



# EUROPEAN CANTORS ASSOCIATION

*The future of synagogue music*

Patrons: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Cantors Naftali Herstik, Joseph Malovany, Asher Hainovitz

Director Alex Klein: [alex@cantors.eu](mailto:alex@cantors.eu)

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## European Cantors Association Newsletter No 6, October 2021

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### My dear Friends **ECA enjoys great international collaborations**

Over the last few years ECA has enjoyed **world-wide attention and acclaim**. We have presented programmes about British cantors for the Cantors Assembly in America and devised programmes with Edgware United Synagogue in the UK. Right now, we working with the United Synagogue here and are collaborating with the Milken Centre for American Jewish Music at UCLA in their **Kol Nidre** conference. <https://schoolofmusic.ucla.edu/event/2021-10-10/>. Speakers of International renown endorsed Michael Jolles cantors' encyclopaedia at the ECA launch on 6 October (see page 3).



Cantors, Rabbis and Synagogue leaders from around the world joined ECA for our own series – **The Voice of the Cantor (VOC)** to discuss some of the burning issues of the day. (See them all again on the ECA YouTube Channel [first series of Voice of the Cantor](#). In our current VOC series, fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7.00pm, I am interviewing Cantors from Israel, the UK, Canada and the US, who have made great contributions to the cantorate – see page 4 and [www.cantors.eu](http://www.cantors.eu).

Our **ECA Academic Wing** has partnered with the Universities of Leeds 2015 and Hannover 2019 in presenting two international conferences *Magnified and Sanctified* on the music of Jewish prayer. Working with UCLA and the University for Music and Dance in Hanover, we currently collaborate in a weekly COZ programme <https://jewishmusic.hcommons.org/conversations-on-zoom-coz/>.

Before lockdown, we brought students and teachers from Tel Aviv Cantorial Institute of Israel to preside over our **ECA European Cantors Conventions** in Prague and Budapest. We will be returning to Budapest for the next **European Cantors Convention** scheduled for Wednesday 2 to Sunday 6 November 2022 at the beautifully refurbished Rumbach synagogue. There will be a scintillating array of international teachers, mentors, and people to inspire the next generation of prayer leaders. **Being unaffiliated**, ECA can bring you the very best practitioners, teachers and those that succeed in leading prayer with our ancient and traditional music, wherever they can be found. Book the dates now. We hope to see you there and include you in the Shabbat services and choral concerts in this beautiful city. (See more details on page 2)

With warm wishes, **Alex Klein** Director European Cantors Association. [alex@cantors.eu](mailto:alex@cantors.eu)  
*I thank all those that sent me birthday greetings on my 70<sup>th</sup> this year. I would love to share my birthday book with you – click here: <http://www.cantors.eu/Alex%20Klein%20Birthday%20Book.pdf>*



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### European Cantors Convention returns to Budapest – November 2022

ECA is on track for the 14<sup>th</sup> Convention. We have been invited back to Budapest to partner with the Hungarian Jewish community who will host our convention in the recently restored Rumbach Street Synagogue. Covid permitting, this will take place from Wednesday 2 to Sunday 6 November 2022.



Registration will be at lunch time on Wednesday 2 November. Convention sessions, presentations, teaching sessions, masterclasses take place all day Thursday. On Friday we finish early in time for glorious choral and cantorial shabbat services and meals. Convention will include a tour of historic Jewish Budapest for delegates and guests. There will be formal and informal concerts.

Already the following have indicated their eagerness to be on the faculty: **Asher Hainovitz, Azi Schwartz, Beny Maissner, Mark Kligman, and Amalia Kedem**. We are busy planning the themes and the programme and locating the best hotels at the best prices and such information as well as the cost will be available later in the year.

