BEYLE100

Celebrating a Century of the Yiddish Songs, Poetry & Artistic Vision of Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman (1920-2013)

Premiered live on YouTube and Facebook
August 9, 2020, 1:30 p.m EDT
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Poetry & Artistic Vision of
Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman
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This program booklet includes:

~ The words to songs and poems performed during the BEYLE100 event. Words are in Yiddish transliteration and English translation.

~ Translations of spoken tributes, one by Beyle’s son and one by a close friend, and comments made throughout the program by the emcee.

~ A list of performers, contributors, and supporters.

About the music and poems:

~ Beyle wrote the words and composed the melodies, with two exceptions: “Ba mayn mames shtibele” (“At My Mother’s House”) is a folk song, and the music for “Tunkl grin” (“Dark Green”) was composed by Binyumen Schaechter.

~ Music for accompanied songs is arranged by the performers.
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English translations: 1Charne Schaechter; 2Paulette (Pesye) Schneider with Binyumen Schaechter; 3Thomas (Tevye) Bird; 4Lucette van den Berg with Willy Brill; 5Zackary Sholem Berger; 6Michael Alpert
Comments by Itzik Gottesman (Beyle’s son)

I just found what may be the first thing that my mother published: an article from 1953 about children’s folklore in the journal of the Jewish Teacher’s Seminary in New York. The brief article reflects my mother’s view of the Yiddish cultural world. She writes that we need not only to collect the Yiddish folklore treasures of earlier generations but also to create new poetry, rhymes, plays, and songs for the current generation. New creations are a sign of a living culture, and her attitude had a great influence on the Yiddish world at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century.

She lived to hear her own poems and her own folk songs sung and played and recorded by singers throughout the world. Today’s celebration in honor of her 100th birthday is an appropriate and lovely way to highlight what an important role she played in Yiddish culture during the past fifty years. All the singers and participants in today’s program bear witness that Yiddish culture is alive and is getting richer. It would have given her great pleasure.

Today’s program was the initiative of Binyumen Schaechter, and he put a lot of effort and labor into putting it together. A big thanks to Binyumen and to all the organizers and participants.
**SHA, SHA**

Sha, sha, ale vintn avekgeblozn,
Sha, sha, vider gele blimelekh un grozn,
Yo, yo, kh’makh avek di khmares mit der hant,
Yo, yo, s’klort zikh vider uf der horizont.
   Do, dort, zestu vider a heymish ponim,
   Do, dort, herstu vider a heymish vort.
Sha, sha, federlaykhte tritelek, vi frier,
Sha, sha, kumt ver un se klapt on in mayn tir.
Yo, yo, s’tsindt zikh on a likhtl un ikh shver,
Yo, yo, s’iz a nayer nign vos ikh her.
   Do, dort, zestu...
Sha, sha, vekt der morgn zikh tsum lebn,
Sha, sha, gib im, oyb du host im vos tsu gebn.
Yo, yo, s’efnt zikh far dir a breyter veg,
Yo, yo, vider gele blimelekh un teg.
   Do, dort, zestu...

**HUSH, HUSH**

Hush, hush, all the winds blown away,
Hush, hush, yellow flowers and grass anew,
Yes, yes, I wave away the clouds with my hand,
Yes, yes, and the horizon is clear again.
   Here and there, you see a familiar face again,
   Here and there, you hear a friendly word again.

Hush, hush, feathery light steps as before,
Hush, hush, someone is knocking at my door,
Yes, yes, a candle lights up and I swear,
Yes, yes, it’s a new tune that I hear.
   Here and there...

Hush, hush, morning comes to life,
Hush, hush, give him, if you have something to give,
Yes, yes, a wide road lies before you,
Yes, yes, yellow flowers and days once more.
   Here and there...
AN EMESER KONTSERT

Lomir zingen,
Lomir zingen,
Yedes grezele zingt mit.
Beymer shushken,
Khvalyes plyushken,
Zogt, ikh bet aykh, vos zingt nit?

Bern brumen,
Binen zhumen,
S’zingt di gantse velt – Hert, hert!
Feygl pishtshen,
fayers trishtshen,
S’iz an emeser kontsert!

Poykt der regn
Af di vegn
Un der duner – trask! A klang.
Shpilt a vintl
Af a fleytl
Aza lebedik gezang!

A REAL CONCERT

Let’s sing,
Let’s sing,
Each blade of grass is singing along.
Trees are whispering,
Waves are splashing,
What, I ask you, isn’t singing?

Bears are roaring,
Bees are buzzing,
The whole world is singing – listen, listen!
Birds are tweeting,
Fires are crackling,
It’s a real concert!

Rain is pounding
On the roads
And the thunder – boom! A noise.
A breeze is playing
On a little flute
What a lively song!

(hemshekh)
AN EMESER KONTSERT
(hemshekh)

Vu fun vanen
Fayfn banen,
Tsimblen reyern: Bokh, bokh!
Un di ketslekh,
Oy di pitslekh,
Myowken: “Mame, gib undz nokh!”

Hintl bilt,
shrayt un shilt,
Skripet beyz an alte tir,
Nor di beste
Fun di greste
Zingers, kinder, dos ze’mir!

A REAL CONCERT
(continued)

From somewhere
Trains are whistling,
Dulcimers are sounding: Bam, bam!
And the kittens,
Oh, the tiny ones,
Are meowing: “Mama, give us more!”

A dog is barking,
Yelling and cursing,
An old door is creaking angrily,
But the best
Of all the singers
Are we, the children!
**FLATERL**

Fun blat tsu blat,
Fun blum tsu blum,
Flaterl, flaterl,
Flit arum.
“Royt un grin,
Gel un blo,
Ot bistu dort,
Ot bistu do.

Tra-la-la-la...

**BUTTERFLY**

From leaf to leaf,
From flower to flower,
Butterfly, butterfly,
Flying around.
“Red and green,
Yellow and blue,
Now you’re there,
Now you’re here.

