

♪ JEWISH MUSICAL SATIRE ♫



with David Misch / www.davidmisch.com

Is there something distinctly Jewish about musical satire written by Jewish songwriters?

No. Case closed, move along now, nothing to see here.

Or...

Yes. Popular music often reflects traditional Jewish values like social justice (“Sail Away,” Randy Newman’s horrifying/gorgeous evocation of the slave trade), skepticism of values (“Pleasant Valley Sunday,” where songwriters Gerry Goffin & Carole King – born Klein – wonder about their move to the suburbs to a driving Monkees beat), skepticism of happiness (Leonard Bernstein’s “Oh Happy We”), dealing with evil (“No Way To Stop It,” Rodgers & Hammerstein’s acerbic critique of political accomodation), and – perhaps understandably, given Jewish history – scapegoating (the Oscar-nominated “Blame Canada”).

In this multimedia presentation, David Misch looks at a wide range of songs – from the lighthearted mocking of the Gershwins’ “Blah Blah Blah” to Lieber & Stoller’s witty Fifties Rock to Jerome Robbins and the New York City Ballet’s “The Mistake Waltz” – to explore how Jewish musical satire connects with the mournful merriment of klezmer, the paintings of Marc Chagall and the stories of Sholem Aleichem: an awareness of, amusement at, and sympathy for our inevitable human fallibility.

“Insightful and hilarious” – The Jewish Journal

Among David’s TV and movie credits are “Mork & Mindy,” “Saturday Night Live” and “The Muppets Take Manhattan.” He’s also a songwriter and author of “A Beginner’s Guide To Corruption” and “Funny: The Book.” He’s spoken at Yale, Columbia, Oxford, the 92nd St. Y, the Smithsonian Institute, Grammy Museum, Midwest Popular Culture Association, Austin Film Festival, Raindance Film Festival (London), Trinity College Dublin, University of Sydney and the VIEW Cinema Conference (Torino, Italy). More at davidmisch.com.