

## **The Israeli Music Archive: Documentation and Research**

YOHANAN RON

*In memory of Prof. Judith Cohen*

**Abstract:** The Israeli Music Archive is a vital research resource for anybody who is interested in the history of Israeli music and musicians. The first part of the article relates and describes the history of the Israeli Music Archive since its first formation in the early 1970s, by the late Prof. Herzl Shmueli, through its formal foundation in 1979, and until its situation and condition today. The issues dealt with are the recruitment of materials, their various stages of storage and preservation, staffing, and the financial challenges of the Archive. The second part draws in general lines the content of the Archive, the types and specifics of its estates, including short descriptions of some of its holdings.

**Keywords:** Israeli Music Archive; Prof. Herzl Shmueli; estates; collections; human resources, Institutional funding

### **Foreword**

Israeli music was one of the research areas of Prof. Judith Cohen. The Israeli Music Archive at Tel-Aviv University was, for her, a source of information and a magnet for her research studies. She was involved in its management and spent much time in the Archive working with its materials for her projects.

I was a musicology student of Prof. Judith Cohen, and I owe her a significant part of my professional knowledge. After I finished my studies and worked on the expansion of the Archive, we constantly collaborated, and I updated her about all the changes and developments related to the Archive. A modest person, she had a practical approach. For me, she was a source of encouragement and support, both for the development of the Archive and for my development as a researcher of Israeli music. The following lines are devoted to her in gratitude and esteem. I miss her.

### **Introduction**

The Israeli Music Archive at the Tel-Aviv University is a first of its kind in Israel, functioning as a place that collects, preserves, and documents written and printed musical materials. Founded by Prof. Herzl Shmueli (1920–2001), it serves scholars and students internationally. The Archive has functioned for more than 50 years without a budget, relying on a handful of committed people who worked voluntarily, except for a few years in which several staff held partial formal positions. As of today, this Archive holds the largest number, nationally and internationally, of Israeli musicians' and music scholars' estates. This article relates the story of the Archive's foundation and development, its goals, its function, as well as the historical and cultural importance of its materials.. It also recounts the interrelationship between the Department of musicology and the School of Music at Tel-Aviv University and its connections with other musical institutions in Israel

and abroad. As a caveat, I state that a considerable part of this essay is based on my personal experience and memories. Therefore, it could contain some inaccuracies, for which I apologize, and I would appreciate the readers' additions and corrections.

The materials kept in the Archive from the moment of its foundation, include scores, books, journals, newspaper clippings, minutes of staff meetings, various letters and correspondences, and more.

### **The Founding of the Archive**

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, when the number of residents in Israel was about two million, the community of musicians was small, too: everybody knew everybody. Prof. Herzl Shmueli, then a young and determined musicologist, was teaching Music History, Jewish Music, Aesthetics and Psychology of Music, and Israeli Music at the Music Teachers College in Tel-Aviv (1953–1965), becoming its Head in 1956.<sup>1</sup> He was also among the founders of the Department of Musicology at Tel-Aviv University (1966), where he taught for several decades, acting twice as Chair of the Department (1971–1974 and 1987–1989).

As one of the central figures in the Israeli musical academic life, Prof. Shmueli was frequently approached by authors, composers, scholars, and teachers. They handed to him copies of their works—compositions, research projects, books, booklets, photographs, copies of journal issues including their articles, etc.—often with a personal dedicatory note. As time passed, Shmueli's small one-bedroom apartment became cluttered with these accumulated materials that needed separate, committed lodgings.

At that time, it became clear that Israeli art music and the genre of Israeli song carried cultural and historical value and deserved to become a special area of study and research.<sup>2</sup> Shmueli's rich collection of relevant materials called for an accommodation in a special depository dedicated to Israeli music.

Such an institution would collect and preserve the research materials reflecting the continuing work of Israeli musicians and musicologists. As a first practical step, Prof. Shmueli reserved a cabinet in his University's office (by that time he was serving as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts). Into the cabinet he transferred a considerable part of the relevant materials from his apartment: this was the Archive's beginning.

By the 1960s and 1970s, Israeli composers and musicians of the first generation were approaching old age. Among these individuals, who were born at the turn of the century, and most of whom did arrive in Eretz Israel during the 1930s, were Prof. Leo Kestenberg (d. 1962), Baruch Kobias (d. 1964) Alexander Uriah Boskovich (d. 1964), Zvi Snunit (d. 1966), Pooa Grinshpon (d. 1966), and Frank Peleg (d. 1968). In the following

---

<sup>1</sup> Sarit Tauber, "Fifty Years of Music Teachers Training in Israel: The Music Teachers Training College in Tel-Aviv(1945-1996)," Doctoral Thesis, Tel-Aviv University, 2017, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Then also appeared Herzl Shmueli's book: *Ha-Zemer Ha-Israeli: 'Iyunim be-Signono, Mivnehu U-Milotav* ("The Israeli Song: Inquiries into its style, structure, and texts") Tel-Aviv: Ha-Merkaz Le-Tarbut Ve-Chinuch, 1971.

decade, Israel's musical life lost Erich Walter Sternberg (d. 1974), Hans Yohanan Samuel (d. 1976), and Nahum Nardi, Daniel Sambursky, and Ödön Pártos (all passed away in 1977). The heirs of these composers and theoreticians would confront the dilemma of the remaining artistic and personal estate: is it worth keeping? And if yes, where could it be stored and preserved?

