

## Poems by Richelle Shem-Tov written in 2024

### *Tarab: Two Poems on Tarab*

#### *1. Tarab: What it means*

Fellini found antique paintings in a cave  
On trying to film them – in the camera's light, they fade  
So dost my creative thoughts of prose or poem  
Which often pop up in bed or on roam  
But will fade when trying to pen.  
Only shattered pieces to be remembered again

This piece on Tarab on a stroll in the park  
Came to mind  
Only filtered parts remaining behind  
I heard music through earphones plugged in my ear  
A passionate aria from Italian opera  
'Twas as if that song came from within  
Sweeping me up and away into the blue sky  
I myself would have burst into song  
If not for the occasional passerby,  
There and then came to me this writ on Tarab

Tarab – a word from Arabian lands  
No word like this from any other tongue do I know  
It describes a heightened sense of enchantment  
A feeling, a sensation, an uplifting surge of emotion  
Coming from music and music alone  
Be it through lyrics of sorrow or joy

Arabic-speaking people describe hereby their ethnic music.

I have adopted and adapted this musical word

To define any form of harmony or rhythm

Reaching in to pluck on my heart strings

Any music – if Tarab or not

To people can do many things.

But Tarab is that special state of being

Which might make you want to laugh or weep or sing.

It might make you tap your feet or dance;

*Tarab* can be evoked by great artists in concert,

But also by melodies simple as dirt.

It may be something heard by chance

A few bars on the piano, a tune, a child's dance.

*It* adds a special dimension to music, to life.

Sometimes the instruments, sometimes the word

Sometimes the voice or the melody or both.

Even to the sounds of nature it may relate

The words in language foreign, or not.

Perhaps the sound itself may excite or elate.

Such is the power of Tarab

## 2. In Praise of Tarab

It is Tarab I hear, loud and clear

Beethoven. Rachmoninov

Brahms or Prokofiev

Stravinski, Tchaikovski and Dimitri Hvoroskofski

Chopin's piano, the lute or the flute

Like magic my spirit doth cheer,

Celine Deon with "A Hymn to Love"

In Paris on the Eifel, high above,

Memories of the 'Way we Were',

Abba, The Beatles, The Phantom, Evita,

Rigoletta and Il Travator

"Sukara" in Arabic by the Lady of the Nile

African Rhythm and Russian chime

Sung in Hebrew or whateve

Does it matter if it comes from bird chatter?

On and on and so much more

Pluck on the strings of my heart

On and on

Until it's time to part

Until a day will come

When no more will I sing

With laughter or tear

No more will I hear

Nor feel that beat in my ear

Nor dance with joy.

Tarab however

Will be here forever

To enchant man, woman, girl and boy.