KHEVRISA

European Klezmer Music

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings
This is the first modern studio recording of the klezmer music of Europe, performed with the original European instrumentation—first violin, *cimbal* (hammer dulcimer), *sekund* (contra-fiddle), and bass. Half of these compositions were recorded here for the first time. This CD features haunting instrumentals by the great klezmer composers of the 19th century, such as Mikhl Guzikow and Avram Moyshe Kholodenko. The Khevrisa ensemble is led by Steven Greenman (violin) and Zev Feldman (*cimbal*), and includes some of the finest musicians of the contemporary klezmer revival—Alicia Svigals (*sekund*), Michael Alpert (*sekund*), and Stuart Brotman (bass). The 36-page booklet contains extensive notes, bibliography, glossary. 70 minutes.

I. Suite in A Minor, A Freygish, D Freygish, D Minor
1. *Sher (Am)* 3:22
2. Mazltov 5:25
3. *Sher (A)* 3:12
4. Ahavo Rabbo Shteyger 2:49
5. Ahavo Rabbo Shteyger 1:40
6. Shir Ha-Malois 3:30
7. Kaleh-Bazetsn 4:29
8. Dobriden (D) 3:54

II. C Minor
10. *Di Shvartse Khasene* 3:34
11. Simkhas Toyre 5:59

III. Violin and Cimbal Music for the Wedding Table in G Minor
12. Dobriden (Gm) 3:45
13. Zogekhs 4:27
14. Freylakh 2:56
15. Alter Yiddisher Tants 2:40
16. Steiner’s Khosidl 1:48

IV. Old Moldavian Klezmer Suite in E
17. Terkisher Gebet 5:00
18. Bughici’s Terkisher Freylakh 4:09
20. Old Bulgar 2:02
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with Steven Greenman and W. Zev Feldman

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(All tracks with the exception of #17 arranged by W. Z. Feldman/Cimbalomusic Music, BMI and S. Greenman/Greenfull Music, BMI, copyright 1995)

Concert, by Jan Piotr Norblin de la Gourdine (1745–1830), 1778.
Museum Narodowym w Krakowie.
This recording is a modern performance of the klezmer music of Eastern Europe by American Jewish musicians of Eastern European origin.

Beginning in the 17th century, Jews in Eastern Europe used the Yiddish term klezmer (pl. klezmorim) for the professional musician, derived from the Hebrew for musical instruments. Professional klezmorim formed an occupational caste, intermarrying at times with families of the wedding jesters (badkhon). Klezmer ensembles (kapelye or kheorisia/kheurusa) were exclusively male and featured no vocal genres except for the wedding rhymes and songs of the badkhon. The klezmer profession as well as the specific instrumentation of the traditional ensembles were derived from the older Ashkenazic centers of Central Europe. However, the genres and style of European klezmer music originated in the large Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, probably before the middle of the 18th century. Most of the known European klezmer repertoire came into existence between 1800 and 1900, in the partitioned Polish and Ottoman regions which were annexed by the Russian and Austrian empires, as well as in the Ottoman territory that became the Kingdom of Romania after 1878.

Throughout the territories of the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Poland, Galicia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine) klezmer music played a very important role in the musical life of the Jews and of society at large. In much of these northern areas where Gypsies (Rom) were never very numerous, the klezmorim constituted the majority of the professional musicians. Principally located in the private towns on the large estates of the Polish nobility, the klezmer kapelyes were organized in a tight, guild-like structure, with the occupation passed down within families. The leader or kappelmeister, usually a violinist, had great authority. When economic and cultural conditions were favorable, a kapelye might become a center of composition and set new standards of performance, playing classical and entertainment repertoires for the nobility, mystical melodies (nign; pl. niggunim) for the local Hasidic dynasty, and wedding melodies for the Jews. Throughout the 19th century the Ukrainian town of Berdichev was that kind of creative klezmer center, boasting two of the leading violinist/composers—Yosef Drucker "Stempenya" (1822–1879) and Abraham Khodenko "Pedutser" (1828–1902). Such kappelmeesters needed to speak fluent Polish to communicate with local landowners. In Moldavia and Wallachia kappelmeesters provided music for the Romanian boyars—in the first half of the 19th century this required some familiarity with Turkish and Greek music. The leading kapelyes occupied a position between the musical worlds of the nobility, the Hasidic rebbes, the Jewish upper bourgeoisie, and the shtetl Jews.

In less favorable conditions some or all of the kapelye members adopted other professions to make ends meet. Some of these part-time kapelye musicians also played in taverns or at peasant weddings. In desperate straits a kapelye might break up and the individual klezmorim take to wandering, playing as adjunct members of more successful kapelyes. In Ottoman Romania it was common for even successful kapelyes to team up with Gypsies and go on tour in the Balkan cities, finally reaching Istanbul. The Greeks in particular formed a lively market for Jewish and Romanian music, and the Romanian klezmorim returned home with new Turkish and Greek melodies that soon found their way north to Galicia and Ukraine.

Some kappelmeesters emigrated to American cities such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia even before 1900. Occasionally they were able to set up new kapelyes with relatives or countrymen. In other cases they found it more lucrative to leave Jewish music altogether and play in the American mainstream as soon as they could. It was more common for relatively junior klezmorim to emigrate, and they could not reproduce the old, guild-like kapelye/kheorisa in the New World. The European kappelmeesters had been violinists, but in America the clarinet soon became the leading Jewish instrument; this fact alone forced a readjustment of musical priorities. In 1928 Naftule Brandwein, the cornet player of the famous Brandwein kapelye of Peremyslany, Galicia, emigrated to New York, learned the
Klezmer Music

While klezmer is a traditional Yiddish term, klezmer music is a neologism—an English translation of the "klezmer musik" employed in the 1930s by Moshe Beregovski (1892–1961), the first musicologist to devote serious study to the music of the klezmorim. To Beregovski klezmer musik was the repertoire played by klezmorim mainly or exclusively for Jews.

