

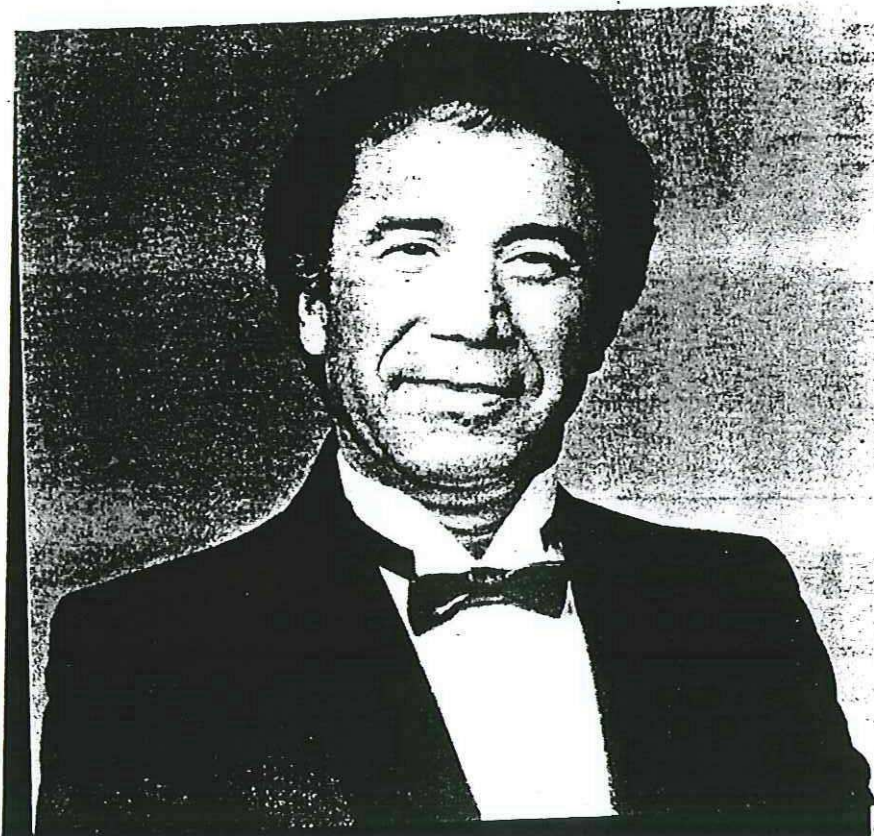
ATLANTA

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Melodies For The Masses

Cantor Sol Zim brings his popular melodies to Atlanta this Sunday.

NEIL RUBIN ASSISTANT EDITOR



Cultural Connection. The AJCC is funded by the Atlanta Jewish Federation.

"He really is one of the best around," says Rabbi Mark Zimmerman of Beth Shalom. "Sol Zim is known everywhere."

For Atlantans, the cantor promises "nostalgic experiences," but not ones out of reach for younger generations.

During the performance, he says that the traditional *chazanoos* music will take a back seat to Israeli and Yiddish folk songs, Broadway show tunes and operatic arias. "I make it very palatable," he says. "I don't do anything in Yiddish; I do it in Yinglish."

Also on stage will be the AJCC's Shirim Chorale, the Greenfield Hebrew

music. To top it all off, the cantor, who says "don't tell them my age; they'll think I'm old," is writing the score to a Broadway musical loosely based on his life.

The fifth generation of cantors in his family, the Toronto native does not underestimate the difficulty of his self-described task of creating an emotional experience for the religiously alienated. That group, he points out, occasionally finds itself in synagogue for a bar or bat mitzvah.

"Ninety to 95 percent of the Jewish population can't read Hebrew so how can you in a synagogue create involvement,

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Cantor Sol Zim's tunes are the standard fare for many congregations today.

Academy chorale, the Epstein School Kolenu Choir and the Beth Shalom Children's Choir.

The presence of so many youngers underlies the importance of creating bouncy, memorable melodies, says Cantor Zim.

"My mission is to bring Jewish music through concerts to our people, to make sure that Jewish music will survive for the younger generation," he says in a telephone interview during a recent vacation in Miami. "I had a feeling that it was me that had to do it because these melodies came so easy to me."

For the past 28 years he has been cantor at New York's Hollis Hills Jewish Center. He has also published 16 books of

a Jewish emotional experience for them?" he asks. "I did it by utilizing the melodies.

"A lot of them are antiphonal, or repetitive," he explains. "If I do *L'dor v'dor*, you want to repeat that. I did it by putting forth the Hasidic principle of creating joy.

"We must have a sense of unity within a group that's dovening together," he continues. "How do I create that sense of unity? By having everyone sing together. Even if a person doesn't have the skill of reading Hebrew he can partake and participate."

With that, he is off on another series of melodies. "You will recognize this one," says the energetic cantor. "*La, la, la ... Bim, bim bom ...*" □

antor Sol Zim, often spoken of in congregational circles as *the* Sol Zim, is a man whose tunes have wafted to the ceilings of virtually every Conservative congregation in the world.

"Like *L'dor v'Dor*," he says, singing a well-known bouncy tune to the prayer when asked to describe his work. "You know, *bim, bim, bom, L'dor v'Dor ...* I also did *Sim Shalom. Sim, sim, sim shalom. Adon Olam* too."

This Sunday, at 7:30 p.m., he will perform at Congregation Beth Shalom. His appearance is cosponsored by the synagogue and the Atlanta Jewish Community Center's

THE ARTS