

A. Grossman, Two Hanukkah Songs



Adam Grossman, composer and conductor, lives near Boston, Massachusetts. His works have received many performances in and around Boston, including by the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, the Newton, Wellesley, Brockton and Waltham Symphony Orchestras, the Symphony pro Musica, the New England Conservatory Youth Repertory Orchestra, the North Shore Philharmonic and the New Philharmonia Orchestra. His music has been performed at the New England Conservatory, Brandeis, Tufts and Northeastern Universities, Franklin and Marshall College, and by the Zamir Chorale of Metropolitan Detroit and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Ann Arbor, Michigan. This concert by the KSO is his first Canadian performance. He is

Music Director of The Master Singers of Lexington, and is on the faculty of the All Newton Music School and the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, where he conducts the Junior Repertory Orchestra. He is the former Music Director of the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra and conductor of The Boston Cecilia Chamber Singers. Guest conducting appearances include with The Boston Cecilia, Chorus Pro Musica, Dinosaur Annex New Music Ensemble, The Lexington Sinfonietta, Symphony by the Sea, Longy Summer Orchestra, Newton Community Chorus, and Youth and Pops concerts with the Newton, Wellesley, and New Philharmonia Orchestras. He has appeared three times at the Warebrook (Vermont) Festival for Contemporary Music, and in the fall of 1999 was Artist in Residence and Conductor of the Brandeis University Chorus. In 2006 he conducted the first performance of Abigail Al-Doory's *Tonya & Nancy: The Opera*, and in 2007 he conducted the Central Massachusetts Junior District Festival Orchestra. He has conducted more than forty premieres, including works by Allen Anderson, William Bolcom, Marti Epstein, Peter Lieberman, Rodney Lister, John McDonald, Joyce Mekeel, Marjorie Merryman, William Pfaff and Michael Weinstein, as well as local premieres by Peter Maxwell Davies, Michael Finnissy and Richard Felciano.

Two Hannukah Songs is a string version of two sections of *Four Hannukah Songs*, a setting of traditional melodies for full orchestra first performed by the Newton (Massachusetts) Symphony Orchestra in 1984. The first song, *S'vivon*, is a spinning song about a dreidl, the four-sided top used in a game of chance played on Hannukah. The song is a round, which illustrates musically the spinning of the top as the tune chases itself around in circles. I have also set the melody against its mirror inversion (when the melody goes up the inversion goes down, and vice-versa), which suggests to me the dreidl and its reflection as it spins on a shiny tabletop. The second song, *Hannukah*, is a silly melody about how much fun the holiday is. Tonight's performance is the Canadian premiere of the composition.