's beloved*  
Rosa Neiman..... *Lily's friend*  
Hymie Quicksilver..... *Rosa's beloved*

## SYNOPSIS

### ACT I

Upstate New York, at a summer home in the mountains. The time is the present (i.e., 1911). Arn and his daughter-in-law, Anna, are in conversation. He reflects on his old age and his desire to live long enough to dance at the wedding of his grandson, Dave, who he hopes will marry Lily. She is an orphan who had been adopted by Arn's twin brother, Moyshe. Laughter is heard offstage as Moyshe is dancing with a group of young women and girls before he enters to join the conversation. The two old brothers have the first of what will be a series of dialogs about life and death, old age and youth, and love and desire. Dave enters and reports to his mother that Lily has left because Leon is being cold to her, and then Leon enters and begins to bicker with Anna about his eyesight, which is failing as he works obsessively on his new opera.

Hymie enters looking for Lily on behalf of their mutual friend Rosa, and with a chorus of women begins his humorous song "*Boyes, hit op di meydlekh*" (Boys, take care of the girls). Halfway through, Rosa enters, responding with a men's chorus, and then the comic couple sing an antic refrain together. After that number, though, Rosa plays hard to get.

In Hymie's absence, Dave tells Rosa he loves her, but she resists his attempt to embrace. Hymie returns and sings his comic song "*Damenrekhte*" (Ladies' rights), about what would happen if women were given government powers.

Leon and Anna now discuss Dave and Lily's marriage prospects. Leon disapproves, saying that Dave is too young to be considering marriage, and also arguing that Dave may be interested in Rosa, not Lily. With that, he sits down at the piano and begins playing an introduction to "*Dos lid fun libe*" (The song of love), the principal theme of his new opera. Anna sees through her husband's objections, though, saying he is just playing the aria so that Lily — who is the new

opera's prima donna! — will hear the piano and join him. And with that, Anna storms out, whereupon Lily begins singing the aria from offstage and then joins Leon, who continues accompanying her from the piano. When they finish, each confesses a powerful attraction to the other.

### ACT II

The next day, Anna, Arn, Moyshe, Dave, and Rosa are all together. While elderly Moyshe and coquettish Rosa playfully flirt, the group begins talking about the love triangles that are forming: Rosa recounts that Dave tried to kiss her, and she and Dave then remark on Lily's obvious interest in Leon.

When the others leave, Lily and Dave, who also has a role in his father's opera, rehearse their big love duet, "*Hofenung zise*" (Sweet hope), dancing off together at its rapturous close. Hymie and Rosa then sing their own love duet, "*Pitselekh kinderlekh*" (Tiny tots), and they, too, dance off together. Lily returns, now with Leon, but any growing intimacy between them is interrupted by Dave's entrance. Leon exits, and Dave declares his love to Lily and embraces her just as Rosa walks in, who tells Lily that Dave had also just declared his love for her. The three sing their amusing *Terzett*, in which the women demand that Dave choose one or the other. Still singing, he proposes that the two women be blindfolded and that he will then marry whichever one catches him. Just as they grope in the dark, in walk Arn and Moyshe, and each woman thinks she has caught Dave. Unmasking, they see they have the old men. All laugh and together launch into the number's final refrain about being carefree, and they dance off.

Leon asks Lily to marry Dave, but she says Dave is just a child. Leon says the situation is driving him mad, and Lily realizes it also seems to be affecting his eyes. She nonetheless declares her love to Leon, but Dave and Anna enter, interrupting and ending Leon and Lily's confessions of love.

### ACT III

The city, some weeks later. Music from Leon's opera is heard as Rosa and Hymie are joined by a group of chorus girls in a restaurant within earshot of the opera house. They are talking about how successful the opera is when Dave enters, visibly upset. He asks to speak to Rosa alone and tells her that his father's behavior has become intolerable — Leon and Lily have become obvious in their mutual attraction — and Dave is desperate to protect his mother from the pain and humiliation. Rosa advises Dave that he himself should marry Lily, and as soon as possible. When Lily enters, Rosa tells her that her attraction to Leon is a problem. Lily argues that she is not in love with Leon in *that* way, but in an idealized way, as a musician and mentor, and she scolds Rosa, saying she must not accuse someone of something without good reason. Each takes offense at the other, and Rosa sings her humorous solo, "***Men tor nit***" (That's not allowed!), about the hypocrisy of those who tell others what they are not allowed to do.

All gather and talk about the success of Leon's opera, while Leon beseeches Lily to leave him, lest she drive him mad and ruin his family. All exit except for Lily, who, with the chorus, sings the **Gavotte**, her grand solo aria, pondering her quandary. Leon returns, and Lily tells him that, while she will not break up his family, she will not marry Dave, whereupon Dave and Rosa enter. Dave has a gun and shoots Lily.

### ACT IV

A short while later, in the Oppenheim apartment where Anna, Moyshe, and Arn are gathered, Rosa breaks in to tell them that Dave has shot Lily, but that it is a minor wound and not serious. Dave, Hymie, and Lily then enter. Lily's arm is bandaged, and she tells everyone that she wishes Dave had killed her. After she exits with Rosa and Hymie, Anna tries to convince Dave to remain hopeful, as Moyshe and Arn reflect on life's brevity. Dave responds with an old-fashioned and nostalgic but philosophical song, "***Fun vigele bizn keyver***" (From cradle to grave), and the two old men join with him on its final refrain. Upon their exit, Anna re-enters, now with Leon, whom she asks point blank if he loves Lily. He does not deny that he does, but he is clearly agonized. Anna calls for Lily to come in from the other room, only to tell her that Leon is now free, he is Lily's. Lily turns to Rosa, begging to be told what to do; so Rosa calls in Dave and, pointing to him, tells Lily that it is Dave who loves her. Lily turns to Dave and offers her hand. But as all forgive one another and Leon gives Dave and Lily his blessing, he collapses, sightless. Anna embraces him, assuring him that, henceforth, her eyes will be his eyes, only for him, only for him.



# BOYS, TAKE CARE OF THE GIRLS

בויעס, היט אָפּ די מיידלעך | *Boyes, hit op di meydlekh*

דאָמענכאָר: אהאַ! אַהאַ!	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>Aha! Aha!</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> Ha, ha!
השמײ: דאָמען, זיי זענען דאָס לעבן בײַ מיר.	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>Damen, zey zenen dos lebn ba mir.</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> Women are my whole life.
דאָמענכאָר: מיט אונדז איז ער אויף יעדן אָרט!	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>Mit undz iz er af yedn ort!</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> He's with us everywhere!
השמײ: זע איך אַ מיידל, קראַפּיר איך פֿאַר איר.	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>Ze ikh a meyd, krapir ikh far ir.</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> When I spy a girl, I just die for her.
דאָמענכאָר: ווייל ער איז דאָך אַ ספּאָרט.	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>Vayl er iz dokh a sport.</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> Because he's such a sport.
השמײ: איך ווער ניט מיד און איך ווער ניט פֿאַרשמאַכט.	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>Ikh ver nit mid un ikh ver nit farshmakht.</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> I don't get tired, I don't get weak.
דאָמענכאָר: הי איז אַ ווערײַ גוד בױ.	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>Hi iz a veri gud boy.</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> <i>[in English]</i> He is a very good boy.
השמײ: ווי איך נאָר גיי...	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>Vu ikh nor gey...</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> Wherever I go...
דאָמענכאָר: ווי ער גייט...	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>vu er geyt...</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> wherever he goes...
השמײ: ווי איך נאָר שטיי...	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>vu ikh nor shtey...</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> wherever I stay...
דאָמענכאָר: ווי ער שטייט...	<b>Damenkhor:</b> <i>vu er shteyt...</i>	<b>Women's Chorus:</b> wherever he stays...
השמײ: ברעקפֿעסט אַ מיידל און דינער אַ וויבל, ביי טאָג און אויך ביי נאַכט.	<b>Haymi:</b> <i>brekfest a meyd un diner a vaybl, ba tog un oykh ba nakht.</i>	<b>Hymie:</b> a single girl at breakfast, a married one at dinner, day and night.
טעניס שטענדיק שפּיל איך, בייזבאָל שפּילן וויל איך, פּול און קאַרטן שפּיל איך גאַנצע נעכט. נאָר פֿון אַלע גליקן, גאָט זאָל מיר צושיקן שפּילן מיט אַ מיידל. ניט שלעכט!	<i>Tenis shtendik shpil ikh, beyzbol shpiln vil ikh, pul un kortn shpil ikh gantse nekht. Nor fun ale glikn, Got zol mir tsushikh shpiln mit a meyd. Nit shlekht!</i>	I'm always playing tennis, I want to play baseball, pool and cards I play all night. But of all the delights, may God send me a girl to play with. Not bad!
מעג עס הייסן חיה, מעג עס הייסן פּייע, קיין אונטערשייד איז מיר. אַ טאַנץ און שפּרינג און אויך אַ זינג, איינס, צוויי, דריי בין איך שוין ביי איר.	<i>Meg es heysn Khaye, meg es heysn Paye, keyn untersheyd iz mir. A tants un shpring un oykh a zing, eyns, tsvey, dray bin ikh shoyn ba ir.</i>	She could be named Khaye, she could be named Paye, no difference to me. A dance and a leap, and also a song, one, two, three and I'm by her side.

דאמענכאָר:  
 טעניס שטענדיק שפילט ער, בייזובאָל שפילן וויל ער,  
 פול און קאָרטן שפילט ער גאנצע נעכט.  
 נאָר פֿון אַלע גליקן, גאָט זאָל אים צושיקן שפילן  
 מיט אַ מיידל. ניט שלעכט!  
 מעג עס הייסן חיה, מעג עס הייסן פּייע,  
 קיין אונטערשייד איז אים.  
 אַ טאַנץ און שפּרינג, און אויך אַ זינג,  
 איינס, צוויי, דריי איז ער שוין ביי איר.

