

THE
AFRICAN RENAISSANCE ENSEMBLE | 

IN CONCERT WITH

THE LEWANDOWSKI CHORALE

Hidden Treasures of the Hebrew Baroque

A concert 400 years in the making



In celebration of the 400th anniversary of the publication of Salomone Rossi's Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo – the first choral synagogue music ever notated.



AFRICAN RENAISSANCE ENSEMBLE

www.earlymusic.co.za

Founded by Adam H. Golding in 2017, The African Renaissance Ensemble is a group of South African musicians, striving to infect fellow South Africans with our love for early music. Our goal is to bring this exquisite, little known and seldom performed music to modern audiences. The music we perform is far more accessible to modern audiences than classical music; pieces are short (between 1 and 10 minutes) and there is a surprisingly wide variety of sound. Much of the music is light-hearted and was composed specifically for dancing or for storytelling. It is all highly emotionally evocative and varied.

The instruments are very different to those in use today. These include gut string violins, period keyboards (harpsichord, virginal etc.) lutes, and winds that you have likely never seen before. Guitar and percussion also play an important role. You will hear a diversity of sound that you have never experienced before!

Our performances are not the formal affairs that one expects from a symphony concert, opera, or classical chamber concert and neither is the music that we perform. Musical director, Adam H. Golding connects with audiences and provides context by using the music to weave together a story including anecdotes ranging from hilarious to grotesque.



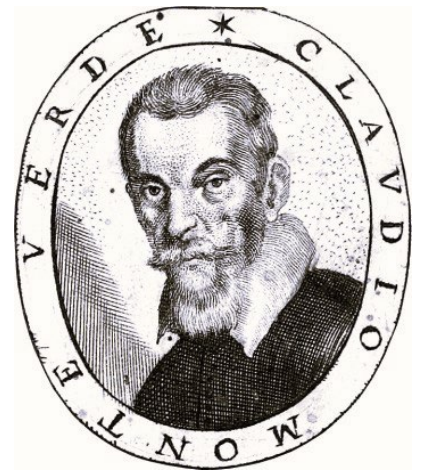
The Birth of the Baroque

In the late 16th century, a group of musicians, poets, humanists, and artists gathered at the home of **Count di Bardi** in Florence. The group became known as the **Florentine Camerata** and one of their goals was to resurrect Greek theatre as it had been performed thousands of years previously, with musical interludes, dance, and sung sections. This gave rise to the first operas written at the turn of the 17th century.

This event coincided almost exactly with the advent of Baroque art and architecture. The music of the 17th century became influenced by the aesthetic quality of the art and architecture mimicking the high level of decoration, ornament and flourish with musical ornaments and virtuosity.

The Mantuan Court

The city state of Mantua was an important centre in Renaissance Italy, ruled by the powerful **Gonzaga** family. Duke **Vincenzo Gonzaga**, a patron of the arts, attracted some of the finest musicians in Italy to his court, including the Cremonese composer, **Claudio Monteverdi**. It was here that **Monteverdi's** first operas were premiered, including *L'Orfeo*, the first opera ever written and still performed today. Along with his colleagues, **Wert**, **Gastoldi**, and **Rossi**, **Monteverdi** was one of the composers to take music from the Renaissance into the Baroque with what became known as *Practica Seconda*.



Baroque Music

Historians often group European art music into 3 main eras: Early Music, Common Practice Period and 20th/21st Century Music. The Baroque period straddles the Early Music and Common Practice Period. It was during the Baroque that these common practices were established. These included instrumentation, tuning, intonation, tonality, major and minor scales, notation, harmony, and form.

Like its architectural and artistic counterparts, Baroque music is characterised as highly decorative and ornate. Musicians in this period were expected to improvise ornaments and embellishments on the spot.

When thinking of Baroque music, the first names that come to mind are **Bach**, **Vivaldi**, and **Handel**. However, these composers were only working in the last third of this period. It is the Baroque music from over a century earlier that we perform today.

Salomone Rossi



Rossi was born in Mantua in 1570 and quickly became one of the most respected musicians in the city, both as a violinist and composer. It is likely that he led the orchestra as concert master for **Monteverdi's L'Orfeo**. Little is known about **Rossi's** life, but it is recorded that he had a sister, the virtuoso opera singer known as **Madame Europa**. Little is known about her either, and some sources indicate that Salomone and Madame Europa may in fact have been the same person as men regularly took female roles in early operas.

What we do know, is that **Rossi** was so respected, that he was exempted from living in the Jewish Ghetto and from wearing the mark imposed on Jewish at the time. Despite living at court, he never lost touch with his roots and made a decision to never compose for the church; even with the knowledge that this would have repercussions for his advancement.

In 1630, Mantua was invaded by Habsburg mercenaries, following the Mantuan Wars of Succession and Rossi was likely murdered or died from the plague that they brought with them. This also marked the end of the golden age of Mantua.

Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo

In 1616 following much correspondence with **Rabbi Leon of Modena**, **Rossi** began composing musical works for synagogue, in the polyphonic musical language of his day. With **Modena's** encouragement, **Rossi** published a full collection of his Synagogue music in 1623 as *Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*, or *The Songs of Salomon*. There are records of this music being used in Synagogues during **Rossi's** lifetime in Venice and Ferrara.

These performances were met with very mixed responses and the idea of Synagogue music did not really take off for another 200 years.





It was only in the 19th century with **Salomon Sulzer's** appointment as Oberkantor in Vienna that choral music became a fixture in the Synagogue service. By this time, **Rossi's** synagogue music had long fallen into obscurity. It later in the 19th century by the **Baron Edmund de Rothschild**, who commissioned the **Samuel Naumbourg** to rearrange the early baroque collection for modern audiences in a 19th century style and to publish a new edition. As a composer and professor of Jewish liturgical music and as a renowned cantor in Strasbourg and Paris, **Naumbourg** was the obvious choice. Slowly, this led to much interest in the music of **Salomone Rossi** and a resurgence of his works in the late 20th century.

The Manuscripts

Rossi wrote the music in what is known as mensural (measured) notation, a notation system that indicates the duration of notes in relation to each other. This is the standard form of notation in use today but has changed dramatically over the past 400 years. Barlines separating each measure have since been introduced, the shapes of notes have changed, and the way that we indicate timing has progressed.

Writing music with Hebrew lyrics presents challenges as Hebrew, and musical notation read in opposite directions. In *Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*, **Rossi** pioneered a way to do this, writing words in Hebrew underneath musical phrases, not attempting to match each syllable to a note.

On the following double page, you will find a facsimile of the original parts of his "Keter". It is also important to note that at the time, scores were not yet in use, so each musician would only see their own part when learning a piece. You may notice that the diamond-shaped note heads are not spaced according to duration, another convention that was only adopted later. The staves themselves are also slightly staggered; this is a product of the single imprint block printing system that had been invented less than a century earlier by the English printer **John Rastell**, and popularised by **Pierre Attaignant** who published the works of over 150 composers. Printers would use a separate block for every note, which would show the position of the note on the staff. This was far faster (although with messier results) than the triple imprint method pioneered by **Ottaviano Petrucci**, where first the staff, then the notes and lastly the words were printed.

אֲבִיכֵנוּ מִלֵּוֹת

כֹּהֵן יִתְּנוּ

מִלֵּוֹת הַמִּנִּי

לֹחַ זֶה שׂוֹאֵל־מִסְתַּרְתּוֹ עֵינֵי מִלֵּוֹת כְּבוֹד מִטְהַר קִבְּרוֹ

עֵיב שׁוֹ אֲתִחְסְדִים לַעֲנֵי יִן בְּמִטְבֵּי כְבוֹד מִקְסֹמֵי אִי

מִלְכֵּנוּ הוֹאֲאִבֵּנוּ הוֹאֲאִבֵּנוּ אֲרֵךְ יוֹם בְּכֹל תְּמִידוֹבֹקֵר

זֶה כֹּל לַעֲנֵי סִנֵּי בְרַחֲמֵנוּ וְשִׁמְעֵנוּ הוֹאֲמִסְמִעֵנוּ הוֹא

אֵלֵינוּ ה' אֲנִי

הַלֵּלוּ יֵה הַלֵּלוּ דוֹר לְדוֹר צִוּנוּ אֱלֹהֵיךְ לַעֲלֵם ה' יִשְׂרָאֵל

יֵה יֵה הַלֵּלוּ יֵה הַלֵּלוּ

TENORE

אֲבִיכֵנוּ מִלֵּוֹת

כֹּהֵן יִתְּנוּ

מִלֵּוֹת הַמִּנִּי

לֹחַ זֶה שׂוֹאֵל־מִסְתַּרְתּוֹ עֵינֵי מִלֵּוֹת כְּבוֹד מִטְהַר קִבְּרוֹ

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יֵה יֵה הַלֵּלוּ יֵה הַלֵּלוּ

BASSO

HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE HEBREW BAROQUE

Vocal and Instrumental music by **Salomone Rossi**
(Mantua, Italy, 1570 - 1630)

- ❖ **Barechu** (*Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*) - **Sinfonia Seconda - Brando Secondo** (*il Terzo Libro de varie Sonate*)
- ❖ **Cor Mio deh non Languire** (*il Primo Libro Madrigali a cinque voci*)
- ❖ **Keter** (*Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*)
- ❖ **Sonata Prima** detta la Moderna (*il Terzo Libro de varie Sonate*)
- ❖ **Baruch Haba** (*Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*)
- ❖ **Sonata Settima** sopra l'Aria d'un Balletto (*il Quattro Libro de varie Sonate*)
- ❖ **Elohim Hashiveinu** (*Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*)
- ❖ **Sonata Sesta** in Dialogo "Detta la Viena" (*il Terzo Libro de varie Sonate*)

