

*Mazal Tov, Amigos!*  
**Jews and Popular Music  
in the Americas**

*Edited by*

Amalia Ran and Moshe Morad



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

# Contents

Acknowledgements VII

List of Figures VIII

List of Contributors IX

Introduction 1

*Amalia Ran and Moshe Morad*

1 Is “White Christmas” a Piece of Jewish Music? 11

*Ellen Koskoff*

2 The Musical Worlds of Jewish Buenos Aires, 1910–1940 25

*Pablo Palomino*

3 *Tristes Alegrías*: The Jewish Presence in Argentina’s Popular Music

Arena 44

*Amalia Ran*

4 Jacob do Bandolim: A Jewish(-)Brazilian Composer 60

*Thomas George Caracas Garcia*

5 Walls of Sound: Lieber and Stoller, Phil Spector, the Black-Jewish Alliance, and the “Enlarging” of America 78

*Ari Katorza*

6 Singing from Difference: Jewish Singers-Songwriters in the 1960s and 1970s 96

*Jon Stratton*

7 ¡*Toca maravilloso!* Larry Harlow and the Jewish Connection to Latin Music 109

*Benjamin Lapidus*

8 Roberto Juan Rodriguez’ *Timba Talmud*: Diasporic Cuban-Jewish Musical Convergences in New York 122

*Nili Belkind*

- 9 **Yiddish Song in Twenty-First Century America: Paths to Creativity** 142  
*Abigail Wood*
- 10 **Fight for Your Right to *Partycipate*: Jewish American Rappers** 153  
*Uri Dorchin*
- 11 **Gypsy, Cumbia, Cuarteto, Surf, Blah Blah Blah: Simja Dujov and Jewish Musical Eclecticism in Argentina** 171  
*Lillian M. Wohl*
- 12 **Queer Jewish Divas: Jewishness and Queerness in the Life and Performance of Barbra Streisand, Bette Midler, and Olga Guillot** 188  
*Moshe Morad*
- 13 **Third Diaspora Soundscapes: Music of the Jews of Islam in the Americas** 208  
*Edwin Seroussi*
- Closing Notes: The Soundstage of Jewish Life, North and South** 237  
*Judah M. Cohen*
- Index** 249

## *¡Toca maravilloso!* Larry Harlow and the Jewish Connection to Latin Music

*Benjamin Lapidus*

### Jews and Latin Music: The Catskill Mountain Scene and New York City

Jewish involvement with Spanish Caribbean dance music—also referred to as Afro-Latin, Afro-Cuban music, or simply Latin music—is not a new phenomenon. On the one hand, the Jewish presence in Latin America has existed for more than 500 years and Latin-American Jews have historically engaged in the cultural practices of their homelands even after they emigrated elsewhere. Throughout the twentieth century in New York City and its environs, there was a sizeable list of Jewish performers of Latin music, but very few chose to highlight their *Jewishness* or make it their calling card, with the exception of Larry Harlow. In order to truly appreciate Larry Harlow’s musical and cultural legacy, it is important to consider his predecessors and the links that existed between Jews and Latin music before his arrival on the scene.

In an oral history of the Catskill Mountain resorts, the wife of a Catskill Mountains booking agent pointed to a direct correlation between the Jewish interest in Latin music and her husband’s trips to Cuba. Ceil Beckman Jacobs said that her “late husband, Al Beckman, played a big part in bringing about the Latin music craze in the Catskills.”<sup>1</sup> She further explained that when the couple went to Havana for the first time in 1938, “Al was so enchanted by the beat and sound of Latin music, he brought it back to the United States. He started booking bands and dancers in the Mountains.”<sup>2</sup>

While 1938 is the earliest date to appear in any account thus far, most historians place the apex of Latin music in the Jewish community in the 1950s. Dancer Jackie Horner claimed that Jews were dancing to Latin music even before the 1950s’ mambo explosion. She told the Frommers that: “Latin was all

---

1 Myrna Katz Frommer and Harvey Frommer, *It Happened in the Catskills: An Oral History in the Words of Busboys, Bellhops, Guests, Proprietors, Comedians, Agents, and Others Who Lived It* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991), 135.

