



IRIS KARLIN

Candidate for
Cantorial Ordination



CONTACT ME

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 www.iriskarlin.com

PROFILE

Worship leader,
educator, song leader
and composer.

A versatile singer
specializing in Jewish
music, folk, pop-rock,
Israeli music, Musical
Theatre, orchestral and
classical music.

Pianist & accompanist.
Musical director and
conductor. Experienced
in producing events,
concerts, musical
theatre productions
and fund raisers.

CONGREGATIONAL PULPIT EXPERIENCE

➤ Temple B'nai Israel, Clearwater, FL

Student Cantor (Bi-Weekly); August 2022–present

- *Designed and led dozens of creative Shabbat and Festival services in partnership with the Rabbi.*
- *Arranged and composed new music for worship.*
- *Co-designed with the Rabbi and led the High Holy Day services, transitioning to siddur Mishkan Hanefesh.*
- *Built a volunteer choir of 18 members, and prepared them to sing in the High Holidays and special occasions.*
- *Created a monthly 'Rock Shabbat' with a professional band*
- *Created music curricula for a newly merged religious school (Conservative and Reform pre-K through 7), created a school siddur, and led a kids' music band elective.*
- *Co-officiated life cycle events with the rabbi.*
- *Created a special Slichot program with a string quartet.*
- *Wrote and delivered two sermons in worship.*
- *Coached and prepared b'nei mitzvah in weekly lessons for the seven months leading up to their services.*

➤ Congregation Adas Emuno, Leonia, NJ

Student Cantor: Sep 2020–Aug 2022; Summer 2023

- *Co-led weekly Shabbat services with the Rabbi (Including B'nei Mitzva, Sunday school and tot Shabbat).*
- *Co-led the High holidays with the Rabbi.*
- *Created music curricula for the Hebrew School.*
- *Created a school siddur, and co-designed Temple shirt.*
- *Produced a concert celebration for the Temple's 150th.*
- *Created and led 'Rock Shabbat' services with volunteers.*
- *Arranged and composed new music for worship.*
- *Wrote and delivered two sermons.*
- *Prepared family Shabbats and holiday concerts.*
- *Prepared and edited with the kids a full virtual production of Joseph and the amazing technicolor dreamcoat.*
- *Taught basketball Torah tropes to 6th & 7th graders.*
- *Coached and prepared b'nei mitzvah in weekly lessons for the seven months leading up to their services.*

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➤ REVIEWS

Iris was recognized by Opera News magazine as “A gleaming soprano with an upper register of striking beauty”; and by Stage magazine as: “Iris Karlin was an absolutely delight... whom I loved from the moment she opened her mouth. Karlin handled the vocal acrobatics with ease and resonated high notes powerful enough to hit the back wall.”

➤ NON-PULPIT JEWISH MUSIC EXPERIENCE

- 2023 Cantor sub for Shabbat services at Village Temple, NYC.
- 2022-2023 Song leader at Camp Kaplan JCC, NJ.
- 2020 HHD Student Cantor at Temple Beth Am, NYC.
- 2015-2019 Cantorial Soloist, Riverdale Temple, Bronx.
- 2017 High Holiday choir conductor at Riverdale Temple, Bronx.
- 2006-2008 Conductor of the Welfare Office – Shira Ivrit Choir, Haifa.
- 2006-2007 Conductor of the Bney-Brit Choir, Haifa, Israel.
- 2005 Song leader at ‘Young Judaea’ Summer Camp, Salem, OR.
- 2004-2007 Conductor of Haifa University Choir.
- 2001-2003 Song leader Capital camps, PA.
Directed “Grease” & “Into the Woods”.
- 1994-2008 Shabbat services leader at Rambam Hospital (Volunteer)
- 1994-2008 Soloist, conductor and accompanist for Jewish cultural and religious events on prestigious stages across Israel.

➤ SECULAR MUSIC EXPERIENCE

In 2004 Iris embarked on a professional cross-over singer career, singing a wide range of repertoire, from Israeli music, folk songs and Yiddish songs to pop-rock, musical theatre, Lieder, operettas, operas and classical music. Iris had performed as a soloist in concerts, as well as full theatrical productions with orchestras. Iris has portrayed 27 different roles in full productions, some of them reoccurring on different stages with different companies.

Amongst the prestigious stages, on which she performed are - Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Alice Tully and Symphony Space. Amongst the companies she performed with are - NY Lyric, Pacific Encore Performances, Israeli Opera Studio, Technion Choir, Madrigal Choir, Dell’Arte Opera, Light Opera of NY; Metropolis Opera; Riverside Opera Company; NY G&S Society; Ridgewood G&S; Williamsburg Opera; Amore Opera; NJ Baroque Orchestra; Asian Cultural Symphony; Staten Island Symphony; Cleveland Pop Orchestra; Delaware County Symphony orchestra and North Jersey Symphony.