The klezmer repertoire may be classified according to the following scheme:

The core repertoire featured dances called freylakhns. The terms iker and khusid implied choreographically but not musically different structures from the freylakhns. In some regions "khosidl" was used instead of "freylahn". The core dance repertoire was characterized by lively interchange with vocal hymns in fixed meter (asemrl) and with Hasidic dance-songs (niggunim). While some freylakhns were little more than instrumental versions of these songs, others showed instrumental development. When played as display pieces, these dances were called skochn. The core dance repertoire had three major sources: 1) older Central European dance music, which by the 19th century had largely blended with 2) dances based on the Ashkenazi prayer modes and Hasidic niggunim, and 3) Greco-Turkish dance music.

Non-dancemetrical genres included wedding ritual tunes such as dobriden, donbroch, some of the mazot, and haleh bason, (in Galicia and Belarus). The dance-like tekerisher freylakh could also be developed as a display piece for listening. There also were nonmetrical wedding melodies and various tunes played before the khupe (wedding canopy), as well as metrical and non-metrical paratircular melodies for such holidays as Hanukkah and Purim, where klezmorim performed with the musically elaborate Akhshayev-yoshpil (play for Purim). Elaborate improvisations were known as gedanken (meditations), while composed rubato melodies were known as zogehts and tish-nign.

The transitional repertoire emerged out of the musical symbiosis of Jewish klezmorim with Gypsy lautari in Wallachia/Moldavia, which had its origins in the early to mid-18th century. By 1800 it was common for both groups to perform together, so that in some towns the leading "Gypsy" musician was a Jew and the leading "Jewish" musician
was a Gypsy. The repertoire consisted of dance genres whose names were either borrowed from Romanian or referred to Romano-Moldavians: velekh (Wallachian), hora, sirba (sirba), ange (angul), and bulgarish (bulgareasca). In the non-dance category the most important genre was the doyne (dolina), and earlier also the taksim. In addition, there were a number of non-dance genres (such as maaztev far di mahketonim) related to the Moldavian zok (zoc)—the latter having either a dance or non-dance function.

All of the gehres in this category also differ from the core repertoire through their exclusively instrumental nature—none of them originated in vocal music. In time, elements of this repertoire became jointed to the core repertoire, producing new hybrid genres. Despite the secular origin of this music, Hasidic musicians developed a mystical interpretation of much of it, leading the klezmorim to perform it in an introverted, meditative style. In Odessa, on the other hand, klezmorim playing for the Jewish proletariat and underworld presented this repertoire in a worldly style, and it became influential in New York in this fashion. Elements of this repertoire were known in both the southern and the northern parts of Jewish Eastern Europe.

The co-territorial repertoire consisted of local dances of non-Jewish origin, played by klezmorim for non-Jews, and also, at times, for Jews within a limited geographical region: the Polish mazurka, Ruthenian kolomeyka, and Ukrainian kozachok. Klezmorim also seem to have aided in the diffusion of dance genres from one end of the Polish-Lithuanian state to the other.

The cosmopolitan repertoire consisted of couple dances of Western and Central European origin—lancer, padespan, padehaker, quadrille, polka, waltz, and so on—played for both Jews and non-Jews. The known cosmopolitan repertoire of the 19th century is a continuation of an older European dance repertoire which had been played by the klezmorim, such as the minuet and the polonaise.

The Klezmer Ensemble
Throughout the 18th century the klezmorim performed either as a duet of violin and cimbal (klezmer, dulcimer) or as a four- to five-piece group consisting of lead violin, contra-violin (sekund), cimbal (also spelled cymbal, tsimbel, or zimbel), and bass or cello. Sometimes a wooden (baroque) flute was added. The Jews were active in bringing this ensemble to Eastern Europe, and they maintained it well into the 19th century (in some areas into the 20th) long after it had gone out of fashion in the West. In the 19th century the Jewish kapelye was adopted by peasant musicians in much of Poland, Lithuania, and Belarus.

During the 18th century the violin and cimbal seem to have been equally important in the kapelye. In the 1740s the cimbalist Solomon “Tsimbelar” played before the Ottoman governor of Moldavia and received exemption from taxation. Early in the next century the Polish national poet Adam Mickiewicz (1834) depicted Jankiel the innkeeper and cimbalist as the beloved musician of the Polish aristocracy. In the same generation the cimbalist Mikhl Guzikow (1805–1837) made a concert career for himself accompanied by his brothers playing violin and cello. In the early 20th century the Skvidler family of Lwow (Lemberg) and the Lepianski family of Vitebsk created klezmer ensembles exclusively of cimbals.

Leopold von Sacher-Masoch described a performance by a shettl cimbalist playing for dancing peasants in a tavern in one of his Galician Tales (1860s):

Not a single nerve twitched in his stony face, and his little eyelashes were completely immobile, even though his tears flowed unobstructedly, but not down his colorless cheeks. They arose, rich and sorrowful, from the cimbal sitting in front of him, which he was beating with two small sticks wound in soft, dirty leather, his tone at one moment soft and flattering, as if he were playing with a beloved child, at another wild and forceful, as if he were trying to tame an angry woman by beating her.... He seemed to have been transformed into a single big ear with a closed mouth and glowing eyes, listening to the sounds that flowed forth from the moaning cimbal, which, in turn was the sound of his own soul. He was an artist at this moment, and God knows what celestial harmonies
were revealed to him for the first time in human history.

In the course of the 19th century the violinist seems to have taken the leading role in the kapelye, and is most often depicted in literary descriptions, as in Sholem Aleichem’s novel *La Stempenyu* (1888):

Oh, what a master he was! He would grab the violin and apply the bow, just one stroke, nothing more, and the violin had already begun to speak. And how do you think it spoke? Why, with words, with a tongue, like a living human being—if you’ll forgive my mentioning them in the same breath. It spoke, pleaded, crooned tearfully, in a Jewish mode, with a force, a scream from the depths of the heart, the soul.

