



Music Man:

*Up Close and Personal
with Yitzy Spinner*

By Rochelle Maruch Miller

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Powerful, professional, and highly polished in every aspect, this is a debut album like no other, a treasure trove of musical gems. That “you and i” is distinctively different from any CD on the market is testament to the artist’s diverse musical talents. What Yitzy Spinner brings to Jewish music is a gorgeous, classically trained voice in the tradition of the great lyrical masters, past and present. He has a rich, melodious voice you’ve heard on seventeen albums in collaboration with other performers. He has recently taken that voice to a new level: as a graduate of the illustrious Belz School of Music, Yitzy studied with such distinguished educators as Cantors Joseph Malovany, Bernard Beer, and Sherwood Goffin, and was selected to participate in an exclusive program, where he is being mentored by Cantor Malovany. Yitzy is not merely another singer who has decided to come out with yet another album, but rather a gifted performer. Taking center stage is second nature to him, ever since he enchanted audiences as a star soloist with the Miami Boys Choir for five years. By the time he was sixteen, he was in demand as a wedding singer.

Since then, he has been performing at weddings and live in concert at world-class venues the world over. His fans have, for years, been asking for a solo recording, and his long awaited debut album is proof positive that all good things come to those who wait.

What sets this album apart from everything else on the market is that it reflects the artist himself. “First and foremost, I composed and wrote all the songs,” Yitzy explained in an exclusive interview with JE Magazine. “I don’t just compose for the sake of composing; I try to translate parts of my life into my music. It’s a very unique perspective because whereas a singer usually buys the compositions from the composer, this CD is truly representative of my musicality. It’s very diverse in style and music; I have a lot of musical influences and play piano and guitar.” Indeed, throughout his years, Yitzy studied both musical instruments with several of the most prestigious teachers in New York. Both of his parents are musically gifted, and he grew up in a home ensconced in the sounds of beautiful music.

“It’s been a lifelong dream of mine to release an album,” says Yitzy, “and it seemed like the right time to do it.” Once the decision had been made, it was essential to find a producer who shared Yitzy’s own standards of excellence and who would seamlessly orchestrate it to perfection. That is precisely why he approached Avi Newmark. “I chose to work with Avi

because he’s one of the best producers in the industry. Avi’s reputation is stellar, and it speaks volumes. Listen to Dovid Gabay’s “Legabay”. To see his uncompromising diligence – it’s apparent in every one of his noteworthy productions. He won’t settle for anything less than perfection, which is what I wanted my album to be. It took us two-and-a-half years from the album’s inception to its culmination, but it was truly a labor of love and an achievement of which I’m very proud. Every track has an experience of its own. Each song had to be framed within its own setting. And because every studio has a unique vibe, we ended up in nine different studios. We recorded in New York, New Jersey, Israel, and Turkey to achieve an authentic setting and Authenticity was integral to our production. For example, most



contemporary albums feature a Middle-Eastern track. Because we wanted 'Oseh Shalom,' our Middle-Eastern song to be truly authentic, we recorded it in Istanbul, with Turkish instruments. We're also very proud to feature the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra on the CD – they truly take our songs to a new level."

"Music is very much a part of who I am. It's in my blood. Because I grew

thoughts being expressed that some people have never heard before."

Music, for Yitzy, is a very personal expression. And because he composes every song that he sings, he is able to interpret them as they were meant to be. Consider the beautiful and soul-stirring "Neshoma," which refers to the purity of the soul. "The melody has to match the words," Yitzy explains. "I was only able to do compose a melody to these words when my son was born

quintessential rock -- 'Tzur and 'L'maan Achai,' which may be more palatable to the uninformed listener, and 'Peeha' and 'Acheinu,' which are more in the style of what people are accustomed to. We feature the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra on four songs to add depth and enrich the effect. 'Lefonai' is edgy and exciting. It's a big band shuffle, and we did it because -- why not? If we could give people something that is new and fresh, why shouldn't we go for

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up in a very musical family, I was always exposed to Jewish music and I appreciate it. By the time I was ten years old, I was sharing the stage with the 'Who's Who' of Jewish music and I grew up in the business. However, I think that over the years, people have become more open-minded about their musical options -- the instruments, arrangements, and orchestrations. What we've attempted to do with 'you and i' is to provide something fresh - a new compass. There are new musical

and I held him in my arms for the first time. It's very emotional and heartfelt."

Produced and directed by Avi Newmark, "you and i" features musical arrangements by Yitzy Spinner, Steve Bill, Danny Flam, and Sezgin Gezgin, string arrangements by Leib Yaacov Rigler, and Choir arrangements by Mike Boxer and Yitzy Spinner. Each of the twelve tracks is a standout and is unique in its own right.

"There's quite a collection here. We have

it? Musical authenticity has been a key component all throughout the CD, and our calypso track maintains the true flavor of the setting by incorporating real steel drums. I'm very excited about this project. . We've taken chances and explored new musical thoughts. I'm grateful to Avi Newmark for making it all come together perfectly. He extended himself over and above my every expectation and made this project breathe."