2 Katz Frommer and Frommer, 135.

the craze. Rumba had come in during the '40's and was still going strong, but everyone wanted mambo and cha-cha. Merengue and bossa nova came in a little bit later, around 1963."<sup>3</sup>

The popularity of these dances and musical genres among Jews and non-Latinos prior to the 1950s is echoed in the written chronicles of fellow traveler, Vincent Livelli.<sup>4</sup> Latin music booking agent and Jew Jack Hooke disagreed with the notion that Beckman was responsible for the diffusion of Latin music in the United States, New York, or the Catskills.<sup>5</sup> He felt that there was no "Jewish angle" involved in the music, but this is not the case from a music education perspective, as a number of Jewish musicians and dancers, such as Mark and Morton Sanders, Steven Lapidus (my father), Gene Zachary, Larry Harlow, and others, traveled to Cuba to pursue musical knowledge.

As discussed earlier, numerous informants have indicated the influence of Latin music on the Jewish entertainment scene in the Catskills. In New York City, Jews made their presence known throughout dance halls featuring Latin music. According to Larry Harlow, many of the best dancers—both amateur and those who participated in the floorshows at the Palladium Ballroom (owned by Jewish impresario Maxwell Hyman)—were Jewish and Italian. Harlow contends that the support of the Jewish people helped the music thrive. On a musical level, Harlow stated that "the Catskills were like going to school," for him and other musicians.<sup>6</sup> Top name artists such as Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodriguez headlined in the best resorts while up-and-coming artists who would later achieve success as bandleaders and/or sidemen, such as Larry Harlow, Barry Rogers, Joe Cuba, Sonny Bravo, Willie Torres, Eddie Palmieri, Henry "Pucho" Brown, and countless others, played as opening acts or in smaller settings.<sup>7</sup>

What sort of Latin music was being performed at the Catskill Mountain hotels? According to Harlow, *clave*, *tumbao*, and idiomatic anticipated bass lines, strict rhythmic patterns that form the basis of Latin music, were played by the bands he led and/or performed in. However, others have expressed the view that the majority of non-Latino performing musicians did not adhere to the rhythms as they are played today. The Romanian-born composer Jerome Jolles, who appeared in the Catskills until 1961 stated that "there was not as

3 Katz Frommer and Frommer, 135.

4 Vincent Livelli, <http://salsalivelli.blogspot.com/> (accessed June 26, 2014).

5 Interview with Jack Hooke by author, New York, 1996.

6 Interview with Larry Harlow by author, New York, December 7, 1996.

7 A photo of Sid Caesar playing with the Machito Band in 1960–61 at the Concord offers a fascinating glimpse of the entertainment world in the Catskills.

much syncopation.”<sup>8</sup> Stock band charts from the 1950s, owned and played by pianist Steven Lapidus, indicate authorship and arrangements by Cuban composers, such as Obdulio Morales, René Hernández, Chico O’Farrill, Mario Bauzá, Julio Cuevas, Ernesto Lecuona, and Perez Prado.<sup>9</sup> Other authors of Latin stock band charts included non-Latino composers and arrangers, such as Johnny Warrington, Harry Huffnagle, and Ben Paisner. Oral historian David Carp indicated that each bandleader would alter the material performed to be more or less *típico* (traditional) depending on “how secure” they felt. He noted that Tito Puente often played certain charts for Latino audiences and other charts for Jewish audiences. Carp stated that other artists, such as Eddie Zervigón, were clearly comfortable performing for Jewish audiences and even preferred them to Latin audiences. Some artists, such as Noro Morales and dancer Anibal Vásquez, were among those who could speak Yiddish. Still others kept Yiddish songs in their repertoire and performed and recorded them. For example, Mexican vocalist Carlos Varela recorded a version of “Yiddishe Caballero,” and Angel Rosa and Mon Rivera frequently performed “Hava Negilah,” which the latter also recorded, as did Celia Cruz and La Sonora Matancera.

