

By Anil Dawar

MUSIC composed by Jewish prisoners in German concentration camps has received a world premiere in Jerusalem.

The songs and orchestral pieces, some originally written on sheets of toilet paper, were played at an emotional concert to honour the six million Jewish people killed by Adolf Hitler.

The Notes Of Hope event was made possible by money from Jewish National Fund-UK and formed the early fruits of a continuing labour of love for Italian composer and conductor Professor Francesco Lotoro.

The 63-year-old started researching in 1988 and gathered the work of professional musicians, music hall and cabaret stars and gifted amateurs.

"There was an explosion of creativity in the camps," he said. "It was a reaction to the horror."

One song was performed by 85-year-old Holocaust survivor Aviva Bar-On.

The song was written by concentration camp nurse Ilse Weber, who taught it to Mrs Bar-On before she was sent to the gas chambers in Auschwitz.

### Joyous

Mrs Bar-On was nine when she learned three of Ilse Weber's songs by pretending to be ill - and being sent to the infirmary.

She said: "The musical life in the ghetto was very rich.

"It is important for me to sing the songs. Emotionally it is very hard, it reminds me of Ilse."

Prof Lotoro came across the nurse's notebook with her poetry and song lyrics and Mrs Bar-On then sang him the tunes, which he orchestrated.

Other songs performed included Tango In Auschwitz, written by 12-year-old Irke Yanowski, a piece in which she yearns for the time before the war when she danced and sang freely.

Prof Lotoro has found, transcribed and pieced together works written on toilet paper, on X-ray sheets and stamps. He also searched national archives.

Since he started, the conductor has discovered some 8,000 pieces in whole or partial form. He has reconstructed about 400 of them.

Chairman of Jewish National Fund-UK Samuel Hayek said yesterday: "What has been done is important because there are fewer and fewer Holocaust survivors alive. It is such a sad story but the event was joyous at the same time."

# Celebrated at last...the music written in Nazi death camps and collected over 30 years



Conductor Francesco Lotoro before the concert and, top, on the rostrum

## Family anger as Egypt shows strained face of pills smuggler

By Michael Knowles

A BRITISH woman jailed for smuggling painkillers into Egypt has been paraded in front of cameras.

Laura Plummer was filmed sitting in a makeshift church inside Cairo's notorious al-Qanater prison over Easter.

Her distraught family yesterday told how the 33-year-old "doesn't bear any resemblance" to the woman who left for a two-week holiday last October.

Ms Plummer, from Hull, was jailed after carrying 290 Tramadol pills into the country for her Egyptian partner Omar Caboo.

The tablets, for his back problem, are banned in Egypt. Laura's sister Jayne said yesterday: "It's so hard to see her like this.

"We've obviously been out to see her regularly but she



Mr Caboo with Ms Plummer

isn't the same woman who left for a two-week holiday in the sun. She doesn't bear any resemblance to her.

"Our mother is in bits and has complained to the Foreign Office. There doesn't seem to be any urgency to review Laura's case."

The Foreign Office said last night: "We continue to do all we can to support Laura and her family."



Laura Plummer, filmed in prison church

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