By the beginning of the 19th century in Moldavia the newly perfected clarinet took its place alongside the violin, creating a typical kapelye along with the cimbal and the bass but without the sekund fiddle. The absence of the sekund, which was sometimes replaced with a struck frame-drum (buben), seems to have been typical also of parts of Belarus and Lithuania. The clarinet spread northward to Ukraine, where it began to stand on a par with the fiddle. In Poland, however, it remained subordinate to the violin and could only perform dance music. The czarist policy of mass conscription of the Jews familiarized the conscripted klezmer youths with the military brass instruments and brought these instruments into the kapelye. In addition, the increasing pauperization of Russian Jews as part of the anti-Semitic czarist policy induced musically talented men from non-klezmer families to enter or even create kapelyes, thus allowing greater scope for these new instruments. By the last third of the 19th century these developments led to the new-style klezmer kapelye, particularly in Russian Ukraine, consisting of between six and twelve instruments, led either by the violin or the clarinet. These ensembles no longer included the cimbal, and they often featured double-headed drums (poyk) with sticks and cymbals (tatrn). In Poland a modified version of this group sometimes emerged, with lead violin, contra-fiddle, a doubling
melody fiddle, clarinet, flute, trumpet, and bass. Elsewhere, especially in Galicia, variants of the older traditional ensemble with a number of fiddles and a cimbal continued into the post-World War I period. By the early 20th century the larger ensembles reached Belarus, but they were still under the lead of the violin and clarinet, as in this description of a kapelye from Vitebsk from 1904. Although the author is describing a large ensemble with brass and wind instruments, it is clear that the first violinist still held an important soloist's role:

To play without notation is hardly considered a transgression among them, and what is written on the musical staff, especially for the violinist and the clarinetist, serves only as the basis for their own striking fantasy. I was once able to observe this myself in Vitebsk during the performance of the violinist. Notation was spread out before him, but he took one of the melodies and created such fantasy that I would not have imagined even in my dreams! (Lipaev 1904)

A number of European recordings prior to World War I document the violin and cimbal duet. Shortly before World War I a Russian record company issued a great many 78 rpm recordings of one quarter led by a clarinetist (Belf), with violin, bass, and piano. Some of the American recordings have fiddle and cimbal, violin and piano, or even accordion and cimbal (although the accordion was not a klezmer instrument). Most have clarinet with a large backup studio ensemble, while many others have some form of the studio ensemble, essentially the large string, wind, and brass klezmer ensemble of the turn-of-the-century Russian Empire but without the first violin. The recordings which most closely approximate a traditional kapelye are the few sides issued in New York by Berish Katz's Boiberiker Kapelye. Although they lack the fully independent first violin (and have no cimbal), their phrasing has something of the subtlety of a good European klezmer kapelye. Any attempt to recreate a European string kapelye must be based on selective extrapolation from recordings using other instrumentation, plus the hints that have been gleaned from informants such as Leon Schwartz, Ben Baysler, or Jeremiah Hescheles. None of the older transcriptions of klezmer music treat the accompaniment at all. Some of the current practitioners of klezmer violin, such as Alicia Svigals, Steven Greenman, Deborah Strauss, and Michael Alpert, have discovered patterns for the sehnud contra-fiddle, which add much of the polyrhythmic texture of a kapelye.

The Violin
Both Jewish and non-Jewish sources speak of the distinctiveness of the Jewish violin style, known for its "softness" and "weeping" quality. The few existing klezmer violin recordings from Poland, Ukraine, Romania, and the United States display a broad similarity in tone with clear links to the Ashkenazic synagogue styles of singing. Within this broad commonality one can hear personal or sub-styles based on the varying degrees of influence from Western conservatory training or from the techniques of Romanian Gypsy fiddlers. Although few of the recorded klezmer fiddlers displayed a fully classical use of the bow, some techniques, essential for those kappelmasters who also performed for the Polish aristocracy, had evidently reached them second- or third-hand. Behind the Romanian influence there are elements of the Turkish violin style, including at times the Turkish tuning. Moldavia seems to have been the area of interface between the klezmer and Turkish violin techniques. Moldavian fiddlers had been influential in Istanbul, and one of them, Kemani Miron, helped to create the ala turca style of violin while performing at the Ottoman court at the end of the 18th century.

According to Jeremiah Hescheles (b. 1910), the former kappelmaster from Glinyany (Gline), Lvov province, the performances of H. Steiner in Lvov in 1928 represent the finest traditional style of klezmer violin in Galicia. Steiner's few recordings have had an impact on several figures of the klezmer revival, and were even used by the Hungarian group Musikas in locating Gypsy musicians who had known some Jewish music before World War II. Jozef Solinski recorded a number of fiddle and cimbal duets in Warsaw at the same time as Steiner. Solinski displays more profuse ornamentation of the type used by Romanian
Gypsy fiddlers, and he named all of his recorded pieces "Rumanische Fantasie." The klezmer violinists who recorded in America, such as Abe Schwartz and Max Leibowitz, were on a considerably lower technical and artistic level than any of the Jewish violinists who had recorded on 78s in Europe. Nevertheless, they are sources for elements of the common klezmer violin style.

As the clarinet came to dominate American klezmer music by the 1920s, an American-born generation of klezmer clarinetists, such as Sam and Ray Muziker, Max Epstein, and Paul Pincus, maintained a high level of performance up to and well into the klezmer revival. But despite the centuries-long continuity of klezmer violin playing in Europe, there was a break in transmission lasting fully two generations in America. Berish Katz had no successors in klezmer violin playing—his son Milton Kay became a pianist, and his friend Jeremiah Hescheles did not continue his klezmer playing long after he arrived in New York in 1938. The only European-born Jewish violinist to have had any direct effect on the klezmer revival was Leon Schwartz (1901–1990).

The movement to reinstate the violin into klezmer music developed slowly over a period of roughly fifteen years. Whereas the players of the clarinet and other instruments had a variety of musical backgrounds, the violinists of the klezmer revival were all classically trained. Among the earliest was Sandra Layman of Seattle in the early 1980s, followed by Mimi Rabson of the Klezmer Conservatory Band of Boston. Since the 1970s the violinist and violist Jeffrey Wolkow in New York has researched the klezmer violin style, mainly from 78 recordings. While primarily a singer, Michael Alpert played a crucial role in discovering the klezmer violin ornaments, which he passed on to Alicia Svigals and Deborah Strauss in the mid-1980s. By the late 1980s Deborah Strauss was fiddling with the Chicago Klezmer Ensemble under Kurt Bjorling. More recently Daniel Hoffman has taken up the klezmer violin in the Bay Area. While in its early years KlezKamp was dominated by clarinetists, since 1986 Alicia Svigals has taught violin to an increasing number of students, among them Steven Greenman. She also led the Fidl Kapelye at the Ashkenaz Festival (Toronto) and elsewhere. During the early 1990s Svigals created a distinctive violin style which has had a great influence on aspiring violinists over the last decade.