Now you’re here,
Now you’re there,
You can’t stay put
In one place.
Butterfly, butterfly,
You’re so pretty!
I don’t want to catch you,
No, oh no!

Tra-la-la-la...

(heimshekh)
**FLATERL**
*(hemshesh)*

*Fli zhe, flaterl,*  
*Flater avek,*  
*Di velt iz groys,*  
*Hot nisht keyn ek.”*  
*Fun blat tsu blat*  
*Fun blum tsu blum,*  
*Flaterl, flaterl*  
*Flit arum.*

*Tra-la-la-la...*

---

**BUTTERFLY**
*(continued)*

Fly then, butterfly,  
Flutter away.  
The world is big,  
It has no end.”  
From leaf to leaf,  
From flower to flower,  
Butterfly, butterfly  
Flying around.

*Tra-la-la-la...*
**DER FOYGL UN IKH**

Er shrayt (mentshn meynen az zey zingen)
Vi ikh kum nor aroys
Shrayt er
S’iz der gortn zayner
Meynt er
Ikh entfer im op
Af mayn eygenem shteyger
Er farshteyt
Un er beyzert zikh vayter
Ikh tu mir mayns
Tsi se gefelt im
Tsi nisht
A foygl a beyzer
S’vert zayn kol nisht
Farvisht
Mir farshteyen zikh voyl
Zayn shpitsiker shnobl
Hilekh in der velt arayn
Un hakt un pikt
Pikholts!
Shray ikh un pruv
Im farshteyn
A kol klingt mit
S’iz zayns tsi neyn?
Ver ken dem feyglishn sod
Dergeyn?!

---

**THE BIRD AND I**

He yells (people think they sing)
As soon as I come outside
He yells
It’s his garden
He believes
I answer him
In my own way
He understands
And he is still angry
I do my own thing
Whether he likes it
Or not
An angry bird
His voice will not be
Erased
We understand each other well
His pointy beak
Echoes everywhere
And bangs and pecks
Woodpecker!
So I yell and try
To understand him
A voice joins in
Is it his or not?
The birdlike secret –
Who can figure it out?!
**SHVARTSE VORONES**

Di shvartse vorones, zey vern nisht mid
Tsu krakeven shtendik dos eygene lid:
Iz kra-kra-kra-kra krakevet men
Dos eyntsike lidle vos me ken.

Libe vorones, efsher, lemay,
Tsi volt ir nisht pruvn a zing tun vos nay?
An andern trel, a frishn tra-la,
Vayl opgenutst shark iz ayer kra-kra.

Di shvartse vorones...

Libe vorones, heybt a mol on
An origineln shnit un fason.
Azoy iz di mode – zi kumt un zi geyt,
Me vert opgeshtanen ven me fargest zikh un shteyt.

Di shvartse vorones...

Khapt uf di klangen tsezeyt arum aykh,
Klaybt zey fun vald, fisht zey fun taykh,
Shept zey fun himl, tsi fun unter der erd,
Un mer keyn kra-kra zol nisht vern gehert!

Di shvartse vorones...

BLACK CROWS

The black crows never tire
They keep on cawing the same old song:
Kra-kra-kra-kra they’re cawing on
The only song they’ve ever known.

Dear crows, how about
Trying to sing something new?
A different trill, another tra-la,
Since your constant kra-kra is very worn out.

Dear crows, start for once
An original style and fashion.
Fashion is like that – it comes and it goes,
You’re left behind if you don’t move ahead.

Catch the sounds scattered around,
Gather them from the woods, fish them from the river,
Draw them from the skies or from under the ground,
And let’s hear no more this kra-kra-ing sound!

The black crows...
**GENDZELEKH**

*Gendzelekh geyen*

*In gendzene reyen,*

*Gendzelekh mit frendzelekh,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*Foroys get der goner,*

*Feter Kaperoner,*

*Un nokh im di gendzelekh,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*Eyns a kleyns, eyns a sheyns,*

*Eyns a brudiks, eyns a reyns,*

*Gendzelekh mit frendzelekh,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*Tsum taykhl, tsum taykhl,*

*Banetsn zikh dos baykhl,*

*Bavashn zikh, bavishn,*

*Derkvikn zikh, derfrishn.*

*Ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga!*

*Ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga!*

*Gendzelekh mit frendzelekh,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

---

**GOSLINGS**

*Goslings are walking*

*In gosling-like rows,*

*Goslings with feathery fringes,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*The gander takes the lead,*

*Uncle Kaperoner,*

*And the goslings follow him,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*A little one, a pretty one,*

*A dirty one, a clean one,*

*Goslings with feathery fringes,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*

*To the stream, to the stream,*

*To wet their bellies,*

*Wash themselves, dry themselves,*

*Take delight, freshen up.*

*Ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga!*

*Ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga, ga!*

*Goslings with feathery fringes,*

*Ga, ga, ga!*
Letter to Beyle on her 100th Birthday
from Ethel Raim

Dearest Beyle,

Last Friday would have been your 100th birthday. I always have such fond memories of your birthday, mostly the many times we gathered together to celebrate with you.

But there is one birthday that stands out for me; your 70th birthday, which we celebrated in Elkins West Virginia, when we co-taught a class in Yiddish singing at the Augusta Heritage Folk Arts Program in 1990.

I remember vividly our 10-hour drive from New York City to Elkins; the students you enthralled in our singing class over the course of a week; how receptive they were to your songs and stories, and how there wasn’t a dry eye in the room after you sang your song *Mayn khaverte Mintsye*.

I also remember how Peggy Seeger, who was also teaching that week at the Heritage Program, would stop you in the hall, on the grounds, in the cafeteria, or just about anywhere and would ask you to say your “reysh” which she could not get over how fabulous the sound was. And Beyle, you did have the most amazing, delicious “reysh.”