Dance classes at the Catskill hotels were de rigueur, and for the dancers mambo nights or champagne hour dance contests were ways of showing their ability, as well as a way to be seen. In trying to understand why the Jewish community took Latin dancing so seriously, one need not look far for sources in which Jewish interviewees explain the attraction of Latin music. Al Altieri told the Frommers: “Latin music gives a girl a chance to undulate, to move more than anything else. You’d see a smartly dressed woman dancing the cha-cha or the meringue, or the mambo, and you’d see something very sensuous.”<sup>10</sup> Some dancers like Ira Goldwasser and Barbara Craddock were exposed to Latin music at the hotels, but further explored Afro-Latin folkloric dance and even became professional dancers thereafter.<sup>11</sup>

Vernon Boggs elicited a similar response from Art D’Lugoff, famed proprietor of the Village Gate, home of the legendary Monday night series *Salsa meets Jazz* hosted by Jewish disc jockey Symphony Sid Torin:

---

8 Interview with Jerome Jolles by author, New York, 1996.

9 These stock arrangements even include histories of Cuban music development in their introductions.

10 Katz Frommer and Frommer, 135.

11 *The Palladium: Where Mambo Was King*. Kaufman Films. 120 Minutes. VHS; Interview with Ira Goldwasser by author, New York, August 5, 2013.

Interviewer [Boggs]: Why is it . . . that the Jewish community, particularly in the Catskills and at the hotels, took to the music?

Art: . . . I grew up in a Jewish neighborhood and we grew up on it. We grew up with that music in the '30s and '40s. That's the music. When you went to singles dances, you found at the Concord or Grossinger's or whatever those clubs were there, that was on the menu. Why it happened, you can guess. Maybe there was affinity to that type of music. I don't know. I mean, it certainly was on the menu. There was musical recognition and a close relationship with Jews. Certainly in my case—I certainly related to it.<sup>12</sup>

D'Lugoff's description corresponds to that of Ceil Beckman Jacobs and Jackie Horner, who said that Latin dancing was the primary form of popular dance for young New York City Jewish couples of their generation.

### Jews and the Business of Latin Music

Many Jews were involved in the business side of Latin music, both in the United States and in the Caribbean and Latin America. Walter P. Zenner, José Cobas, and Jorge Duany have identified Jews, Chinese, and Cubans in Puerto Rico as "middleman minorities . . . defined as culturally distinct groups that specialize in the selling of goods and services."<sup>13</sup> For Duany, Jews in the Caribbean "form a large extended family . . . which controls a large share of the import export trade . . . They effectively manipulated cultural barriers for business purposes, limiting their intimate social encounters with outsiders and maximizing internal group solidarity."<sup>14</sup> Similarly, American Jews held positions as agents, club owners, radio personalities, and record label owners and executives.

The first among the radio presenters was Art Raymond, who would go on to co-found Tico Records, a successful record label specializing in Latin music.<sup>15</sup>

---

12 Vernon Boggs, *Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in New York City* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), 172. In May 2008, I received a surprise phone call from D'Lugoff in praise of the album *Herencia Judía*. As I was traveling to Japan for performances, it was agreed that we would communicate at the conclusion of the trip in order to book an engagement. D'Lugoff passed away shortly thereafter.

13 Jorge Duany, "The Cuban Community in Puerto Rico: A Comparative Caribbean Perspective," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12, no. 1 (1989): 36.