In this period the recordings of Leon Schwartz, of Abe Schwartz and Max Leibowitz (1920s), the Polish klezmer virtuoso Josef Solinski (ca. 1908), the clarinet recordings of Brandwein and Tarras, as well as the studio band 78s from early 20th-century New York furnished almost the entire repertoire of these klezmer revival fiddlers. With the appearance of Alicia Svigals’s violin solos and compositions on such klezmatics recordings of the 1990s as Rhythm and Jews, Jews with Horns, and Possessed, her solo cd Fidl (1997), and Steven Greenman’s lead violin in the Budowitz ensemble’s cd Mother Tongue (1997), the klezmer violin seems to be on the way to reestablishing itself. Now violin students are numerous in both KlezKamp and KlezKanada, fiddle kapelyes are formed at major klezmer festivals, and students are looking beyond the American clarinet recordings for models of klezmer violin style.

Steven Greenman brings a unique background and sensibility to the klezmer violin. His early years in the Ashkenazic synagogue in Pittsburgh sensitized him to the rhythmic nuances of the “flowing rhythm” of Jewish prayer, and his professional life as an Eastern-European fiddler in Cleveland (largely with the Harmonia Ensemble under Walt Mahovlich) familiarized him with the virtuosity of Hungarian and Romanian Gypsy violin styles. Cleveland is perhaps the ideal American city for immersion in both classical Western music and Eastern European fiddling, and Greenman is the product of this unique cultural symbiosis. His work with Budowitz (benefitting from the European fieldwork of Bob Cohen and Joshua Horowitz) and then with me in New York gave him access to a broader range of sources for klezmer violin than had been utilized previously by any other violinist in the klezmer revival. Both his performances here and his recent klezmer compositions testify to the degree to which he has internalized the European klezmer violin style.

The Cimbal
The Polish klezmorim seem to have played a leading role in perfecting the late-medieval
German dulcimer *hakbrett* (Yid. *hakbreydl*) by giving it a chromatic tuning, thus fitting it for both melody and accompaniment roles. In the early 19th century, they brought it with them to Moldavia and Wallachia, which became the home of several famous klezmer *cimbali* such as Solomon "Tsimbeler" (mid-18th century) and Itsik Tsambalgilu (early 19th century). This pattern of diffusion explains the near identity of instruments and tuning in Moldavia, Wallachia, Greece (and formerly parts of Turkey as well). Paintings and photographs indicate that the *klezmorim* played two basic types of *cimbal*—one an instrument approximately 30 inches wide in a trapezoidal shape, and another considerably smaller with sides at a less sharp angle. The *cimbal* was mainly a professional instrument, but it seems that simpler versions were used by itinerant beggars. The *cimbal* maintained itself fairly well in this century in Poland and also in Belarus and Moldavia. In the southern parts of the Russian Empire it went out of fashion among Jews by the turn of the century. Jewish *cimbali* had come to America—there is even a record of one Russian klezmer *cimbalist* travelling around Ohio in the 1830s!—but the adoption of the clarinet and the large brass ensemble plus the greater availability of pianos quickly ended the viability of the instrument in the New World. Only a single virtuoso was known in America—Iosef Moscovic (1879–1954) from Galati. But while Moscovici was a descendant of klezmer *cimbali*, he played a Hungarian concert *cymbalom* and chose a predominantly international repertoire.

The reintroduction of the *cimbal* into klezmer music was the work of the present writer in the 1970s. This fortuitous circumstance emerged out of my making the acquaintance of an elderly Greek *cimbalist* (Paul Limberis) shortly before I began my study with Dave Taras, and our discovery of one of the Steiner recordings of violin with *cimbal* accompaniment. My 1979 recording with Andy Statman introduced many young musicians to the instrument. Less than ten years later, Kurt Bjorling was manufacturing fine instruments in Chicago and listening to the oldest klezmer duets in order to reconstruct the Jewish *cimbal* style. The *cimbal* playing of both Stuart Brotman and Joshua Horowitz is based in part on Bjorling’s reconstructed rhythmic figures. By now the basis of the Jewish rhythmic accompaniment style has been rediscovered, but much creative work still needs to be done on other forms of accompaniment and on melody playing. On this recording I am using an instrument custom-made for me in 1981 by Johnny Roussos (Philadelphia). It seems likely that the revival of the Jewish *cimbal* will be linked to the continued popularity of the klezmer violin.

**The Music of Khevrisa**

On this recording Khevrisa performs mainly display pieces (fifteen out of twenty tracks) which were part of the wedding ceremony or which were played at the tables of wealthy connoisseurs. The display pieces are very rare in the published notated and recorded sources, mainly for two reasons: they had little currency among the Jewish masses, and so were rarely issued on commercial recordings; and they were considered the private property of their composer or of his successor in the *kapelye*. Most were violin pieces by European klezmer violinists of the 19th century; some were by *cimballi*. To the best of our knowledge none of these tunes was created in America. Ten out of the twenty tracks on this CD have never been recorded before. I performed a number of them as *cimbal* solos in concerts during the early 1980s. Some others were worked out by Greenman from 78 or other European recordings.