**Damenkhor:**  
*Tenis shtendik shpilt er, beyzbol shpilt vil er,  
 pul un kortn shpilt er gantse nekht.  
 Nor fun ale glikn, Got zol im tsushikn shpilt  
 mit a meyd. Nit shlekht!  
 Meg es heysn Khaye, meg es heysn Paye,  
 keyn untersheyd iz im.  
 A tants un shpring un oykh a zing,  
 eyns, tsvey, dray iz er shoybn ba ir.*

(ENTER ROSA WITH SIX MEN)

כאָר פֿון זעקס מענער:  
 אַהאַ! אַהאַ!

**Khor fun zeks mener:**  
*Aha! Aha!*

ראָזאַ:  
 וואָס ביסטו אַנטלאָפֿן, מיין לעבן, מיין גליק?

**Roza:**  
*Vos bistu antlofn, mayn lebn, mayn glik?*

כאָר:  
 יאַ, זי האָט דאָך רעכט!

**Khor:**  
*Yo, zi hot dokh rekht!*

ראָזאַ:  
 איבערגעלאָזט מיך אַליין מיט זעקס שטיק!

**Roza:**  
*Ibergelozt mikh aleyn mit zeks shtik!*

כאָר:  
 דאָס איז אויך ניט שלעכט!

**Khor:**  
*Dos iz oykh nit shlekht!*

ראָזאַ:  
 דאָס איז ניט שיין...

**Roza:**  
*Doz iz nit sheyn...*

כאָר:  
 ס'איז ניט שיין...

**Khor:**  
*s'iz nit sheyn...*

ראָזאַ:  
 מיך לאָזן אַליין...

**Roza:**  
*mikh lozn aleyn...*

כאָר:  
 יאַ, אַליין...

**Khor:**  
*yo, aleyn...*

ראָזאַ:  
 טו דאָס ניט מער, איך בעט דיך זייר,  
 זעקס איז פֿאַר מיר צו שווער.  
 הערי און באַרני, און סעמי, מיין שאַץ.

**Roza:**  
*Tu dos nit meyr, ikh bet dikh zey'r,  
 zeks iz far mir tsu shveyr.  
 Heri un Barni, un Semi, mayn shats.*

כאָר:  
 סעמי איז איר שאַץ!

**Khor:**  
*Semi iz ir shats!*

ראָזאַ:  
 און דיך, מיין היימי, הער איך ווי די קאָץ.

**Roza:**  
*Un dikh, mayn Haymi, her ikh vi di kats.*

כאָר:  
 זי הערט אים ווי די קאָץ!

**Khor:**  
*Zi hert im vi di kats!*

**Women's Chorus:**

He's always playing tennis, he wants to play baseball,  
 pool and cards he plays all night.  
 But of all the delights, may God send him a girl to  
 play with. Not bad!  
 She could be named Khaye, she could be named Paye,  
 no difference to him.  
 A dance and a leap, and also a song,  
 one, two, three and he's by her side.

**Chorus of six men:**

Ha, ha!

**Rosa:**

Where did you run off to, my life, my joy?

**Chorus (SATB):**

Yes, she has a point!

**Rosa:**

You left me alone with six pieces of merchandise!

**Chorus:**

That's not bad, either!

**Rosa:**

That is not nice...

**Chorus:**

it's not nice...

**Rosa:**

to leave me alone...

**Chorus:**

yes, alone.

**Rosa:**

Don't do that again, I'm begging you,  
 six is too much for me.  
 Harry and Barney, and Sammy, my treasure.

**Chorus:**

Sammy is her treasure!

**Rosa:**

And to you, my Hymie, I pay no attention.

**Chorus:**

She pays no attention to him!

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
כ'קען דיך ניט מער.  
*Kh'ken dikh nit mer.*

**כָּאָר:** **Khor:**  
יאָ, ניט מער!  
*Yo, nit mer!*

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
קרייך ניט אָהער.  
*Krikh nit aher.*

**כָּאָר:** **Khor:**  
ניט אָהער!  
*Nit aher!*

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
בי אַ גוד בוי  
זי נישט קיין גוי.  
פֿאַלג מיך און טו נישט אַזוי.  
*Bi a gud boy,  
zay nisht keyn goy.  
Folg mikh un tu nisht azoy.*

**הַשְּׂמִי:** **Haymi:**  
אויף קלאָר לאָז מיך פֿאַרשטיין.  
*Af klor loz mikh farshteyn.*

**הַשְּׂמִי און רֹזָא:** **Haymi un Roza:**  
מען לאָזט ניט אַ מיידל אַליין!  
*Men lozt nit a meyd l aley n!*

(REFRAIN)

איר בויעס, היט אַפּ די מיידלעך, היט זיי גוט [גיט]!  
לאָזט זיי ניט אַליין, און נעמט זיי תמיד מיט.  
היט, בעני, דין עני.  
היט, מאַלי, דין טשאַרלי [טשאַלי].  
לאָזט אַיך ניט קיין מאַל אַליין, אַליין!  
קוים וועסטו צום מיידל קיין גוט בוי ניט זיין [זאָן],  
אוי, וועסטו דאָן לידן זייענדיק אַ מאַן!  
אויב איר וועט זיין אַלרײַט, וועט איר צו יעדער צייט  
ביידע דאָן גליקלעך זײַן.  
*Ir boyes, hit op di meydlekh, hit zey git!  
Lozt zey nit aley n, un nemt zey tomed mit.  
Hit, Beni, dayn Eni.  
Hit, Mali, dayn Tshali.  
Lozt aykh nit keyn mol aley n, aley n!  
Koy m vestu tsum meyd l keyn gut boy nit zan,  
oy, vestu dan laydn zayendik a man!  
Oyb ir vet zayn olrayt, vet ir tsu yeder tsayt,  
Beyde dan gliklekh zayn.*

[REPEATED BY CHORUS]

**Rosa:**  
I don't know you anymore.

**Chorus:**  
Yes, no more!

**Rosa:**  
Don't crawl to me.

**Chorus:**  
Not to her!

**Rosa:**  
*[in English]* Be a good boy,  
*[in Yiddish again]* don't be a goy.<sup>1</sup>  
Listen to me and don't do that sort of thing.

**Hymie:**  
Let me understand this clearly.

**Hymie and Rosa:**  
Never leave a girl alone!

You boys, take care of the girls, take good care!  
Don't leave them alone, always take them with you.  
Benny, watch your Annie.  
Mollie, watch your Charlie.<sup>2</sup>  
Don't ever let yourselves be alone, alone!  
As soon as you're not a good boy with your girl,  
oh, how you'll suffer as her man!  
If you'll be all right, then you will always  
then both be happy.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, a gentile. When said by one Jew to another, it (pejoratively) suggests a Jew who is ignorant of Jewish tradition or learning. Here, its superficial meaning suggests a broader sense simply of “don't be one of *them*,” but its real purpose is to make an in-group bilingual rhyme with “boy.”

<sup>2</sup> The *r* in Charlie would be ghosted in a New York Yiddish accent, so the rhyme in English should maybe be spelled Mollie and Cholly.

# LADIES' RIGHTS

## דאָמענרעכטע | Damenrekhte

הַשְּׂמִי:

[1.]

איך שטעל מיך פֿאַר ווען איך וואָלט געווען אַזאַ  
גרויסער מאַן ווי טעפֿט,  
אַ נייע לאַ וואָלט איך געמאַכט:  
פֿאַר וויבער אַ גוט געשעפֿט.  
דאָמענרעכטע, ביי מיין לעבן,  
גיב איך זיי די מינוט [מיניט].  
די בעסטע דזשאַבס נאָר זיי געגעבן: קלינען די סטריט.  
וויבער פֿאַליסלייט, וויבער דזשאָדזשעס,  
עס וואָלט ניט זיין קיין גרעפֿט.

Haymi:

[1.]

*Ikh shtel mikh for ven ikh volt geven aza  
groyser man vi Teft,  
A naye lo volt ikh gemakht:  
far vayber a gut gesheft.  
Damenrekhte, ba mayn lebn,  
gib ikh zey di minit.  
Di beste dzhabs nor zey gegeben: klinen di strit.  
Vayber polislait, vayber dzhodzhes,  
es volt nit zayn keyn greft.*

Hymie:

[1.]

I imagine if I was as big a  
man as Taft,<sup>1</sup>  
I'd make a new law:  
a good deal for the women.  
I'd grant the ladies rights this very minute,  
I swear.  
They'd get the best jobs: cleaning the street.  
Women policemen, women judges,  
there would not be any graft.

(RECIT.)

אוי, וועט דאָס זיין אַ מחיה,  
ווען אויפֿן קאָרנער וועט שטיין מיסעס פֿאַליסמאַן חיה.

*Oy, vet dos zayn a mekhaye.  
Ven afn kornet vet shteyn mises polisman Khaye.*

Oh, won't it be wonderful,  
When on the corner stands Mrs. Officer Khaye.

(REFRAIN)

חיה פֿאַליסמאַן, פֿייע דעטעקטיוו.  
דזשאָדזשעס און מעיאָרס, און אויך אַ פֿרעזידענט.  
קיילע אַ שמש, ביילע אַ חון,  
שוחטים, רבנים –  
נאָר ביי וויבער אין די הענט.

*Khaye polisman, Paye detektiv.  
Dzhodzhes un meyors, un oykh a prezident.  
Keyle a shames, Beyle a khazn,  
Shokhtim, rabonim –  
nor ba vayber in di hent.*

Khaye the policeman, Paye the detective.  
Judges and mayors, and also a president.  
Keyle a sexton, Beyle a cantor,  
Kosher slaughterers, rabbis –  
everything in the hands of women.

[2.]

