Phantasia Judaica

By

Boaz Bischofswerder

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Before the Second World War, Boaz Bischofswerder was an Obercantor in the Brunenstrasse Synagogue, Berlin. He and his son, Felix (b. 1922) fled Germany and later were transported as "enemy aliens" from England on the infamous Dunera, that docked at Darling Harbour on 7th September 1940.

During the voyage, the refugees were systematically robbed and beaten by their guards and kept on board in appallingly overcrowded conditions. The graphics of Schonberg (of which there are copies in the Archive) have immortalised these scenes.

On arrival in Australia, father and son, categorised as "enemy aliens," were subsequently interned at Hay and Tatura. During this time, both father and son continued to compose music. Fantasia Judaica was originally composed for four tenor voices and sung (without words) on the Dunera. At Hay, the music was arranged for piano and violin, these instruments being the only ones available at the time. In 1995 Felix Werder added a flute part to his father's composition.

The original manuscripts were donated to the Archive by Mrs Hemda Patkin. They were copied by Mrs Julie Symonds, and published with the permission of Felix Werder. Thanks are due to Mrs Ida Ferson for her expert advice.
Boaz Bischofswerder (ca1933)
Phantasia Judaica

Andante cantabile.

B. Bischofswerder