

Dr. MICHAEL ISAACSON

December 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I have known Ben Tisser since he was a child at Valley Beth Shalom in Los Angeles. I have watched him grow as a person, a musician and a Jewish leader in the community.

Over the years he has matured from a boy in Cantor Herschel Fox's youth choir to becoming the VBS synagogue organist and eventually a cantor on his own . His great care in selecting appropriate music for the synagogue, showing both respect for tradition and innovation for the future of Jewish music is evident in the successful programs that he has produced.

In 2008 we collaborated on a program for his former congregation presenting my High Holiday compositions for Selichot services. To help the congregation better prepare to listen with "midrashic ears" to the music of the pending Yamim Noraim, I annotated the performance of each work with words of explanation.

In 2012, Mr. Tisser invited me to speak in New York at a lecture demonstration featuring the talents of cantorial students from JTS and HUC where I spoke on the message of my book *Jewish Music as Midrash: What Makes Music Jewish?*

Student Cantor Tisser has taken to heart all that I have shared of my own experience as a composer with him and continues to incorporate these lessons in his own writing.

I am impressed by his great love of *Hazzanut* and all things musically Jewish. I believe that Ben Tisser will be a great positive energy in any congregation seeking an enthusiastic Hazzan and will take great care to elevate the membership *b'shira uv'zimrah*, in song and in melodious prayer.

Cordially Yours,

Michael Isaacson