Delegates have said that ECA conventions *provide deep learning and generous sharing in a warm and welcoming atmosphere*. At this planning stage you could let us know what you would really want to see happen in Budapest and what are the key issues that will enable you to attend – or prevent you from attending. Contact [alex@cantors.eu](mailto:alex@cantors.eu) to have a conversation

See a five-minute resume of the 13<sup>th</sup> convention in Hanover in January 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkOh5JTnb64>



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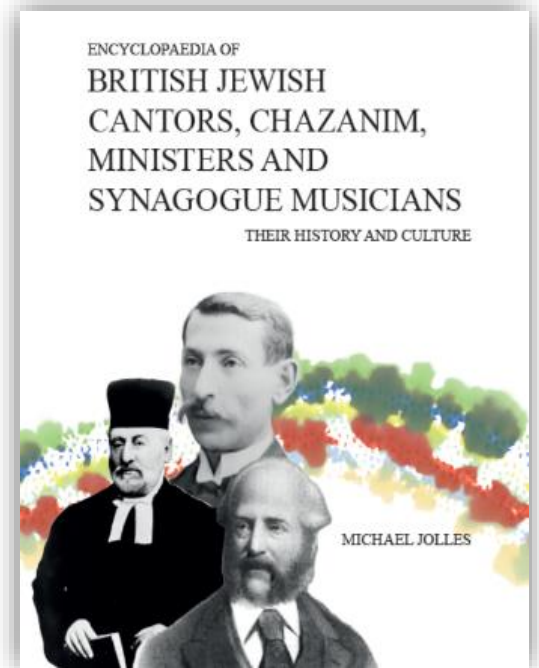
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### Michael Jolles's Cantors Encyclopaedia

*"The Jolles Encyclopaedia is an astounding accomplishment and one I will be referring to for decades, I expect. I've barely cracked the surface and am already floored by the beautiful devotion of your research endeavour".* Dr Jeremiah Lockwood, New York.

The European Cantors Association (ECA) was honoured to launch Dr Michael Jolles's ***Encyclopaedia of British Jewish Cantors, Chazanim, Ministers and Synagogue Musicians: their history and culture*** on 6 October 2021.

Up to now cantors have been largely ignored by historians. At last, we have, in Jolles Encyclopaedia, a dedicated and comprehensive introduction to cantors and cantorial music, as well as documentation of over 2000 members of the profession who have served in the UK from 1656 to the present day. This compilation, ten years in the making, includes not only the great chazanim in the UK, such as the Kusevitskys and Mombachs that people have heard of, but also includes all those who have served – and those who still serve in this capacity – up and down the country in synagogues large and small. In its over 870 pages, Dr Michael Jolles, the independent researcher and eminent Jewish historian has compiled fascinating information not available anywhere else. The work is continually being revised and added to as readers write in with additional information. From time-to-time updated versions will be posted for download. **To download a copy of the Encyclopaedia** email: [DownloadJollesEncyclopaedia@cantors.eu](mailto:DownloadJollesEncyclopaedia@cantors.eu) and **to write to the editors suggesting additional material**, amendments, photographs, discographies, references to academic sources, and links to appropriate websites email [EditorialJollesEncyclopaedia@cantors.eu](mailto:EditorialJollesEncyclopaedia@cantors.eu).



Guest speakers from around the world at the launch event on Wednesday 6 October spoke of its uniqueness and wealth of information. They included **Professor Mark Kligman** of UCLA, **Dr Alexander Knapp** Research Associate, SOAS, University of London; **Michael Goldstein** President of the United Synagogue, London; **Dr Amalia Kedem**, Senior Archivist of the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem; **Rabbi Dr Raphael Zarum** Dean of the London School of Jewish Studies; **Cantor Robert Kieval**, Past President of the Cantors Assembly USA; Cantor **Matt Austerklein** Halle-Wittenberg University; **David Prager** of London and Cantor **Yehuda Marx of Manchester**, (of the editorial team); and **Dr Michael Jolles** himself.

ECA welcomes this focus on cantors and the cantorate - especially at a time when cantors continue to be disregarded in the orthodox synagogues of the United Kingdom. There is a real danger of their profession collapsing altogether, for lack of standards required, training, and employment conditions.

(You can see and listen to this launch event again on the ECA YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilbPfCkxR0Y>)



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### The Voice of the Cantor (VOC)-2 <https://bit.ly/eca-voc2>

Following the success of our initial **Voice of the Cantor** sessions, ECA brings you a second series - VOC-2. Wednesdays at 7.00pm UK time continuing Wednesday 27 October with Jackie Mendelson.