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TUTORING EXPERTISE

Teaching individuals and classes of all ages -
Modern Hebrew, Jewish History and Jewish Holidays.

Tfilah - prayers leading
B'nai Mitzva - tutoring, teaching Hebrew prayers and blessings, Torah and Haftarah Trope, and understanding and analyzing Torah Portions
Jewish music

Singing

Musical Instruments

Band Instructing

Choir Instructing

Musical Theatre

productions



ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

Tech savvy

MS Office

Google Suite

Marketing design

Written communication

Scheduling

Writing programs

Writing curriculums

Project management

And thanks to covid...

Video editing

Sound editing



TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2022-2024 URJ Hebrew Teacher - Adults Hebrew courses.

2023 Hebrew Teacher for Rabbinic students HUC - YII.

2022 Teacher Assistant HUC Hebrew Literature course.

2021-2022 Hebrew Bnei Mitzva Teacher at The Reform Temple of Forest Hills, NY.

2021 Hebrew Teacher Assistant for HUC - Middlebury College seminar for Rabbinic students.

2020-2021 Hebrew Teacher at Congregation Beth Elohim, Brooklyn, NYC.

2017-2020 Early Education Music Specialist at Bogart Nursery School, Bogota NJ.

2017-2020 Early Education Music Specialist at Sweet Peas, Bergenfield NJ.

2015-2017 Judaic & Hebrew Teacher at Temple Beth Or, Township of Washington.

2015-2017 Song Leader and Music Teacher at the Goddard School, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

2007-2008 Teaching Artist - Lecturer at the Israeli Opera.

2006-2008 Teacher at Yamaha School of Music Herzliya, Israel.

2004-2007 BPM College faculty - Taught courses in music appreciation, theory, piano & voice.

2004-2005 Vocal Coach & Piano accompanist at the Hecht's drama studio, Haifa.

2004-2005 Schools Concerts touring guide, patronized by Lewinski's Music College.

2008-2020 Teaching privately: Piano, Voice and Hebrew.



LANGUAGES

English, Hebrew, Romanian; Basic: Italian, German, French.
Written Arabic.



MUSICAL STYLE

Iris' conducting had been praised as "engaging", "clear" and "emotional", and her compositions had been described as "soulful", "luscious", "eclectic", "European with a Middle-Eastern flare", and as "Jewish sacred Musical Theatre".

By her colleagues, for her composition style, Iris has also been called "The Queen of Schmaltz"

Focusing on mostly liturgical music, Iris brings to the table her rich musical eclectic experience, in all of her arrangements as well as in her original compositions.

Harmonizing together East & West, Middle-Eastern with American, Classical & Chazzanut with mainstream rock and pop.

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MUSIC DIRECTOR / CONDUCTOR EXPERIENCE

- 2021 *Directed and produced a fully virtual "Joseph and the amazing technicolor dreamcoat" with Adas Emuno kids.*
- 2015-2019 *Musical Director of Amore Academy kids' G&S shows.*
- 2010-2019 *Producing Director & Assistant Conductor at Amore Opera.*
- 2014-2016 *Musical director of FPC Musical Theater summer camp, Englewood, NJ.*
- 2010-2013 *Musical Director of Pacific Encore Performances.*
- 2012 *Director of "Snegurochka", Delaware County Symphony Orchestra.*
- 2011 *Director of "Carmen" at JCC, Deal, NJ.*
- 2010 *Director of "Gypsy Fest" at JCC, Deal, NJ.*
- 2008 *Music director "un Ballo" at Israeli Opera summer camp.*
- 2007 *Director of G&S kids "Iolanthe" Production of Yamaha, Herzliya.*



COMPOSITION EXPERIENCE

During her Bachelors studies, Iris majored in composition. Amongst her esteemed teachers in Israel: Dr. Arie Shapirah, Prof. Oded Zehavi, Prof. Bat-Sheva Rubinstein, Prof. Bo'az Ben-Moshe & Dr. Eitan Steinberg. At Hebrew Union College she was the protege of the esteemed composers: Dr. Gerald Cohen & Jonathan Comisar.

During her last pulpit years, Iris had composed over 50 mainstream songs of liturgy and prayer, as well as Shirei Midrash, Ruth Song Cycle, and songs for parashas, several of which are being sung in congregations in the Tristate Area.

Iris is the recent recipient of the Excellence in Composition award two years in a row, and she's currently working on her first Modern Chazzanut Opera "Yehudit" to be premiered at Temple Emanu-El, NYC May 16th, 2024.



THESIS PROJECT

YEHUDIT

In her last years at HUC, Iris had explored the ancient Hebrew writings about Yehudit, whose scroll is a part of the old testaments, however it is unknown to the Jewish world. Her work led to an adaptation of the text into a libretto, and into composing it as a theatrical piece containing Jewish elements, from Cantillation, to Chazzanut, and into the musical realm of synagogue music, past and present, creating the first Modern Chazzanut Opera.

