

# International Ernest Bloch Society

President Steven Isserlis CBE

Associate musicians: Raphael Wallfisch, Natalie Clein, Rivka Golani, Miriam Kremer, Jack Liebeck, Danny Driver, Malcolm Singer, Benjamin Wolf

[www.ernestblochsociety.org](http://www.ernestblochsociety.org) [info@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:info@ernestblochsociety.org)



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## Bloch Anniversary Events

IEBS and JMI are thrilled to announce that booking is now open for:

**THE WORLD OF ERNEST BLOCH**  
Masterclasses Discussion  
**GALA CONCERT**  
A day exploring and celebrating the diversity of his music with Bloch specialist Dr Alexander Knapp; a BBC Producer; and three internationally acclaimed musicians

You can apply to participate in the masterclasses and attend the gala concert with

**Miriam Kramer** violin, **Rivka Golani** viola, **Raphael Wallfisch** cello



To celebrate the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in Switzerland in 1880, the International Ernest Bloch Society has pledged to help young musicians to discover, play and hopefully love the music of Ernest Bloch. Together with the Jewish Music Institute at SOAS University of London, they will present **The World of Ernest Bloch Day, on 19 April 2020 from 10.30am to 9.30pm** which will feature **masterclasses, talks, interviews and a Gala Concert.**

The three internationally acclaimed musicians, violinist **Miriam Kramer**, violist **Rivka Golani** and cellist **Raphael Wallfisch**, all recognised as supreme exponents of Bloch's works, will lead masterclasses during the day focusing on some inspirational works that are well worth regular performance. They will be interviewed by a BBC producer about their connection with Bloch's music and will each perform one of his **major works** in the evening Gala Concert. Masterclass participants may be invited to perform in the evening concert. Bloch specialist, Dr Alexander Knapp, will talk about the composer after lunch, and introduce the Bloch works in the concert.

The major works to be performed in the concert:

**Miriam Kramer** will perform **Violin Sonata no 2, Poème Mystique**, 1924, with pianist Nicholas Durcan. **Rivka Golani** will perform the **Viola Suite of 1919** with pianist Michael Hampton.

**Raphael Wallfisch** will perform **Cello Symphony**, 1954, with pianist Craig White. This is the work that Raphael has recently recorded with the National Orchestra of Wales.

To apply to participate in the Masterclass (free) go to: [www.ernestblochsociety.org](http://www.ernestblochsociety.org)

**Audience Bookings** [www.jmi.org.uk](http://www.jmi.org.uk)

**All-day** (including gala concert) £25, Students £15

**Concert only** £20, Students £10

**Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre**, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG

More information [events@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:events@ernestblochsociety.org)

## Other Bloch events:

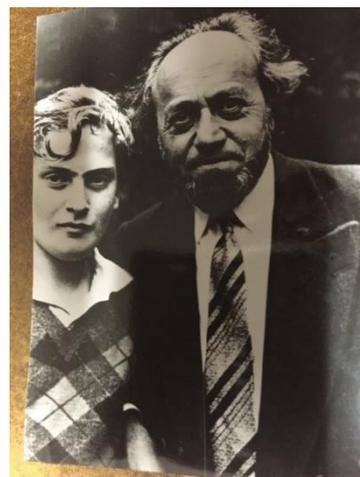
### The Jury Concert of the 2020

### Yehudi Menuhin Competition

in Richmond Virginia, on 27 May salutes Ernest Bloch. The five renowned jurors will be joined by the Artistic Director, Gordon Back, in an evening of chamber music. The programme includes

**Bloch's** Baal Shem Suite: Three Pictures of Chassidic Life.

(Pictured, the young Yehudi Menuhin and Ernest Bloch in San Francisco in the late 1920s)



### Ernest Bloch, Concertino for Flute, Viola and Strings

A short work, written in 1950, will be performed at the Cadogan Hall in 25 March by the **London Chamber Orchestra**, conductor