Claudio Monteverdi (Italy 1567 - 1643)

- ❖ **Lamento Della Ninfa** (*il Ottavo Libro, Madrigali Guerrieri et Amorososi - Madrigals of Love and War*)

INTERVAL

Carlo Grossi (Venice, Italy, 1634 – 1688)

- ❖ **Cantata Ebraica** *in Dialogo – voce sola e choro*

Ludovico Saladin (Provence, France, 1605 - 1675)

- ❖ **Canticum Hebraicum** *Notis Musicis Illustratum*

Salomone Rossi (Mantua, 1570 – 1630)

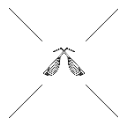
- ❖ **Yitgadal** (Kaddish) (*Hashirim Asher L'Shlomo*)

HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE HEBREW BAROQUE

Adam H. Golding – Musical Director

John Reid Coulter – Harpsichord Continuo

THE AFRICAN RENAISSANCE ENSEMBLE



INSTRUMENTALISTS

Hilton Anspach – Contrabass, **Isabella Bonnet** – Baroque viola,
Kabir Budlender – Baroque violin (Pretoria), **Dillon Davie** – Theorbo (long-necked lute), **Jens Eggers** – Baroque violin (Cape Town), **Handri Loots** – Traverso (baroque flute), **Esté Meerkotter** – Traverso (baroque flute), **Margot Smythe** – Baroque cello,
Ute Smythe – Baroque violin, **Tanya Spiller** – Baroque violin

VOCAL SOLOISTS

Glynnis Kanar – soprano, **Leigh Nudelman** – soprano, **Joao Ribeiro** – countertenor,
Doron Kanar – tenor/baritone, **Adam H. Golding** – tenor/baritone,
Andrew Gould – Bass

THE LEWANDOWSKI CHORALE

Sopranos: Leigh Crymble, Laura Dube (Pretoria), Di Golding, Glynnis Kanar, Jeannette Menasce, Penny Satikge, and Kecia Rust

Altos: Gillian Berkowitz, Martina Griller-Mushel (Pretoria), Itta Roussos (Cape Town), Carol Slabolepszy (Cape Town), and Kathryn Wheeler (Cape Town)

Tenors: David Britany (Cape Town), Michael Golding, Rov. Anton Klein (Pretoria), Rodney Katzew, Mark Lephoto (Pretoria), and Marc Shapiro

Basses: Lyall Chazan (Pretoria), Phillip Gordon (Cape Town), Adam Midzuk, and Robbie Potenza

Ben Schoeman Auditorium

Afrikaans Hoer Seunskool

22 October, 15:30

PRETORIA

Temple Israel, Wynberg

28 October, 20:00

29 October, 15:00

CAPE TOWN

The Lewandowski Chorale

In 2011 Adam travelled to Berlin to attend the first ever Louis Lewandowski festival. He immediately resolved to form a choir dedicated to the music of Lewandowski and his contemporaries and to take the choir to perform at the second Lewandowski Festival in Berlin, which they did in 2012 and again in 2016.

The Chorale is a non-denominational group of singers who have fallen in love with this exquisite music. Although we focus on Jewish Liturgical music, the group has no religious affiliation, and we welcome all.

The group has performed regularly in Johannesburg and has toured Cape Town and Berlin. The Lewandowski Chorale also hosted the first festival of mixed-voice Jewish music in Johannesburg and Cape Town in 2016 featuring The Synagogal Ensemble Berlin, Imilonji KaNtu and The Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir.

The Lewandowski Chorale welcomes new singers, and no experience or musical knowledge is required. If you are interested, please message us on Facebook.

Feedback and support

A little goes a long way! If you enjoyed the concert, we ask that you leave us a review on Facebook or Google and follow us on YouTube. Doing this will really help us in reaching a wider audience for future concerts!

Google

In Google, search African Renaissance Ensemble. In the info box on the right, click "Write a Review". Please leave us 5 stars and tell us what you enjoyed and your usual musical preference.

Facebook

Go to bit.ly/renaissancereview and click **Yes** in the box "Do you recommend The African Renaissance Ensemble". Tell us what you enjoyed as well as your usual musical preference. It's better to do this from a computer and not from a phone.

You can copy and paste the same review for both.

If you have any other comments or suggestions, please rather complete the online form on our website to share this with us directly:

earlymusic.co.za/contact

YouTube

Follow us on YouTube: [YouTube/@africanrenaissanceensemble](https://www.youtube.com/@africanrenaissanceensemble). We'd love you to leave a comment on some of our videos. The more likes and comments, the more people will see our work!







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Special thanks to **The Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble** for the loan of the **theorbo**, **Anna Stoddard** for the **harpsichord**, and **Temple Israel** for hosting the performances.