

The Jewish National School in Music54

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The article is devoted to the history of a unique and distinctive phenomenon of Russian culture – the Jewish National Composer School, which was born in the bosom of the Society of Jewish Folk Music (officially approved in 1908). Its core was made up by the most talented and consistent followers of the ideas of the Society, young St. Petersburg and Moscow musicians: Y. Engel, M. Gnesin, I. Ahron, A. Crane, L. Saminsky, L. Rozovsky, M. Milner, A. Veprik.

Overcoming, especially at first, the misunderstanding and resistance of different circles of society, in heated discussions about the foundations and characteristic features of national professional music (the well-known debate between J. Engel and L. Saminsky), Jewish composers in two decades went through all the necessary steps for development of each national school: from collection and arrangement of folklore to creation of original works in various genres including opera. But the early 1920s, under the influence of well-known socio-political events, became the time of the decline of the Jewish national school in music. Some composers (Ahron, Rozovsky, Saminsky) left Russia, others (Gnesin, Crane, Milner, Veprik) remained. The artistic fate of both of them cannot be called happy.

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