Suffice it to say you had a huge impact on our class, many of whom had never heard Yiddish, sung a Yiddish song, met a native Yiddish speaker, and no less encountered such a beautiful and compelling traditional singer as yourself with such an unassuming magnetism. And what an extraordinary and rewarding opportunity it was for me to share this experience with you.

Beyle, I cherish every moment I ever spent with you, and feel eternally grateful to have been in the right place at the right time to connect with you in such a deep way and to have spent as much time as I did with you.

With enduring love,
Ethel
**MAYN KHAVERTE MINTSYE**

Ven kh’brekh durkh di tirk fun ort un fun tsayt,
Shteystu far mir in farnepler vayt;
Un fun unter di tsamen farleygte afir
Du shmeykhlst an eybikn shmeykhl tsu mir,
Mayn khaverte Mintsye.

**MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND MINTSYE**

When I break through the portals of time and space,
You stand before me in a faraway mist;
And from behind the barriers
You smile an eternal smile at me,
My childhood friend Mintsye.

Gevoksn in eynem af der zelbiker gas,
Kinder tsefloygn in shpil un in shpas,
Keshenes ful mit gelektzer un freyd,
Di gore velt far undz ofn un greyt.

Raised together on the same street,
Children wrapped up in games and fun,
With pockets full of laughter and joy,
The whole world was open and waiting for us.

Nu, ver volt gerikht zikh, afile getrakht,
Az no’nt ba der shvel vart a fintstere nakht,
Un undzer shteyngas vi a fayeriker shtrom
Vet vern farshlungen in fintstern t’hom...
Mayn khaverte Mintsye.

Who could have known, or even dreamed,
That right on our doorstep was the darkest night,
And our Shteyngas in a river of flame
Would be swallowed up in a black abyss...
My childhood friend Mintsye.

Ver in gehenem Transnister farshikt,
Ver in di getos fartsamt un farshtikt,
Ver s’iz antlofn ibern Nester vu het,
Du bist gefaln dershosn in veg.

Some to the hell of Transnistria were sent,
Others in stifling ghettos were trapped,
Some beyond the Dniester fled,
You were shot down on the way.

*(hemshekh)*

(continued)
**MAYN KHAVERTE MINTSYE**  
*(hemshekh)*

Nokh der milkhome, ikh gey durkh dayn hoyz,

Pust vi a khurve un hoyl zet es oys,

Un af di trep zitst farnyuret un gro:

A shotn, dayn mame, nor du bist nishto,

*Mayn khaverte Mintsye.*

---

**MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND MINTSYE**  
*(continued)*

After the war, I passed by your house,

An empty, desolate ruin it was,

And on the steps a gray shadow huddled:

Your mother, but you were not there,

My childhood friend Mintsye.
**AZOY LANG**

Azoy lang, azoy lang
Zogn mir zikh “zay gezunt,”
Shoyn kemat funem ershtn bageg’nen.
S’iz di zun ufgegan
Mit ir gantsn tseflam
Un di shotns fun undzer gezeg’nen.

Zay gezunt, zay gezunt,
Tsayt tsu geyn, muz men geyn.
Zay gezunt, tsayt tsu geyn,
Muz men geyn.

Fliyen reges avek,
Fun eyn tog vern teg
Un se zenen gor plutsem shoyn yorn.
Un mir shteyen nokh alts
Un gezegenen zikh,
Khotsh s’iz, dakht zikh, shoyn shpetlekh gevorn.

So Long

So long, so long
We’ve been saying farewell,
Almost from the very first meeting.
The sun rose
With all its flaming
And the shadows of our parting.

Zay gezunt, zay gezunt...  
Farewell, farewell...

Farewell, farewell,
Time to go, I must go.
Farewell, time to go,
I must go.

The moments fly,
One day becomes many
And suddenly it’s been years.
And we’re still here
Saying goodbye,
Although, it seems, it’s getting rather late.
MY HOME, NEW YORK

You’re ashamed to confess it,
That the coal dust,
The gasoline smoke,
The wild noise, the impetuous tumult
Is your home – and you love it.

You won’t admit
That your life,
Like the paved asphalt,
Has become congealed, stone cold.
Not uttering a word to anyone
For days on end.
And this has become the pattern of your
life,
In fact, your preference.

What is there to boast about?
Those who don’t understand
Won’t agree;
And the others – in any event – think:
It’s the best home anywhere.

MAYN HEYM NYU-YORK

Shemst zikh oystszogn,
Az der koyln-porekh,
Gazolin-roykh,
Der vilder getuml, hastik getrib
Iz dayn heym – un du host zi lib.

Vilst nisht tsugebn
Az oykh dayn lebn
Vi der brukirter asfalt
Iz gevorn farglivert, shteyn kalt.
Nisht oystsuredn a vort mit keynem
Teg lang.
Un dos iz gevorn dayn shteyger lebn,

Afle farlang.
Un vos iz do zikh tsu barimen?
Di vos farshteyen es nisht
Veln mit mir nisht aynshtimen;
Un di andere – say vi say meynen:
S’iz di beste fun ale heymen.
A NEW LAW IN NEW YORK

You may live free an easy, without a care –
There’s a new law in force in New York,
A new law, hot off the press:
You’ve got to clean up after your dog!

So you see a man with a newspaper and his dog.
He is of course a dedicated citizen!
He’s a good man, a true civilian, a good patriot!
He follows his dog every step of the way.

Oh, what a wonder!
What a wonder, what a marvel!
All streets, all back alleys,
Nice and clean now, without a smudge.

People, guests, tourists come from all over the world,
To observe our metropolis, and they’re elated.
They walk through Manhattan, street by street,
Admiring their reflections in classy store windows.

A NAY GEZETS IN NYU-YORK

Ir megt shoyn lebn fray on dayges un on zorg –
S’iz aroys a nay gezets in Nyu-york,
A nay gezets frish fun der nodl atsind:
Ir muzt opreynikn nokh ayere hint!

Zet ir eynem trogn a tsaytung zayn hintele nokh.
A getterayer birger, veyst ir, iz er dokh!
A getterayer birger, yo, a patriot!