14 Duany, 36.

15 Raymond's partner George Goldner was also Jewish and later married a Latino woman.

According to oral historian David Carp, Raymond did not speak Spanish, but he created an on-air alter ego named Pancho who spoke English with a Spanish accent. In the 1950s, two other disc jockeys became prominent, Dick “Ricardo” Sugar and “Symphony Sid” Torin. At first Sugar and Torin were in competition, but they then joined forces with producer/agent Jack Hooke. Dick “Ricardo” Sugar began playing Latin music on the radio in 1952 and told Vernon Boggs that “the music itself and the audience became interested and changed from mainly Spanish-speaking listeners who wanted to learn English to a very large and popular dance music with a Jewish and Italian group who then became my biggest audience.”<sup>16</sup> Sugar also explained to Boggs that non-Latino listeners appreciated the fact that he spoke English and not Spanish, and was able to talk about Latin music and its background in English. Therefore, “an American disc jockey gave them [non-Latino listeners] the opportunity to be a part of the [Latin] music—that’s what brought them to the Palladium, that’s what brought them to the clubs . . . otherwise it would remain largely a Spanish audience or a foreign language kind of programming.”<sup>17</sup>

“Symphony Sid” Torin—a well-known jazz disc jockey—had a “nightly six-hour jazz program.”<sup>18</sup> He became interested in Latin music and devoted one of the six hours to it. The rest was dedicated to jazz. According to Jack Hooke, by 1962 Torin was playing five hours of Latin music and one hour of jazz. Also in 1962, D’Lugoff, Hooke, and Torin began a weekly series at the Village Gate in New York City, which presented Latin bands to audiences of “800, 900 [and] 1000 people every Monday night.”<sup>19</sup> Sid served as the master of ceremonies and helped promote the series on his radio programs. When asked how the Latino audience reacted toward Symphony Sid, given that he did not speak Spanish, Hooke stated: “It didn’t matter, he was a novelty to them. The Latin people loved his ass and he gave them the kind of music that they liked . . . the fact that he didn’t speak Spanish was an attraction . . . a novelty.”<sup>20</sup> Sid’s participation in the Monday night series at the Village Gate affected business. Hooke would not continue the series without Sid. Hooke also claimed that when he was promoting Latin music dances and concerts the audiences consisted of

---

16 Vernon Boggs, *Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in New York City* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), 136.

17 Boggs, 139.

18 Boggs, 158.

19 Boggs, 158.

20 Jack Hooke, Interview.



“90% Latinos and 10% Americans.”<sup>21</sup> In Hooke’s opinion there was not much, if any, Jewish consumer participation in these events.

Jack Hooke was always interested in Latin jazz. In the 1940s he recorded Charlie Parker, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, Errol Garner, and others on the Royal Roost record label that he shared with Teddy Reig. In 1949, Hooke recorded an album called *Cu-Bop City*, which featured jazz tenor saxophonist Brew Moore and jazz trumpeter Howard McGhee, accompanied by Machito and his orchestra. Hooke was involved with rock and roll before Latin music, and he switched to Latin music because he “saw dollar signs.”<sup>22</sup> Another important player in the Latin music scene was Cuban Jew Pancho Cristal, who produced a number of recordings on his own after spending years running A&R at Tico, the record label started by fellow Jew George Goldner.<sup>23</sup>

The level at which people such as Jack Hooke, Symphony Sid, and Dick Sugar participated in the Latin music business should not be perceived as more serious and complex than that at which other non-Latinos and Latinos were involved in it. However, it represents an example of middleman ethnic groups in action. Clearly, in the United States, capitalism was the driving force and these three men “effectively manipulated cultural barriers,” but one can see that they truly loved Latin music.<sup>24</sup> Symphony Sid Torin and Dick Sugar enjoyed unparalleled popularity among Latinos and non-Latinos and, until his death, Hooke continued to work as a highly respected agent and producer in Latin music, alongside Ralph Mercado. Italian-American Jerry Masucci, and Dominican-American Johnny Pacheco enjoyed the greatest commercial success and the loudest criticism from musicians and community activists throughout their administration of the Fania Records label.

### Jewish Musicians who Played Latin Music before Larry Harlow

The most notable Jewish Latin musicians prior to Larry Harlow’s arrival on the scene included Afro-Puerto Rican trumpeter/composer Augusto Coen and Carlos Argentino (1929–1991), an Argentine vocalist and composer.<sup>25</sup> Neither

21 Jack Hooke, Interview.

22 Jack Hooke, Interview.

23 <http://www.spectropop.com/tico/> (accessed June 24, 2014).