**Christopher Warren-Green**, Lucienne Renaudin Vary trumpet, Karen Jones flute, Rosemary Warren-Green viola.

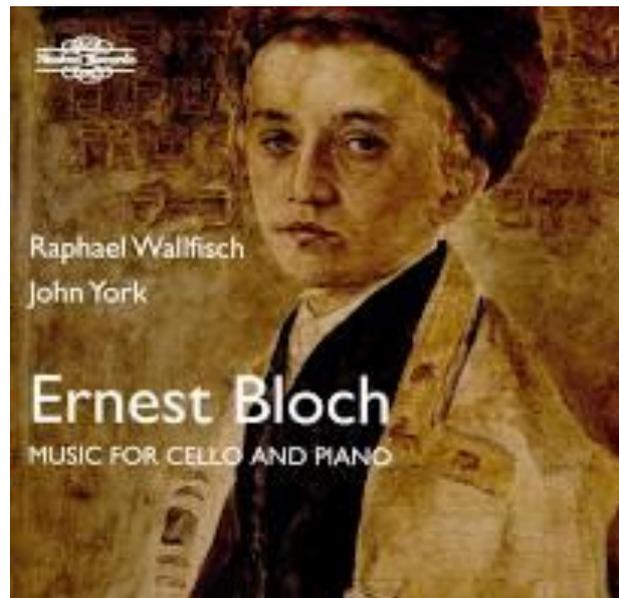
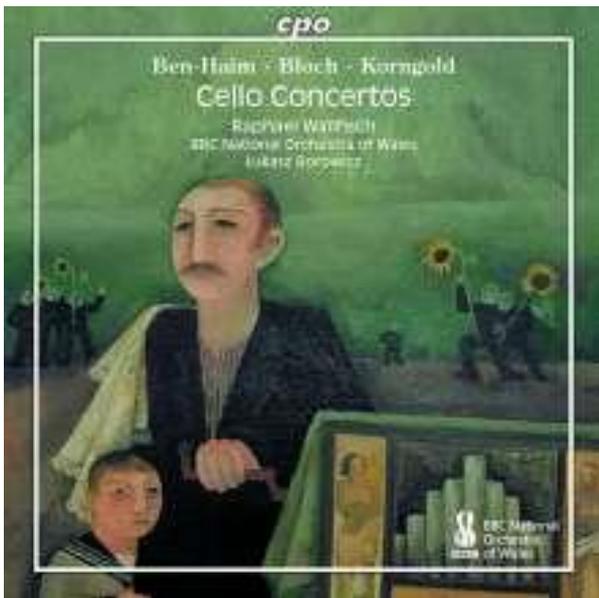
Wednesday 25 March 2020, 7.30 pm

**Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ**

£10.00 to £40.00 **020 7730 4500**

<https://cadoganhall.com/whats-on/london-chamber-orchestra-200325/>

## Some Bloch Recordings



### Raphael Wallfisch – recordings

Several associate artists of the International Ernest Bloch Society have made acclaimed recordings of Ernest Bloch's music. The most recent is Raphael Wallfisch who, amongst his huge discography and many Bloch recordings, has just made a recording of **Bloch's Symphony for Cello and Orchestra**. This was issued by CPO in October 2019. Bloch wrote this symphony in 1954 for either trombone or cello as solo instrument. This is the first time the cello version has been recorded. On this innovative disc Raphael also performs two other rarely heard cello concertos by Jewish composers – the German-born Israeli **Paul Ben-Haim's 1962 Cello Concerto** and the Austrian-born **Erich Wolfgang Korngold's Cello Concerto**. The CD has met with considerable acclaim "Wallfisch plays with apt theatricality ... This whole disc is a real find".

*Raphael Wallfisch will play the piano version of this **Cello Symphony** with pianist Craig White at the concert that is the culmination of **The World of Ernest Bloch** on 19 April 2020 at SOAS University of London. Book at [www.jmi.org.uk](http://www.jmi.org.uk)*

### Zecharia Plavin from Israel writes:

My friend Zvi Carmeli – an excellent violist – and myself – are scheduled to play Bloch's viola suites during the upcoming 2020-2021 season in Israel.

Also, I send you a Russian-language Bloch-dissertation written lately in today's Russia – I discovered this well written text in recent weeks. If anyone can read Russian and would like to see it, please contact [info@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:info@ernestblochsociety.org) or Zecharia Plavin at [zechariatanya@bezeqint.net](mailto:zechariatanya@bezeqint.net)

## Dalia Atlas – recordings



**Dalia Atlas**, President of the Israel Ernest Bloch Society, has devoted much of her life to conducting and recording Bloch's music. Dalia writes: "I am happy to see that people around the world are discovering the greatness of Ernest Bloch's music. As you know, my aim was, and still is, to discover and record all his orchestral works." For many years Dalia has been studying the special original styles in all his works. She has also analysed the hand-written scores. This has guided her understanding of what the composer intended. Most of her numerous recordings are with Naxos. All of them have received excellent reviews which can be seen on the internet. here: <http://www.dalia-atlas.com/Reviews.html>

Her Bloch recordings are often played on Israel Radio along with Dalia giving a talk about the interpretation of his music. In most of her concerts around the world she conducts Bloch. If you would like to consult Dalia about the interpretation of the composer's orchestral music, you can reach her on this email: [datlas@g.technion.ac.il](mailto:datlas@g.technion.ac.il)