Geyt er nokh zayn kelevl trot nokh trot...

O, sara khidesh!
Sara khidesh, sara vunder!
Ale gasn, ale hekn,
Reyn un sheyn un on shum flekn atsinder.

S’kumen mentshn, gest, turistn fun gor divelt,
Me bakukt di metropolye, un me kvelt.
Me shpatsirt in Menhetn, gas nokh gas,
Me shpiglt zikh in di vitrines ershte klas.

(hemshekh)
A NEW LAW IN NEW YORK
(continued)

But one New York neighborhood is very different –

In The Bronx they just carry on as usual.

Under shrubs, on the sidewalk – oh, it’s awful –

You can find what to pick up...take it away!

Oh, what a wonder...

A NAY GEZETS IN NYU-YORK
(hemshekh)

Nor eyn kvartal in Nyu-york iz andersh gor –

Di Bronks firt zikh vi zi firt zikh, yor nokh yor.

Unter kustes, af trotuarn – oy, a shrek –

Gefint zikh vos avektsusharn...nemt es avek!

O, sara khidesh...

Nor s’vet kumen aza tog, ikh garantir,

Az s’vet zayn a fargenign a Bronks-shpatsir...

Ale gasn, ale hekn – ay, ay, ay –

Reyn un sheyn un on shum shrekn, alevay!

O, sara khidesh...

But I guaranty that the day will come

When it will be a joy to walk through The Bronx...

All streets, all back alleys – oh, my –

Nice and clean and nothing to fear, may it be so!

Oh, what a wonder...
TSU BINYUMELES BAR-MITSVE

Do you know what day’s today?

FOR BINYUMELE’S BAR MITZVAH

It’s Binyumele’s bar mitzvah!

Folks from near and far away

Have come to the celebration.

TSU BINYUMELES BAR-MITSVE

Do you know what day’s today?

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**TUNKL GRIN**

*Shoyn lang gehat fargesn*
*Dem tunkl grinem reyekh*
*Fun sosnebeymer.*
*Vi er nemt dikh durkh*
*Biz di vortsen fun di hor*
*Un viklt dikh ayn*
*In valdishe balzamen.*
*S’vaksn oys bay yedn trot*
*Kveytn fun dermonen.*
*Krekhtst a tsvayg, a feyglish kol*
*Ruft dikh tsurik: a mol.*
*Sheptshet der vint:*
*Adort, ahin!*
*Sharf un kil un*
*Tunkl grin.*

---

**DARK GREEN**

I had long forgotten
The darkly green scent
Of pine trees.
How it permeates you
To the roots of your hair
And enwraps you
In woody fragrance.
At every step
Blossoms of remembrance.
A branch creaks, a bird’s trill
Calls you back to a time past.
The wind whispers:
Yonder, there!
Cool and keen and
Darkly green.
VOS KUKT ES DORT AROYS FUN DR’ERD?

Vos kukt es dort aroys fun dr’erd?
A blimele, a blimele!
Vos zingt es afn boym dort, hert?
A feygele, a feygele!

A blimele blit, a feygele zingt,
A flaterl flit, a zhabkele shpringt,
Der friling iz shoyn do,
Der friling iz shoyn do.

Der friling iz gekumen, yo!
Der friling, der friling!
Der liber friling iz shoyn do!
Der friling, der friling!

A blimele do, a flaterl dort,
Se zingt un shpringt af yedn ort,
Der friling iz shoyn do,
Der friling iz shoyn do.

WHAT’S THAT PEEKING OUT OF THE GROUND?

What’s that peeking out of the ground?
A flower, a flower!
Who’s singing in the tree there?
A bird, a bird!

A flower is blooming, a bird is singing,
A butterfly is fluttering, a frog is leaping,
Spring is here,
Spring is here.

Spring has come, yes!
Spring, spring!
Our dear spring is here!
Spring, spring!

A flower here, a butterfly there,
There’s singing and leaping everywhere,
Spring is here,
Spring is here.
AF A MIDBER-VEG

Ven du host keyn mol nisiht lib gehat,
Geystu af a pustn midber-veg.
On a zinen, on a tam iz,
Host umzist opgelebt di teg.

Vayl du zest nisiht un du filst nisiht
Vi se shprost aroys der griner tsvit,
Un eyder vos un ven, far dayne oygn,
Hot dayn velt in gantsn opgeblit.

Vos zhe toyg mir dare kortishes,
Vos zey shvimen af di khvalyes um?
Hobn oykh a modne sheynkeyt,
Zeyer hoyt iz ober toyt un shtum.

Ze nor, bruder, vi se shmeykhlen
Un se finklen shtern arum dir!
Pak dayn rentsl mit sheyne zakhn,
Kum nisiht on keyn bidner pasazhir!

ON A DESERT ROAD

If you have never loved,
You walk on a desert path.
Without sense or savor,
You have wasted your days.

Because you don’t see and you don’t feel
The buds that sprout green,
And before you know it, before your very eyes,
Your world has withered away.

What need have I for dried-out driftwood,
Bobbing upon the waves?
Their is also a strange beauty,
Their skin, though, is lifeless and mute.

Look, my friend, at the smiles
And twinklings of the stars around!
Pack your bags with lovely things,
Don’t arrive a sorry traveler!
FRILING

Ikh shmeykh mit freyd dem friling antkegn,
A shmeykhfarshpreyt iber dekher un vegn.
Un ze nor di erd, di kalte vi shteyn –
Sara vunder mit ir iz geshen...

Zi hot zikh tseefnt un fun shpaltn afir
Hot zikh tsefinklt der griner kolir.
Grezer un blumen, bleteleh kleyn –
Sara vunder mit ir iz geshen...

Un du un ikh, vi alding arum,
Frish zikh tseyungt vi di ershte blum.
In dayne oygn kh’hob a finklen derzen –
Sara vunder mit dir iz geshen...