איך שטעל מיך פֿאַר סאָלדאַטן פֿון וויבער,  
זיי דאַרפֿן גיין אין שלאַכט.  
שמינק און פודער, הוטן, קאַרסעטן,  
דאָס וואָלט געווען איר מאַכט.  
ווען ביים שונא איז דאָ ווער אַ שיינער אָפֿיציר,  
אָוועקגעלייגט באַלד דאָס געווער, אַזאַ יאָר אויף מיר.  
נייע מאָדעס ווי צום שיסן וואָלטן זיי אויסגעטראַכט.

[2.]

*Ikh shtel mikh for soldatn fun vayber,  
zey darfn geyn in shlakht.  
Shmink un puder, hutn, korsetn,  
dos volt geven ir makht.  
Ven bam soyne iz do ver a sheyner ofitsir,  
avekgeleygt bald dos gever, aza yor af mir.  
Naye modes vi tsum shishn voltn zey oysgetrakht.*

[2.]

I imagine women soldiers that  
have to go into battle.  
Makeup and powder, hats, corsets,  
that would be their power.  
And when the enemy has a handsome officer,  
they'd immediately drop their weapons, so help me.  
They'd invent new ways to shoot.

(RECIT.)

אוי, וועט דאָס זיין אַ צרה,  
ווען די קאָמאַנדע וועט געבן גענעראַל שרה!

*Oy, vet dos zayn a tsore,  
ven di komande vet gebn general Sore!*

Oh, it will be a calamity,  
if the command gives us General Sarah!

(REFRAIN)

<sup>1</sup> A "big man" was a topical pun. William Howard Taft, who was President of the United States when *Shir-hashirim* premiered (he would later be named Chief Justice of the Supreme Court), was a very big man, indeed, in both the sense of socio-political stature as well as that of sheer anatomical size. Over six feet tall, he weighed up to 350 pounds and was said — perhaps factually! — to have once gotten stuck in the oversize custom bathtub he'd had installed in the White House.

# THE SONG OF LOVE

## דאָס ליד פֿון ליבע | *Dos lid fun libe*

### לילי:

איין ליבעסליד זינג איך פֿאַר דיר.  
אַך, ווי עס גליט אין האַרצן ביש מיר.  
אַ, מיין אַמאָר, דיר דין איך נאָר.  
מיין אַפּאָלאָן, הער צו מיין טאָן.  
הער מיין געזאַנג, איין האַרפֿנקלאַנג,  
דער ליבעסטראַנק.

### Lili:

*Eyn libeslid zing ikh far dir.  
Akh, vi es glit in hartsn ba mir.  
O, mayn amor, dir din ikh nor.  
Mayn Apolon, her tsu mayn ton.  
Her mayn gezang, eyn harfnklang,  
der libestrank.*

### Lily:

A love song I sing to you,  
Ach, how it glows within my heart.  
O', my amour, I serve only you.  
My Apollo, listen to my notes.  
Hear my song, the sound of a harp,  
the elixir of love.

### (REFRAIN)

ליב מיך נאָר פֿיל, ליב אין דער שטיל.  
דער ליבעסטראַנק, ער שמעקט זאָ זיס.  
קום נאָר צו מיר, איך וואַרט אויף דיר  
אין ליבעס פֿאַראַדיז.  
ליב און ווער נישט מיד, זינג איין ליבעסליד.  
ליב מיך נאָר פֿיל, ליב אין דער שטיל.  
ליב, ליב, ליב.

*Lib mikh nor fil, lib in der shtil.  
Der libestrank, er shmekt zo zis.  
Kum nor tsu mir, ikh vart af dir  
in libes paradiz.  
Lib un ver nit mid, zing eyn libeslid.  
Lib mikh nor fil, lib in der shtil.  
Lib, lib, lib.*

Love me madly, but so that none other can hear.  
The elixir of love, it smells so sweet.  
Come only to me, I await you  
in Love's Paradise.  
Love and never weary, sing a song of love.  
Love me madly, but so that none other can hear.  
Love, love, love.

# SWEET HOPE

## Hofnung zise | האָפֿענונג זיסע

**Lili:**

*Vorrei morir quando tramonta il sole,  
Quando sul prato dormon le viole,  
Vorrei morir, vorrei morir.<sup>1</sup>*

**Lily:**

I would like to die when the sun sets,  
When violets sleep on the meadow.  
I would like to die, I would like to die.

[SPOKEN]

**Dave:**

Say, what is all that clamoring about in there?  
What have you to be so angry about in Italian?  
“Vorrei morir?” You even want to die?

**Lily:**

Do they want us to go over the duet again?

**Dave:**

Start from the Farewell Scene. And sing the Yiddish text so that the older folks also understand it.

**Lily:**

That’s fine with me.

[THEY SING, BUT IN THE GERMANIZED  
YIDDISH FROM THE EARLIER YEARS  
OF THE YIDDISH STAGE.]<sup>2</sup>

**דייו:**

אַך, ווי שווער איז מיר דאָס שייַדן.

**Deyv:**

*Akh, vi shver iz mir dos sheydn.*

**לילי:**

אַך, ווי שמערצלעך זינט מיניע לייַדן.

**Lili:**

*Akh, vi shmertslekh zint mayne leydn.*

**דייו:**

טײַער קינד, יאָ גלייב עס מיר.  
לעב וואָל! מיין האַרץ בלייבט שטעץ מיט דיר,  
נאָר מיט דיר, נאָר מיט דיר.

**Deyv:**

*Tayer kind, yo gloyb es mir.  
Leb vol! Mayn herts blaybt shtets mit dir,  
nor mit dir, nor mit dir.*

**לילי:**

ניין, ניין, ניט גיי, בעט איך ביי דיר.  
איך שטאַרב אויף דעם אָרט, יאָ גלייב עס מיר.

**Lili:**

*Neyn, neyn, nit gey, bet ikh ba dir.  
Ikh shtarb af dem ort, yo gleyb es mir.*

**דייו:**

נאָר מוט, יונגעס בלוט קיין האָפֿנונג פֿאַרליר.  
איך שווער, איך געהער נאָר דיר, יאָ דיר.

**Deyv:**

*Nor mut, yunges blut, keyn hofnung farlir.  
Ikh shver, ikh geher nor dir, yo dir.*

**צוזאַמען:**

ניין, ניין, ניט/איך גיי, איך בעט ביי דיר.

**Tsuzamen:**

*Neyn, neyn, nit/ikh gey, ikh bet ba dir.*

**Dave:**

Ach, how difficult is this parting for me.

**Lily:**

Ach, how painful are my sorrows.

**Dave:**

Dear child, do believe me.  
Farewell! My heart remains always with you,  
yours alone, yours alone.

**Lily:**

No, no, don't go, I beg of you.  
I die on this spot, do believe me.

**Dave:**

But courage, young blood, do not lose hope.  
I swear I belong but to you, yes, to you.

**Together:**

No, no, don't go/I'm going, I beg of you.<sup>3</sup>

איך שטאַרב אויף דעם אָרט, יאָ גלייב עס מיר.  
נאָר מוט, יונגעס בלוט, קיין האַפֿ'נונג פֿאַרליר.  
איך שווער איך געהער נאָר דיר, נאָר דיר.  
מיין זעלע דאָ לייג איך איבער ביי דיר.  
דאָס קענסטו הייליק יאָ גלייבן מיר.  
אויף ווידערזען, אויף ווידערזען, אויף ווידערזען.

ליב מיר נאָר פֿיל, ליב אין דער שטיל.  
דער ליבעסטראַנק, ער שמעקט זאָ זיס.  
קום נאָר צו מיר, איך וואָרט אויף דיר  
אין ליבעס פֿאַראַדיז.

*Ikh shtarb af dem ort, yo gleyb es mir.  
Nor mut, yunges blut, kayn hofnung farlir.  
Ikh shver ikh geher nor dir, nor dir.  
Mayn zele do leyg ikh iber ba dir.  
Dos kenstu heylik yo gleybn mir.  
Af viderzen, af viderzen, af viderzen.*

*Lib mikh nor fil, lib in der shtil.  
Der libestrank, er shmekt zo zis.  
Kum nor tsu mir, ikh vart af dir  
in libes paradiz.*

(RECIT.)

**דייו:**  
איך קען נישט גיין, איך מוז יאָ לידער יעצט גיין.

**דייו און לילי:**  
האַפֿ'נונג זיסע, נאָר דו אַליין  
שטילן קענסטו אונדזער געוויין.  
האַפֿ'נונג זיסע, נאָר דו אַליין  
שטילן קענסטו דאָס געוויין.

**לילי:**  
גיי מיט גאָט, גיי מיט גאָט,  
מיין זעגן נעם מיט דיר.

**דייו:**  
לעבע וואָל, לעבע וואָל, נאָר פֿאַרגעס נישט אָן מיר.

**דייו און לילי:**  
האַפֿ'נונג זיסע, נאָר דו אַליין  
שטילן קענסטו אונדזער געוויין.  
האַפֿ'נונג זיסע, נאָר דו אַליין  
שטילן קענסטו דאָס געוויין.  
גיי געזונט. גיי געזונט.

**Deyv:**  
*Ikh ken nit geyn, ikh muz yo leyder yetst geyn.*

**Deyv un Lili:**  
*Hofnung zise, nor du aleyn  
shtiln kenstu undzer geveyn.  
Hofnung zise, nor du aleyn  
shtiln kenstu dos geveyn.*

**Lili:**  
*Gey mit Got, gey mit Got,  
mayn zegn nem mit dir.*

**Deyv:**  
*Lebe vol, lebe vol, nor farges nit on mir.*

**Deyv un Lili:**  
*Hofnung zise, nor du aleyn  
shtiln kenstu undzer geveyn.  
Hofnung zise, nor du aleyn  
shtiln kenstu dos geveyn.  
Gey gezunt. Gey gezunt.*

[DANCE OFF]

I die on this spot, do believe me.  
But courage, young blood. do not lose hope.  
I swear I belong but to you, yes, to you.  
My soul I leave here with you.  
This you may sacredly believe.  
*Auf Wiedersehen, auf Wiedersehen, auf Wiedersehen.*

Love me madly, but so that none other can hear.  
The elixir of love, it smells so sweet.  
Come only to me, I await you  
in Love's Paradise.