At that time, no office or institution in Israel had the custody of Israeli composers' creative output as its regular agenda. Most heirs (and sometimes the composers themselves) looked for advice from someone qualified. Naturally, they found this authority in Prof. Herzl Shmueli. On his part, he actively consolidated the Archive at the Tel-Aviv University and approached family members of late musicians and musicologists with the proposal to deposit their dear one's estates in the archive.<sup>3</sup>

The first estates that arrived at the newly formed Archive were those of Frank Peleg, Hannan Avdori, Hans Yohanan Samuel, and Shalom Aharony.<sup>4</sup> Parts of these estates were brought to the University by Prof. Shmueli himself in his small private car. About that time, he recruited the composer Benjamin Bar-Am, who taught in the Musicology Department at Tel-Aviv University, to manage the technical and administrative aspects of the process.

In 1978, when the organization of the Archive was at its most active phase, Prof. Shmueli was granted a room in the basement of Mexico Building, where all the Faculty of Fine Arts, including the Musicology, was housed. The first document featuring the letterhead "Israeli Music Archive" was sent from the Dean's (Shmueli) Office on January 21, 1978. By early 1979, after metal shelves were installed along one wall at that basement, the Archive was fully functioning. The Maintenance Unit of the University kindly equipped us with furniture from its used surpluses: a table, several chairs, and other accessories needed for regular maintenance.<sup>5</sup> To make the Archive function properly, an additional workforce was recruited. In 1979, three musicology-trained persons were hired: Mr. Benjamin Bar-Am, as the director, Ms. Hannah Sharkansky, a research assistant at the Musicology Department, and myself, Yohanan Ron, as a temporary research assistant of Prof. Herzl Shmueli, who remained the academic supervisor of the entire project.

As the materials in the Archive accrued, a formal policy, resulting from a series of staff deliberations, had crystallized:

---

<sup>3</sup> For the sake of clarity, a few definitions: the "**estate**" of composers refers to all the existing materials pertaining to their professional output and given to the Archive either by their heirs or by themselves, as an explicit bequest. When the materials arrive at the Archive in any other way, usually in an incomplete form, they are referred to as a "**collection**." This difference explains the situation in which the "estate" of one composer may reside in the Archive, while (sometimes even a significant) there exists a "collection" of their compositions and other documents in another library or archive, and vice-versa. This also is true about materials in libraries, archives and organizations out of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> All the documents pertinent to the Archive's internal issues are kept at the Archive in two folders marked "**Correspondence**," in which the documents are organized chronologically. The content of these folders is recorded but not yet catalogued. Another source of information about the history of the Archive is a notebook marked as "**Protocol**" (kept until 2003), where the minutes of staff meetings are recorded.

<sup>5</sup> See minutes of meeting from November 1978.

1. The Archive will provide free access and the best possible means for researching Israeli musical life and Israeli music, whether art music or popular song repertoire.
2. The Archive will storage, preserve, and document the spiritual treasures of generations of Israeli composers and musicians, aiming to become a memorial to their person and work. Any relevant material will be collected, preserved, and catalogued, including autographs (or copies) of compositions, personal and formal correspondence, documents, certificates, photographs, and newspaper clips from the various estates. Likewise, journals and magazines, books, concert programs, recorded materials (in all formats), etc.

To make the material accessible, a card index was prepared (first by hand and later computerized). The index is organized alphabetically, thematically, and it is cross-referenced. It also includes an wide-ranging bibliography on Israeli music and musicians found in books, magazines, and journals, as well as in other publications: a total of c. 5000 card entries.

### **Activities**

In order to bring the existence of the Archive to the public's attention and make it a thriving entity, we embarked on several important initiatives, although not all had been implemented.

1. ***An annual publication.*** We decided to produce an annual publication that will be sent, free, to the various institutions, composers, musicologists, and music teachers.<sup>6</sup> This publication should include detailed information about the materials kept in the Archive. While the decision was made in November 1981, it did not materialize until Benjamin Bar-Am's retirement from the Archive.<sup>7</sup> On June 1, 1986, the first issue was published; I edited it and, encouraged by Prof. Shmueli, took over the current directorship of the Archive. Since then, approximately every year, "The Israeli Music Archive: documentation and research—an informative booklet" was published. It usually included information about newly received materials, new archival projects, and one or two articles related to Israeli Music. A total of 13 booklets were published, the last one in the summer 2003. Sadly, this publication was discontinued due to the lack of funds.
2. ***Concerts based on the Archive's materials.*** In order to resuscitate the materials kept at the Archive and also to raise public awareness of its rich contents, we decided to organize concerts in which compositions from our collection would be performed, and then to have them recorded and broadcast by the Israeli Broadcast Authority.<sup>8</sup> We managed to pull off two concerts, both open to the public. They were publicized and

---

<sup>6</sup> See the minutes of staff meetings 1980–1981.

<sup>7</sup> His last signed letter, from April 18, 1985, is kept in the Archive.