SPRING

I smile with joy in the face of spring,
A smile that spreads over roofs and roads.
Look at the ground, cold and stone –
What a miracle has happened to her...

She opened herself up and from every crack
A green glow radiated.
Grasses and flowers, leaves so small –
What a miracle has happened to her...

And you and I, like all around us,
Refreshed and young again like the first
flower.
I saw the sparkle in your eyes –
What a miracle has happened to you...
**TU BISHVAT**

*Tu bishvat, tu bishvat,*  
*A gut yor aykh, boym un blat!*  
*A gut yor, a gut yor,*  
*Gut yor aykh, grine beymer!*

*Boksers, teytlen un marantsn,*  
*Lomir geyn haynt beymer flantsn!*  
*Lomir geyn, lomir geyn,*  
*Flantsn griner beymer!*

*Iber barg un iber tol,*  
*Vaksn beymer in yisrol,*  
*Vaksn beymer, vaksn beymer*  
*Vaksn grine beymer.*

*Lomir grobn un farzetsn*  
*Un mit vaser zey banetsn,*  
*Beymer, beymer, beymer, beymer,*  
*Zetsn grine beymer!*

*Tu bishvat, tu bishvat,*  
*Lomir zingen a vivat!*  
*A vivat, a vivat,*  
*Tsu di grine beymer!*

---

**TU B’SHEVAT**

*Tu b’Shevat, Tu b’Shevat,*  
*Happy New Year, trees and leaves!*  
*A good year, a good year,*  
*Good year to you, green trees!*

*Carob, dates and oranges,*  
*Let’s go plant trees today!*  
*Let’s go, let’s go,*  
*Plant green trees!*

*Over hill and over dale,*  
*Trees are growing in Israel,*  
*Trees are growing, trees are growing,*  
*Green trees are growing.*

*Let’s dig and plant*  
*And moisten them with water,*  
*Trees, trees, trees, trees,*  
*Planting green trees!*

*Tu b’Shevat, Tu b’Shevat,*  
*Let’s sing hooray!*  
*Hooray, hooray,*  
*To the green trees!*
**S’IZ MATSE DO**

S’iz matse do, kharoyses do  
Un koyses royter vayn.  
S’iz peysekh dokh. S’iz seyder dokh.  
Vos ken nokh ziser zayn?

S’iz kidesh do, kashes do,  
Maykholim mole-tam.  
S’iz yontev dokh, friling dokh.  
Vos ken nokh shener zayn?

Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay,  
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay.

Afikoymen do, elye-novi do,  
Mishpokhe, gute-fraynd.  
S’iz yontev dokh, banayung dokh,  
Vos ken nokh beser zayn?

Hagode do, bonim do,  
Der khokhem un der tam,  
Der vos veyst nisht vos tsu fregn,  
Un der vos fregt nisht stam.

Ay-ay-ay...  
(hemshekh)

**THERE’S MATZAH HERE**

Matzah is here, charoset is here  
And cups of red wine.  
It’s Pesach, of course, and it’s the seder.  
What could be sweeter?

Kiddush is here, the four questions are here,  
Delicious dishes.  
Of course, it’s a holiday and springtime.  
What could be nicer?

Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay,  
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay.

The afikomen is here, Elijah is here,  
Family and friends.  
Of course, it’s a holiday and renewal,  
What could be better?

The Haggadah here, the sons here,  
The wise one and the simpleton,  
The one who doesn’t know what to ask,  
And the one who doesn’t ask at all.

Ay-ay-ay...  
(continued)
S’IZ MATSE DO
(hemshekh)

Der meylekh do, di malke do,
Kneydlekh, fish muz zayn.
Kraytekhtser un khreyn avade.
Vi ken es andersh zayn?

Der nign do, dayeynu do,
Dos tsigele khad-gadyo.
Mertseshem, leshono habo.
Vos ken nokh neenter zayn?

Ay-ay-ay...

THERE’S MATZAH HERE
(continued)

The king is here, the queen is here,
Matzah balls and fish – a must.
Bitter herbs and horseradish, of course.
How could it be any different?

The tune is here, Dayenu is here,
And the little goat – Chad Gadya.
God willing, leshanah ha-ba’ah,
What could be any closer?

Ay-ay-ay...
LEVONE, LEVONE!

Levone, levone, du bist azoy sheyn
Ven du shaynst in der finsterer nakht!
Nor zog mir far vos du host nisht keyn noz
Un di oygn haltstu farmakht?

Levone, levone, vos bistu azoy freylekh
Ven du shaynst in der finsterer nakht?
Bistu a malke, tsi bistu a meylekh?
Zits ikh baym fentster un trakht.

Levone, levone, afn himl dort oybn
Hitstu undz, vi mir dakh,
Ven ikh in mayn betl un zi in ir betl
Shlofn di gantse nakht?

LEVONE, LEVONE!

MOON, MOON!

Moon, moon, you are so lovely
As you shine in the dark night!
But tell me why you have no nose
And you keep your eyes closed?

Moon, moon, why are you so cheerful
As you shine in the dark night?
Are you a queen, or are you a king?
I sit by the window and ponder.

Moon, moon, in heaven above,
Are you guarding us, as it seems,
When I in my bed and she in her bed
Are sleeping through the night?

Moon, moon, I dream about you,
While my eyes are closed.
I see that you are out there alone
With no home in the dark night.
ZILBER-SHTERN

O, ir mayne zilber-shtern,
O, ir himlen mayne blo!
O, ir mayne yunge yorn,
Yunge yorn mer nishto,
Nishto, nishto, nishto,
O, yunge yorn mer nishto.

Kh’bin dergangen bizn shpits barg,
Shnaydn zikh di vegn op.
Shtey ikh itster afn shpits barg,
Firt a tifer barg arop,
Arop, arop, arop.

Kum tsu fliyen, du, mayn odler,
Nem mikh af di fligl dayn
In di bloe, vayte himlen,
Loz mikh nisht in tol arayn,
Arayn, in tol arayn,
O, loz mikh nisht in tol arayn.