**Dave:**  
I cannot, no, but alas, I must leave you.

**Dave and Lily:**  
Sweet Hope, but you alone  
can silence our weeping.  
Sweet Hope, but you alone  
can silence the weeping.

**Lily:**  
Godspeed, go with fortune,  
and take my blessing with you.

**Dave:**  
Farewell, farewell, but do not forget me.

**Dave and Lily:**  
Sweet Hope, but you alone  
can silence our weeping.  
Sweet Hope, but you alone  
can silence the weeping.  
Farewell. Farewell.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Leonardo Cognetti's text to Paolo Tosti's well-known song "Vorrei morire!" (1878). Lily sings Cognetti's words, albeit in rearranged order and not to Tosti's melody, but rather to Rumshinsky's own quasi-recitative.

<sup>2</sup> The Modern German-inspired vocabulary used in early Yiddish theater was called *daytshmerish*. At the time that Anshel Shor wrote this libretto to *Shir-hashirim* (1911), it had only been some three and a half years since another libretto he collaborated on, the operetta *A mentsh zol men zayn* (One should be a decent person), was said to have been the first Yiddish operetta to be written in conventional Modern Yiddish. That is, it had shed the legacy of *daytshmerish*.

This dialog in *Shir-hashirim* was making a point that older audiences in 1911 certainly remembered well the way Yiddish theater had not so long before made itself sound like German — and in fact still did, as many of the older performers were still active on the stage. It is with that sound in mind that this aria is sung.

<sup>3</sup> Lily sings, "Don't go" (*nit gey*), against Dave's singing "I'm going" (*ikh gey*).

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "Go in health. Go in health."

# TINY TOTS

## פיצעלעך קינדערלעך | Pitselekh kinderlekh

### הַשְּׂמִי:

הייסט דאָס אַ ליבע, פֿרעג איך דיך?  
דו האָסט אויף מיר גאַר קיין רחמנות,  
און פֿאַרשאַפֿטסט מיר זאָ פֿיל יסורים.

### רֹזאַ:

די ליבע ברענט און פֿלאַקערט אין מיר אַזוי שטאַרק,  
דאָס איך האָב דיר געוואָלט פֿאַרברענען דעם  
שיר-השירים.

### הַשְּׂמִי:

דעם שיר-השירים ווען דו זאָלסט פֿאַרשטיין  
וואָלטסטו געוואָלט ווי האַלטן דאָרף מען אים דאָך יאָ  
זייער הייליק.

### רֹזאַ:

דעם גאַנצן שיר-השירים שענק איך דיר אַוועק,  
איך בין דיר מוחל און האַלט דיר שוין אויך  
מיט מיין חלק.

### הַשְּׂמִי:

אויב דו ווילסט וויסן ווי איך ליב דיך,  
הער מיך אויס נאָר איין מינוט.  
עס וועט דיר שמעקן, יאָ, זייער גוט.

### רֹזאַ:

לאַמיר זען.  
ליב'ערקלער און מאַך מיר אַפּעטיט.

### הַשְּׂמִי:

ליב מיך נאָר פֿיל, ליב אין דער שטיל.  
דער ליבעסטראַנק, ער שמעקט זאָ זיס.

### רֹזאַ:

עס געפֿעלט מיר ניט אַזוי, ס'איז אַ ליבע פֿון אַ גוי,  
ווייל דאָס פֿאַסט דאָך גאַר ניט פֿאַר דיר.  
וויילסטו מיך געווינען, מוזסטו באַלד געפֿינען  
אַ שענערע ליבע פֿאַר מיר.

### הַשְּׂמִי:

ליב און ווער ניט מיד, זינג איין ליבעסליד.

### רֹזאַ:

גי שוין פֿון מיר, ווייל איך לאַך פֿון דיר.  
דאָס האָב איך געהערט נאָך פֿריי.

### Haymi:

*Heyst dos a libe, freg ikh dikh?  
Du host af mir gor keyn rakhmones,  
un farshafst mir zo fil yesurim.*

### Roza:

*Di libe brent un flakert in mir azoy shtark,  
dos ikh hob dir gevolt farbrenen dem  
shir-hashirim.*

### Haymi:

*Dem shir-hashirim ven du zolst farshteyn  
volstu gevust vi haltn darf men im dokh yo  
zeyer heylik.*

### Roza:

*Dem gantsn shir-hashirim shenk ikh dir avek,  
ikh bin dir moyhkl un halt dikh shoyn oykh  
mit mayn kheylek.*

### Haymi:

*Oyb du vilst visn vi ikh lib dikh,  
her mikh oys nor eyn minut.  
Es vet dir shmekn, yo, zeyer gut.*

### Roza:

*Lomikh zen.  
Lib'erkler un makh mir apetit.*

### Haymi:

*Lib mikh nor fil, lib in der shtil.  
Der libestrank, er shmekt zo zis.*

### Roza:

*Es gefelt mir nit azoy, s'iz a libe fun a goy,  
vayl dos past dokh gor nit far dir.  
Vilstu mikh gevinen, muzstu bald gefinen  
a shenere libe far mir.*

### Haymi:

*Lib un ver nit mid, zing eyn libeslid.*

### Roza:

*Gey shoyn fun mir, vayl ikh lakh fun dir.  
Dos hob ikh gehert nokh fri'r.*

### Hymie:

You call this love, I ask you?  
You have no pity on me,  
and you cause me so much pain.

### Rosa:

Love burns and flares up in me so strongly,  
that I wanted to burn up the Shir-hashirim  
for you.<sup>1</sup>

### Hymie:

If you understood the Shir-hashirim,  
you'd know how it needs to be  
regarded as very sacred, indeed.

### Rosa:

You can have the whole Shir-hashirim,  
pardon my saying, and the same goes for you, too,  
as far as I'm concerned.

### Hymie:

If you want to know how I love you,  
hear me out for just a minute.  
It will be very much, indeed, to your taste.

### Rosa:

Let me see it.  
Declare your love and give me an appetite.

### Hymie:

Love me madly, but so that none other can hear.  
The elixir of love, it smells so sweet.

### Rosa:

I don't like that way, that's love from a goy,  
it doesn't suit you at all.  
If you want to win me, you must quickly find  
a more beautiful love for me.

### Hymie:

Love and never weary, sing a song of love.

### Rosa:

Get away from me, I'm laughing at you.  
I've heard that one before.



**השמי:**  
וואָס ווילסטו? איך זאָל פֿאַר דיר קני'ן?

**ראָזאַ:**  
ניין, ניין, ניין, מיין ליבער זון [זין].  
איך האָב ליב אַ ליבע ווי מיין טאַטע  
האַט געטון [געטין].

**Haymi:**  
*Vos vilstu? Ikh zol far dir kni'n?*

**Roza:**  
*Neyn, neyn, neyn, mayn liber zin,  
Ikh hob lib a libe vi mayn tate  
hot getin.*

(REFRAIN)

**השמי און ראָזאַ:**  
פיצעלעך קינדערלעך ליבן זיך קינדיש, נאַיוו.  
יינגלעך, מיידלעך, ליבן פֿון האַרצן זאָ טיף.  
טאַטעלעך, מאַמעלעך, האָבן אַן אַנדער באַגריף.  
ווייל דיר געהער איך, הייליק דאָ שווער איך,  
מיך נאָר דיין קעצעלע רופֿ [ריף].

**Haymi un Roza:**  
*Pitselekh kinderlekh libn zikh kindish, naiv.  
Yinglekh, meydlekh, libn fun hartsn zo tif.  
Tatelekh mamelekh hobn an ander bagrif.  
Vayl dir geher ikh, heylik do shver ikh,  
mikh nor dayn ketsele rif.*

[DANCE OFF]

**Hymie:**  
What do you want? You want me to kneel?

**Rosa:**  
No, no, no, my dear boy,  
I love a love like my papa  
used to do it.

**Hymie and Rosa:**  
Tiny tots love childishly, naively.  
Young men and women love from deep in their hearts.  
Papas and mamas have yet another concept of it.  
Because I belong to you, I take a sacred oath,  
just call me your little kitty-cat.

<sup>1</sup> *Shir-hashirim* is the Hebrew title of the Biblical book Song of Songs, the frankly erotic long love poem.

# TERZETT

**דייוו:**  
וואָס ווילט איר פֿון מיר?  
וואָס איז צו טאָן, זאָגט איר?

**ראָזאַ און לילי:**  
ביידע ווילן מיר דאָ הערן,  
אויף דער שטעלע אונדז ערקלערן.  
ליבסטו זי, צי ליבסטו מיר?  
גיב אַן ענטפֿער נאָר אויף גיך. יאָ?

**ראָזאַ:**  
נו? נו? מירקע, גיב לשון!

**דייוו:**  
איך שטיי ווי דול [דיל].  
איך ווייס ניט וואָס איך וויל.

**ראָזאַ און לילי:**  
וואָס דו ווילסט, דאָס ווייסן מיר,  
מיין ליבער, שיינער יונגער-מאַן.  
ווילסט האָבן וויבער אָן אַ שיעור.  
ווילסט אַ שלמה-הומלך זיין [זאָן].  
וועמען ווילסטו, זאָג שוין גיך.  
וועסט זיך ניט אַרויסדרייען.  
ווילסטו זי צי ווילסטו מיר?  
נישט דריי אַ קאַפּ אין צווייען.

