

**Recital Program:
Andrew Henderson**

**Temple Emanu-El NYC
Sunday, January 25, 2015 ~ 4 PM**

Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 65 Allegro moderato e serio Adagio Andante, Recitativo Allegro assai vivace	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Psalm Prelude, Set 1, No. 1, Op. 32 (1916)	Herbert Howells (1892-1983)
Rosh Hashanah (from <i>Funf Fest-Praeludien</i> , Op. 37)	Louis Lewandowski (1821/3-1894)
Shavat Vayinafash (1968)	Herman Berlinski (1910-2001)
The Burning Bush (1956)	Berlinski
From <i>Ten Hebrew Folk Songs & Folk Dances</i> , Op. 22 A Song and Dance of the Feast A Love Song A Chassidic Religious Song A Lullaby A Merry Wedding Dance	Lazare Saminsky (1882-1959) arr. Andrew Henderson
From <i>Symphonie No. 1</i> , Op. 14 Final	Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Felix Mendelssohn's greatest contribution to organ repertoire is found in his six sonatas composed between 1844 and 1845. An English publishing firm, Coventry & Hollier, instigated their composition by commissioning the composer for a set of organ voluntaries. The *First Sonata* contains some of Mendelssohn's most brilliant writing for the instrument. The powerful first movement calls for "echo" effects from a secondary manual keyboard, which can be effectively achieved at Temple Emanu-El by using the Echo division pipes adjacent to the rear balcony. The second movement is poignant and lyrical, betraying Mendelssohn's gift for elegantly polished melodic ideas. The third movement presents two contrasting ideas: quiet linear writing alternating with loud chordal interjections, leading directly into the ebullient finale.

A longtime professor of composition at the Royal College of Music in London, **Herbert Howells** composed for the organ throughout his life. His first set of *Three Psalm Preludes* was his first major work for the instrument, each one uniquely based on a different verse selected from the psalms. Howells chose the sixth verse of Psalm 34 as the inspiration for his first prelude in the set: “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.” The entire work is like an arc in which the suppliant’s prayer becomes more and more intense, building to a majestic climax and then returning to the serenity of the opening, providing ample opportunity to hear the quiet flute and string stops of the Temple’s sanctuary organ.

Louis Lewandowski received his musical training at the Berlin Academy of Arts, becoming much involved in the music making of the Jewish community in Berlin. In 1844 he was appointed to be the first known synagogue choir director, subsequently taking the post of choir director at the Neue Synagogue upon its completion in 1864. He wrote innovative music for the Jewish liturgy for cantor, choir and organ, and advocated for the controversial installation of an organ in the Neue Synagogue. His *Five Festival Preludes* for organ were published in 1889. His Prelude for Rosh Hashanah is based on a well-known festival motif.

German-born American composer **Herman Berlinski** was the associate organist at Temple Emanu-El from 1954 to 1963. His career and musical output were wide-ranging, and he produced many intricate, complex musical scores. Berlinski composed *The Burning Bush* in 1956 for the opening recital on Emanu-El’s then recently renovated sanctuary organ, dedicating it to the congregation’s president, Mr. Saul Dribben, with the first performance played by the Temple’s virtuoso organist, Dr. Robert Baker. The piece is a commanding interpretation of the story from Exodus Chapter 3, incorporating 12-tone compositional techniques and using the rhythm of the Hebrew words that God spoke to Moses: “I AM who I AM”, which permeates the piece:



The organ prelude *Shavat Vayinafash* (“God rested and was refreshed”) embodies the peace implied by the descriptive title and makes skillful and challenging use of the organist’s ability to produce unusual sound palettes and textures.

Temple Emanu-El’s music director from 1924 to 1959, **Lazare Saminsky** was a prominent figure in the world of Jewish music, active as a composer and author. A native of Russia, his career took him to Tblisi (Georgia), France and England, and he came to the United States in 1920. His piano suite *Ten Hebrew Folksongs and Folk Dances*, Op. 22 (1924) betrays his extensive research into the Jewish religious and folk melodies of Russia and Eastern Europe.

Louis Vierne, the organist at Notre Dame in Paris from 1900 until his death in 1937, was born blind. He was a pupil of two great musical figures of 19th century France, César Franck and Charles-Marie Widor. Vierne was a widely known concert organist and made a number of recital tours to North America. The first of his six masterful organ symphonies was published in 1899. The Final is the most popular movement, with the theme frequently played on powerful pedal stops played by the feet, with rapid, virtuosic writing for the hands.