

ONLINE AUDIO GUIDE 4.6

MUSIC FOR THE JEWISH HIGH HOLY DAYS

title: “Kol Nidrei” (All Vows)

language: Aramaic

performing forces: solo voice (Cantor Abraham Brun), organ

form: free, with some repeated melodies

function: worship for the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

source: *Cantorials for the High Holidays* (Smithsonian Folkways Archival FW 6940 1956, 2006)

Listen for:

- phrases
- melisma, ornaments
- monophonic texture
- free meter
- minor mode, with several augmented seconds
- half cadences
- form (repeated motives, here highlighted in colors, each corresponding to a given melodic idea)

Timing	Structure and text	What happens
00:00	organ introduction	establishes minor key, prepares with soloist’s entry with a half cadence
00:21	soloist: Kol nidrei, Ve’esarei,	augmented second (on –sarei)
	Ush’vuei, Vachamei,	half cadence
00: 48	Vekonamei, Vekinusei	
	Vechinuyei	melisma, ornaments in vocal line organ concludes musical phrase
1:02	D’indarna	new melodic idea introduced ornaments in vocal line phrase ends on a major chord
1:18	Ud’ishtabana	melodic idea of 1:02 repeated
1:33	Ud’acharimna	
1:46	Ud’ssarna	half cadence
1:54	Al nafshatana	highest note in piece occurs phrase ends on a major chord
2:11	Miyom Kippurim	word repetition extended melisma, ornaments

2:27	ad Yom Kippurim	augmented second
2:42	haba aleinu letovah	organ drops out briefly, then returns
2:58	Bechulhon Icharatna vehon	melismas, ornaments
3:14	Kulhon yehon sharan	organ parallels voice
3:20	Kulhon yehon sharan	
3:34	Sh'vikin, sh'viti,	melismas, ornaments
3:49	betelin, umevatulin	
3:56	lo sheririn v'lo kayamin	
	v'lo kayamin	
4:13	Ni-dran lo nidrei	extended melismas
4:28	v'essarana lo essarei	augmented second (on “—sarei’)
4:46	Ush'vuatana lo shevuot.	

English translation:

All vows, prohibitions, obligations, oaths, and anathemas which we may vow, or swear, or pledge, or whereby we may be bound, from this day of Atonement until the next (whose happy coming we await), we do repent. May they be deemed absolved, forgiven, annulled, and void, and made of no effect; they shall not bind us nor have power over us. The vows shall not be reckoned vows; the obligations shall not be obligatory; nor the oaths be oaths.

Consider:

- Describe the organ part? Does it “back up” the voice or take an active role?
- How would you describe the vocal style? Is it closer to classical or popular music?