Documentation of European klezmer music began only in the early 20th century, first through large-scale commercial recording in czarist Russia and then in the United States. A number of violin display pieces for fiddle and *cimbal* were recorded in Poland prior to World War I. Scientific collection was begun in Russia, first by Anski (1912–1914) and then by Moshe Beregovski in the 1930s. The klezmer violinist Wolf Kostakowsky published a major collection of dance repertoire in New York in 1916. Moshe Bik’s important collection of both display and dance pieces from the *kapelye* of Orhei, Bessarabia, was published in Haifa in 1958. Joachim Stutchevsky also published some similar items in Israel. A small part of the repertoire of Avram Bughici, the *kappelmeister* of Iași, Moldavia, was recorded in the 1970s. The Bucovinian fiddler Leon Schwartz brought a unique violin repertoire with him.
when he emigrated to America. All of these (and other) sources were combed in seeking repertoire for Khevrisa. At present Svigals, Greenman, and I are composing new display and dance pieces in the European klezmer style.

Previously unknown repertoire (mainly of the commonly held, rather than the purely klezmer, type) is emerging from older Jewish musicians emigrating from the former Soviet Union. Certain Hasidic groups in Israel and America (such as Vishnitz and Bobov) still preserve some of their instrumental repertoires, and a small independent repertoire also exists among the Orthodox musicians of Israel. Many klezmer manuscripts had existed (one had once belonged to Jeremiah Hessekeles), and despite their widespread destruction in the 20th century, it is possible that some survive in the countries of Eastern Europe.

About This Recording
Klezmorim who attempted to present their art on a concert stage—from Mikhel Guzikow in the 1830s to Herman Shapiro in the 1860s and the Lepianski Family performing for Czar Nicholas II in 1912 at the St. Petersburg Ethnographic Exhibition—had no choice but to select pieces from their most original and artistic repertoire and group them according to aesthetic criteria. We have followed the same practice, finding pieces that relate to one another according to a musical logic. At times this results in certain groupings emphasizing similarity or contrast in tonality, modality, rhythm, structure, or geographic provenance as well as the secular or religious “mood.” In some cases we have also followed the practices of certain Hasidic groups who perform their holiday hymns in a fixed order with a gradual progression from the longest to the shortest pieces.

With the exception of the old Moldavian klezmer suite (tracks 17–20), all of the pieces on the present recording were selected from the core repertoire of klezmer music. They include two dobridens (tracks 8 and 12), a sogekhis (track 13), two versions of the Ahavo Rabbo sh'teygger (tracks 4 and 5), a version of the kaleh-baiveynen performed for orphans (track 10), a wedding ritual tune (kaleh-baizetzn, track 7), a rubato composition for the psalms (track 6), a masztov (track 2), a freylakh/shtochne (track 14), a freylakh fun der khupe (track 13), two shers (tracks 1, 3), two khosidl (tracks 16 and 19), another old Jewish dance (track 15), and a holiday zemerl (track 11). The terkisher gebet and terkisher freylakh (tracks 17, 18) represent early forms of the transitional repertoire, probably current in the middle of the 19th century or somewhat earlier. The closing bulgar (track 20) is a famous tune displaying early stages of the fusion of Jewish melody and Moldavian rhythm that would come to dominate klezmer music in America.

This European klezmer repertoire is distinguished by a great variety of rhythmic organization. Jewish “flowing rhythm” is represented by the two sh'teygger melodies and by the kaleh-baiveynen for orphans (track 10). The terkisher gebet occupies a space between flowing rhythm and rubato, while the sogekhis and shir ha-malos are more purely rubato melodies. Triple meters are common in those metrical tunes not used for dancing—such as the dobridens, the masztov, and the kaleh-baizetznign—and each has a distinct character. Both dobridens feature the unique cadence which characterizes this genre as well as the related vocal “tune of spiritual longing” of the Hasidim. The masztov has the 3/8 signature of the Moldavian shok dance, but the slow tempo and pauses between phrases (as well as the melodic content) are features of Jewish and not of Moldavian music. The more straightforward 3/4 time of the kaleh-baizetzn would seem to be a direct borrowing from Greek dance music as it was played in 18th- and early 19th-century Moldavia.

Most Ashkenazic dance music utilizes a simple duple meter, but the compositional structure retains a rather Western quality marked by alternation of opening and closing phrases only in the first sher (track 1). Elsewhere, in the second sher, the old Jewish dance, in Steiner’s khosidl, the Buhusher khasid, and the freylakh fun der khupe, the relations of rhythm and melody feature sharp contrasts from section to section and within the phrases of a single section. For example, the second sher and the Buhusher khasid both open with emphatic quarter notes which are not repeated elsewhere in these tunes. The frey-
lakhsh/kochne (track 14) breaks up its rather symmetrical rhythmic structure with a series of runs and cadenzas which cannot be fit into a steady dance tempo. In addition, the cimbal often creates rhythmic patterns which are unique for each section of a melody, while the sekund fiddles emphasise up-beats and syncopations which differ from the rhythmic patterns of the cimbal and the bass.

* * *

1. Sher (Am): first violin (Greenman), sekund violin (Svigals), cimbal (Feldman).
   This old sher dance-tune in A minor was published in Brooklyn in 1916 in Wolf Kostakowsky's Hebrew Wedding Melodies. The serene melody, performed as a piece for listening, seems to preserve something of the music of the Baroque contra-dance that underlies the sher. This tune has already inspired new sher melodies by Alicia Svigals and Zev Feldman.

2. Mazlov violin (Greenman), cimbal, sekund (Svigals), bass (Brotman).
   This mazlov would be played to honor a respected guest at a wedding. Based on the 3/8 rhythm of the Moldavian woman's dance zhok (joc) or hora, this three-section melody uses Jewish melodic material throughout. In typical klezmer fashion the first section is in A minor, the second in A freygish, and the third in C major, cadencing in A minor. The pauses and lengthening of certain notes also distinguish it from the dance-function of the zhok in Moldavian musical culture. This tune was first recorded in New York in 1927 by the Boiberiker Kapelye under the direction of the violinist Berish Katz as part of the Boiberiker Chaseneh (the Boiberik Wedding). According to Hescheles the tune was known in Galicia, and Katz's recording preserves the performance style of the local kapelyes far more than other American recordings of the same period.

