

ARIANNE BROWN IN CONCERT OPENS STS YEAR OF MUSIC

Photos by Ori Chen-Zion Story by Jack Israel



What an opening performance for the Year of Music at Shomrei Torah Synagogue! Only days after the High Holidays, the beginning of a new year, Sinai Temple's Cantor Arianne Brown drew a packed house into our Sanctuary to listen to her musical concert, "The Eternal Flame: a Yiddish Love Story." From the Bimah and, at times, when she strolled through the audience she stressed the importance of keeping the Yiddish language alive and, then, spiced the program with songs from Broadway shows and chants from our Hebrew prayers. Her beautiful soprano voice and sparkling personality thrilled the over-flowing audience.

With unmitigated grace and charm, she spoke to the audience as she introduced each song during her performance. To add variety, she brought on four delightfully talented youngsters: Liza Wohlberg, Ariel Bina, Zahava Jaffe, and Anina Dassa from her Synagogue's youth choir to join her in song. And, as if that was not enough, the five of them were joined in a dramatic lyrical rendition of prayer *Mah Tovu* (see page 61 of our *siddur*) by our Hazzan Joel Smith that received a rousing round of applause.

She also paid highest compliments to her pianist-accompanist, our Rabbi Sherman who, we learned, was responsible for bringing the Cantor's concert to STS. An interesting aside: the Cantor and Rabbi Nicole Guzik were roommates in college before going to different schools for their advanced degrees. Years later, they are back together again as Cantor and Rabbi at Sinai Temple in nearby Westwood. And, their husbands have become the best of friends.

Certainly, one of the highlights of the early-afternoon program was the dedication of a Yiddish song about the City of Vilna to STS member Esther Meisler, a former resident and a Holocaust survivor of that tragic Jewish Community in Poland. As she rose to acknowledge Rabbi Sherman's kind words of praise while he was citing her role as a main-stay in the Morning Minyans, the audience gave her an enthusiastic ovation.

Cantor Brown has performed with the Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre. It is said that Yiddish music touches everyone; she certainly proved that. As the audience exited the Sanctuary, there was a rush to purchase her CDs; they just could not get enough of her singing.



A partial view of the Audience