24 Duany, 36.

25 For more information on Coen, see See Ruth Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917–1940* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1997).

of these two musicians publicly identified as Jews. Argentino was born Israel Vitensztein Vurm in Buenos Aires and enjoyed a long career singing in Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Venezuela, and New York. After establishing himself in Cuba with a number of top groups in the early 1950s, he subsequently recorded and toured both nationally and internationally with La Sonora Matancera, becoming known as *El Rey de la Pachanga*. Also based in Cuba, Luis Chanivecky was an important Cuban Jewish composer who was active in the 1950s and scored many popular hits with Los Zafros. Like Carlos Argentino, some Jewish musicians who performed Latin music in New York changed their names to appear Latino. One example was pianist Alfredo Mendez who changed his name from Alfred Mendelson. Mendez was a student of the Puerto Rican piano virtuoso Noro Morales. Others include Harvey Averde, who performed as Arvito, and vibraphonist Alfred Levy, whose stage name was Alfredito. Alfredito used vocalist Tony Molina and achieved some success and popularity, even buying arrangements and a vibraphone from his hero Tito Puente. Two pianists, Irving Fields and Harlow's father, paved the way for Larry the son.

Born Buddy Kahn, Larry's father changed his family name to Harlow, because Harlow was the name of the doctor who treated him after an automobile accident. Irving Fields initially performed under the name Campos, which is the Spanish translation of the word "fields."<sup>26</sup> Buddy Harlow's band was the house band at the Latin Quarter nightclub in New York City, where they played Latin and other ethnic music. Fields took Harlow's place at the Latin Quarter and enjoyed success as a composer as well. Fields recorded a number of novelty records, including *Bagels and Bongos*, which set Jewish melodies to Latin American rhythms. On April 25, 1947, Fields was awarded a Distinguished Service medal by President Antonio Somoza of Nicaragua for his composition "Managua, Nicaragua."<sup>27</sup> One review from 1947 claimed that, "Irving Fields plays real Latin Music [with] a real beat and that lilt that is typical of Latin music, but rather rare with popular Latin groups."<sup>28</sup> Noted jazz critic J.S. Wilson also gave his seal of approval to Fields for his authorship of "Miami Beach Rumba."<sup>29</sup> While Fields definitely made use of the tambora and other Latin percussion instruments and rhythms for his recordings, the arrangements sound less informed by clave-based tradition and practice by today's standards. In contrast, Larry Harlow (Buddy Harlow's son) epitomizes

---

26 David Carp, Personal Communication, 1996.

27 "Two New York Songwriters Honored," *NY Sun*, April 25, 1947.

28 "Irving Fields Plays Real Latin Music," *Variety*, March 1947.

29 J.S. Wilson, "Irving Fields in Piano Recital," *NY Times*, October 1, 1959.

music that Latinos view as authentic and hot, largely because of its fealty to *clave*, among other aspects.

### Larry Harlow

Born Lawrence Ira Kahn, Harlow adopted his father's stage surname. Harlow started as a jazz enthusiast but soon shifted to Latin music. After suffering embarrassment in a high school pickup group he learned classic Cuban and Puerto Rican piano solos note for note. In the 1950s he lived in Cuba and spent time attending and recording performances of both secular and religious Afro-Cuban music. This experience became the foundation of his understanding of the Latin music that was being played in New York. Upon returning to New York, Harlow experienced what he referred to as "reverse Uncle Tom" treatment in finding engagements.<sup>30</sup> However, when he teamed up with Puerto Rican vocalist Ismael Miranda, he was given legitimacy by the powers that be and started to sell what were by Latin music standards large quantities of records. During a recording session an excited percussionist permanently sealed Harlow's stage persona as *El judío maravilloso*, the marvelous Jew, exhorting Harlow to play a piano solo.<sup>31</sup> This name showed the influence of his mentor, *El ciego maravilloso* (the marvelous blind man), Arsenio Rodríguez. Harlow cultivated a bad-boy image while releasing a string of hit records. As a member of the Fania All-Stars tour of Africa, he made a comment about Africans, which was misunderstood and cost Harlow popularity among black audiences, as well as entrée to black clubs in New York. In 1972, he released *Tribute to Arsenio Rodríguez*, when his mentor passed away. The record went gold and Harlow proceeded to embark on a series of projects that would place him in the annals of Latin music.

