

# Music

MUSICAL MUSINGS  
Eitan Freilich

## It's roller coaster season

**W**e were running sound check one afternoon at a wedding: "testing, testing, one, two, three" -you know, the normal routine-when my phone bleeps. It's an email from Shaul, the *Jewish Tribune's* Head of Marketing, with a new idea for me to consider. I forward the email to my manager, who responds instantly: 'Sure, go for it'. The rest is history. The *Jewish Tribune* wanted our permission to give out one or two songs from my album for a special edition of the paper. Sure, I said, but why two or three? This seed of an idea slowly blossomed into 'My Favourite CD', each containing five of our favourite songs from my previous and current releases on a *Jewish Tribune* CD. So I hope you enjoy the tracks as much as we enjoyed listening to all the old tunes ourselves. I say 'old' but my last album was released just two years ago. As they say, *tempus fugit!*

It's a special time of year - Chanukah is approaching, which means the schools tour is looming up on the horizon. This year it'll be a special tour too, because my album has just been released, so on top of Jewish victory over the Greeks (let's get our priorities right!), there's a lot to celebrate! We're also finalizing next year's weddings, confirming the teams and the logistics - we often have at least one or two weddings on a Sunday and many more are scheduled mid-week, so there's a lot to organize. Next week I have a wedding in Manchester on Sunday, a performance in London on Monday and back to Manchester for two performances on Tuesday - I'd better find a comfortable cushion for the train.

Now here I am, chatting about the future, but I haven't yet told you the wonderful news. As soon as the new album 'Yavo Shalom' was released, it went to Number 1 in the World Music Charts, an unbelievable achievement. I still pinch myself, wondering if I'm going to wake up and discover that it was what Freud called a wish fulfilment fantasy! It always makes my day when a letter or email arrives with responses and feedback from my new releases and work is underway to begin the new music videos. We are still running a competition at Bagel Bar in Hendon, where numerous prizes have already been claimed. There's a special sticker under a random takeaway hot cup; if you find it, you're the lucky

winner of album merchandise giveaways and hey, who can resist a 'Yavo Shalom' mug and T-Shirt? In case you're wondering, yes, that was a rhetorical question.

Meanwhile, on a very hot Sunday last week, we experienced one of those moments of high drama when the air conditioning had broken down at a superior high-end hotel in town (unusual, for sure). Terrible, indeed, but that's only the beginning of the saga. Hold on, I'm getting there. During the chuppah, the kallah sipped a little wine, turned a little pale and the next moment, she had fainted right away. But the story has a happy ending. After a minute or two, she revived, the proceedings continued as wedding proceedings are meant to do; she danced with her chosson out the room following the smashing of the glass, and the dinner rocked without a hitch. But it did remind me of similar incidents in the past, although never before at the chuppah itself. Usually, the crisis erupts at the wedding dinner after a day of fasting, intense exercise, dancing and a flood of high emotions - I guess it's all part of the job, but it's definitely a lesson for all future couples: take care to look after yourselves: keep calm and carry on, and go on, enjoy the day - because it is *your* day, the day that will stay etched in your memory for the rest of your life.

Speaking of this wedding, it was a delight to sing 'Hashken Na' (Track 2 of 'Yavo Shalom') at the chuppah. This song has special memories for me. I remember taking a huge file crammed with ideas and lyrics to the home of Elie Shwab, the composer of well-known songs like *Teffilat Kala* and *Schar Mitzvah*. After scrolling through the pages without success, I suddenly, as if by some mysterious inspiration, pulled out the small pocket booklet my wife had used to daven from under our chuppah, and we fell to composing this beautiful wedding song, which I'm now fortunate to sing at other people's weddings.

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BLAKE EZRA

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