

***Suite Revelation* for cello and piano (2014)**  
**Robert Greenberg**

**Program Note**

- I. Overture
- II. Nigun no. 9
- III. Molad'ti
- IV. Gilu Hagalilim
- V. Y'mey Hanoar
- VI. The Gigue Is Up

My apologies upfront for all the first person pronouns in this program note!

A few years back, Nina Flyer asked me to write for her a piece of music that would contain or make reference to Jewish/Yiddish/Hebrew dance music and/or folk songs. The more I thought about it, the more difficult I realized the challenge would be. As best as I could tell, I had three options. Option one: I could set said dance music/songs for cello and piano, with the result being a series of arrangements: nice, but artlessly unoriginal (meaning *dull*). Option two: I could weave the tunes into a single narrative and in doing so write another version of “Schlomo” (a self-proclaimed “Hebraic” work for cello and orchestra by Ernst Bloch). Option three: I could make up my own ethnic-sounding melodies and either arrange them for cello and piano or weave them into some sort of Hebraic narrative: options one and two all over again.

So I came up with option four. I selected four folk tunes (movements II, III, IV, and V) and composed a counter-melody to each. The first half of movements II, III, IV, and V set that counter-melody without any reference to the original folk tune. The second half of those movements then combines the counter-melody with the original tune (and thus the “revelation”, as the original tune is “revealed”).

The generally two-part shape described above (excepting movement IV, which is “A-B-A” in structure) suggested Baroque binary dance form, and so I turned the piece into a sort of Baroque dance suite. It begins with a French Overture based on the counter-melodies of movement III and V, and concludes with a gigue based on the counter melodies of movements II and IV. The historical references are supposed to be tongue-in-cheek and I can only hope they will be taken that way.

A thousand-and-one thanks to Nina Flyer and Lori Lack for their patience, hard work, and musical brilliance. *Suite Revelation* is dedicated – with the greatest respect and affection – to Nina Flyer.