**דייוו:**  
איך האָב פֿאַר אַיך אַ גוטן פּלאַן,  
ביידע וועט איר צופֿרידן זיין [זאָן].

**ראָזאַ און לילי:**  
נו זאָג, נו זאָג, וואָס איז דער פּלאַן?

**דייוו:**  
די אויגן וועל איך אַיך פֿאַרבינדן,  
אין דער פֿינצטער זאָלט איר טאַפֿן.  
און מיט דער וויל איך פֿאַרשווינדן  
ווער פֿון אַיך וואָס וועט מיר כּאַפֿן.

**ראָזאַ און לילי:**  
כאַ-האַ-האַ, האַ-האַ-האַ,  
דאָס איז אַ פּלאַן גאָר אַ גערעכטער!  
כאַ-האַ-האַ, האַ-האַ-האַ,  
איך קאַטשע מיר אַזש פֿאַר געלעכטער!

**דייוו:**  
נו, קומט אַהער...

**Deyv:**  
*Vos vilt ir fun mir?*  
*Vos iz tsu ton, zogt ir?*

**Roza un Lili:**  
*Beyde viln mir do hern,*  
*af der shtele undz erklern.*  
*Libstu zi, tsi libstu mikh?*  
*Gib an entfer nor af gikh. Yo?*

**Roza:**  
*Nu? Nu? Mirke, gib loshn!*

**Deyv:**  
*Ikh shtey vi dil.*  
*Ikh veys nit vos ikh vil.*

**Roza un Lili:**  
*Vos du vilst, dos visn mir,*  
*mayn liber, sheyner yunger-man.*  
*Vilst hobn vayber on a shir.*  
*Vilst a Shloyme-hameylekh zan.*  
*Vemen vilstu, zog shoyn gikh.*  
*Vest zikh nit aroysdreyen.*  
*Vilstu zi tsi vilstu mikh?*  
*Nisht drey a kop in tsveyen.*

**Deyv:**  
*Ikh hob far aykh a gutn plan,*  
*beyde vet ir tsufridn zan.*

**Roza un Lili:**  
*Nu zog, nu zog, vos iz der plan?*

**Deyv:**  
*Di oygn vel ikh aykh farbindn,*  
*in der fintster zolt ir tapn.*  
*Un mit der vil ikh farshvindn*  
*ver fun aykh vos vet mikh khapn.*

**Roza un Lili:**  
*Kha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha,*  
*dos iz a plan gor a gerekhter!*  
*Kha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha,*  
*Ikh katshe mikh azh far gelekhter!*

**Deyv:**  
*Nu, kumt aher...*

**Dave:**  
What do you want from me?  
What is to be done, do tell?

**Rosa and Lily:**  
Both of us, right here, want to hear it,  
declared on the spot to us.  
Do you love her, or do you love me?  
Answer immediately. Yes?

**Rosa:**  
Well? Well? Out with it!

**Dave:**  
I'm standing here like an idiot.  
I don't know what I want.

**Rosa and Lily:**  
What you want, that we know,  
my dear, handsome young man.  
You want an endless number of women.  
You want to be King Solomon.  
Which of us you want, say it at once.  
You won't squirm your way out of this.  
Do you want her or do you want me?  
Don't toy with us both.

**Dave:**  
I have a good idea for you,  
both of you will be satisfied.

**Rosa and Lily:**  
So, tell us, tell us, what is your idea?

**Dave:**  
I'll blindfold you both,  
in the dark you can feel your way around.  
And then I'll disappear  
with whichever of you catches me.

**Rosa and Lily:**  
Ha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha,  
that's a perfect plan!  
Ha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha,  
I could roll on the floor laughing!

**Dave:**  
So, come over here...

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
אַט בין איך דאָ. *Ot bin ikh do.*

**לילי:** **Lili:**  
כאַהאַהאַ, דאָס איז ניט שלעכט!  
כאַפן וועל איך דאָ באַלד אַ העכט!  
*Kha-ha-ha, dos iz nit shlekht!*  
*Khapn vel ikh do bald a hekht!*

**דייוו:** **Deyv:**  
נו, קומט אָהער...  
*Nu, kumt aher...*

**לילי:** **Lili:**  
אַט בין איך דאָ. *Ot bin ikh do.*

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
כאַהאַהאַ, דאָס איז ניט שלעכט!  
כאַפן וועל איך דאָ באַלד אַ העכט!  
*Kha-ha-ha, dos iz nit shlekht!*  
*Khapn vel ikh do bald a hekht!*

(HE BLINDFOLDS BOTH OF THEM, THEN  
SNEAKS OUT. THEY WALK AROUND  
WITH ARMS OUTSTRETCHED.)

**רֹזָא:** **Roza:**  
וון איז ער? וון איז ער?  
*Vu iz er, vu iz er?*

**לילי:** **Lili:**  
צו געפֿינען איז אים שווער.  
*Tsu gefinen iz im shver.*

(ENTER MOYSHE AND ARN, WHO ARE DAVE'S  
GRANDFATHER AND GREAT-UNCLE, AND THEY  
ARE IMMEDIATELY GRABBED BY THE GIRLS.)

[SPOKEN]

**לילי און רֹזָא:** **Lili un Roza:**  
איך האָב אים! איך האָב אים!  
*Ikh hob im! Ikh hob im!*

[SUNG]

**אַלע:** **Ale:**  
כאַהאַהאַ, כאַהאַהאַ,  
אויסגעצייכנט גוט געווען.  
*Kha-ha-ha, kha-ha-ha,*  
*Oysgetseykhnt gut geven.*

ניט הערן קיינעם, אַלע אין איינעם,  
וועלן מיר טאַנצן שיין, יאָ זייער שיין!  
ווי קאַוואַלירן, אַלע שפּאַצירן,  
אויף דער פּראַמענאַדע גיין, יאָ, גיין!  
שטיפֿן און לאַכן, און חוּזק מאַכן,  
וועלן מיר אַלע ווי אונדז געפֿעלט.  
יונג און אַלט וועלן באַלד לאַכן פֿון דער גאַנצער וועלט.  
*Nit hern keynem, ale in eynem,*  
*veln mir tantsn sheyn, yo, zeyer sheyn!*  
*Vi kavalirn, ale shpatsirn,*  
*af der pramenade geyn, yo, geyn!*  
*Shtifn un lakhn, un khoyzek makhn,*  
*veln mir ale vi undz gefelt.*  
*Yung un alt veln bald lakhn fun der gantser velt.*

(DANCE OFF)

**Rosa:**  
Here I am.

**Lily:**  
Ha-ha-ha, this is not bad!  
I'll catch a big shot right away!

**Dave:**  
So, come over here...

**Lily:**  
Here I am.

**Rosa:**  
Ha-ha-ha, this is not bad!  
I'll catch a big shot right away!

**Rosa:**  
Where is he? Where is he?

**Lily:**  
He's hard to find.

**Lily and Rosa:**  
I have him! I have him!

**All:**  
Ha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha!  
That was outstanding!

Listening to (obeying) no one, all together,  
we will dance beautifully, yes, very beautifully!  
Like proper escorts, all will go strolling,  
we'll go on the promenade, yes, we'll go!  
Joking and laughing, and making fun,  
we'll all do just as we like.  
Young and old will soon laugh at the whole world.

# THAT'S NOT ALLOWED!

## מען טאַר ניט! | Men tor nit!

ראַזאַ:

[1.]

פאַרשאַלטן וואָלט איך דעם מענטש זאָפּאַרט  
וואָס האָט געפֿונען דאָס וואָרט:  
„אוי, מען טאַר ניט!“  
צו וואָס דו ווילסט זיך נאָר צורירן,  
וועט מען דיך באַלד סיקירן, „אוי, מען טאַר ניט!“

מיט אַ בוי אויסגיין? מע טאַר ניט.  
אין דער פֿינצטער שטיין? מע טאַר ניט.  
אויב מיר זאָלן קוקן אויף אַלעס וואָס מע טאַר ניט,  
אַ שייַן פנים וואָלטן מיר געהאַט.

דער דזשאָדזש באַפֿעלט, דער מייאָר קלאָגט,  
ווער עס האָט נאָר אַ דעה זאָגט,  
„אוי, מען טאַר ניט!“  
אַט די אַלע וואָס מאַכן משוגע, דול [דיל],  
זיי אַליין טוען עס אין דער שטיל וואָס מע טאַר ניט!

היפּאָקריטן, באַנדיטן,  
זיי מיינען עס ניט צום גוטן [גיטן].

(REFRAIN)

זאָג „מען טאַר“ און וואָרף אַרויס דעם „ניט“.  
זאָג יאָר ווי דיר וועט דאָן זיין גוט [גיט].  
לעב און לאַך, און פֿאַרגעניגן האָב אַ סך.  
אויב דיר געפֿעלט, וואָס אַרט דיך פֿאַר דער וועלט?

[2.]

ווען דו שטייסט מיט אַ מיידל ביי נאַכט אין דער האַל,  
הערסטו באַלד איר טאַטנס קול,  
„אוי, מען טאַר ניט!“  
און ווילסטו נאָר קומען אין שטוב צו איר  
שרייט איר מאַמע באַלד אויף דיר, „אוי, מען טאַר ניט!“

דעם אמת זאָגן? מע טאַר ניט.  
אויף גאָט זיך קלאָגן? מע טאַר ניט.  
ווי קען מען זיך באַהאַלטן פֿון דעם „מע טאַר ניט“?  
ווי ווערט מען פֿטור פֿון אים?

Roza:

[1.]