3. Sher (A): violin (Greenman), sekund (Svigals), cimbal, bass.
   This sher melody in freygish was also published by Wolf Kostakowsky. Performed as a dance with full rhythmic accompaniment, this melody is more typical of the Jewish freylakh music that came to replace the earlier music of the sher (as heard, for example, in the previous sher in A minor). The rhythmic figure that opens the first section is fairly common in Jewish dance music, as in the "Buhusher Khotid" (track 19). Note the irregularity of the melodic period in the second section of the melody.

4. Ahavo Rabbo Shteyger: violin solo (Greenman).
   Shteyger were rubato melodies based on the modes (shteyger) of synagogue music, of which one of the most common was "Ahavo Rabbo" (Great Love), also called freygish by some klezmorim. This piece was recorded in 1913 in Bobopolye (Podolia) by the fiddler M. Steingart, a student of Avram Moyshe Kholodenko "Pedutser" (1828–1902), the happelemaster from Berdichev and the last great klezmer-composer of Ukraine. Greenman has added a cadenza from the version of L.M. Pulver, recorded in Kiev in 1929. See Beregovski (1987), nos. 17–18.

5. Ahavo Rabbo Shteyger: cimbal solo.
   Based on the previous shteyger, this original melody effects the modulation from freygish in A to freygish in D.

   This is a setting for Psalm 126 by the early 19th-century klezmer virtuoso Mikhail Iosef Guzikow (1809–1837). Born into a klezmer family in Shklov, Belarus, Guzikow was trained as a flutist and subsequently as a cimbalist. In 1832 he concertized in Kiev and from there went on to Odessa, then to Austria, Germany, Belgium, and France. He was the first klezmer to appear on a European stage performing Jewish music, usually accompanied by his brothers playing violin and cello. This, his only surviving composition, was published in 1922 in Vilna. According to Hescheles it was sung in the Jewish Gymnasium in Lemberg after World War I. See A. Z. Idelsohn (1929), pp. 458–59.
Bik from the playing of the Rom Petru Tsigayner and was composed by Petru’s teacher Khayyim Fiedler (d. ca. 1900) from Orhei, Bessarabia. Khayyim had been a famous musician, often called to play in the capital, Kishinev (Chișinău), not only for the Jews but also for the Moldavian aristocracy. Recent immigrants from Orhei still recall the performances of his student Petru. This piece, and the zogehieh and freylakh (tracks 13 and 14), are rare examples of artistic display pieces composed by a klezmer kappelméister and preserved by his-successor in the kapelye. This professional ensemble, as was often the case in Bessarabia, was ethnically mixed. In the early decades of the 20th century its leader was a Rom/Gypsy, just as in the middle of the 19th century one of the major Gypsy ensemble-leaders of Beltsi (Balți) was a Jewish violinist of the Lemish klezmer clan.

The first musical experience of Hescheles was just such a cemetery wedding held in Glinyany in 1915 on the occasion of the outbreak of cholera during World War I when an orphaned girl was married off by the community to a poor laborer. The klezmorim donated their services, and the good deed of the community was supposed to ward off further death and catastrophe.

II. Sinhkhas Toyre: violin (Greenman) and cimbal. This haunting melody had been recorded in New York in 1911, apparently in connection with the Rejoicing in the Torah ceremony. Which Jewish subculture used such grave music for this normally happy festival is unknown.

III: Violin and Cimbal Music for the Wedding Table in G Minor (tracks 12-16).

12. Dobriden (Gm).
Collected in 1936 by Moshe Beregovskiy from the clarinetist G. Barkagan from Nikolaev, this piece was probably composed by either Josef Drucker “Stemenyiu” (1822-1879) or Avram Moyshe Khododenko “Pedutser” (1828-1902), both kappelméisters from Berdichev. Barkagan used this tune as a gasnign or street melody for escorting the wedding party. See Beregovskiy (1987), no. 76.
Structurally, this piece is a *dobriden*, used for a variety of purposes in different regions either on the morning of the wedding or after the wedding to honor the members of the bride's family or the bride and groom themselves. *Dobridens* were display pieces created by talented *klezmorim* that used a 3/4 rhythmic structure with a peculiar rhythmic formula at the close of phrases. The artistic nature of this *dobriden* is reinforced by its rather wide use of chordal changes and the uneven nature of its melodic periods. Certain melodies of "spiritual longing" (*nigguni gd gavim*) of the Lubavitcher Hasidim derive from this type of *dobriden*. See Zalmanoff (n.d.), vol. 1, no. 138.

I had been intrigued with this piece since I first found it reproduced in the Stuchewsky collection over twenty years ago. It was only when I met Jeremiah Hescheles that I heard similar tunes sung—in the post-Holocaust period no other Jewish musician has been documented with these tunes in his repertoire. Since then Greenman has written a successful new *dobriden* inspired in part by this melody.

13. *Zogeikhts*.
Composed by Khayyim Fiedler, *kappelmiezer* of Orhei, Bessarabia, as music for the wedding table, this *zogeikhts* is also a display piece, kept within one *kapelye*. The name refers to the improvisation of the cantor, but unlike the cantorial *zogeikhts*, it is completely pre-composed. Opening with a striking arpeggio, it returns to a phrase from the prayer modes (*nasuk*). Its climax features phrases from Romanian *doina*.

In the early 1980s I had worked out a performance style for this piece which I performed in concerts on the *cimbal*. Greenman developed this style further for the violin, and he has since composed a new *zogeikhts* which develops the prayer-mode basis.

14. *Freylakh*.
The companion piece for the previous *zogeikhts*, this line-dance *freylakh* was reworked by Khayyim as a display piece. The basic dance tune is found in the Kostakowsky collection (1966). Elsewhere this type of playing was described as *skochne*. Bik, the collector, did not describe what ensemble accompanied the violinist, or even if the *cimbal* had been present in either Petru's or Khayyim's *kapelye*. Greenman and I arranged it as a violin and *cimbal* duet.

15. *Alter Yiddisher Tants* (Old Jewish Dance).
This dance comes from a 1912 manuscript written by V. Mesman (apparently from the Anski Expedition) and deposited in St. Petersburg. Its general form is reminiscent of some of the *nign* melodies in Beregovski's collection, and does not resemble the *freylakh* or *skochne* repertoire there. Considered old in 1912, this melody probably represents a northern Byelorussian/Lithuanian tradition. Our version is somewhat expanded-in section three. See Beregovski (1987), no. 223.

