

Program Notes

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, memorializes those who died in the Shoah, which means catastrophe or utter destruction in Hebrew and refers to the atrocities that were committed against the Jewish people during World War II. Here, the guitar scordatura, rhythmic figures, and melodic motives express the emotions experienced in such memories – because it still feels necessary to remember and remind.

Yom HaShoah consists of three movements and each holds a specific significance.

I. Yellow Candle elicits the Jewish tradition of lighting a 24-hour candle during periods of mourning. Burning a specially designed Yellow Candle mourns the Six Million who perished and keeps their memory alive. Importantly, the music is strongly influenced by the Yiddish song *Es Brent* (It Burns) by Mordechai Gebirtig.

II. Hear My Prayer musically petitions us to honor and remember all the souls who died in the Holocaust. Woven into this movement is the prayer *Sh'ma Yisrael* in one of its most familiar musical representations. The major/minor mode-shifts *juxtapose* hope (never again) and sadness in a most fundamental way.

III. The March of the Living brings students from around the world to Poland, where they explore the remnants of the Holocaust in a silent march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp complex built during World War II. Set in 7/8, the music's asymmetry reflects on walking in those steps learning of such things.

Salonika Fantasy was composed for my very good friend, and former colleague, Dan Immel. Dr. Immel premiered the piece on April 27, 2017 at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, Greece. The name of the piece, Salonika, is another name for Thessaloniki. The city is the second-largest city in Greece and the capital of Greek Macedonia.

According to *Wikipedia*, the Sipsey River is a 145-mile-long swampy low-lying river in west central Alabama. The Sipsey is surrounded by some exceptional wetland habitat, and originates near Glen Allen, and discharges into the Tombigbee River near Vienna. For me, I know it as a swamp located between my home in Tuscaloosa and where I work, Columbus, MS. I wrote ***Sipsey Sweet*** for my dear friend, Alan Goldspiel, in the summer and fall of 2017 as my commission piece for the 2017 Mississippi Music Teachers Association conference meeting. I would like to thank Dr. Goldspiel for his help editing the piece.

The Performers

Alan Goldspiel has performed world premieres at New York's Carnegie and CAMI Halls and has been featured on NPR radio stations from coast to coast. He continues to be an active international performer whose compositions are regularly commissioned.

He is the recipient of the Alabama State Council on the Arts 2016-2017 Artist Fellowship Award for artistic excellence as well as professional commitment and maturity – awarded to outstanding individual artists from Alabama who create important works of art and make valuable contributions to the entire state.

His music has been performed at national and international events including the conferences of the North American Saxophone Alliance, National Association of Composers, and International Clarinet Association. Dr. Goldspiel received the 2014 Alabama Music Teachers Association Composition Commission and he was a 2013 recipient of the Escape to Create Residency in Seaside, Florida.

He is the only guitarist to be honored with the Marshall Dodge Award of the Performing Artists Associates of New England and has been a soloist with the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, Monroe Symphony Orchestra, Vermont Philharmonic, Sinfonie-by-the-Sea, and served as an Artist-in-Residence for North Carolina's prestigious Visiting Artists Program, presenting over eighty concerts throughout that state.

As the Music Director of the Magic Shtetl Klezmer Band, he has performed and arranged many pieces from the classic Klezmer repertoire. His composition project, a Klezmer Shabbat Service, keeps that tradition current. He has received numerous awards for excellence in teaching, research, and service including the Louisiana State Arts Council Artist Fellowship Award for artistic excellence and the University Senate Chair Award from Louisiana Tech University. He has taught at the International Guitar Festival held at the The Hartt School, where he remains the only guitarist to be designated University Scholar for his research on the music of Villa-lobos. He is Professor of Music and Chair of the Department of Music at the University of Montevallo. More information, including news, events, and catalog can be discovered at the composer's website www.alangoldspiel.com.

"Goldspiel's compositions exhibit a variety in thematic melodies that are well suited for musicians and audiences. His work is imaginative and explores new musical ideas." – Alabama State Council on the Arts

Pianist **Daniel Immel** is Associate Professor of Music at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. His primary teachers have included Madeleine Forte, James Cook, Luba Edlina-Dubinsky, and Gregory Allen.

He has coached in masterclasses with several artists, including Martin Canin, Nelita True, Jay Gottlieb, Philippe Entremont, Philippe Bianconi, and Frederic Augessy. He holds performance degrees from Boise State University, Indiana University, and the University of Texas at Austin, as well as a Performance Diploma from the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, France. His solo and collaborative performances have led him to perform in the United States, Europe, Canada, and Russia. He was a finalist in the Vienna International Music Competition in 2008, and received second prize in the 2007 Bradshaw and Buono International Piano Competition in New York. He recently collaborated with the Cypress String Quartet for the Louisiana Tech Concert Association's 2009-10 season, as well as saxophonist Todd Oxford at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. The New York Concert Review praised his ability to "successfully transform himself from empathetic collaborator to independent soloist several times and rightly received equal billing." He collaborated with Oxford for his second solo CD, *Tango Magnetism*, which was recently released by Equilibrium Records.

Dr. Immel is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator, and has held previous teaching posts at Washington State University and Louisiana Tech University. He advocates for the performance of new piano literature, as he specializes in the performance and research of twentieth and twenty-first century music. His recent series of lecture recitals on Ligeti's *Etudes for Piano* were met with critical acclaim.