<sup>8</sup> See the minutes of staff meetings 1980–1981.

recorded by the Israeli Broadcast Authority. The first concert took place on June 12, 1983.<sup>9</sup> Its program included a Violin Sonata by Erich Walter Sternberg, Piano sonata by Leopold Kondor, Ten violin duets by Baruch Kobias, and Songs for voice and piano by Avraham Daus. The performers were: Ani Schnarch, Yigal Tuneh, and Itzhak Rashkovsky (violin); Idit Zvi (piano), and Emilie Berendsen (mezzo-soprano). The second concert (on June 1, 1987) featured the program including *Songs* for soprano and piano by Erich Walter Sternberg; *Variations on an Ancient Tune* by Zvi Snunit, *Song and Dance* for violin and piano by Artur Gelbrun; the Piano Sonata by Avraham Daus, *Seven Introductions* for violin and piano by Aviasaf Barnea; Rondo for violin and piano by Ödön Pártos; and Three songs for soprano and piano by Nahum Nardi. The performers were: Amalia Itshak (soprano), Astrith Baltsan and Zahava Simon (piano), Shim'on Abelovich (violin).<sup>10</sup> A third concert, designed to feature Israeli songs, did not transpire.<sup>11</sup> In 1990 yet another event was planned, with the participation of the chamber ensemble *Musica Nova*, within a larger context of a symposium related to the contribution of the new immigrant composers from Central Europe.<sup>12</sup> Prof. Judith Cohen joined in to assist in this initiative and applied to the America-Israel Culture Fund for financial support.<sup>13</sup> This concert did not happen, too, because not all the necessary budget was collected.<sup>14</sup> Other attempts to produce concerts based on materials from the Archive did not succeed due to a lack of funds.<sup>15</sup>

3. **Joint projects.** In 1991 we explored options for collaboration with the Chaim Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism and Israel, through the combination of symposia and research.<sup>16</sup> The director of the Institute even visited the Archive and opined that there are extensive possibilities for cooperation, since music and songs were always combined with the Zionist Movement. Prof. Shmueli did his best to implement this plan, but for unclear reasons (probably fiscal, too), it did not come to fruition.
4. **Enriching the collection.** We sent personal letters to all the authors and musicians in the country, telling them about the Archive and offering to keep and preserve their materials.

---

<sup>9</sup> See the minutes of staff meetings, 1983.

<sup>10</sup> This concert was preceded by an interview with me with other media present, too. The concert was made possible thanks to the Israeli Board for Culture and Art.

<sup>11</sup> Relevant documentation can be found in the folder “Correspondence,” letters from 1988–1989.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from May 29, 1990, copy kept in the “correspondence” folder at the archive.

<sup>14</sup> Editor’s note: Ironically, such a concert *did* happen, albeit 32 years later (March 2022), in Toronto, Canada, as a result of a research collaboration between the Israeli Music Archive and the Felicja Blumental Library and Music Center. The concert, entitled *Émigrés to Israel*, included works by Franz Crzellitzer, Paul Ben-Haim, and Vardina Shlonsky. See “[Malhinim U-Malhinot Mi-Shelanu: Franz Shlitzer](#)” by Jochewed Schwartz and Anat Viks, in the Felicja Blumental Music Library’s Blog (July 2022).

<sup>15</sup> Relevant documentation can be found in the folder “Correspondence,” letters from the 1990s.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

5. ***Creating a recorded “live history.”*** We drew a plan to create a series of recorded personal interviews with authors and musicians, thus collecting a kind of “live history.” The idea was to ask teachers at the Musicology Department to locate students interested in such a project, planning for their training by Prof. Shmueli. Sadly, the plan did not succeed because of the lack of funds and administrative hindrances.

### **The Struggle for Survival**

In the beginning, for a short time, the Department of Musicology allocated for the Archive a part-of-a-position or four weekly hours. The Department also paid for the rental, phone bills, office equipment, and the like. This arrangement was terminated years ago. Since then, for most of the time the Archive’s existence depends on a handful of devoted volunteers, spearheaded by myself.

This situation forced the Archive’s volunteers to invest time and effort in fundraising, which enabled the execution of several projects and (frustratingly limited) initiatives.

Despite all these hurdles, the period between the mid-1980s and the end of the 1990s witnessed a remarkable increase in the Archive’s collections. I had contacted relatives of deceased key figures in Israeli music persuading them to bequeath the musical estate of their loved ones to the Archive. I spent time with the families, explained to them the cultural and historical significance of their materials, and eventually, after receiving their consent (which was not always an emotionally easy undertaking), brought the materials to the Archive. Among these additions are the estates of Artur Gelbrun, Hanoach Jacoby, Zvi Nagan, Avraham Mindlin, Franz Crzellitzer, and Yehuda Wohl. Sometimes, this initiative required long drives to remote parts of the country. This was the only way to enrich the Archive with the estates of Yekutiel Shor from Kibbutz Kineret; Moshe Kilon from Kibbutz Yas’ur; Shlomo Yoffe from Kibbutz Beit-Alfa; Yehuda Engel from Kibbutz Ma’agan Michael; Chaya Arbel from Kibbutz HaMa’apil, and many other important estates.

The collection grew to a size that required larger storage. In 1996 the Archive was eventually moved to the spacious basement in the Sourasky (central) Library’s building where it still resides, joining the Israeli Archive of Theatre that already had been located there. The purpose was to unite these two archives into one body that should be called “The Israeli Center for the Documentation of the Performing Arts.” The idea behind this change was that in almost every performance—be it a theater production, an opera, a musical, or a vaudeville—there always was music involved. Together, Shim’on Lev-Ari (1942–2012), who served then as the director of the Israeli Archive of Theatre, and I, composed a detailed document and handed it to the University authorities. Were this plan to succeed, the financial problems of the Israeli Music Archive might have found at least a partial solution. The unification plan, however, did not succeed, and again—no clear reason was given for that.

