SPARKS A-FLYIN' SPRING 2021 issue no. 5

Welcome to the fifth issue of our quarterly newsletter -- I hope it finds you and your loved ones vaccinated, safe, and rejuvenating as we near the official start of summer. I'm grateful to share there has been more airplay here and there (from the NPR station KTEP-FM to the community radio station KTAL-FM) and that *SPARKS* co-producer Bill Radcliffe's playing appears on 5 of 12 songs of a April 16, 2021 major label release by the country band Midland, but the biggest *SPARKS* news is:

*SPARKS was announced in early April as a Finalist in FOUR categories in the **2021 New Mexico Music Awards:** Best Humorous Song ("The Bark Mitzvah Song"), Best Bluegrass Song ("Shabbos Keeps the Jews"), Best Religious Song ("Sparks"), and **Best Album of the Year!** To be in the final 5 of each of these categories when the competition received over 670 entries statewide feels like amazing validation, especially for a project whose diversity and distinctiveness don't always make for easy marketing! It's also exciting to be the first album from Brainville Studios to get NMMA recognition. The winners are scheduled to be announced at a July 25 event in Albuquerque -- for more updates, see* http://www.newmexicomusicawards.com/

If you have a friend (or someone who writes a music blog, is a music DJ, etc.) who is eclectic in their musical or Jewish tastes, thank you for letting them know the album is available via the major platforms, and that https://larrylesser.com/sparks has links to browse the lyrics, access the music, and learn about the project. A project that tries to transcend denomination/faith can hopefully help at a time our country remains so divided.

Take care,

Larry