*Farsholtn volt ikh dem mentsh zofort  
vos hot gefunen dos vort:  
“Oy, men tor nit!”  
Tsu vos du vilst zikh nor tsurirn,  
vet men dikh bald sikirn, “Oy, men tor nit!”*

*Mit a boy oysgeyn? Me tor nit.  
In der fintster shteyn? Me tor nit.  
Oyb mir zoln kukn af ales vos me tor nit,  
a sheyn ponem voltn mir gehat.*

*Der dzhodzh bafelt, der meyor klogt,  
ver es hot nor a deye zagt,  
“Oy, men tor nit!”  
Ot di ale vos makhn meshuge, dil,  
zey aleyн tuen es in der shtil vos me tor nit!*

*Hipokritn, banditn,  
zey meynen es nit tsum gitn.*

*Zog “men tor” un varf aroys dem “nit”.  
Aza yor vi dir vet dan zayn git.  
Leb un lakh, un fargenign hob a sakh.  
Oyb dir gefelt, vos art dikh far der velt?*

[2.]

*Ven du shteyst mit a meydл ba nakht in der hol,  
herstu bald ir tatns kol,  
“Oy, men tor nit!”  
Un vilstu nor kumen in shtub tsu ir  
Shrayt ir mame bald af dir, “Oy, men tor nit!”*

*Dem emes zogn? Me tor nit.  
Af Got zikh klogn? Me tor nit.  
Vi ken men zikh bahaltн fun dem “me tor nit?”  
Vi vert men poter fun im?*

Rosa:

[1.]

I'd curse anyone right away  
who first came up with the phrase:  
“Oh, that's not allowed!”  
About anything you might be drawn to,  
they tell you right off, “Oh, that's not allowed!”

Going out with a boy? That's not allowed.  
Staying out at night? That's not allowed.  
If we had to think about all that's not allowed,  
Then woe would be us.

The judge commands, the mayor laments,  
whoever has some authority says,  
“Oh, that's not allowed!”  
But all those who are driving you crazy,  
they themselves in private do what isn't allowed!

Hypocrites, rogues,  
and they're up to no good.

Say “it's allowed” and toss aside the “not.”  
Then things will be great for you.  
Live and laugh, and have a lot of fun.  
If it pleases you, what do you care what others say?

[2.]

When you stand in the hallway at night with a girl,  
right away you'll hear her dad's voice,  
“Oh, that's not allowed!”  
And if you want to come into her house  
Her mom will yell at you, “Oh, that's not allowed!”

Tell the truth? That's not allowed.  
Complain to God? That's not allowed.  
How can one hide from the “that's not allowed”?  
How does one get rid of it?

ווען דו נעמסט זיך דאָס לעבן ווייל  
ס'גייט דיר שלעכט, שרייט די קאָרט,  
„דו האָסט קיין רעכט. אוי, מען טאָר ניט!“  
ניט לעבן, ניט שטאַרבן, ניט עסן, ניט טרינקען,  
ניט גלעטן, ניט קושן, ניט ווינקען.  
אוי מען טאָר ניט!

היפּאָקריטן, באַנדיטן,  
זיי מיינען עס ניט צום גוטן [גיטן].

*Ven du nemst zikh dos lebn vayl  
s'geyt dir shlekht, shrayt di kort,  
"Du host keyn rekht! Oy, men tor nit!"  
Nit lebn, nit shtarbn, nit esn, nit trinken,  
nit gletn, nit kushn, nit vinken.  
Oy, men tor nit!*

*Hipokritn, banditn,  
zey meynen es nit tsum gitn.*

(REFRAIN)

If you try to take your life because  
it's going so bad for you, the court cries,  
"You have no right. Oh, that's not allowed!"  
No living, no dying, no eating, no drinking,  
no fondling, no kissing, no beckoning.  
Oh, that's not allowed!

Hypocrites, rogues,  
and they're up to no good.

# GAVOTTE

<b>לילי:</b> ניין, ניין מנין הארץ קען קיינער ניט פֿאַרשטיין, נאָר איך אַליין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Neyn, neyn, mayn harts ken keyner nit farshteyn, nor ikh aleyn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> No, no, none can understand my heart, just I alone.
<b>כאָר:</b> נאָר זי אַליין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zi aleyn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just she alone.
<b>לילי:</b> נאָר איך אַליין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Nor ikh aleyn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Just I alone.
<b>כאָר:</b> נאָר זי אַליין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zi aleyn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just she alone.
<b>לילי:</b> מנין ליבע איז דאָך הערלעך, הייליק, ריין אין האַרצן מנין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Mayn libe iz dokh herlekh, heylik, reyn in hartsn mayn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> My love is glorious, sacred, pure in my heart.
<b>כאָר:</b> אין האַרצן שיין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>In hartsn sheyn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> In a beautiful heart.
<b>לילי:</b> אין האַרצן מנין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>In harstn mayn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> In my heart.
<b>כאָר:</b> אין האַרצן פֿיין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>In hartsn fayn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> In a fine heart.
<b>לילי:</b> מנין אידעאל איז ער. ווייל נאָר אים ליב איך זייר, פֿאַרגעסן קען איך אים ניט מער.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Mayn ideal iz eyr. Vayl nor im lib ikh zey'r, Fargesn ken ikh im nit meyr.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> He is my ideal. Because I love only him so much, I can no longer forget him.
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ, יאָ, ניט מער.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, yo, nit mer.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, yes, no longer.
<b>לילי:</b> מנין אידעאל איז ער. ווייל נאָר אים ליב איך זייר, פֿאַרגעסן קען איך אים ניט מער.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Mayn ideal iz eyr. Vayl nor im lib ikh zey'r, Fargesn ken ikh im nit meyr.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> He is my ideal. Because I love only him so much, I can no longer forget him.
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ, יאָ, ניט מער.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, yo, nit mer.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, yes, no longer.
<b>לילי:</b> ניין, ניין מנין האַרץ קען קיינער ניט פֿאַרשטיין, נאָר איך אַליין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Neyn, neyn, mayn harts ken keyner nit farshteyn, nor ikh aleyn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> No, no, none can understand my heart, just I alone.
<b>כאָר:</b> נאָר זי אַליין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zi aleyn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just she alone.
<b>לילי:</b> נאָר איך אַליין.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Nor ikh aleyn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Just I alone.

באָר: נאָר זי אליין.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zi aleyrn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just she alone.
לילי: מזין ליבע איז דאָך הערלעך, הייליק, ריין אין האַרצן מײַן.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Mayn libe iz dokh herlekh, heylik, reyn in hartsn mayn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> My love is glorious, sacred, pure in my heart.
באָר: אין האַרצן שײַן.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>In hartsn sheyn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> In a beautiful heart.
לילי: אין האַרצן מײַן.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>In hartsn mayn.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> In my heart.
באָר: אין האַרצן פֿײַן.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>In hartsn fayn.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> In a fine heart.
לילי: ווי שײַן,	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Vi sheyn,</i>	<b>Lily:</b> How beautiful,
באָר: ווי שײַן...	<b>Khor:</b> <i>vi sheyn...</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> how beautiful...
לילי: ווי ווּנדער שײַן,	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Vi vunder sheyn,</i>	<b>Lily:</b> how miraculously beautiful,
באָר: ווי שײַן...	<b>Khor:</b> <i>vi sheyn...</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> how beautiful...
לילי: ווען יעמאַנד ליבט	<b>Lili:</b> <i>ven yemand libt</i>	<b>Lily:</b> when someone loves
באָר: יאָ, ליבט...	<b>Khor:</b> <i>yo, libt...</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> yes, loves...
לילי: און ווערט געליבט.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>un vert gelibt.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> and is loved in return.
באָר: געליבט.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>gelibt.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> is loved.
לילי: דין שמערץ,	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Dayn shmerts,</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Your pain,
באָר: דין שמערץ,	<b>Khor:</b> <i>dayn shmerts,</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> your pain,
לילי: ווער קען פֿאַרשטיין	<b>Lili:</b> <i>ver ken farshteyn</i>	<b>Lily:</b> how can you understand it
באָר: פֿאַרשטיין,	<b>Khor:</b> <i>farshteyn</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> understand,
לילי: ווען דיר דין הערץ	<b>Lili:</b> <i>ven dir dayn herts</i>	<b>Lily:</b> when your heart

כָּאָר: דין הערץ	<b>Khor:</b> <i>dayn herts</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> your heart
לילי: עס ווערט באַטריבט?	<b>Lili:</b> <i>es vert batribt?</i>	<b>Lily:</b> torments you so?
כָּאָר: באַטריבט.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>batribt.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> torments.
לילי: רויק, מײַן האַרץ, זײַ דײַן ליבע טרײַ.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Ruik, mayn harts, zay dayn libe tray.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Peace, my heart, remain true to your love.
כָּאָר: יאָ, טרײַ,	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, tray,</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, true,
לילי: דו זײַ, נאָר זײַ.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Du zay, nor zay.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Remain so, just remain.
כָּאָר: נאָר זײַ.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zay.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just remain.
לילי: רויק, מײַן האַרץ, זײַ.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Ruik, mayn harts, zay.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Peace, my heart, remain.
כָּאָר: וואָס איז דאָרטן מיט דער פֿרוי וואָס זי איז גאַנץ אַליין?	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Vos iz dortn mit der froy vos zi iz gants aleyen?</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> What is the trouble with this woman that she is all alone?
לילי: רויק, מײַן האַרץ, זײַ דײַן ליבע טרײַ.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Ruik, mayn harts, zay dayn libe tray.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Peace, my heart, remain true to your love.
כָּאָר: יאָ, טרײַ,	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, tray,</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, true,
לילי: דו זײַ, נאָר זײַ.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Du zay, nor zay.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> Remain so, just remain.
כָּאָר: נאָר זײַ.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Nor zay.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Just remain.
לילי: ביסט אומשולדיק, זײַ געדולדיק.	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Bist umshuldik, zay geduldik.</i>	<b>Lily:</b> You are blameless, be patient.
כָּאָר: זעט, וואָס איז דאָרט מיט דער פֿרוי, וואָס איז מיט איר געשען?	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Zet, vos iz dort mit der froy, vos iz mit ir geshen?</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> Look at her, what is the trouble with this woman, what happened to her?
(AS CHORUS SINGS)		
לילי: אַ-אַ-אַ...	<b>Lili:</b> <i>A-a-a...</i>	<b>Lily:</b> A-a-a...
כָּאָר: ווי שיין, ווי ווונדער שיין, ווען יעמאַנד ליבט און ווערט געליבט.	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Vi sheyn, vi vunder sheyn, ven yemand libt un vert gelibt.</i>	<b>Chorus:</b> How beautiful, how miraculously beautiful, when someone loves and is loved in return.