Ikh vel zitsn do un vartn,
Gleybn, az du kumst ot bald.
Kh’vel nisht zen vi se vert tunkl,
Kh’vel nisht filn vi s’vert kalt,
O neyn, o neyn, o neyn.

(hemshekh)

SILVER STARS

Oh, you silver stars of mine,
Oh, you skies of blue!
Oh, you youthful years,
Youth that is no more,
No more, no more, no more,
Oh, youth that is no more.

I have reached the summit
And the road ends here.
I stand now at the summit
And see the steep decline below,
Below, below, below.

Fly to me, my eagle,
Take me on those wings of yours
To the distant blue skies,
Don’t leave me down in the valley,
Down in the valley,
Oh, don’t leave me down in the valley.

I will sit here and wait,
Believing that you’ll come soon.
I won’t see when it gets dark,
I won’t feel when it gets cold,
Oh no, oh no, oh no.

(continued)
ZILBER-SHTERN
(hemshekh)

O, ir mayne bloe himlen,
O, ir zilber-shtern mayn!
Nem mikh dort tsu zey, mayn odler,
Zikher muzn zey vu zayn,
O yo, o yo, o yo,
O, zikher muzn zey vu zayn.

SILVER STARS
(continued)

Oh, you blue skies of mine,
Oh, you silver stars!
Take me there to them, my eagle,
Surely they must be somewhere there,
Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes,
Oh, surely they must be somewhere there.
**BA MAYN MAMES SHTIBELE**

Ba mayn mames shtibele  
Bin ikh mir geshtanen,  
Biz es zenen yingelekh tsvey  
Derekhgegan(g)en.

Mit zeyere shvartze eygelekh  
Hobn zey mikh gefangen.  
Zey hobn dokh mir dem kop fardreyt,  
Arger vi gehangen.

Kh’gey in gey in gey in gey,  
Fal in fal in fal.  
Farlibt hob ikh mikh in a yingele,  
S’platst in mir di gal.

**AT MY MOTHER’S HOUSE**

At my mother’s house  
I was standing,  
When two boys  
Passed by.

With their dark eyes  
They captured me.  
They turned my head,  
Worse than a hanging.

I walk and walk and walk and walk,  
Fall and fall and fall.  
I’ve fallen in love with a boy,  
And I’m feeling really spiteful.

He comes into my house,  
Tells me he loves me,  
Goes off with another girl,  
Makes me a grave.

When you dig a grave for someone else,  
It’s you who falls into it.  
He will only pray to dear, precious God  
For me to marry him!
**A REGE**

Ven du zolst keyn mol mer nisht zayn
Un ikh bin keyn mol mer nisht dayn,
Bistu gevezn eyn mol mayn,
Eybik mayn a rege,
A rege, a rege,
Eybik mayn a rege.

Du geyst avek, avek in vayt,
An and’re gas, a fremde tsayt,
Nor eybik zenen mir tsu tsveyt
Gegangen far a rege,
A rege, a rege,
Gegangen far a rege.

Ikh tseyl di tropns in mayn hant
Oysgeperlte banand,
Heng zey uf af mayn gevant,
Eybik iz di rege,
Di rege, di rege,
Eybik iz di rege.

**A MOMENT**

If you were no more
And I were no longer yours,
Yet you were once mine,
Forever mine for a moment,
A moment, a moment,
Forever mine for a moment.

You go away, far away,
Another street, a strange time,
Yet we were eternally
Together for a moment,
A moment, a moment,
Together for a moment.

I count the drops in my hand,
A strand of pearls,
Hang them on my garb,
Eternal is the moment,
The moment, the moment,
Eternal is the moment.
I’VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO SING

I’ve forgotten how to sing,
I’ve forgotten the sound of my voice,
I’ve forgotten the sound of
Faint tones from the past.

I hear the bird at my window –
Somehow he is angry with me.
Some think that birds sing,
But I believe it’s not a song.

So I speak to him in his language:
“Bird, silly one that you are,
I recognize your true self –
It is useless to be angry with me.

I was also once a bird
And sang so sweetly,
But a disaster came
And shackled me to silence.”

But now I’ve forgotten my song
And lost my way to fly.
I’m a mute wanderer
With no path and no purpose.

KH’HOB FARGESN VI AZOY TSU ZINGEN

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With no path and no purpose.
**A ZEMERL AZA**

Trya da bam bam bam, un trya da bam bam ba,
Zing ikh mir a zemerl, a zemerl aza.
A zemerl mit freyd, a zemerl mit tam,
A zemerl, a zemerl, a zemerl ful flam.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

Me trakht azoy aher, me trakht azoy ahin,
Un vos merer me trakht, alts veyniker der zin.
A bletl un a harts, se tsitert yeder shorkh.
Vos iz den der mentsh – mer vi ash un porekh?

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

Itster iz atsinder, nekhtn shoyn geven,
Un vos zhe hot dos oyg den nokh nisht gezen.
Iz trya da bam bam ba, trya da bam bam bam,
Zingen mir a zemerl mit fayer un mit flam.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

Un az nisht baym rebns tish, un az nisht in shil,
Un fort brumt men unter a zemerl in der shtil...
A nigndl tsevakst zikh, fligl laykhte fli’n,
Flit men mitn nigndl in di himlen ‘hin.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

**A SONG LIKE THIS**

Trya da bam bam bam, un trya da bam bam ba,
I sing myself a zemerl, a zemerl like this one.
A zemerl with joy, a zemerl with feeling,
A zemerl, a zemerl, a zemerl full of fire.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

You can think up and you can think down,
But the more you think, the less sense it makes.
A leaf and a heart, every sound trembles.
What is a person, after all, but ash and dust?