**Dalia Atlas** was born in Israel, graduated at the Music Academy of Jerusalem, and studied conducting with the most distinguished conductors abroad. She won seven prizes in prestigious international conducting competitions, the first woman to do so, and was invited to conduct major orchestras. Fausto Cleva, a member of the jury of the Mitropoulos Competition, invited her to become his assistant conductor at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Unable to accept the offer, she returned to Israel where, inspired by her idealistic vision, she founded on a voluntary basis her two touring orchestras to spread music all over the country for the following 28 years. At the Technion in Haifa, Professor Dalia Atlas formed and directed musical activities to enrich future scientists with music and imagination. At the same time she accepted offers as guest conductor worldwide with major orchestras and developed her international career. Her extensive repertoire includes about 750 scores, among them hitherto unknown music, some of her own discoveries, and also arrangements of her own. She has conducted some 72 orchestras, such as The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic, the Philharmonia, the RPO, the LSO and the Mariinsky Orchestra, in concerts, festivals and recordings in thirty countries. Since 1996 she has undertaken extensive research into the music of Ernest Bloch to reveal and revive his neglected compositions, including the opera *Macbeth*. She is president of the Ernest Bloch Society in Israel.

Here are some of Dalia Atlas's Naxos Albums that you can link directly to:

| Album Title  | Catalogue No      | Work Category   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| <a href="#">BLOCH, E.: Israel / Suite for Viola and Orchestra (Gandelsman, Atlas Camerata Orchestra, Slovak Radio Symphony, Atlas)</a> | Naxos<br>8.573283 | Concerto,<br>Orchestral                                     |
| <a href="#">BLOCH, E.: Symphony in C-Sharp Minor / Poems of the Sea (London Symphony, Atlas)</a>                                       | Naxos<br>8.573241 | Orchestral  |
| <a href="#">BLOCH, E.: Symphony in E-Flat Major / Macbeth: 2 Interludes / 3 Jewish Poems / In Memoriam (Royal Philharmonic, Atlas)</a> | Naxos<br>8.573290 | Orchestral  |
| <a href="#">BLOCH: 4 Episodes / 2 Poems / Concertino / Suite Modale</a>  | Naxos<br>8.570259 | Chamber Music,<br>Orchestral,<br>Concerto,<br>Chamber Music |
| <a href="#">BLOCH: America / Suite Hebraïque</a>   | Naxos<br>8.557151 | Choral - Secular,<br>Orchestral                             |

## Miriam Kramer – recordings



Miriam also records for Naxos. Her CD of the violin music of Ernest Bloch was the Gramophone Magazine Editor's Choice in 2010. This disc was also listed in the 2017 guide for “1001 Classical Recordings You Must Hear Before You Die” compiled by Matthew Rye and Steven Isserlis.

Rob Cowan wrote in Gramophone: “Miriam Kramer's programme might usefully serve as a sort of **'Bloch starter-pack'**, with the delightful *Suite Hébraïque* as its tuneful opener. ‘Rapsodie’, the Suite's first movement, harbours a noble melody reminiscent of top-drawer Max Bruch and Kramer's performance of it could hardly be

more heartfelt. Both violin sonatas are given extremely good performances, that of the Second particularly fine especially in the ecstatic, double-stopped statements of the central theme. The combination of Kramer's musicianship and Naxos's price will be irresistible to most repertory explorers.

“This is a stupendously good disc from the ever-enterprising Naxos label, comprising 75 minutes of Swiss-Jewish composer Ernest Bloch's violin sonatas, plus the shorter pieces *Abodah* {*A Yom Kippur Melody*}, the *Suite Hébraïque*, and the brief, modestly titled *Melody*. Recorded in a London church in 1998, Miriam Kramer's violin technique is both rigorous and resonant, with a hauntingly yearning edge to it, perfect for this evocative yet uncompromising music by the too little known Bloch. Listen to the final Moderato movement of the 1st Sonata as an example of her musicianship. The piano of Simon Over matches her dedication to these lovely works in sensitive style. One more bargain from Naxos, and my introduction to a superb violinist, for whose other recordings I shall be on the lookout.”

## Take your pick of recordings of *Schelomo* .....

The Strad Magazine in February 2018 published a long article comparing recordings of *Schelomo* over the decades, starting with Zara Nelsova's recording of 1949, with Bloch himself conducting. The article is full of praise for recordings by our President Steven Isserlis, and associate artists, Natalie Clein and Raphael Wallfisch.

Julian Haycock writes: "Intended to be played as a seamless integrated whole, with an equality between the cellist and the orchestra, rather than as a concertante piece, Bloch's Hebraic rhapsody *Schelomo* has been recorded by many cellists in numerous ways."

It seems that there is something special about almost all of Julian Haycock's selections.

You can read the article and see the recommended recordings here.

<https://www.thestrad.com/reviews/cello-journey-the-best-recordings-of-ernest-blochs-schelomo/7509.article>

### Listings of Bloch activities on the website

Details of these and, all the Bloch-related activities that have been brought to our notice, can be seen on the activities page of the IEBS website

<http://ernestblochsociety.org/index.php?id=activites>

### Any musicians planning Bloch performances

or recordings in the coming years should please inform the International Ernest Bloch Society so that we can include the details on our website and in our promotions.