The first such record was an adaptation of The Who's rock opera *Tommy*, which he rewrote with Henry Alvarez and titled *Hommy* (pronounced "o-mee"). In the original rock opera the protagonist is a deaf, blind, and mute pinball wizard, while in *Hommy* he was transformed into a conga virtuoso with the same physical challenges. The record was a success for a number of reasons. First, Harlow brought Cuban singer Celia Cruz out of retirement in Mexico to sing

30 Larry Harlow, Interview.

31 See Peter Manuel's technical analysis of Harlow's piano improvisation and a discussion of how it is emblematic of the Latin piano style of Peter Manuel, "Improvisation in Latin Dance Music," in *In The Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*, Bruno Nettl and Melinda Russell, eds. (1998), 140–42.

in it. Second, it was the first salsa “concept” album. Third, it was the first record recorded with DBX noise reduction, which was achieved by using 35mm movie film for tape and configured in such a way as to record sixteen tracks. Finally, it was the first time that “real” Latin music was played in a major American concert hall venue, Carnegie Hall. *Hommy* was performed at Lincoln Center on July 23, 2014, with a new orchestral overture.

The next major project Harlow conceived of—*La Raza Latina*—was a suite, which traced the evolution of salsa from Africa to Cuba, New York, and beyond. For Harlow it was “a musician’s album.”<sup>32</sup> In July 2011, the piece had a live world premier at Lincoln Center with Ruben Blades, Adonis Puentes, and a fifty-piece orchestra before an audience of 22,000. A subsequent performance took place at the Adrian Arsht Center for the Arts in Miami in January 2012.<sup>33</sup> Another important musical and technical achievement for Harlow was *Live in Quad*:

Recorded live at Sing Sing on January 16, 1974, the listener can hear that the musicians came to play hard from the first note. In a recent conversation, Harlow talked about this being one of his best recordings and how the enthusiasm of the largely Latino audience affected the performance positively. This was the only Latin album recorded in the quadrophonic stereo format. The basic concept was similar to today’s surround-sound but the means of achieving the four channels of audio varied across formats. As good as true quad sounded, it was doomed by incompatibility and technical variations within formats. Harlow took advantage of the new technology, recording the album on location with an RCA 8-track unit and mixing the album by essentially spinning around in a suspended rattan chair that faced four speakers.<sup>34</sup>

Ironically, subsequent album titles such as *Yo soy latino* (I am Latino) place his identity firmly with the Latino musical world. Today, Harlow is recognized as one of the founding fathers of the New York sound of modern salsa music.<sup>35</sup> Since the mid-1990s he continues to perform with the Fania All-Stars, his own Latin Legends band, and in a Broadway show for children called *Sofrito*, for which he wrote music to accompany acclaimed storyteller and children’s radio

---

32 José Tapia and Izzy Sanabria, “Larry Harlow: Jewish Salsero Numero Uno,” *Latin New York* (February 1978), 22.

33 The author performed in both concerts.

34 Benjamin Lapidus, “Larry Harlow” essay in accompanying booklet, *Larry Harlow, Live in Quad* [Fania 1974] Emusica 130153, 2006. Compact Disc.

35 He actually recorded and released the first album, titled *Salsa*, in 1972.

personality David González. Harlow's biggest project to date has yet to be produced, but it has been brewing for almost 35 years. It is a Faustian Broadway musical entitled *Mamboland*, set in the acme of the Palladium dance hall and with characters that correspond to *orishas* (deities) in the Afro-Cuban religion of Santería.