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

Now is the moment, yesterday is gone,
And what have these eyes not seen?
So trya da bam bam ba, trya da bam bam bam,
I sing a zemerl full of fire and flame.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._

Since we’re not at the rebbe’s table, or in shul,
We sing a zemerl, a zemerl in the silence...
A melody melts away, weightless wings take flight,
And I too fly with the zemerl up to the heavens.

_Ay dam, tray ray ray ray dam..._
**SHOYN FARENDIKT ZIKH DOS LIDL FUNEM TOG**

Shoyn farendikt zikh dos lidl funem tog,
Kh’her zikh ayn, trakht arayn zikh in dayn zog.
Kh’veys a mentsh halt nisht vort vi er zol,
Bist arayn in der nakht far ale mol.

*S’hot a kholem mikh getoret, gevekt,*
*A koshmar, a beyzer mikh geshrekt,*
*S’hot nisht umistn ver a shtoys dir geton*
*Bistu gefaln vi a snop afn lan.*

**THE SONG OF THE DAY IS DONE**

The song of the day is done,
I listen in, deliberate on what you said.
I know a person doesn’t keep promises as he should,
You’re gone into the night forever.

A dream nagged at me, woke me,
A nightmare, a bad one, frightened me,
Someone accidentally gave you a shove,
You fell like a sheaf on the meadow.

**Ta-ra-ra-ra...**

Kh’hob gepruvt dikh oyfheybn, nor umzist
Bist gelegn, nisht gevust ver du bist.
Bist avek, nisht gevorn, nisht gedakht
Un a lets iz geshtanen un gelakht.

**Ta-ra-ra-ra...**

I tried to pick you up, but in vain,
You lay there, not knowing who you were.
You were gone, as if never there,
And a clown stood and laughed.

**Ta-ra-ra-ra...**

Lemplekh tsinen af der gas zikh royt un grin,
Heysn geyn ven me darf un vuhin,
Un ikh ze vi zey pintlen mir tsu:
Tsayt shoyn geyn, kum shoyn, kum, nu shoyn, nu.

**Ta-ra-ra-ra...**

Red and green lights illuminate the street,
Telling when to go and where,
And I see them winking to me:
Time to go, let’s go now, come on, come.

(hemshekh)
SHOYN FARENDIKT ZIKH DOS LIDL FUNEM TOG (hemshekh)

Un ikh pruv shteln trit, gikher gikh,
Nor ot bayt zikh dos likht vi fun zikh
Un ikh shtey shoyn in mitn gelaf
S’yogt di velt, flit adurkh un ikh gaf?

Ta-ra-ra-ra...

THE SONG OF THE DAY IS DONE (continued)

And I try to take steps, faster and faster,
But the light changes now, as if by itself
And now I’m standing in the middle of the rush
The world races, flies by and I stare?

The song is finished, sound after sound.
Silent the night, silent the day, and the song,
But the window of night, my good friend,
Smiles gently, keeps me awake, rocks me to sleep.

The song is finished, you are gone,
I still talk to your shadow and I ask:
Did you really go into the night?
Were you ever here? Or did I imagine you?

(hemshekh) (continued)
THE SONG OF THE DAY IS DONE
(continued)

[BEYLE ADDED THESE LINES TO BE SUNG AFTER SHE PASSED AWAY.]

O, zi iz geven a mol, yo geven,
Gezesn ba ir fentster un gezen
Vi der boym bayt zayn tsure tog far tog
Un di toybn pikn zernes afn rog.

Oh, she once was here, she was,
Sat at her window and noticed
How the tree changed its look day by day
And the pigeons pecked kernels at the corner.

O, zi iz geven un zi iz avek
Un gezen vi se kumt ir sof, an ek,
Un zi hot farshribn yedn rir
Vos di gas hot oysgeshpilt far ir.

Oh, she was here and she is gone
And realized how her time was coming, an end,
And she recorded every action
That the street performed for her.

Ta-ra-ra-ra....

Ta-ra-ra-ra....
HARBSTLID

Ze, s’iz harbst,
Un vos gegrind fargelt, farvyanet.
Ze, s’iz harbst,
Un vos geblit fargeyt.
Un ikh, vos kh’hob gemeynt s’iz shtendik friling,
Un kh’halt in hant
Di gantse eybikeyt.

Oho, falndike bleter!
Oho, fliyendike teg!
Oho, vi vel ikh itster blondzhen,
Ven s’ligt gedikhter nepl af mayn veg...

Kraken feygl,
Zogn troyerik: “Zay gezunt dir!”
Krekhtst in fentster
Un se klogt der vint:
“O, vi volt ikh itst avek fun danen
Tsun a breg
Vu nokh der friling grint...”

SONG OF AUTUMN

See, it’s fall,
And all that greened has yellowed, withered.
See, it’s fall,
And all that bloomed is gone.
And I, who thought that spring would last forever,
And in my hand I hold
Eternity.

Oh, falling leaves!
Oh, flying days!
Oh, how will I wander now,
When thick fog settles on my way...

Sadly cawing birds
Say: “Goodbye!”
At the window
The moaning, wailing wind:
“I wish that I could get away from here
To a shore
Where there is still green spring...”

(hemshekh)
**SONG OF AUTUMN**
(continued)

*Oho, falndike bleter...*

*Oh, falling leaves...*

*Driving rain*

*Gallops on a wild horse,*

*Whispers secret love*

*Into my ear:*

*“Why do you need to wait for springtime*

*When autumn offers*

*Baskets full of gold?”*
Comments by Shane Baker (Emcee)

Welcome to our concert today, BEYLE100, in honor of and in memory of Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman on her 100th birthday!

Beyle, an artist, Yiddish poet, and Yiddish songwriter, was born August 7, 1920 in Vienna. She grew up in Chernowitz with her parents and her younger brother, the linguist Mordkhe Schaechter.

Beyle’s mother, Lifshe Schaechter-Widman, was herself an amazing folk singer who knew from memory literally hundreds of folk songs, not only in Yiddish, but also in Russian, Ukrainian, German, and other languages.