Once we have realized the magnitude of our collections and their scholarly value, Prof. Shmueli and I addressed the Musicology Department. We advocated the study of Israeli music by including this subject in its curriculum, encouraging students to visit the Archive and learn about its contents, and promoting joint research projects.<sup>17</sup> Sadly, the Department did not seem interested in exploiting the scholarly potential of the original materials kept in the Archive. The idea was doomed to be stillborn.

All these efforts happened in tandem with personnel changes. In 1997, after almost 20 years of service, Hannah Sharkansky retired. Her position was filled by Dr. Marina Ritzarev, whose employment was made possible thanks to the governmental Fund for Immigrant Scholars. Dr. Ritzarev achieved what seemed to be the impossible: a successful organization in the new abode. She transferred all the materials from open shelves to closed cabinets, and what was especially important, she started the digitalization of our catalog. She even managed to get some monetary donation for the Archive from the Los-Angeles Friends of Tel-Aviv University. This enabled us to purchase cabinets and improve the hardware of our computing system. Despite all this, the Musicology Department showed very little interest in the Archive, renouncing the very existence of all this material at Tel-Aviv University as an unanswered question.

Yet, we did not give up. In 2000, Dr. Ritzarev and I approached the Culture and Art Section of Tel-Aviv Municipality, proposing to create a connection—or even unification—of the Israeli Music Archive with the Municipality’s Music Archive that is part of the Felicja Blumental Music Center. We were hoping to enjoy some financial support and in return—offered an “academic umbrella” for the future united institution. Our initiative was followed by a large meeting resulting in decision that the Tel-Aviv Municipality joins forces with us to keep the spiritual and artistic heritage of its musicians. It was also decided to invite all Tel-Aviv’s senior musicians to a special conference in which every musician will be addressed individually, and the importance of leaving their estate in their city will be emphasized.<sup>18</sup> The conference did take place, and the special certificates of appreciation were presented, but nothing has materialized beyond that.

At the Tel-Aviv University, we continued attempts to be unified with the Israeli Archive of Theatre, which has been institutionalized, budgeted, and staffed, The proposal was not approved, and no reason was given for that.

At the end of the academic year 1999–2000 (May-June 2000) the University decided not to renew my contract. Instead, the Head of the Musicology department asked me to continue my teaching and work at the Archive on a voluntary basis. I agreed, but with a heavy heart: I perceived the decision to withdraw the financial connection with the Archive as its renunciation from the Department.

That year witnessed more changes. Dr. Ritzarev accepted a research position at Bar-Ilan University, and in her position was filled by Ms. Gila Dobkin-Gottschall, who

---

<sup>17</sup> Letter from January 12, 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Document from April 30, 2000.

specialized in Israeli song.<sup>19</sup> Through the efforts of Prof. Shai Burstyn and—especially—Prof. Judith Cohen, the Musicology department found a modest budget that enabled her part-time employment. Gila continued the digitalization process, transferring hundreds of recorded Israeli compositions and songs from old formats: LPs, magnetic reels, and cassettes to digital storage.

On March 21, 2001, shortly upon receiving notification about winning the Israel Prize, Prof. Herzl Shmueli died. His illness prevented him from being involved in the Archive, and his passing was a huge loss not only for us but for the Israeli musicians' community in general. The new situation left me as the only authority familiar with all the materials in the Archive, and I continued working there, voluntarily, on my own. The twelfth booklet of the Archive, which I edited, was dedicated to Shmueli's memory. Its publication was possible thanks to a sum given by the Department of Musicology and the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

In May 2002, the Knesset's Education and Culture Committee met; it was entitled "Preservation of the Hebrew Song." Among many attendees were representatives of the Israeli Music Archive at Tel-Aviv University. The Knesset's manifested interest in the preservation of Israeli music raised high hopes. I presented our Archive and its content. Many others spoke, too, but nothing material resulted from that meeting. Yet another disappointment.

In the same year, I approached the State Archivist, Dr. Tuvia Friling,<sup>20</sup> asking for formal recognition of our Archive as a public institution.<sup>21</sup> The meaning of such a status would make the Archive a branch of the National Archive. Dr. Friling visited the Archive and he was positively impressed. Not long after his visit, however, he resigned. This plan was just next to fail.

In 2005 Gila Dobkin's employment contract was not renewed, possibly also due to the closure of the Musicology Department, which the University authorities considered unviable. Appeals and entreaties on the subject did not help.<sup>22</sup> The Department of Musicology lost its administrative independence and became a program within the Buchman-Mehta School of Music. This new affiliation meant that the main body financially in charge of the Archive should be an institution focused instead on performance and composition rather than research. Thus the Archive has become exclusively dependent on volunteer work. However, the School of Music pays for its routine maintenance.

---

<sup>19</sup> Gila Dobkin, "Hora Songs: Their Origins, History, and Place in the Context of Israeli Songs," MA Thesis. Tel-Aviv University, 1985.