Harlow himself is a Santero who also wears a large Star of David on his neck. When asked if being a Jew and a Santero were in conflict and whether or not he still considered himself a Jew in terms of nationality, Harlow has consistently answered that, "you can take the boy out of Brooklyn, but not the Brooklyn out of the boy."<sup>36</sup> However, he adds that it is a "very personal thing" for him and that he uses divination and *ifa* to get closer to God and to avoid potential problems.<sup>37</sup>

Harlow served nine years on the board of governors of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), which is the body that awards the Grammys, and was instrumental in adding the Latin music category. In 2008, he was given a lifetime achievement award at the Latin Grammys (LARAS).

### Conclusion

Richard Wagner asserted that Jews do not have their own culture. After analyzing the meaning behind this boldly racist statement, Samuel Lipman responded:

At its core, the charge is that Jews can neither understand the majority national culture in which they live nor participate in its creation—at least so long as they remain Jews. Put in a slightly different way, the charge seems even more stark: Jews cannot be both self-conscious Jews and citizens of the wider cultural world around them . . . [However] serious music has afforded many Jews an avenue into the wider culture while at

---

36 Harlow, 1996. Migene González-Wippler profiled the community of Jewish Santería devotees in "Santeria Experience," a monthly column she wrote in *Latin New York* magazine. Wippler described the comfort and ease with which Jewish Santeros participated in ceremonies and ritual meals that she attended in Manhattan and that "there was no discernible difference in their behavior and actions from those of Latin santeros." She also pointed out the similarity between kosher butchering and *kapporot* (Jewish ritual practiced on the eve of Yom Kippur) and animal sacrifice. Migene González-Wippler "Jews in Santeria," in *Latin New York* (April 1984), 48–49.

37 José Tapia and Izzy Sanabria, "Larry Harlow: Jewish Salsero Numero Uno," *Latin New York*, (February 1978), 22.

the same time allowing them to remain conscious, even if not at all times proud, of their identities as Jews.<sup>38</sup>

In light of Lipman's response, the reader can draw several conclusions about all of the persons profiled in this study. While many Jewish performers changed their names to appear Latino, they were still performing for their own people, as well as for Latino and non-Latino audiences. An even larger number of musicians who were Larry Harlow's contemporaries did not change their names and maintained their Jewish identities while laboring as sidemen in the most popular *conjuntos* and orchestras of the last fifty years. These include Andy Harlow (saxophone/flute), Barry Rogers, (trombone/tres/arranger with Eddie Palmieri and Fania All-Stars), Manny Albam, (Dominican-born arranger/baritone saxophone), Mitch Frohman (flute/sax with Bronx Horns, Tito Puente, Mambo Legends), Steve Sacks (sax with Tito Puente and Angel Canales), Lewis Kahn (trombone/violin Fania All-Stars, Willie Colon), Marty Sheller (trumpet/arranger Mongo Santamaria), Johnny Conquet, Lalo Schifrin (arranger for Dizzy Gillespie), Marco Katz Montiel (trombone Eddie Palmieri), Mark Weinstein (trombone/flute Alegre All-Stars, Eddie Palmieri), Andy Kaufman (Producer, Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Newyorquino), Ira and David Hersher (Orquesta Broadway), Charles Klaif (piano), Charlie Hersh (Sax, clarinet and flute), Harold Wegbreit (lead trumpet and arranger for Tito Rodríguez), Artie Azenzer (b. Matthews pianist with Tito Rodriguez), Schep Pullman (saxophone, Tito Puente, Joe Loco), among many others on the scene today.

