

Your Jewish Connection – Jewish Music

Brought to you by the Lifelong Learning Committee

Written by Linda S Trapasso

Jewish music covers a broad spectrum, and Jack Zaiantz at teruah-jewishmusic.blogspot.com states this perfectly:

“For me, Jewish music used to be Adon Olam, Hava Nagila, and Fiddler on the Roof. I started getting a clue a few years ago. Jewish music is Klezmer dances, Sephardic ballads, and Chassidic niggun. It's thousand year old hymns, three hundred year old Shabbat table songs, and 60 year old partisan resistance songs. It's contemporary hip-hop, punk rock, electronica, jazz, and chamber music. In addition to loving its musical and spiritual qualities, Jewish music helps me connect my family with a much broader and diverse Jewish culture than is available locally.”

Jack explores Jewish music and blogs his exploration at Teruah – Jewish Music. In the left hand column, you can find just about anything – references to Jewish music on the Web, a list of Jewish music blogs, Jewish music podcasts, AM/FM radio stations playing Jewish music, events, and more. He is down-to-earth with his writing, and lets you know exactly what he thinks.

Mostly Music (www.mostlymusic.com) bills itself as “the heartbeat of Jewish music.” On the left side are the music categories – cantorial, chassidic, dance, holidays, Israeli, and more. Click on Free Mostly Downloads to see what you can obtain for free. Usually you can listen to a preview of the music before downloading. And note that this Web site offers free weekly downloads, updated on Monday mornings. Now you can add to your Jewish music collection!



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In New England, the Boston Jewish Music Festival takes place in March. See the separate list of events for the 2012 festival elsewhere in the bulletin. For details and to purchase tickets, go to www.bostonjewishmusicfestival.org.

A librarian at Brandeis University has put together a directory of Jewish music on the Web – the Jewish Music WebCenter (www.jmwc.org). On the left side, you can find various resources and lists – performers, events, publishers, bibliographies, lyrics, and more. One of the unique pages here is Women in Jewish Music, listing well-known and little-known women who have influenced Jewish music. You can also look up artists and groups by geographic area and find courses of instruction.

Locally, check out the School of Jewish Music of Hebrew College (www.hebrewcollege.edu/sjm.html). They offer Cantorial ordination and certificates in Jewish sacred music, cantillation, and Jewish music education.

Life itself creates its own kind of music, and each of us listens to the tune. With spring approaching, I like to think that music is in the air, and that it surrounds and connects us while adding joy to life.