<sup>20</sup> Professor Tuvia Friling is a historian, specialized in Zionist history. A Senior Researcher at the Ben-Gurion Research Institute at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, he was the head of the Ben-Gurion Institute (1993-2001) and the State Archivist of Israel (2001-2004), when he established the project of digitalization of the whole National Archive.

<sup>21</sup> Letter from November 5, 2002.

<sup>22</sup> See letters from Prof. Shai Burstyn (August 21, 2005); Dr. Esti Sheinberg (November 21, 2005); Dr. Zohar Eitan (November 23, 2005), and others, all kept in the "correspondence" folder in the Archive.



Again, in this critical moment, Prof. Judith Cohen came to save the Archive's research potential. As an uncommon measure, she used part of her own University Research Fund to enable Mrs. Dobkin to continue her work for a limited period until March 31, 2006.

Meanwhile the housing of the Archive received essential upgrade. Through a donation obtained by the Department of Theater and the Faculty of Fine Arts, the hall at the library's basement was renovated from end to end. This refurbishment significantly improved the ability to keep archival materials according to required standards in a separate, enclosed space, with the constant temperature 17° Celsius. The area is equipped with computerized smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and with access limited only for the archive's staff. Now the original correspondence and manuscripts that are sometimes almost century old received safe and appropriate storage. They rest horizontally on the compactus shelving units in special cardboard sections covered on the inside with anti-oxidizing paper. These conditions are indeed optimal.

Another improvement, albeit not a formal one, happened about five years when I was the sole volunteer in the Archive. Help arrived in 2015, when Ms. Bella Yakobovich joined me volunteering in the Archive. For many years Bella headed the music library at the Levinsky College of Education. Since her retirement, and following the initiative of Prof. Judith Cohen (who, again, helped every time and in any way she could!), she offered her professional expertise and assistance to the Israeli Music Archive. Bella delivers excellent and much needed help. The reorganization of the Archive would be unimaginable after its refurbishment without her knowledgeable approach and organizing ability.

Regardless these improvements and help, nothing has changed, to this day, in the status of the Archive. Two retired volunteers maintain it: myself, the 86 years old Dr. Yohanan Ron, and Ms. Bella Yakobovich. Despite all the difficulties and struggles, however, I can proudly state that now, on the verge of the end of my position in the Archive, I am leaving at the University the highly meritable institution. It developed a research apparatus within which great cultural and spiritual treasures of extraordinary national and international significance are enfolded, preserved, and organized.

### **The Paradox of the Israeli Music Archive at the Tel-Aviv University**

The Israeli Music Archive has existed at the Tel-Aviv University for more than 50 years, but—paradoxically—its status still is unclear. On the one hand, the University has an “Israeli Music Archive” page on its website, where the Archive is briefly described, including some photographs, essentially stating its status as belonging to the larger academic institution.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, the University has provided the Archive neither with a fixed position nor with a budget. There are major archives in Israel that keep various materials, such as the Zionist Archive or the State Archive. These are independent institutions with their own administration. University archives, on the other hand, used to

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://arts.tau.ac.il/Researches/archive/musicarch>, last accessed December 22, 2022.

be appended to a certain faculty and identified with a particular department. They are created for a specific area of research, and they are open to the general public. Even if they, too, possess materials of national value, but students (and scholars) at a university have no interest in their use, an archive's right to exist becomes questionable.<sup>24</sup> At the Tel-Aviv University, there were Deans at the Faculty of Fine Arts who believed that with no budget or interest from the part of researchers, it behooves to move the entire collection to the National Library in Jerusalem. Scholars who regarded the Archive as a cardinal research tool that the University should not dispense with stood against this opinion and were willing to fight for it. Among these people were Prof. Judith Cohen, myself, and others. There are many reasons to keep the Archive in its present location and affiliation, but there are two more which deserve special mentioning:

1. The legal aspect. The University is committed to the families who gave the complete estates and the collections of their dear ones to provide the appropriate custody. This signed commitment is legally binding.
2. Giving these materials away could, and probably would, lead to court cases. Furthermore: the organizing work invested in these estates required funds (even beyond the meager salaries that were paid at the beginning of its days). Is the University willing to give these as a gift, even if it is a gift to the National Library?
3. The Archive has gained international fame: many scholars and researchers from different countries reached us and visited to use its resources. Such international connections are essential for research universities.

### **The Materials in the Archive**

Since the Archive was founded, its collections and documentation have grown into more than sixty complete personal estates of renowned musicians, each estate holding hundreds to thousands of items. More than three hundred partial estates and collections (each consisting of one to fifty items) represent musicians who are still alive. There are about ten archives of Israeli musical institutions, as well as about 1500 booklets and music scores. The Archive's library has more than 300 titles dedicated to Israeli music history, among them research projects, monographs, documentaries, and so on. Israeli song tradition, especially significant for the national culture, is vastly represented in the Archive. It owns more than 500 songbooks and choral song collections; a collection of books on music

---

<sup>24</sup> A little bit of "what if" reflections: If the Music Department's leaders in the 1990s would embrace Prof. Shmueli's and my proposal to encourage the research of Israeli Music, based on the materials in our archive, and give it a more prominent position in the curriculum; and if such courses would be compulsory for undergraduates, including a guided tour of the archive, and a seminar on the subject would be requested from graduate students; and if graduate students would be encouraged to do "field work" and to interview and record Israeli musicians; and if the department would be proactive in creating a position for a professional archivist; then the archive would become an integral de-facto part of the department and function as a banner of pride to Israeli Music Research. If all that would happen, maybe the university authorities would not close down the Department of Musicology.

education and didactical-teaching materials contains hundreds of items, and about 50 journals including thousands of articles. In addition, the Archive holds a collection of CDs and LPs. About 1500 of its books, booklets, and leaflets of songs and musical compositions of Israeli composers are digitized or recorded. Most of this treasure is organized, recorded, and catalogued, including specific articles we published in journals and magazines.

