



Music in Times of Tragedy

Music from the Holocaust

About the project:

“Music in Times of Tragedy” was created by Dr. Amit Weiner in 2012, as a way to preserve the music written and performed by Jews during the Holocaust. As shown in Dr. Weiner research about the subject, music played a major role in the lives of the inmates in the concentration camps, the Ghettos, and the extermination camps. This consisted of live performances of operatic music, classical music, and even jazz, in horrible living conditions, and truly against all odds.

In the years 2016 - 2017, Amit Weiner travelled to Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar, and addressed six events under the collective title: **“Music in Times of Tragedy”**, commemorating the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.



In addition to those travels, Dr. Weiner is known for assisting with the production of such event over the world, and he is regularly asked by various Israeli Embassies, consulates and Holocaust commemoration institutes to advise regarding International Holocaust Remembrance Day events. Among those are the Israeli embassy in Nepal, the Israeli consulate in Taipei and the Hong Kong Holocaust and Tolerance Center.

Past events were held in schools and universities to a diverse audience in addition to the embassy's International Holocaust Remembrance Day main event.

The concerts were dedicated solely to music that was written and performed during the Holocaust. The live music was interwoven with the personal stories and the struggles of those musicians, all perished during the Holocaust. The audience learned about the Jewish culture and heritage, a culture that was almost completely lost by the Nazis.

The program ends with Dr. Weiner teaching the audience one of Mordechai Gebirtig's songs, inviting the audience to sing along. This ending every time drives everyone to tears.

A video of that communal and emotional singing, of almost 200 kids at the British Vietnamese International School in Hanoi can be found on this [link](#).

On a personal note, as a third generation to Holocaust survivors, this project is a very gratifying experience for me. I look forward to presenting it to many other audiences around the globe.





Target audience:

The presentation and concert are suitable for various audiences, both children and adults, uneducated or high-educated, Jewish or non-Jewish. In addition, Dr. Weiner performs most of the pieces along with local musicians, usually students from the largest music academy in the area. That is a very important part of the project – to give the local musicians a glimpse into the Jewish musical world.

The responses to the series of events are always very positive. Many diplomats personally stated they were very moved by the concert and learned a lot from the presentation. Others have stated it has given them new insight into the life inside the concentration camps, and to the significant role of music in the lives of the Jews, and about the power of music to give people hope in times of tragedy.

The goal:

This project's goal is to emphasize the efforts made by Jews in the concentration camps and the ghettos to maintain an active cultural life. In this concert and presentation Dr. Weiner demonstrates the significant role that music played in the lives of the Jewish people during those horrible times:

“Music is more important than bread”

That was written on one of the posters on the Jewish symphony orchestra bulletin board in Warsaw Ghetto.

Press coverage and links:



[UN International School publication](#)

Hanoi, Vietnam, January 2016



[Concert TV coverage](#)

Yangon, Myanmar, January 2017



[Article at an Israeli newspaper](#)

(Hebrew) May 2017

For the full press coverage visit [Dr. Amit Weiner's website](#)

Additional participants:

The program is modular, and the songs and compositions can be arranged to fit various ensembles:

Presented here, recommended ensembles for the program:

- **Small ensemble:** 2-4 players.
Local players of the following instruments: violin, viola, cello, clarinet, and oboe
The moving experience in previous events has proven that cooperation with a local music institute is the best way of arranging these events.

- **Large ensemble:** 5-8 players.

Another possibility could be with a chamber orchestra, of around 20 players.

Technical details – for concert and presentation:

- Large TV screen or Screen & projector, with computer connection
- Piano





Links to Videos from the concerts:

- Our Town is Burning- Mordechai Gebirtig – [click here](#)
- Hey Zigelech - Mordechai Gebirtig – [click here](#)

About Dr. Amit Weiner

Composer, Pianist, and a Musical Producer

Israeli composer Amit Weiner has an international career as a composer, a concert pianist, and a presenter. In past years Amit Weiner has performed in concert tours all over Asia, including Hong Kong, Macau and Vietnam. His music achieved numerous prizes, and he has performed in festivals and concerts across the United States, including New York's Carnegie Hall, Europe and Asia, including Japan and Nepal.

Dr. Weiner is an active composer in the fields of concert music, music for film, and popular music. His oeuvre includes over 40 chamber and orchestral works. In addition, he composed music for full-length silent films and documentaries, and has many credits for TV and music libraries.

In 2016, the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance (JAMD) has appointed Dr. Weiner as the Head of The Cross-Disciplinary Composition Division in addition to him being a senior staff lecturer and a composition and theory classes teacher, an ensembles director.

Dr. Weiner has given presentations in universities and conferences in Israel and abroad, including guest lectures in the Tel Aviv University and Bar Ilan University in Israel, in the College of Music in Hanoi, Vietnam, and more.

Moreover, he takes an active role in the field of research and performing Jewish music written during the Holocaust. Since 2011 he undertook the production of the annual Holocaust Memorial Day concert at Yad Vashem – “Music from the Holocaust” – a concert perpetuating the works of Jewish composers who perished in the Holocaust. Among his activities is also a collaboration with "Theresienstadt House" in Israel, a memorial association of Ghetto Theresienstadt.

In according with his research in the subject, Weiner advises many institutes around the world, especially in Asia, regarding holocaust commemoration events. In addition to the events held in collaboration with the Israeli embassies, he is regularly advising the Hong Kong Holocaust and Tolerance Center (HKHTC) regarding the international Holocaust Memorial Day concert, and since 2014 he is constantly assisting the Israeli embassy in Nepal with arrangements of music from the Holocaust to be played by native Nepalese instruments.

Related materials attached to this press release:

- The **program** of the international holocaust remembrance day events last year at Hanoi, Vietnam 2016
- A selection of **press coverage** from past events at Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand.

