

# Music

Eitan Freilich

## Now I'm in everyone's living room

**Y**ou won't be surprised to hear that I haven't been 'working' too much since March. But there's work and there's work – BH things have certainly remained busy. I expect you're wondering what a full-time singer can be busy with when studios have closed, events have been cancelled or postponed, and the future remains uncertain. Casting my mind back to March, we all knew about the virus, but weddings were still in full swing, and life was pretty much 'business as usual'. My last event was a stunning Manhattan wedding in March. Landing at JFK, I was greeted by news of an outbreak in Yeshiva University but still, pretty much everything continued as normal, though the yellow cab driver told me business had almost completely dried up, with far fewer flights arriving daily. As if in defiance of the national gloom, my band, the flowers, the food and the party, reached new peaks of thrilling atmosphere and vibrant energy. You don't expect anything less in the Big Apple! I landed back in London on Purim, in time to hear the Megillah and spend time with the family. And then the lockdown struck and the story started taking a most unexpected turn...

Obviously, there were the logistical challenges of postponing my teams, set and ready for upcoming events, within days. The big challenge is that clients were not and are still not sure for how long they need to postpone their events. Many of my clients have moved their events forward several times in anticipation. Quite honestly, we've never experienced anything like this within our industry and we want to do everything we can to help. Although weddings and events are being rescheduled, let's not forget the Barmitzvah boy who's spent the best part of a year preparing his leining, only to discover that he might need to

change the Parsha or read his Sedra over Zoom during the week. At times like this there are no winners; it's simply a question of looking after each other and using our wits to overcome the challenges.

So where there was uncertainty, there was also hope. I don't just say that pointlessly. I began working with my team to establish different technological methods of streaming and performing live to homes throughout the UK and worldwide to entertain, bring some joy, and also allow people to forget the pandemic for an hour or so - all the while keeping strictly to the social distancing regulations. We managed to stream concerts, with me singing in my home and the musicians joining me in their homes, performing to thousands of people, without audio latency, a medley of slow, fast and upbeat music - with a little banter in between, too, naturally! It's been such an honour to perform to thousands of people, not only here in my home town but also further abroad, in Germany, Canada, Israel, America and more. Performing for the United Synagogue, JNF, Kinloss community, Ner Yisrael community and Kisharon were all unique, precious, magical moments. Though it might sound simple, the technology involved in producing musical concerts with good quality music took us a few days to master – but necessity is the mother of invention and as I always say, where there's a will there's a way (or a large family dispute). The greatest honour was the feedback and messages we received afterwards from families, children, men, women and most movingly, those isolating at home alone. If it were only for them, it was worth it a thousand times.

Although at this time of year we would normally expect a halt to weddings and events, we'd normally be rehearsing



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and prepping for post-Shavuot simchas. But when will it be acceptable and safe to start celebrating together again? We're still in the dark. One thing seems clear, though: we almost certainly won't be returning to the 'normal' life we left behind. Events may need to follow a certain set of rules and the number of guests might be restricted, but we can't take these events, however simple, however lavish, for granted any longer. That said, a daily bittersweet pleasure is recording video messages for boys, girls, chassanim and kallahs worldwide, singing to them words of encouragement, reminding them that their big day will be here soon. It's such a privilege to be able to send



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them a clip, something to make them smile, even if it's just for a moment.

This pandemic has challenged me with many stumbling blocks but my wife would say I have certainly become more domesticated. My cousin Avi picked up on this when I was discussing electric mops and different Dyson vacuum cleaners with him – an urgent concern, given that the house looks like a bomb site and we have no helpful cleaner coming in 'to oblige'.

Meanwhile, I have expended a substantial amount of time preparing insightful "deconstruction" videos online, taking various songs from my albums and stripping the music

back to its roots, explaining where the concepts, music, ideas and musical arrangement originally came from. Check them out if you have a minute. It's been a great opportunity to sit back and return to the basics of music, my music, while getting ready to go back on a stage or at an event near you soon. Looking forward to catching up with you soon, but for the moment, keep safe, keep well and if you see me in the street make sure to shout hello (from a distance of two metres, please!).

*To book Eitan Freilich, please contact his team at [management@efmusic.co.uk](mailto:management@efmusic.co.uk) or call 0207 043 4260.*