16. Steiner's *Khosidl*
According to Hescheles this *freylakh*/*khoisid* was probably used to accompany a virtuoso solo dancer. It was taken from the recording *Popurrli Judezhe Melodien* by H. Steiner in Lemberg (Lvov) in 1908. Nothing is known about the life of the violinist H. Steiner, but according to Hescheles his style represented the highest level of traditional klezmer fiddling in Galicia. The original of Steiner's recording of "Haneros Haluti" can be heard on the Folkklyric reissue *Klezmer Music: Early Yiddish Instrumental Music* 1908-1927.

The *cimbal* accompaniment on the original recording is a model of the local traditional klezmer style and is reproduced here. Another melody of Steiner's—a *honga*—is introduced in the *G* minor section preceding the C major section.

IV. Old Moldavian Klezmer Suite in E (Tracks 17-20).

17. *Terkisher Gebet*: violin solo (Greenman).
This type of *rubato* composition is known variously as *terkisher gebet* (Turkish prayer), *terkisher yale-ve yuve* (Turkish prayer), or simply as *tave shriunes* (two strings). The violin is tuned in the Turkish manner "with the A-string of the fiddle lowered in pitch to E and moved closer to the E-string, allowing both to be fingered as one creating the distinctive octave tone" (Alpert 1953). This tuning had been used by *klezmorim* for a variety of Oriental-derived genres. Michael
Alpert learned this melody from the Bucovinian Jewish fiddler Leon Schwartz (1901–1990). Schwartz had learned it from the Galician klezmer fiddler Julius Spielmann, who had performed in Istanbul. The original can be heard on Like in a Different World: Leon Schwartz, a Traditional Jewish Klezmer Violinist from Ukraine (1993).

18. Bughici's Terkisher Freylakhhs: violin (Greeneman), sekund violins (Greeneman, Svigals), cimbal, bass.

This tune was first recorded at home by Avram Bughici, scion of the famous Bughici klezmer lineage from Iași, Moldavia. It is related structurally to the previous terkisher gebet. With a rhythm that derives from the Greek dance syrto (called terkisher freylakhhs by the Jews), which had been current in Moldavia during the period of Greek Phanarion rule (1711–1828), its melody is an independent klezmer creation, emphasizing the third degree (g) in the "altered Dorian" mode in E minor. It is a part of the small terkisher freylakhhs repertoire that survived the decline of Greco-Turkish influence in Romania. The few recordings of klezmer and Moldavian melodies using this rhythm have a slower tempo than the American recordings of Brandwein, who also favored it.

19. Buhusher Khosid: violin (Greeneman), sekund violins (Greeneman, Svigals), cimbal, bass.

This is one of a type of three-section, modulating dance-tunes associated with the Hasidic dynasty of Buhushi (a branch of Vishnitz) in the hill country of southwest Moldavia. The Vishnitz Hasidim, formerly based in northern Bucovina, possess a large and colorful repertoire, some of which is instrumental. One version of the tune was recorded in New York in 1915 by Abraham Elenkri, and another in 1916 (as "Sadigurzer-Chusid") by the cimbalist Iosef Moscovici.

20. Old Bulgar: violin (Greeneman), sekund violin I (Svigals), sekund violin II (Alpert), cimbal, bass.

One of the oldest known examples of the Jewish bulgarish dance, created in the later 19th century out of the Moldavian dance bulgarasca, it was first recorded in Istanbul in 1912 by a Moldavian klezmer ensemble, apparently for a Greek market. This version is that of Avram Bughici from the 1970s. The emergence of the bulgarish represented the new popularity among Jews of the purely Romanian and secular element in Moldavian urban folk music. Although the rhythmic structure and the dance are purely Moldavian, the melody of this tune is connected with other Jewish dance melodies. See Feldman (1994).

Glossary of Yiddish Terms

Ahavo Rabbo (Sephardic form, Ahava Rabba): one of the modes (sh'teyger) of Ashkenazic synagogal music.

badkhon: wedding ritual in which the bride is veiled while the badkhon improvises verses about the miseries of married life.

badkhn (pl. badkhnim): wedding jester, poet, and master of ceremonies.

bulgarish (var. bulgar): klezmer music for the Moldavian dance bulgarasca; in 20th-century America the dominant form of klezmer dance music.

cimbal (var. tsimbl; Polish, cymbal): cimbalom; the Jewish hammer-dulcimer of Eastern Europe with a chromatic tuning system.

dobranoch (from Russian, "good night"): song and music performed at the end of the wedding ceremony.

dovriden (from Russian, "good day"): elaborate klezmer tune in 3/4 time performed either on the morning of the wedding or the morning afterwards.

doyne (from Romanian, doina): semi-improvised rubato genre based on the Wallachian form of the same name, which entered klezmer music at the beginning of the 20th century.

freigish: folkloric form of the Ahavo Rabbo sh'teyger used in klezmer music.

freylakhhs: music for the dominant line-dance of Yiddish folklore.

goguyim-nign ("melody of spiritual longing"): Hasidic vocal melody combining triple meter and rubato phrasing.

gas-nign ("street melody"): Jewish melodies that by the late 19th century were set to the 3/8 rhythm of the Moldavian zhek.
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gebet: prayer.

gedanken ("thoughts," "meditations"): klezmer display genre combining flowing rhythm and metrical phrases.

honga (from Romanian, hangul): Moldavian men's dance favored by Jews.

hora: slow Romanian women's line-dance, developed also as a klezmer display genre at the beginning of the 20th century.

kaleh-baveynen ("causing the bride to weep"): flowing-rhythm lament sung by the bagdhn and played by the klezmorim at the badekh ceremony of the wedding.

kaleh-basetsn ("seating the bride"): metrical klezmer tune, usually in 3/4, immediately preceding the kaleh-baveynen. In Ukraine, where this metrical tune was omitted, the term was used instead of kaleh-baveynen.

kappelmeister: director of the klezmer kapelye.