דין שמערץ, ווער קען פֿאַרשטיין,  
ווען דיר דין האַרץ עס ווערט באַטריבט?

**באַסן:**

נו, זינג. יאָ, זינג.

**אייבערקולער:**

זינג, יאָ, זינג.

**באַסן:**

נאָר זינג, יאָ, זינג.

**אייבערקולער:**

זינג, יאָ, זינג.

**לילי:**

ניין, ניין, מין האַרץ קען קיינער ניט פֿאַרשטיין,  
נאָר איך אַליין.

**באָר:**

נאָר זי אַליין.

**לילי:**

נאָר איך אַליין.

**באָר:**

נאָר זי אַליין.

**לילי:**

מין ליבע איז דאָך הערלעך, הייליק, ריין  
אין האַרצן מין.

**באָר:**

אין האַרצן שוין.

**לילי:**

אין האַרצן מין.

**באָר:**

אין האַרצן פֿיין.

**לילי:**

ווי ציט עס,  
אוי, ווי, ווי גליט עס,  
אוי, ווי, ווי בריט עס אין האַרץ ביי מיר.  
עס בענקט זיך,  
אוי, אוי, עס קרענקט זיך,  
אוי, אוי, עס דענקט זיך נאָר פֿון דיר.  
ווי ציט עס,  
אוי, ווי, ווי גליט עס,  
אוי, ווי, ווי בריט עס אין האַרץ ביי מיר.  
עס בענקט זיך,  
אוי, עס קרענקט זיך,  
אוי, עס דענקט זיך, אוי, נאָר פֿון דיר.

*Dayn shmerts, ver ken farshteyn,  
ven dir dayn harts es vert batribt?*

**Basn:**

*Nu, zing. Yo, zing.*

**Eyberkeler:**

*Zing, yo, zing.*

**Basn:**

*Nor zing, yo, zing.*

**Eyberkeler:**

*Zing, yo, zing.*

**Lili:**

*Neyn, neyn, mayn harts ken keyner nit farshteyn,  
nor ikh aleyin.*

**Khor:**

*Nor zi aleyin.*

**Lili:**

*Nor ikh aleyin.*

**Khor:**

*Nor zi aleyin.*

**Lili:**

*Mayn libe iz dokh herlekh, heylik, reyn  
in hartsn mayn.*

**Khor:**

*In hartsn sheyn.*

**Lili:**

*In hartsn mayn.*

**Khor:**

*In hartsn fayn.*

**Lili:**

*Vi tsit es,  
oy, vey, vi glit es,  
oy, vey, vi brit es in harts ba mir.  
Es benkt zikh,  
oy, oy, es krenkt zikh,  
oy, oy, es denkt zikh nor fun dir.  
Vi tsit es,  
oy, vey, vi glit es,  
oy, vey, vi brit es in harts ba mir.  
Es benkt zikh,  
oy, es krenkt zikh,  
oy, es denkt zikh, oy, nor fun dir.*

Your pain, how can you understand it,  
when your heart torments you so?

**Basses:**

Well, sing. Indeed, sing.

**Upper voices:**

Sing, indeed, sing.

**Basses:**

Just sing, indeed, sing.

**Upper voices:**

Sing, indeed, sing.

**Lily:**

No, no, none can understand my heart,  
just I alone.

**Chorus:**

Just she alone.

**Lily:**

Just I alone.

**Chorus:**

Just she alone.

**Lily:**

My love is glorious, sacred, pure  
in my heart.

**Chorus:**

In a beautiful heart.

**Lily:**

In my heart.

**Chorus:**

In a fine heart.

**Lily:**

How it yearns,  
oh, woe, how it smolders,  
oh, woe, how it burns in my heart.  
It longs for it,  
oh, oh, it agonizes over it,  
oh, oh, thoughts rise in me for you.  
How it yearns,  
oh, woe, how it smolders,  
oh, woe, how it burns in my heart.  
It longs for it,  
oh, it agonizes over it,  
oh, thoughts rise in me only for you.

<b>פֿרויען:</b> ווי ציט עס,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>Vi tsit es,</i>	<b>Women:</b> How it yearns,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס ציט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es tsit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it yearns.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, וויי, ווי גליט עס,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, vey, vi glit es,</i>	<b>Women:</b> oh, woe, how it smolders,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס גליט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es glit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it smolders.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, וויי, ווי בריט עס	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, vey, vi brit es</i>	<b>Women:</b> oh, woe, how it burns
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס בריט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es brit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it burns.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אין האַרץ ביז מיר.	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>in harts ba mir.</i>	<b>Women:</b> in my heart.
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס בריט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es brit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it burns.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> עס בענקט זיך,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>Es benkt zikh,</i>	<b>Women:</b> It longs for it,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, אוי, עס קרענקט זיך,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, oy, es krenkt zikh,</i>	<b>Women:</b> oh, oh, it agonizes over it,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, אוי, איך דענק פֿון דיר.	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>Oy, oy, ikh denk fun dir.</i>	<b>Women:</b> Oh, oh, I think of you.
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, עס בענקט זיך און קרענקט זיך, ס'דענקט זיך פֿון דיר.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, es benkt zikh un krenkt zikh, s'denkt zikh fun dir.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, it yearns and agonizes, and I think of you.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> ווי ציט עס,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>Vi tsit es,</i>	<b>Women:</b> How it yearns,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס ציט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es tsit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it yearns.
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, וויי, ווי גליט עס,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, vey, vi glit es,</i>	<b>Women:</b> oh, woe, how it smolders,
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, ווי עס גליט.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, vi es glit.</i>	<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, how it smolders.

<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, וויי, ווי בריט עס	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, vey, vi brit es</i>
<b>מענער:</b> אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי, אוי.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy.</i>
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אין האַרץ בײַ מיר.	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>in harts ba mir.</i>
<b>מענער:</b> אין האַרץ בײַ מיר.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>In harts ba mir.</i>
<b>פֿרויען:</b> עס בענקט זיך,	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>Es benkt zikh,</i>
<b>מענער:</b> זיך, אוי, אוי, אוי.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Zikh, oy, oy, oy.</i>
<b>פֿרויען:</b> אוי, אוי, עס קרענקט זיך, אוי, אוי, עס דענקט זיך נאָר פֿון דיר.	<b>Froyen:</b> <i>oy, oy, es krenkt zikh, oy, oy, es denkt zikh nor fun dir.</i>
<b>מענער:</b> זיך, אוי, אוי, נאָר פֿון דיר.	<b>Mener:</b> <i>Zikh, oy, oy, oy, nor fun dir.</i>
<b>לילי:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי גליט!	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi glit!</i>
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי גליט!	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi glit!</i>
<b>לילי:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי בריט!	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi brit!</i>
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי בריט!	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi brit!</i>
<b>לילי:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי גליט!	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi glit!</i>
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ, די ליבע, זי גליט!	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo, di libe, zi glit!</i>
<b>לילי:</b> יאָ,	<b>Lili:</b> <i>Yo,</i>
<b>כאָר:</b> יאָ,	<b>Khor:</b> <i>Yo,</i>
<b>אַלע:</b> יאָ!	<b>Ale:</b> <i>Yo!</i>

<b>Women:</b> oh, woe, how it burns
<b>Men:</b> Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
<b>Women:</b> in my heart.
<b>Men:</b> In my heart.
<b>Women:</b> It longs for it,
<b>Men:</b> For it, oh, oh, oh.
<b>Women:</b> oh, oh, it agonizes over it, oh, oh, thoughts rise in me for you.
<b>Men:</b> Over it, oh, oh, oh, only for you.
<b>Lily:</b> Yes, love smolders!
<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, love smolders!
<b>Lily:</b> Yes, love burns!
<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, love burns!
<b>Lily:</b> Yes, love smolders!
<b>Chorus:</b> Yes, love burns!
<b>Lily:</b> Yes,
<b>Chorus:</b> Yes,
<b>All:</b> Yes!

# FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE

## Fun vigele bizn keyver | פון וויגעלע ביזן קבר

(REFRAIN)

**דייו:**  
די גאנצע וועלט איז אַ פֿינצטערע שטוב,  
און אַלץ איז הַבֿל־הַבֿלים.  
אַ קורצער שפּאַן איז פֿון וויגל צום גרוב,  
דאָס לעבן נישט מער ווי אַ חלום.  
און האָסטו ערוואַכט, ס'איז אַ פֿינצטערע נאַכט.  
עס ציטערט אין דיר יעדעס אַבר.  
אַט ערשט דאָך אַ קינד, און, אַך, ווי געשווינד,  
עס וואַרט שוין אויף דיר אַ קבר.

[1.]

אַפּגעלעבט שוין אַכציק יאָר,  
ווי שנעל ס'איז אַלץ פֿאַרפֿלויגן.  
וויס ווי שניי די בלאַנדע האָר,  
און דער רוקן אין דרייען געבויגן.  
די קינדער-יאָרן נאָך ניט פֿאַרגעסן,  
ס'האַט תּמיד אין די אויערן געקלונגען,  
ווען ביים וויגעלע איז די מאַמע געזעסן  
און אַ לידעלע פֿאַר זיי געזונגען.

[1.]