[info@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:info@ernestblochsociety.org)

### Complete list of Bloch Compositions

Alexander Knapp and Frank Geltner have worked together to revise a list of Bloch's works. It is incorporated into the latest edition of the Bloch Booklet that Frank and Alex worked on last year - The complete list appears as page two of the booklet. The link can be found on the International Ernest Bloch Society website homepage.

<http://ernestblochsociety.org/data/uploads/compositionslist.pdf>

For more detailed information about each of Bloch's works (name, instrumentation, dedicatee, medium, named movements, dates of composition and publication, length, publisher, expiry of copyright), please see "Alphabetical List of Bloch's Published and Unpublished Works", in eds. Alexander Knapp and Norman Solomon (2016) *Ernest Bloch Studies* (Cambridge University Press), pp. xxvi-xlvi.

You can also see a list of works sorted by genre here <http://bloch.music.coocan.jp/list02.htm>

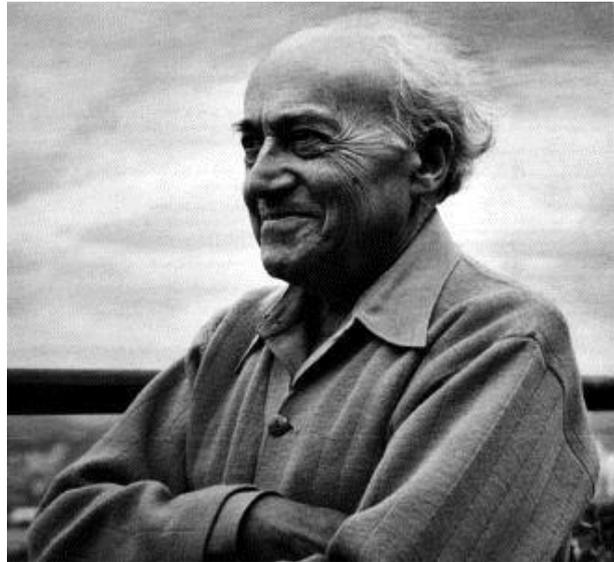
### This Bloch News Sheet no. 4, distributed January 2020

is compiled by **Geraldine Auerbach** MBE. Secretary IEBS [info@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:info@ernestblochsociety.org)

**If you know someone** who may be interested in receiving this occasional News Sheet, please either pass on their details to me or invite them to join our mailing list as follows: send an email to [listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk). Leave the subject line BLANK and in the Message say: SUBSCRIBE ERNESTBLOCHSOCIETY followed by your First name and your Last name only (please delete any automatic signatures). (If you have any queries or difficulties send an email to [events@ernestblochsociety.org](mailto:events@ernestblochsociety.org) and we will try to help).

## Short Biography of Ernest Bloch

Ernest Bloch was so admired in his heyday that many considered him the fourth 'B' after Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. He was one of the most original composers of the 20th century whose music, whilst intellectually challenging, was accessible to a wide audience. His works were regularly performed from the 1920s to the 1950s, particularly in the USA, UK and Italy.



Now, around the time of the 60th Anniversary of his death in Portland, Oregon in 1959, and the 140<sup>th</sup> of his birth in Geneva in 1880, it is time to rejoice in the wide range of his oeuvre and hear again the well- and lesser-known orchestral, choral, chamber, instrumental, and vocal works. There will also be an exploration of his hitherto unpublished music.

Bloch has often been referred to as a 'Jewish composer' because of the substantial number of his works that carry Jewish titles. Yet his repertoire incorporates a variety of influences such as Renaissance, neo-Classical, neo-Romantic, Swiss, Native American, Chinese, and Gregorian Chant. Although he never founded a 'school' of composition, many of the most prominent American composers of the 20th century were his students.

He visited Britain in the 1930s, where concerts of his chamber music were presented. In 1949 his *Concerto Symphonique* for piano and orchestra was premiered at the Edinburgh Festival; in the same year, he also conducted a major concert at the Royal Albert Hall, including *Schelomo* with cellist Zara Nelsova and the *Sacred Service* with baritone Aron Rothmüller and the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus.

Following the founding of the American Ernest Bloch Society in 1937, an Ernest Bloch Society was founded in London later in the same year, with Albert Einstein, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Arthur Bliss, Sir Arnold Bax, and Sir John Barbirolli, among others, as honorary officers. Amongst his many other attributes, Bloch was an accomplished photographer, a lover of mushrooms, a collector and polisher of agates, and a prolific letter writer.

***If you no longer wish to receive these occasional Ernest Bloch Newsletters, please let me know and I will remove your name from our list.***