## **A description of the Archived Materials**

### ***Complete and Partial Personal Estates and Collections***

As said above, the core of the Archive is constituted by the estates and personal collections of composers, musicologists, performers, and music teachers, as well as archives of music institutions, festivals, competitions, and performing bodies (orchestras, choirs, etc.).

An estate of an individual may include thousands of items, among them manuscripts of compositions, sketches, correspondence (personal and formal), photographs, documents, newspaper clips, posters, concert programs, and even personal items such as a bus ticket, a health-insurance booklet, an old ID card, etc. Presently, the estates are kept on compact mobile shelving, in appropriate boxing units, in alphabetical order. Each box is clearly marked with its content to facilitate the finding of required materials. Unlike estates, partial collections arrived to the Archive at random. Some include more than fifty items, others may consist of just a few. Partial collections are shelved separately from the estates, but they, too, are organized alphabetically.

In a work that is still in progress, both the estates and the collections are recorded in the Archive's inventory and classified in a series of EXCEL worksheets. All the archive inventories are kept on the University's servers, but are not (yet) available on the internet; students or researchers who need particular materials must physically visit the Archive and look for the materials on the Archive's computer.

The *Complete personal estates* present a broad and multi-dimensional picture of the musical activity in Israel since the beginning of the New Yishuv (1880s) and particularly from the early 1930s. They include materials belonging to some of the most important and influential individuals in Israel's history, such as the following *recipients of the Israel Prize*:

- **Yedidiah (Gorochov) Admon** (1894–1982; composer, awardee of the Israel Prize 1974), composed dozens of song tunes and incidental music. His songs, “Shir Ha-Gamal” (“Song of the Camel,” 1927), “Shedemati” (“My Crop Field,” 1927), “’Etz Ha-Rimon” (“The Pomegranate Tree,” 1937–8), and many others are an indispensable part of the core Israeli song tradition.
- **Prof. Hanoach Avenari** (1908–1994, musicologist, awardee of the Israel Prize 1994), whose many musicological publications provide an important infrastructure for research in the area of Jewish Music.

- **Prof. Herzl Shmueli** (1920–2001; musicologist, awardee of the Israel Prize 2001), who founded the Israeli Music Archive. His publications offer an essential foundation for research in the areas of Israeli song and Israeli art music.
- **Arie (Arik) Shapira** (1943–2015; composer, awardee of the Israel Prize 1994), whose controversial electronic opera *The Kasztner Trial* (1991–1994) became the source of countless public debates. A rare recording of the opera, as part of the composer's estate, is kept at the Archive.<sup>25</sup>

Other authors, scholars, composers, and performers who had a remarkable impact on Israeli music and general culture also have donated their estates to the Israeli Music Archive:

- **Prof. Leo Kestenberg** (1882–1962), pianist, pedagogue, and founder of national and international musical and musical educational institutions. After the First World War, Kestenberg was appointed as the Head of the Music department of the Weimar Ministry of Education. In this position, he established the first-ever music education plan from kindergarten to university.<sup>26</sup> In 1938 Kestenberg immigrated to Palestine and started to cooperate with Bronislaw Huberman in running the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra (founded in 1936; later the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra). In 1945, together with Emanuel Amiran, he founded the first Hebrew College for Music Teachers. In 1953, Kestenberg was elected as honorary president of the newly founded International Society for Music Education (ISME). In addition to articles and books on music education, his estate in the Archive contains hundreds of documents and rich correspondence with prominent figures of the music world, such as Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924), Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), and many others.
- **Erich Walter Sternberg** (1891–1974), who settled in Palestine during the 1920s, immigrating in 1932, became one of Israel's most revered composers. His expressionistic style was noticeably influenced by Hindemith and Schoenberg. In 1936 he helped Bronislaw Huberman found the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and promoted the Palestine chapter of the International Society for Contemporary Music. He wrote hundreds of Lieders, chamber music, and a children's opera. His symphonic variations *Shneim-Asar Shivtei Yisrael* ("The Twelve Tribes of Israel," 1938) was the first major orchestral composition performed by the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra.
- **Nahum Nardi** (1901–1977), pianist and composer, who wrote tunes to hundreds of songs becoming very popular and form a sizeable part of the Israeli songs' basic repertoire, such as "Shtu Ha-'Adarim" ("Drink yeh Flocks," composed, probably

---

<sup>25</sup> Certain items from Shapira's materials are kept at the Music Department of the National Library in Jerusalem.

<sup>26</sup> An interesting detail: when the Israeli composer Josef Tal, then in Berlin, submitted his appeal for a music teaching certificate in 1931, it was Kestenberg who examined him.

