

# Hazzanut

AT THE MASORTI MOVEMENT

## Hazzanim in Argentina

Argentina also had her "Golden Age". We had great Hazzanim, who had escaped from Pre-War Europe.

What did they find on their arrival?

They found a full Jewish life, theatres, singers, artists, synagogues ready to receive their art; which had been banned for them in their native towns. There was a Bet Haknesset in every neighborhood, and every Bet Haknesset had "its" Hazzan. I do not intend to discuss here about who was the best, but what I am sure of, is the extraordinary and virtuous legacy of those who preceded us, in the 50s, the 60s, and the 70s.

I would like to mention Israel Barsky, Russian, who arrived at Argentina in 1931 and sang in the Israelite Congregation (Libertad Street Temple).

Pinjas Borenstein, Polish, arrived in 1923, the first Hazzan in the Great Temple, Paso Street.

Abraham Blejarovich, born in Poland, arrived in 1947 to excel in the Argentine Israelite Congregation. He was president of the Liturgical Singers' Association.

Aaron Gutman, also born in Poland, arrived in 1924. He sang in the Great Temple, on Paso Street, from 1951 to 1972.

And so many others, all of them famous and international Hazzanim, as for example Menajem "Muni" Balaban, Kalman Dashevsky, David Hitzkopf, Leo Fisher,

Guershon Kiperchtok, Tavi Wilner, Kalman Weitz, Abraham Rozenmacher, Eliahu Borujovich.

We should also mention extraordinary liturgical choir directors as Bernardo Feuer or Jacobo Skliar.

I believe that all of us who love this art must learn from those who gave us so much.

Nowadays, we strive for the re-estimation of our profession. We try to meet, even virtually, since many of us work abroad. In the 60s our teachers formed the "Jazunem Farband", with two large/small aims: Socially, to meet and spend unforgettable moments of music and talks. Professionally, to have a joint group to defend the singers' rights everywhere and anywhere.

They knew how to transmit their love and knowledge to the following generations. Here, in our country, the result was generous. We have great singers who are also successful abroad.

Mentioning them in this article, I feel I am paying an homage to these men, who were, and still are, my teachers.

Mainly my father, of course, but every one of them has given me "something" and this "something" I cannot explain in words. Maybe fire, maybe love, maybe passion.

My deep desire is that G'd help me and my partners to form our coming generations in order that our voices, and the voices of our predecessors resound once and again in the Batei Knessets throughout our country. Argentina, pride of world's liturgy. This is my dream and my daily work.

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