

♪ 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), love of learning (Tom Lehrer racing through the periodic table of the elements to a Gilbert & Sullivan melody), questioning traditional values (“Pleasant Valley Sunday,” where songwriters Gerry Goffin & Carole King – born Klein – wonder about their move to the suburbs to a driving Monkees beat), dealing with evil (“No Way To Stop It,” Rodgers & Hammerstein’s acerbic critique of political accommodation), and even the Holocaust (Rachel Bloom’s “Remember That We Suffered”).

In this multimedia presentation, we look at a wide range of songs – from the light-hearted 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 the Smithsonian, Yale, Columbia, Oxford, 92Y, Grammy Museum, Midwest Popular Culture Association, Austin Film Festival, Raindance Film Festival (London), CineStudio Paris, University of Sydney, and the VIEW Cinema Conference (Torino, Italy). More at davidmisch.com.