

IN MEMORIAM
EDWARD C. GREENE
1926-2008

We mourn the death of Edward C. Greene, an honorary life member of the Union for Reform Judaism Board.

Involved in nearly every facet of the Union, Ed was a member of the Executive Committee; made meaningful contributions to the NAC, the College, Youth, Development, Communications, Dues Policy Review, Biennial Program, Board Alumni, and MUM committees; and served as president of the Southwest Council. He helped found the Union's Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, Texas, serving as its founding chairman; and was president of Temple Shalom in Dallas, the congregation he helped to establish. His Jewish commitments extended to the Wise Academy Reform Jewish Day School, the World Union for Progressive Judaism, and other Jewish organizations.

A Navy veteran of World War II, Ed later became an entrepreneur in real estate development. He was also a private pilot, avid skier, duplicate bridge player, and lover of Afghan hounds.

We extend our deepest condolences to his wife Ilene, his children, step-children, and twelve grandchildren.



IN MEMORIAM
CHARLES J. ROTHSCHILD, JR.
1921-2008

We mourn the death of Charles J. Rothschild, Jr., an honorary chairman of the Union Board of Trustees.

Devoted to the Jewish community, Chuck participated actively in the Union for Reform Judaism for four decades, serving as president of the NJ-West Hudson Valley Council, chairing the New Congregations Committee, becoming treasurer, and playing an instrumental role in redesigning and revitalizing the Maintenance of Union Membership system. One of his great achievements as chairman was to establish a Long Range Planning Committee as a source for new Movement leadership; indeed, every subsequent chairman served on that committee (or in the committee's next incarnation). A past president of Temple Emeth in Teaneck, New Jersey, he was also actively involved with many other Jewish and civic organizations, including Hackensack University Medical Center, where he served as president.

A pilot in World War II, Chuck later became a management trainee at Campus Sweater and Sportswear Company—and worked his way up to president and CEO.

We extend our deepest condolences to his children, Judy, Carol, and Charlie, and his six grandsons.



Hava Negilla to Hip-Hop

continued from page 79

was inspired by the Israeli propensity to express political views on bumper stickers. The lyricist, well-known Israeli author David Grossman, assembled a broad scope of actual Israeli bumper-sticker messages—right-wing, left-wing, religious, secular, angry, funny, bitter, satirical, etc.—positioning and juxtaposing them to fashion a humorous look at Israeli society and its internal politics: “A whole generation demands peace/Let the IDF win/A strong nation makes peace/Let the IDF kick their butts...”

What sparked songwriters to return to music based on religious sources?

It was certainly a departure from the spirit of the secular Zionist founders who saw religiosity as archaic and inconsistent with the “new Jewish culture” they were intent on creating. That is why they promoted songs that were linked to the ideals of a civil religion, based on the love of the land and self-reliance. Today, however, these Zionist ideals are no longer as

compelling and fulfilling; in the 21st century, many Israelis are searching for ways to fill that gap and are turning to the religion of their parents and grandparents for inspiration. Numerous Israeli musicians have become more religious and their search for spirituality in Judaism is reflected in their music. This year, at least two of the ten songs on the Israeli annual hit parade are sung by Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox musicians, and their lyrics recall religious experiences or quote liturgical texts. And these days the lines separating “religious music”—termed neo-Hasidic—and mainstream Israeli music have blurred; you’ll find songs by religious musicians such as the brothers Aharon and Yonathan Razel played on secular Israeli radio stations, as well as secular musicians such as Shlomo Gronich writing songs with words from religious Jewish sources.

At the same time, *piyutim* (liturgical poems) that have been sung regularly in Sephardic communities for generations are now gaining a wider audience. All around the country, groups of religious, secular, Ashkenazic, and Sephardic Jews interested in learning more about their

spiritual roots join together weekly to learn and sing these songs. Also mainstream Israeli musicians are collaborating with Sephardic *paytanim* (musicians specializing in *piyutim*).

In 2007 the singer Meir Banai released the highly successful album *Shema Koli* (“Listen to My Voice”), which is dedicated entirely to the lyrics of the *piyutim*. The song “*Lecha Eli*” (“To You, My Lord”) [Track 12] features these words by the 12th-century rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra: “To You my Lord, my passion/In You is my will and my love/To You my heart and kidneys/To You my soul and spirit/To You my hands, to You my feet/And from You is my character/To You myself, to You my blood/and my skin with my body.”

What does Israeli hip-hop and *piyutim* say about Israeli culture today?

Over sixty years, once-marginalized genres such as *Mizrachi*, rock, hip-hop, and religious music have become part of the Israeli musical mainstream. The definition of “Israeli music” is much broader and more expansive than ever. □