In the [first series of Voice of the Cantor](#) we discussed contemporary issues with panels of cantors from across the religious spectrum, and the globe. Topics ranged from the need for Nusach and the Carlebach Conundrum, to the challenges to the cantorate of Modern Orthodoxy. The series also covered cantors in re-emerging communities in Europe and the rise of the female cantor. (You can listen to all these panel discussions again on this link above)

**For VOC-2**, ECA Director Alex Klein will talk to luminaries of the cantorate. The series began on Wednesday October 13th with Alex talking to Beny Maissner (right) Cantor Emeritus at Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto; conductor and music director of Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir. Beny is revered as a cantor, concert performer, organiser, and teacher worldwide



**On 27 October**, Alex will be interviewing Cantor **Jacob Mendelson**, (left) a graduate of Hebrew Union College and the Juilliard School, who is an acclaimed cantor, composer, performer and teacher. Future sessions will include **Cantor Robert Kieval** (right) a Past President of the Cantors Assembly, he was Cantor at B'nai Israel of Rockville, Maryland from 1977 until his recent retirement. He now teaches at the Jewish Theological Seminary which recently awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.



Others to be interviewed in the series will be **Deborah Katchko-Gray** (left) a fourth generation cantor and the second to serve a conservative synagogue; **Moshe Dubiner** (right) currently the longest continuously serving cantor in the UK; also **Faith Steinsnyder**, **Rabbi Michael Plaskow**, and other distinguished practitioners. You can see the current programme at [www.cantors.eu](http://www.cantors.eu).



**ECA VOC-2 Sessions continue fortnightly from October 27 at 7.00pm UK time.** Register to join the rest of the programme on Wednesdays <https://bit.ly/eca-voc2>.

To listen to this first programme of VOC 2 again go to [www.cantor.eu](http://www.cantor.eu) to see how to connect to the ECA YouTube channel.



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### The European Cantors Association

*Bringing together all who love Jewish liturgical music and the power it brings to prayer*

**The European Cantors Association (ECA) is an independent organisation** established in the United Kingdom in 2012. It is a framework for cantors, prayer leaders and interested lay people across the spectrum of Jewish worship, to engage in dialogue, training and profile-raising to ensure that the beautiful and unique music of Jewish prayer, continues to enhance synagogue services for generations to come. ECA's work is endorsed by several distinguished rabbis and cantors and recognises best practice wherever it exists.

**ECA partners with several international organisations** to create programmes that are relevant to cantors of today and those they work closely with. ECA presented a Zoom series in 2021, The Voice of the Cantor (VOC) tackling some of the burning issues in the cantorial world today. ECA's Academic Wing presents International Conferences on the music of Jewish prayer in partnership with universities around the world.

**ECA arranges European Cantors Conventions** along orthodox lines in the UK and European cities that are recognised for providing deep learning and generous sharing in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Sessions deal with what is most relevant to the cantor and prayer leader of today. Teachers and presenters are chosen for their experience and expertise and are of the highest calibre. Delegates are able to secure professional feedback. Daily services are held, shacharit, minchah and maariv. Shabbat Choral and cantorial services are arranged with local communities. All food served is kosher. Shabbat services as well as concerts are open to the public who share the love of synagogue music past, present and future.

**All who are interested** in the music of the synagogue and the role and art of the cantor or prayer leader are welcome to join the European Cantors Association and attend its activities.

**ECA Membership is free. To join [download the membership form](#)**

**Donations are welcome** to support ECA scholarship programme

**To make a donation**, Transfer to the ECA Bank:

Sort code 402014, Account name: European Cantors Association

Account number 91408429 (International Bank Account Number GB60MIDL40201491408429)

**ECA has an active YouTube** channel where you can see all the previous VOC programmes; the Jolles Encyclopaedia launch; Chief Rabbi Mirvis affirming how important nusach is; and the Julian Klein Memorial Concert of 2008 at Finchley Synagogue.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK2qAUllsThTg9oe7mDilkA/videos>

**For further and continuing information** on the European Cantors Association, join our

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cantors.eu/>

or send us your email address to be put on the Newsletter list. Also see the

ECA Website: [www.cantors.eu](http://www.cantors.eu) **Twitter:** [@eurocantorsassn](https://twitter.com/eurocantorsassn) **Instagram:** [europeancantors](https://www.instagram.com/europeancantors)

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