- influenced by an Arab tune, in 1927); “Shir Ha-‘Avoda VeHaMelacha” (“The Song of Labor,” 1942–3), “ ‘AleI Giv’a” (“On a Hill,” ca. 1932).
- **Aviasaf Barnea** (1903–1957, awarded by the Israel Broadcast Authority and the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra prizes), a composer, pianist, and music teacher.<sup>27</sup> He wrote orchestral, choral, and piano music, as well as liturgical works. Barnea was the son of Avraham Moshe Bernstein (1866–1932), a famous Vilnius Cantor and composer; his estate is included with Barnea’s, who collected and organized his music—a project that sadly remained unfinished following Barnea’s untimely death. Barnea’s piano composition *Israeli Pictures* (1946–1947) used to be part of the required repertoire for all piano students.
  - **Emanuel Amiran (Pougatchov, also Pougachov, Pougatzov, 1909–1993)**, composer, pedagogue, publicist, and author of music curricula. He composed incidental music and hundreds of songs, such as “U-She’avtem Maiym,” (“With joy you will draw water” — from Isaiah 12:3; the song exists in two versions: 1933 and 1942); “Ki Mi-Tsion,” (“The law will go out from Zion” — from Isaiah 2:3 , 1942) “Dodi Tsah Ve-Adom,” (“My beloved is radiant and ruddy”—from the Song of Songs 5:10, 1955[?]); and others, becoming a fundamental part of the Israeli song tradition.<sup>28</sup> From 1949 he served as the general superintendent of Israel’s music studies and curricula at the Ministry of Education.
  - **Hanoch (Heinrich) Jacoby** (1909–1990), a violist and composer. Jacoby immigrated to Palestine in 1934 and became a member of the Jerusalem String Quartet. He was one of the founders of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, serving as its Head (1954–8) and teaching violin and viola. He played at the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, which also performed his compositions. Jacoby arranged many songs for Bracha Zefira, some composed by herself or collected from other sources. His arrangements for her ranged from chamber ensemble to solo-trumpet accompaniments. Jacoby was the student of Paul Hindemith, and his estate contains their correspondence.
  - **Bracha Zefira** (1910–1990), a singer of Yemenite descent who, besides acquiring fame with a popular repertoire, became a source of both Yemenite and local folk tunes to many Israeli composers, such as Ödön Pártos (1907–1977) and Paul Ben-Haim (1897–1984). Zefira worked closely with Nahum Nardi, who also was her first husband. Her two children became known musicians: Na’ama Nardi (1931–1989), who was an opera singer, and whose estate is kept in the Archive, too; and Ariel Zilber (born 1943, from Zefira’s second marriage to the violinist Ben-Ami Zilber [1912–1985]), who is a composer.

---

<sup>27</sup> Several Barnea’s compositions are kept in the “Barnea’s Archive” in the Music Department of the National Library in Jerusalem. However, the entire estate was bequeathed by two Barnea’s daughters to the Israeli Music Archive at the Tel-Aviv University.

<sup>28</sup> Amiran-Pugatchov also wrote music for productions of the National Theater “HaBima,” and a number of his compositions for the stage are kept in the HaBima Archive.

- **Frank Peleg** (1910–1968), an internationally renowned harpsichordist, pianist, composer, author, and teacher. He initiated the chamber concerts at Tel-Aviv Museum and served as the Head of the Music department at the Israel Ministry of Education (1949–1953). During his years of office he established the Central Library for Music and Dance in Tel Aviv and the Phonogramme Archives of Jewish Music in Jerusalem. In 1951 he moved to Haifa, where he founded its Symphonic Orchestra. As a harpsichordist he favored (and taught) a non-conservative approach to performance of J.S. Bach's compositions. He also wrote books and articles on music and composed tunes to songs for a highly popular satirical radio program: "*Shlosha Be-Sira Achat.*" ("Three in a Boat").
- **Prof. Artur Gelbrun** (1913–1985), a violinist, composer, and conductor. After immigration to Israel in 1949, he conducted the Israeli Broadcast Symphonic Orchestra, the Israel Youth Symphonic Orchestra, and the Kibbutzim Chamber Orchestra. In 1955 he was appointed Professor of composition and conducting at the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel-Aviv University. His creative work includes symphonic and chamber music, ballets, vocal cantatas, and Lieders.

The Archive is also the custodian of the complete estates of the following composers:

Shalom Aharoni (1893–1972); Baruch Kobias (1895–1964); Avraham Daus (1902–1974), Lipót Kondor (a.k.a. Leopold Kondor and Yehuda Ben-Cohen, 1902–1976); Yehuda Wohl (1904–1988); Baruch Liftman (1905–1970); Franz Crzellitzer (1905–1979); Daniel Sambursky (1909–1977); Dan Aharonovitz (1909–1981); Shlomo Joffe (1909–1995); David Zehavi (1910–1977); the Mordekhai Olari-Nojick (1911–1981); Dan Blitental (1911–1999); Zvi Ben-Yossef (1914–1948); Issachar Miron (1920–2015); Chaya Arbel (1921–2006); Yehuda Engel (1924–1991);<sup>29</sup> Nira Chen (1924–2006); Moshe Kilon (1925–1993); Yohanan Zarái (1929–2016); and Moshe Gassner (b. 1929).

