

the SHIR *Delight*

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ



Our Guys

Shirah is lucky to have these two great men behind them, in Elliot's case, in front of them. The June concert was enhanced by the skills and talents of Michael Reingold and Elliot Levine. Shirah is also lucky to have Angel Bernie Weinflash, who shares Mati's vision. Thank you, Bernie!

✧ 2014 June Concert ✧

Shirah was all it could be: sparkling and sophisticated on the stage, harmoniously happy, singing with energy and paying close attention to Maestro Mati's every signal. Kol Hakavod!

THE HALL WAS PACKED

What a great turnout! It is obvious that Shirah's reputation has grown. The musical achievements of these non-professional singers is remarkable. Twenty years ago Mati set out to mold the choir and he has succeeded! The weather was perfect and the price of admission was reasonable which may have contributed to the

extraordinary size of the crowd. By the time the concert began there were no parking spaces left. An alto, assigned to handle the overflow, spent the afternoon parking cars at the Armenian church next door and hiking back to the JCC. Shirah's altos are so numerous no one noticed her absence.



Recipe for a Commission

Hynda Feit, in honor of her father, commissioned Elliot Levine to arrange Mi Haish. The result is extraordinary.

- 1 loving daughter
- 1 song
- 1 composer
- 1 conductor
- 1 choir
- 1 great idea



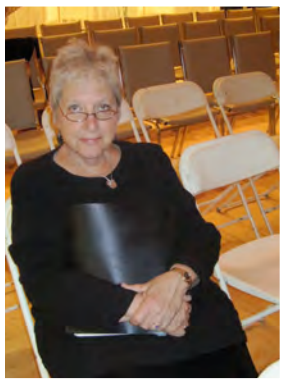


Photo of Mati courtesy of the JCC Kaplen on the Palisades



**MARILYN'S APPLICATION FOR
POSITION OF MANAGER OF SHIRAH
2014-15 OR FOREVER**

How high can you sing?

Higher than most of the other members.

Do you bake?

No, but I shop and eat.

Are you on time to rehearsals?

Occasionally.

What managerial experience have you had?

I manage my husband quite well, though not always my children. I have managed to remain a partner in a large national law firm despite my singing. I also manage my clients' expectations so they are not looking for work from me during NAJCF.

Are you satisfied with the salary offered?

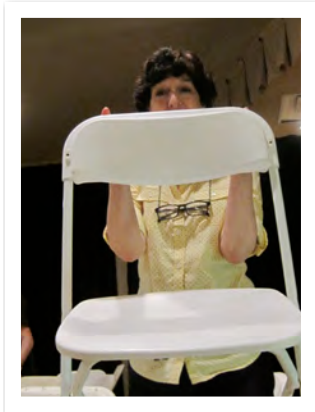
What's not to like?

What would you enjoy about this job?

I would treasure the opportunity to coordinate matters among such responsive and organized leadership, staff and membership, not to mention the prestige and satisfaction that comes from knowing the repertoire and set list at least five minutes before the rank and file. I always wanted to be recognized as one of the cognoscenti.

It Happened at Shirah

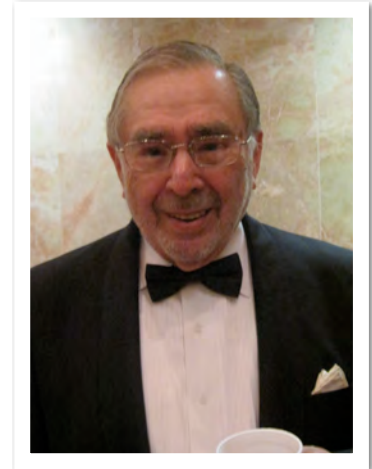
DON'T GET TOO COMFORTABLE



There's always an opportunity to *move your chair!* Here's Lois preparing for the inevitable.

MARVIN STILL HAS IT!

If you've heard Marvin sing Sim Shalom you know what IT is. IT was bestowed upon Marvin by Mati at the last rehearsal. Well deserved.



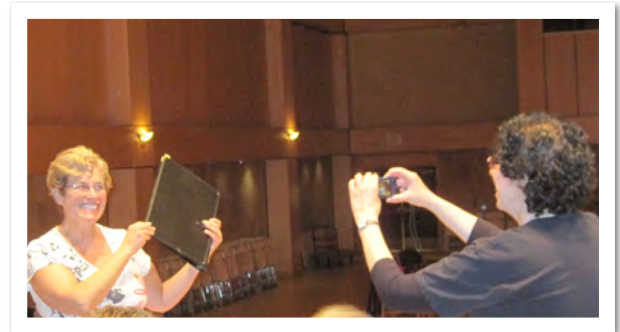
OH NO! THE DUDUS ARE WRONG

Shortly before the June concert a section member told an alto she was not singing the dudus in *Al Kol Eyleh*. as written. Word of this atypical error spread through the alto section like wildfire. Alas, as each alto consulted her notebook, she discovered that she, too, had been singing incorrectly. After a short convocation, the altos decided to continue their errant ways. It was too hard to make a last minute adjustment. A veteran alto announced that Mati had taught it to us this way. The person singing the dudus right was the only one who sounded wrong.