Her recital, that got rave reviews, previewed highlights from the work, with a chamber orchestra and 31 cantors and student cantors.

For a full review:
www.iriskarlin.com/yehudit.html

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EDUCATION

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION (HUC-JIR) | NEW YORK, NY

M.A in Sacred Music from Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music
 2020-2024

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA, ISRAEL

M.A. in Education. Magna Cum Laude
 2004-2007

BUCHMAN MEHTA SCHOOL OF MUSIC TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY, ISRAEL

Graduate Voice Studies
 2004-2007

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA, ISRAEL

B.A. Honors Program and Music Summa Cum Laude, Dean's List
 2001-2004



RECENT AWARDS

- 2023 Dean's Award - Stephen Pearce Prize in Human Relations
 The Dr. Josef Freudenthal Memorial Prize for Excellence in Composition
 The Cantor Debra Stein Award in Traditional Hazzanut
- 2022 The Dr. Josef Freudenthal Memorial Prize for Excellence in Composition
 The Compassionate Cantor Prize by Reform Cantors
 The Women of Reform Judaism Centennial Prize
 Sarah Lantz Prize in Human Relations
- 2021 The Women of Reform Judaism Centennial Prize
 The Cantor Norman Belink Award for Excellence in Reform Workshop
 The Stephen Pearce Prize in Human Relations

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Personal Statement

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I still dream in Hebrew...

I wake up in English, I talk to my kids in English, I cook in English, I code in English. But I still dream in Hebrew.

It's my connection, it's my essence, it's my Ruach and Spirit, my silent thoughts, my deepest feelings. It's my being. As a singer, I traveled from one place to another, from one language to another. But no matter how loud or dominant or prominent the other languages were, I still dreamt in Hebrew. And when I dance, and when I sing, and when I hug, I feel it in Hebrew. The language that flows through my veins. And sometimes it bubbles, and it is so overwhelming, compelling me to let go, to deliver it to others, to share... to give from myself, from my heart, and from my everlasting love of the Hebrew, its music, and its holy tradition.

Hebrew wasn't my first language, but it was my "mama loshen". I was born in Haifa, Israel, daughter to immigrants and 3rd generation of the Holocaust. A middle child that was nurtured to mediate between the siblings and bring peace - Sh'lom Bayit. When my musical talent bloomed, I sang to bring peace to the hearts of those who needed healing, r'fuat haguf u'r'fuat hanefesh. As a little kid, I went with my grandparents to Holocaust survivors' events, and I played the piano and sang to them. They would listen, sing, and cry. But I didn't have the capacity to understand their tears.

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At the age of ten, a terrible car accident left me in the hospital for weeks. And there, in the white empty room, I was introduced first to a Kabbalat Shabbat by the hospital volunteers, who came and filled the room with warmth and ruach. Once healed, I insisted on giving back and joining the volunteers team myself. And so I started leading Kabbalot Shabbat at the hospital, in the section of the wounded soldiers. My keyboard bag always had extra candles, matches, a kiddush cup, and wine (with doctors' permission, of course). It was in the eyes of the young soldiers, that I understood how soothing the music is. How strengthening prayer is. How empowering it is to sing together. And I continued singing for and with the soldiers every Shabbat for years, until I became an officer myself.

I was playing L'cha Dodi, when a loud sweet melody came through the hospital's speakers and interrupted our singing. To my inquiry, the nurse informed me that this is a new song for a new baby. When the next babies were "announced" it was the same melody. I promised myself that one day I'll devote the time, to give every newborn - a new melody. And so I started composing, and made a little tradition for myself. Making every word and every note meaningful and personal. Little did I know that not only I become a composer, but that one day I'd be the one officiating baby namings and bnei Mitzvot, and would have the chance to gift each kid - their new melody.

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Singing, praying, and composing, it was only a matter of time until I was introduced to the world of American Reform Judaism, and seeing myself as a future clergy was inevitable. Everything I did, everything I have become, led me to this path. It seems it has always been my mission to make meaningful connections. To touch hearts. To bring comfort and consolation, and to create uplifting moments and bring somelight to brighten the darkness.

As I begin my journey as a cantor, I am bringing with me the experiences that shaped me, with a welcoming smile and genuine positivity. I hope to find a spiritual home for me and my family, where I can be a part of a team, lead with my soul, and share my gifts. I wish to bring my passion for crafting innovative services and creating meaningful experiences for the community, and compose and arrange for them their own sounds of prayers. To work with a kids' band and a kids' choir, to lead with volunteer musicians in harmony, to bring in the magic of the High holidays with an adults' choir, and to put together shows and concerts, and spark Jewish creativity together. I hope that my congregation will dream along with me, and that I can help them to be inspired, to be hopeful, and to appreciate the blessings we bring and share. For then, with a spiritual vision that unites us, we could all be dreaming in Hebrew...