*Opgelebt shoy'n akhtsik yor,  
vi shnel s'iz alts farfloygn.  
Vays vi shney di blonde hor,  
un der rukn in drayen geboygn.  
Di kinder-yorn nokh nit fargesn,  
s'hot tomed in di oyern geklungenen,  
ven bam vigele iz di mame gezesn  
un a lidele far zey gezungen.*

(REFRAIN)

**[2.]**  
משהלען אין חדר געשיקט,  
בר-מיצווה איז געוואָרן שוין דאָס קינד.  
אַ שדכן געקומען און אַ כלה באַקוקט [באַקיקט].  
משהס תּנאים שרייבט מען  
שוין אַצינד.  
די חתונה איז שוין באַשטעלט,  
אַ שטריימל האָט משהס קאָפּ באַצירט.  
דאָס גאַנצע שטעטל שטייט און קוועלט  
ווי די מאַמעניו איר קינד צו דער  
חופּה פֿירט.

[2.]

*Moyshele in kheyder geshikt  
bar-mitsve iz gevorn shoy'n dos kind.  
A shatkhn gekumen un a kale bakikt,  
Moyses tnoim shraybt men  
shoy'n atsind.  
Di khasene iz shoy'n bashtelt,  
a shtrayml hot Moyses kop batsirt.  
Dos gantse shtetl shteyt un kvelt  
vi di mamenyu ir kind tsu der  
khupe firt.*

**Dave:**

The whole world is a darkened house,  
and all is a vanity of vanities.<sup>1</sup>  
It's a short distance from the cradle to the grave.  
Life's not more than a dream.  
And you awoke, it's a dark night.  
Your every limb trembles.  
Only just now a child, but, oh, how quickly,  
What already awaits you is the grave.

[1.]

Having lived already eighty years,  
how quickly it has all flown by.  
The hair, once blond, is white as snow,  
and the back is bent in three.  
Their childhood years still not forgotten,  
the sound always echoes in the ear,  
of when mama sat beside the cradle  
and sang them a little song.

[2.]

Moyshele was sent to school,  
and he's already become a bar mitzvah.  
A matchmaker came and a bride's been looked over,  
now they've already signed Moyshe's  
engagement contract.  
The wedding was held,  
a shtrayml adorned Moyshe's head.<sup>2</sup>  
The whole town stands by and takes delight  
at how the mama leads her child to the  
wedding canopy.

<sup>1</sup> The phrase used here (*hevl-havolim*) is taken from Ecclesiastes 1:2, which, in the King James translation as “vanity of vanities,” has become a stock phrase in English. In this song, “Fun vigele bizn keyver,” we might instead translate the phrase using the words “pointless,” “futile,” or “meaningless.”

<sup>2</sup> The *shtrayml* is the traditional hat sewn round with an ample band of fur, worn by men — especially by Hasidim — on the Sabbath, holidays, and “by a groom on his wedding day.” (YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, [HTTPS://YIVOENCYCLOPEDIA.ORG/ARTICLE.ASPX/DRESS.](https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/dress.))

## ABOUT THE RECONSTRUCTION TEAM

Musician and writer RONALD ROBBOY was the Senior Researcher for Michael Tilson Thomas's Thomashefsky Project, for whom he developed the Yiddish theater musical reconstructions that MTT premiered at Carnegie's Zankel Hall in 2005. For many years a cellist in both the San Diego Symphony and the San Diego Opera, Robboy was also active in the earliest years of the West Coast klezmer revival. In 1995, the San Diego Jewish Film Festival commissioned his original score to Molly Picon's early silent film *East and West*. Other of his own music has been heard in New York, at MOMA and The Kitchen, as well as in California. A contributor to *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Robboy has held research fellowships and taught at YIVO Institute and University of California–San Diego, and his writing on Yiddish film, literature, and theater music has appeared in academic journals and arts magazines. He has recently completed scholarly studies on Molly Picon and on Yiddish theater composer Abraham Ellstein.

MAX FRIEDMAN is a composer, trumpet player, Yiddishist, translator, and educator based in Memphis, TN. His music and scholarship explore the multitudes of ways Yiddish speakers have and continue to express their identities through music. Friedman holds degrees from Brown University (AB '20) and Brandeis University (MFA '22), and his mentors have included Eric Nathan, Wang Lu, Shawn Jaeger, David Rakowski, Yu-Hui Chang, Erin Gee, Taylor Ackley, and Ellen Kellman. An advanced Yiddish student and translator, Friedman was a 2021 Steiner Program Fellow at the Yiddish Book Center, and in 2022 attended the YIVO-Bard Uriel Weinreich Yiddish Summer Program. He has also presented at conferences hosted at Indiana University, Brandeis University, and the University of Toronto.

ALEX WEISER is the Director of Public Programs at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research where he curates and produces programs combining a fascination with and curiosity for historical context, with an eye toward influential Jewish contributions to the culture of today and tomorrow. Born and raised in NYC, Weiser is also an active composer of contemporary classical music. Weiser's debut album *and all the days were purple*, was named a 2020 Pulitzer Prize Finalist and cited as "a meditative and deeply spiritual work whose unexpected musical language is arresting and directly emotional." Released by Cantaloupe Music in April 2019, the album includes songs in Yiddish and English.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Pianist BAT-ERDENE BATBILEG was born in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. He began studying piano at age seven at the Mongolian State Conservatory. As a child, he won national and international competitions, which led to awards from the Mongolian Government and in 2008, an invitation to attend the United College of the Adriatic in Duino, Italy. In 2013, he obtained his Bachelor's with highest honors at the Conservatory of Music G. Tartini in Trieste, Italy and his Masters degree at the Conservatory of J. Tomadini in Udine, Italy. Currently he is working in the Collaborative Piano Fellowship Program (2021-2023) at the Bard College Conservatory. He performs regularly as a soloist and a collaborative pianist.

Soprano NISHA CAIOZZI is a singer and multimedia artist. She received her BM in Voice Performance with a minor in Ethnomusicology and a concentration in Pedagogy, Advocacy and Community Engagement from Oberlin Conservatory. She is currently in her first year at Bard studying for her MM in Vocal Arts. She received The Ruth Cogan Memorial Scholarship in Vocal Performance in 2023 and attended Songfest in 2022 as a Colburn Foundation Fellow.

American baritone COLTON COOK believes that the stories of humanity are told through music. His previous engagements include serving as a chorus member for the Fargo-Moorhead Opera in their productions of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Don Giovanni* and as George, Earl of Mountararat in the VAP and TON's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe* in the spring of 2023. Future engagements include the role of Mars in the Vocal Arts Program's spring production of *Orphée aux enfers*. Colton holds a BS in Vocal Music Education from Minnesota State University - Moorhead in Moorhead, Minnesota. He is currently pursuing a master's degree through the Bard College Conservatory Vocal Arts Program.

JACLYN HOPPING is a vibrant, young soprano from Coweta, Oklahoma. She is currently earning her Master of Music degree at Bard College Conservatory, studying under Lorraine Nubar. She graduated from Oberlin Conservatory with degrees in Vocal Performance and German. Her first leading role at Oberlin was Elle in Poulenc's *La voix humaine*. Hopping made her professional debut with Opera Columbus as the leading role in Matt Recio's new opera, *The Puppy Episode*. Hopping has performed as a soloist with Oberlin's orchestras several times, including a new work for soprano and orchestra by composer Natsumi Osborn in 2020. Hopping attended the Chautauqua Voice Program her second-year at Oberlin, under the tutelage of Marlina Malas.

JACOB HUNTER, tenor, is the 2021 recipient of the Links Inc. Scholarship, a 2019 recipient of the Renée Fleming Endowment Scholarship, and has appeared in past masterclasses with Judith Haddon and Lawrence Brownlee. He joined the Chautauqua Opera Conservatory in 2022, singing the role of the Schoolmaster in Janaček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Other recent performances include Handel's *Messiah*, Phoebus (*The Fairy Queen*), and Mercurio (*La Calisto*). He holds a BM degree in vocal performance from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Anthony Dean Griffey, and is pursuing his MM degree in voice at Bard Conservatory, where he studies with Richard Cox.

Soprano SARAH NALTY is a passionate performer whose varied and international repertoire ranges from American to Chinese to Ukrainian. This coming season features appearances as Minerve in *Orphée aux enfers* with Bard Conservatory, and Saariaho's *From the Grammar of Dreams* at Bard's annual Kurtág Festival. Previous highlights include Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* at Bard, Mozart and Fanny Mendelssohn with period instruments with the Berkeley-Bucknell Chamber Music Collective, and Elle in *La voix humaine* with New England Conservatory. A frequent recitalist, she has performed in numerous *Liederabende* in the Hudson Valley, Boston, and Graz, Austria, and often programs under-performed repertoire from the Eastern European canon.

Tenor SAM WARSHAUER is a first year master's student in Stephanie Blythe's Graduate Vocal Arts Program at Bard College Conservatory. He received his Bachelor of Arts in vocal performance from Eastern Connecticut State University in 2022. At ECSU he sang the roles of Hansel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (2022), Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (2021), and shepherd in Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (2019). During his undergraduate degree, Sam studied with Dr. Emily Riggs and was coached by Dr. David Ballena. At Bard, he is a student of Lucy Fitz Gibbon.

THE BARD GRADUATE VOCAL ARTS PROGRAM is a unique master of music program in vocal arts led by Stephanie Blythe. Created to prepare the young singer for the special challenges of pursuing a professional life in music in the 21st century, this two-year MM degree program balances a respect for established repertoire and expressive techniques with the flexibility and curiosity needed to keep abreast of evolving musical ideas. Students study and perform operatic, art song, chamber music, and new music repertoire throughout the coursework of the program, in venues including Bard's Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry, and at venues throughout New York. *Shir-hashirim* is the VAP's third collaboration with YIVO since 2021.

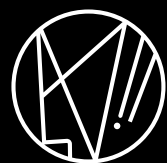
## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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