NEW PHOTOGRAPHER

Deb Wenger adds to her Shirah duties.



CAUGHT EATING-AGAIN



Secret Singer

In an unprecedented move, the Metropolitan Opera is auditioning choirs around the world for a performance of Nabucco. Choirs who meet the Met's high standards will be invited to perform on the stage along with the Met chorus for one performance. Borrowing from the concept of "secret shopper" an undercover singer joined the choir for a few rehearsals to determine the musical and vocal level of the group while posing as a new member.

ANALYSIS OF SHIRAH BY UNDERCOVER SINGER

The Maestro: highest ranking possible though seemed to have undergone a name change from one rehearsal to the next.

Vocal quality: Pretty darn good

Repertoire: consists of 4 pieces, one of which they've only been singing for decades.

Ensemble: If they looked up more, they could reach greater heights.

Commitment: A very bonded group, which is good and bad. It's good for their music making . It's bad if they can't blend into the Met chorus.

Punctuality: When I arrived at 7:30 for rehearsal I was the only one there! Shortly after, a couple named Rosen arrived. They made me move chairs. Perhaps this is why there are few on time arrivals.

Atmosphere: There was a lot of fund raising, dues paying, card signing and switching places while I was there. A coffee pot whined, phones rang, a stand fell over. Not what I'm used to but quite enjoyable.

Overall: There's a chorus in Poland that is on a slightly higher level so I recommend Shirah be placed on the wait list.





Matisms

FOOD

You have the dynamic specificity of a potato. That's a cholesterol filled crescendo! Sopranos were supposed to be a little birdie on a tree, not a Jurassic cholent.

CRITICISM

Altos fluffed in Halleluyah. What the hell was that? The surprise chord is a surprise to you apparently. Even if using the wrong notes you should crescendo. Altos, don't be passive. It doesn't work out in families and society.

PRAISE

You can't hear in the beginning, they can't hear in the middle. You're a great choir. You're hitting the high note. It's not pleasant. Everything we've done in this piece we've done correctly. At least one time. That's good Grover. A Jimmy Durante E natural! You made them late. They were going to be late anyway

MEDICAL

Sounds like you've been with the British navy for 4 months, have scurvy and lost your feet. The pills are working too slow. You need an injection. Basses-don't burp so much. You cannot be retired and sing in a choir. A diminuendo accompanied by fear. Ladies, what are you caucusing about? Marvin, you can't sit with the sopranos-I'm really sorry.

Audience Member Review

I was at the concert and enjoyed it immensely. However, I do have one complaint. This is supposed to be an amateur choir. You are way too professional. This tends to somewhat limit enjoyment, as we could get the same

sound at Carnegie Hall. However, there is a solution. You should have at least one non-singer in your choir; someone who not only can't hit the high notes she can't even tell high from low. This would give your group the true

sound of the non-professional that you should be striving for. I would modestly suggest myself for the part, since anyone who knows me can testify that my voice is in a class by itself (since no one else is willing to

join it). Please let me know when your next rehearsal is taking place. I will gladly come and throw everyone else off key.

A Loyal Listener



Dear Dr. Plotznik,

Although there are written comments all over my music that say Don't Breathe Here, at our last concert I was not able to adhere to this. It was physically impossible. The first time I took a breath in the wrong place I was close to keeling over from lack of oxygen. The second time my heart had stopped beating. Probably Mati noticed this and was displeased despite the color of my face, geisha white. Should I resign from the choir since I am unable to follow the breathing rules?

Breathlessly yours,
Shirah (ex?) member



Dear Breathlessly,

Are you kidding? Is this one of those fake letters? Just in case this is for real, I will give you a serious answer, even though the answer is obvious. First, if you are who I think you are, don't give a second thought about the geisha white color of your face. It ALWAYS looks like that!! The answer to that part of your problem is one word: MAKEUP, any brand of blush will do. As to the more serious question of breathing vs. death—well, the answer to that doesn't take a psychological genius like me with many degrees and credentials to figure out the obvious. Of course you observe the Don't Breathe Here warning. That is a mandatory law of singing with Mati. So how do you not faint? Simple. You breathe everywhere else. There are hundreds of

places that do not have that commandment—so many, in fact, that you could hyperventilate from too much oxygen if you breathed everywhere it is permitted.

Now, to the last part of the question—Should you resign from the choir? I have no opinion on that, except that if you do, it should be for asking silly questions, not for disobeying the breathing rules.

Dr. Plotznik