Many of the complete estates presented to the Archive belonged to individuals that contributed to several areas in the music, beyond composing: performers, conductors, musicologists, music historians and theoreticians, ethnomusicologists, music administrators, and music teachers. The material included in their estates are thus complex and diverse, requiring careful research:

Michael Taube (1890–1972): pianist, conductor and music teacher; David Ma'aravi (1896–1945): sculptor, painter, composer and art teacher; Joel Walbe (1898–1982): composer, musicologist, and music teacher;<sup>30</sup> Avraham Mindlin (1899–1961): singer,

---

<sup>29</sup> Certain manuscripts of Engel's songs are kept in the "Yehuda Engel's Archive" at the Music Department of the National Library in Jerusalem.

<sup>30</sup> Certain manuscripts of compositions by Walbe are kept in the "Joel Walbe Archive" at the Music Department of the National Library in Jerusalem. However, the estate, a very large collection of personal and professional materials, was bequeathed to the Israeli Music Archive by his daughter, who also donated a stipend for students who intend to research these materials.

choir conductor, and composer; Pooa Grinshpon (1900–1966): composer, music teacher, and musical instruments builder; Hans Yohanan Samuel (1901–1976): composer, pianist, and organist; Hannan Avdori (1902–1965): composer and actor; Moshe Rappaport (1903–1968): composer and cellist; Efraim Dror (1903–1981): translator of lyrics to Hebrew, music critic and a member of the committee for music terminology in the Hebrew Language Academy; Yariv Ezrahi (1904–2002): composer, violinist, music critic and music teacher; Dov Ginzburg (1906–1989): composer, cellist in the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, and music teacher;<sup>31</sup> Shlomo Kaplan (1908–1974): music educator, choir director and educational administrator; George Singer (1908–1980): composer, conductor and pianist; Yekutiel Shor (1918–1990): composer, music teacher, arranger, conductor and violinist; Shlomo Hofman (1909–1998): musicologist, composer and music teacher; Zvi Nagan (1912–1986): composer and music teacher; Uri Toepliz (1913–2006): flutist, musicologist and music teacher;<sup>32</sup> Bobby Pinchasi (1919–1992): composer, author, accordionist and pianist; Eddy Halpern (1921–1991): composer and music editor; Shalom Ronli-Riklis (1922–1994): conductor and music teacher; Benjamin Bar-Am (1923–2012): composer, music lecturer and music critic; Nathan Mishori (1927–2001): pianist, musicologist, music critic and music teacher; Na'ama Nardi (1931–1989): opera singer; Zvi Snunit (1933–1966): composer, arranger, music critic and music teacher; Habib Hassan Touma (1934–1998): Arab-Israeli composer and ethnomusicologist; Nechana (Helena) Hendel (1936–1998): singer, composer, guitarist, actor and entertainer; Ester Tal-Itani (born 1923) music teacher and music curricula writer; Richard Farber (born 1945): author and composer.<sup>33</sup>

Other personal estates, though partial, belong to musicians, musicologists and music educators of particular importance and interest. Among them are collections of documents and materials of Karel Salmon (or Salomon) (1897–1974); Menashe Ravina (Rabinowitz) (1899–1968); Marc Lavry (1903–1967); Nisan Cohen-Melamed (1906–1983); Ben-Zion Orgad (1926–2006); Yehuda Levi (born 1939); and many others.

Another category of materials, crucial for understanding many aspects of Israeli music history, is archives of institutions and performing bodies. Among them are the archives of the “Rinat” choir; the Israeli Composers’ Union; the Israeli Musicological Society; the Israeli Chamber Orchestra; the United Kibbutz Choir; the Music School of Beit-She’an, and more. In particular it is worth mentioning the archive of “Shulamit” school: the first conservatory in the land of Israel, founded in 1909 by Shulamit Rupin

---

<sup>31</sup> Ginzburg’s estate was given to the Israeli Music Archive by his daughter. However, parts of his materials are kept at the Felicja Blumental Music Center and Music Library in Tel-Aviv.

<sup>32</sup> Uri Toeplitz donated his music-sheets collection to the Music Department in the National Library in Jerusalem. However, all his personal estate and documents are kept in the Israel Music Archive.

<sup>33</sup> A large collection of Farber’s incidental music was rescued from a neglected storage and is now kept at the Israeli Music Archive. Another part of his music, however, is housed in the Music Department of the National Library in Jerusalem.

(Arthur Rupin's wife). The documents of this collection grant a unique opportunity to learn about the beginning of musical life in the new Jewish community at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>34</sup>

### **New Hopes?**

In October 2019, a new Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts has been appointed: the architect by his specialty, Prof. Eran Neuman himself founded the Archive of Israeli Architecture. and he has a vision of uniting all the archives of the Fine Arts Faculty: architecture, film, theater, music, and visual arts. He initiated an exhibition of documents from various archives including the Archive of Israeli Music, as part of a larger event consisting of lectures, seminars, and recordings. Prof. Neuman appreciates the importance of archives that keep primary and original documents as a basis for research. It seems, therefore, that there may be chances for a better future for our archive as the Archive of Israeli Music: Documentation and Research at Tel-Aviv University. For now we can only hope.

---

<sup>34</sup> Editor's note: See additional information about "Shulamit" in the essays by Anat Viks (librarian at the Felicja Blumental Music Center and Music Library) and by Claudia Gluschkof, both in this *Min-ad* issue.