

## Top US Jewish singer to give Nico concert

ELMARIE SHELLEY

INTERNATIONALLY known cantor Sol Zim, America's foremost exponent of Jewish music, has arrived in Cape Town on his first tour of South Africa.

He will give only one concert — on Sunday night at the Nico Malan Theatre — performing as a soloist and not as part of the usual duo, the Brothers Zim.

Zim has devoted his life to Jewish music, specifically chassidic melodies which combine the traditional with the more contemporary sound. He is responsible for the revival seen in Jewish music cultures worldwide today.

With his new approach to attract young people back to Jewish music, Zim has often been referred to as a renegade or innovator in the field of Jewish pop/rock music.

"To keep the Jewish musical culture alive, you have to create an enthusiasm for it," says the cantor, speaking with great feeling of his commitment to his music.

"Ninety percent of the people who come to shul today can't read Hebrew and therefore can't *daven* (pray)."

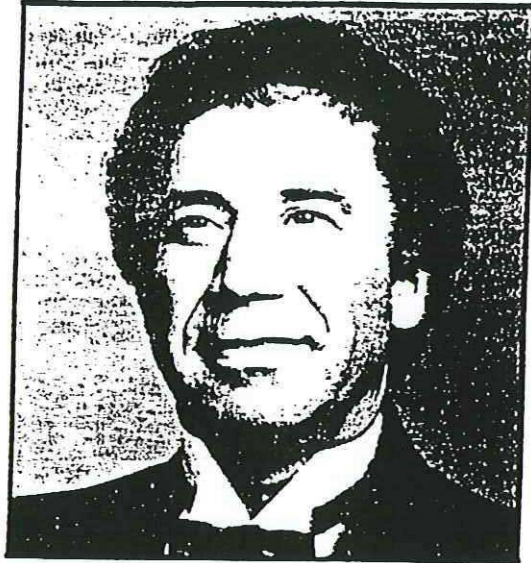
To get this generation involved in the synagogue and prayer and to stop them from merely being spectators, Zim has written functional songs in chassidic syllables that can be sung by entire congregations.

"Even if the people can only sing "biddi-biddi-bam-bam, at least they are participating."

He has composed and arranged hundreds of Jewish and popular songs, made 20 record albums and published nine song books of his own original music.

The Brothers Zim started their entertainment career in 1966. Sol Zim no longer appears with his brother Paul, but a new partner, Bernie Dean. The duo undertake extensive tours throughout the world — "anything between 40 and 50 concerts a year".

His sons, Eric and Craig, who both graduated as lawyers this year, joined their father at Lincoln City recently, performing under the name The Brothers Zim II.



Sol Zim, an acclaimed cantor and America's leading Jewish singer, who has arrived in Cape Town on his first concert tour of South Africa.

### Committed

"There are five generations of cantors in my family, and it's nice to know that my two sons are equally committed to Jewish music," said Zim.

His own career began as a child soloist with his father, cantor Samuel Zimmelman. He received his cantorial training from one of the masters of cantorial prayer, Joshua Weisser.

Since 1964 he has served the Hollis Hills Jewish Centre in New York and was awarded a "lifetime contract" in 1983.

Zim promised Cape Town concertgoers "an evening of constant excitement, sweeping them into a world of emotional Jewish creativity".

The items will include Jewish pop, cantorial chants, Yiddish tunes and operatic and chassidic melodies.

Accompanied by his wife, June, the Zims are the guests of Cape Town cantor Pharrel Wener.

# Cape Town

South Africa