Clearly, Larry Harlow, a second-generation Latin musician, can call Latin music his own music. He has influenced the course of Latin music and still considers himself a Jew. He is lovingly called "the marvelous Jew," in the same way that Symphony Sid was appreciated by Latin fans not just for being non-Latino, but also for having a thorough knowledge of Latin music on a par with Latinos. Although the development of Latin music in New York City has been ascribed Puerto Rican and Pan-Latino ownership, the new Latin music created in New York has its roots in the Afro-Cuban musical tradition of *son* and mambo. Puerto Ricans and other Latinos have modernized Latin music, calling it salsa. It is clear from an examination of the multi-faceted, complex, and long-standing relationship Jews have had with Latin music as consumers, promoters, dancers, composers, arrangers, and performers, that it would be difficult to consider these connections between Jews and Latin music to be less than serious. The places where Jews consumed Latin music and the

---

38 Samuel Lipman, "Out of the Ghetto," *Commentary* 79 (March 1985), 57.

extent to which they did so has made it an integral part of Jewish culture in New York City and its surrounding areas. An analogous phenomenon can be found in the way that New York Jews have made the consumption of Chinese food into a Jewish cultural practice, “an aspect of group identity.”<sup>39</sup> In a period where everyone claims exclusive ownership of culture and its practice, one would be hard-pressed to determine Jews have no claim to Latin music and that it is not their own. Clearly, there has been a profound transformative interplay between these two cultures, one that continues to take on new forms and meanings as it continues to evolve.

### List of Works Cited

- Boggs, Vernon. *Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in New York City*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- Duany, Jorge. “The Cuban Community in Puerto Rico: A Comparative Caribbean Perspective.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12, 1 (1989): 36–46.
- Glasser, Ruth. *My Music Is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917–1940*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- González-Wippler, Migene. “Jews in Santeria” *Latin New York*. 7, no. 4 (1984): 48–49. “Irving Fields Plays Real Latin Music.” *Variety*, March 1947.
- Katz, Myrna Frommer, and Harvey Frommer. *It Happened in the Catskills: An Oral History in the Words of Busboys, Bellhops, Guests, Proprietors, Comedians, Agents, and Others Who Lived It*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991.
- Lipman, Samuel. “Out of the Ghetto.” *Commentary* 79 (1985): 56–62.
- Manuel, Peter. “Improvisation in Latin Dance Music.” In *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*. Bruno Nettl and Melinda Russell, eds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, 126–47.
- Tapia, José, and Izzy Sanabria. “Larry Harlow: Jewish Salsero Numero Uno.” *Latin New York* 5, no. 9 (1978): 20–23.
- Tuchman, Gaye, and Harry Gene Levine. “New York Jews and Chinese Food: The Social Construction of an Ethnic Pattern.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22, no. 3 (1993): 382–407.
- “Two New York Songwriters Honored.” *NY Sun*, April 25, 1947.
- Wilson, J.S. “Irving Fields in Piano Recital.” *NY Times*, October 1, 1959.

---

39 Gaye Tuchman and Harry Gene Levine, “New York Jews and Chinese Food: The Social Construction of an Ethnic Pattern,” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22, no. 3 (1993): 387.

### *Internet*

Livelli, Vincent. <http://salsalivelli.blogspot.com/>. June, 26, 2014.

Animal, Stuffed. <http://www.spectropop.com/tico/>. June 24, 2014.

### *Interviews*

Carp, David. Personal Communication. 1996.

Goldwasser, Ira. Personal Interview. August 5, 2013.

Harlow, Larry. Personal Interview. December 7, 1996.

Hooke, Jack. Personal Interview. December 1996.

Jolles, Jerome. Personal Interview. December 1996.

### *Recordings and Video*

Harlow, Larry. *La Raza Latina: A Salsa Suite*. Fania, 1977. LP.

Harlow, Larry. *Salsa*. Fania, 1974. LP.

Harlow, Larry. *Hommy: A Latin Opera*. Fania, 1973. LP.

Lapidus, Benjamin. *Herencia Judía*. Tresero Productions, 2008. CD.

Lapidus, Benjamin. "Larry Harlow." *Larry Harlow, Live in Quad* [Fania 1974] Emusica, 2006. CD.

*The Palladium: Where Mambo Was King*. Dir. Kevin Kaufman. Kaufman Films. 2002. Film.