Beyle’s father, Khayim-Binyumen Schaechter, a zealous Yiddishist, was sent to Siberia by the Soviets in 1941. He never returned.

During the Second World War, Beyle and her family were confined in the Chernowitz ghetto and miraculously avoided being sent to the camps in Transnistria.

After the war, Beyle lived for two years in Bucharest and then four years in a DP camp in Vienna, where her husband, Yoyne Gottesman, was the head doctor. Beyle, Yoyne, and their daughter Taube came to New York in 1951.

Only when she was in this country, Beyle started writing songs – first, children’s songs, particularly for her own children, then poetry and songs for adults.

In 1998 Beyle was inducted into the People’s Hall of Fame at City Lore in New York. In 2005 she received the National Heritage Fellowship award from the National Endowment for the Arts – the highest honor for folk artists in the United States. She was the first Yiddish poet to receive that acknowledgement.

She created around a hundred songs and published seven books of poetry. Today you’ll hear only a small portion of her oeuvre, as well as reminiscences from those close to her. You’ll also hear Beyle herself in three brief excerpts from the documentary about her.

The youngest singers you’ll hear today are Beyle’s living heirs: a grandchild, a great-nephew, and two great-nieces.

Last but not least, I’ll say this in English because it’s relevant to those who don’t understand our language:

A PDF has been prepared for today’s concert which is available with the click of the link that has been provided in the Facebook and YouTube “Chat.” This PDF contains the full translations of all the songs, poems, and of the brief words which you will hear spoken by two people who were close to Beyle; the entire PDF follows the sequence in which you’ll be hearing them. So if you want to follow along with the translations, do click on that link.

(continued)
And now, to the concert and a greeting from Beyle’s son, Itzik Gottesman.

[Before “Flaterl”]

Birds and other animals appear in many of Beyle’s songs, and sometimes, as in the next song you’ll hear, the main theme, “di hoypt-teme,” is animals.

Speaking of “teme”: The next singer, Temma Schaechter, is more familiar to many people as the younger of the singing duo, Di Shekhter-tekhter, Beyle’s grand-nieces, who, for the past ten years, as children and teenagers, travelled all over the world giving Yiddish concerts for both young and old. Later, you’ll hear Reyna, the elder of the Shekhter-Tekhter.

[Before “Tsu Binyumeles bar-mitsve”]

Beyle wrote “Tsu Binyumeles bar-mitsve” to commemorate the bar mitzvah of her nephew Binyumen Schaechter, who, in those days, was still known as “Binyumele.” (Beyle called him that throughout her life.) And the premiere of the song was sung at his bar mitzvah by the original “Shekhter-Tekhter” (Schaechter Daughters), Rukhl, Gitl, and Eydl Schaechter!

Years after Binyumele’s bar mitzvah, the song became a hit because Yiddishists and people in the Yiddish music world substituted in their own child’s name and sang it at their own bar- and bas mitzvahs. They sang “Tsu Soreles bas-mitsve,” “Tsu Daneeliks bar-mitsve,” and so on. Alicia Svigals, at her son’s bar mitzvah, accompanying herself on the violin, was the first to actually sing the original words again, because her son’s name is Ben – in Yiddish, Binyumen!

[Before “Friling”]

Two of today’s singers have recorded their own CDs consisting exclusively of Beyle’s songs. One of them, Theresa Tova, whom you will hear later in today’s concert, took previously recorded songs of Beyle’s and came up with her own, fresh, unique interpretations and arrangements. The other, Lucette van den Berg, decided to record only songs of Beyle’s that hadn’t yet been recorded on a CD. You’ll now hear Lucette sing one of those songs.

[At the conclusion]

And that’s the end of our concert in honor of Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman on her 100th birthday.

Should you be interested in acquiring any of Beyle’s CDs, songbooks, books of poetry, or a documentary film about her life and her work, you can see in the Chat, both on Facebook and on YouTube, how to order them.

(continued)
The PDF with translations (and transliterated lyrics) of today’s concert will continue to be available in the link on Facebook and on YouTube, so you can download them from either of those places. And for the PDF, we can thank Paulette (Pesye) Schneider for her creativity and hard work.

And if we’re already saying thank-yous....A big yasher-koyekh to all the participants, talented singers, musicians and readers, planning committee, and all co-sponsoring organizations for your participation and your help.

And an equally big yasher-koyekh to Alex Weiser of YIVO, who pieced together all the separate videos that were filmed in, and sent from, every corner of the world, so that one complete film can come out of it, in honor of and in memory of Beyle.

Last but not least, we want to thank all of you who were here with us for the premiere of the concert to celebrate her 100th birthday. I truly believe that she looked down at this concert with the greatest enjoyment and nakhes.

Stay well, and let’s continue to meet at happy occasions, “af simkhes”!
BEYLE100
Celebrating a Century of the Yiddish Songs,
Poetry & Artistic Vision of
Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman

Conceived and produced by Binyumen Schaechter
Videos compiled by Alex Weiser

Featuring:

Michael Alpert       Temma Schaechter
Shane Baker           Gitl Schaechter-Viswanath
Sharon Bernstein     Asya Vaisman Schulman
David Braun           Ilya Shneyveys
Lauren Brody          Lorin Sklamberg
Patrick Farrell       Alicia Svigals
Esther Gottesman     Paula (Perl) Teitelbaum
Itzik Gottesman       Theresa Tova
Matt Herskowitz       Lucette van den Berg
Sveta Kundish         Arun (Arele) Viswanath
Janet Leuchter        Josh Waletzky
Sasha Lurje           Jeff Warschauer
Sarah Myerson         Hy Wolfe
Ethel Raim            Shifra Whiteman
Binyumen Schaechter   Janina Wurbs
Reyna Schaechter
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Event planning committee:
Shane Baker
David Braun
Itzik Gottesman
Ethel Raim
Pete Rushefsky
Binyumen Schaechter
Josh Walezky
Alex Weiser

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Program booklet created by Paulette (Pesye) Schneider