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SUBLIME STRINGS Violinist Itzhak Perlman shakes hands with Cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgot at a concert of Jewish and Hasidic music at the Festival of the Arts BOCA for Perlman’s second appearance March 9. He opened the festival with his more familiar genre of classical music on March 6, but recorded this Jewish concert and has appeared on tour. “A Dudele is a Yiddish folk song that was recorded by Richard Tucker and Jan Peerce,” Netsky said about the two famous tenors of their day, as the band erupted into sound and cheers went up from the crowd.

Perlman asked to turn up the house lights “so I can see your eyes” under a tented Mizner Park Amphitheater after the first few numbers. He and Netsky kibitzed throughout the concert, providing a running commentary on the music and world affairs. “I’m not Putin you on,” a relaxed Perlman joked about the Ukraine crisis and a song from that region.

But it was the music, Helfgot’s voice and the cries of Ilene Stahl’s plaintive clarinet that dazzled the audience of at least 2,400, according to the city’s ticket estimates. Perlman sat up front, playing into a microphone so people could hear every note.

Listeners in the back moved up closer after intermission, and the audience was so receptive, the musicians played an encore, “Adir Hu/Moshe Emes.”

“It was good for the soul,” festival patron Lee Greenspon summed up afterward.

Rapt audience for Perlman’s Jewish music

Violin virtuoso Itzhak Perlman, backed by a New England Conservatory klezmer band and a New York cantor enthralled a mostly Jewish audience who came out to hear the sounds of their heritage re-created, and stayed through the last note.

There was even dancing in the aisles, encouraged by Hankus Netsky, music director for “Eternal Echoes: Songs and Dances for the Soul.” Park East Synagogue chief cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgot was the vocal soloist. A repertoire of familiar Jewish and more prayerful Hasidic music from “Sholom Aleykhem” to “A Dudele [A Song to You]” had English translations in the program book for the Festival of the Arts BOCA for Perlman’s second appearance March 9.

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