kapelye: the klezmer ensemble.

kehvrissa/kehvrusa (from Aramaic, hevruta): religious study-group; in klezmer-lan-
guage, the klezmer kapelye.

khosid (var. khosid): solo dance in Hasidic style, danced to the music of the freylakh; in Galicia and Hungary equivalent to freylakh.

khupe (from Hebrew, hpqap): bridal canopy.

klezmer (pl. klezmorim): professional Jewish instrumentalist in Eastern Europe.

landsdemschaft: fraternal organization of immigrants from a single town or region.

lautar: Romanian equivalent of klezmer; ethnically he may be Rom (Gypsy), Jewish, Romanian, Greek, Russian, or of another nationality.

maaztoc ("good luck"): elaborate klezmer-tune played for respected members of the principal families of the wedding. By the late 19th century it often employed the rhythm of the hora.

maaztoc far di mahktonim: maaztoc tune for the in-laws.

nign (pl. niggunim): wordless melody, usually metrical, sung by Hasidim. Structurally these melodies were often close to klezmer freylakh.

sekund: technique of rhythmic/harmonic accompaniment on the violin developed by klezmorim; in Hungary known as the "Jewish fiddle."

sher: Jewish contra-dance. Its music was usually identical to freylakh, except that its choreography demanded a group of tunes played in succession.

shir ha-malois (Sephardic, shir ha-ma' lot, "Song of Ascent"): a group of Psalm texts frequently set to music.

shetel (pl. shettelakh): small town, often on the private estates of the Polish aristocracy; home to most of Eastern Europe's Jews in the later 18th and 19th centuries.

shivqger: Ashkenazi synagogue mode.

simkhas toyre (Sephardic form, simhat torah, "rejoicing in the law"): holiday at the end of Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkoth).

sibra: Romanian line-dance, precursor of the bulgareasca.

shochne: freylakh played as an instrumental display melody.

takim: Turco-Romanian improvisation that preceded doyne in klezmer music of the early 19th century.

terkisher freylakh ("Turkish line-dance"): klezmer display piece based on the Greek dance syrto.

tish-nign ("table melody"): mystical Hasidic wordless melody, often in 3/4 or rubato rhythm.

tsvai-shtrines ("two strings"): klezmer flowing-rhythm genre, utilizing the octave created with the A-string of the violin tuned to E, in the manner of the Turkish violin.

volokhl (volakh, "Romanian"): Hasidic vocal melody using the rhythm of the Romanian hora or other triple meters.

zemiri: metrical Sabbath hymn with Hebrew poetic text.

shok: Bessarabian term for hora.

zogekhts: cantorial vocal improvisation; klezmer rubato composition utilizing some synagogal prayer-motifs.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


GET THE MUSIC!

Walter Zev Feldman is a leading researcher in both Ottoman Turkish and Jewish music, and a performer on the klezmer dulcimer, cimbal (tsimbl). His book Music of the Ottoman Court: Maham, Composition and the Early Ottoman Instrumental Repertoire was issued in 1996 by VWB publishers in Berlin, and he has written both the "Ottoman Music" and "Klezmer Music" articles for the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Developing a passion for klezmer music from his Moldavian-born father, during the mid-1970s he and Andy Statman studied with Dave Tarras and were two of the creators of the klezmer revival; at that time Feldman reintroduced the cimbal into klezmer music. Their 1979 recording Jewish Klezmer Music (Shanachie Records) became a classic of the klezmer revival. In 1994 he published "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar: The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre," in Ethnomusicology. He lectures frequently on Jewish, Turkish, and Bukharan music and is currently compiling material for a monograph on klezmer music.
Steven Greenman is one of the few practitioners of traditional Eastern European Jewish klezmer violin. He is the first American-born klezmer musician to create a program and performance style based entirely on the repertoire of European klezmer violin music. Together with Zev Feldman (cimbal), Greenman co-founded the Khevrisa ensemble in 1998, dedicated to preserving and reconstructing Eastern European klezmer music through research, concerts, workshops, and lectures. He has also performed internationally with such notable klezmer ensembles as Budowitz, the Klezmatics, the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, and Kapelye. In addition he substituted for members of the Klezmatics in their 1997 performance of Tony Kushner's adaptation of S. Ansky's Dybbuk. He has taught klezmer violin at Living Tradition's KlezKamp and at the KlezKanada festival and has been a regular performer with various ensembles at Ashkenaz: A Festival of New Yiddish Culture. A serious performer of Hungarian Nota, Romanian Gypsy, and Slovak music, he has performed with the ensemble Harmonia, which he co-founded with Walt Mahovlich in 1993.

Greenman received both his Bachelor of Music and his Master of Music degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, studying under Linda Sharon Cerone, Dr. Eugene Gratovitch, and the late Bernhard Goldschmidt. As a classical violinist he is a regular guest soloist with the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, performing his own arrangements of traditional Eastern European Gypsy violin music. He has also performed as a member of the Canton and Akron Symphony orchestras, and has participated in the National Repertory Orchestra, the National Orchestral Institute, and the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Steven Greenman is featured on the following recordings: as lead violinist with Budowitz (Mother Tongue), as guest artist with the Flying Bulgars (Fire), accompanist with Alicia Svigals (Fid), and with Budowitz and Svigals on Ellipsis Arts (Marriage of Heaven and Earth).
Alicia Svigals is a founding member of the Klezmatics and a leading specialist in Eastern European Jewish fiddle style who was named "Best Klezmer Musician" at the Fifth Klezmer Festival in Safed, Israel. Her debut solo co, Fiddl, is the world's first klezmer fiddle album. As a composer and musician, she has collaborated with playwright and lyricist Tony Kushner, singers Debbie Friedman and Chava Albershteyn, and violinist Itzhak Perlman (who recorded two of her compositions as violin duets with her and the Klezmatics); she was recently commissioned by the Kronos Quartet to write a piece which she will record on an upcoming album. Svigals also writes and performs in genres from Greek to new age and rock. She has provided the music for such films as the documentary Uprising of 1934, which featured singer Peggy Seeger, and she appeared with Robert Plant and Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin on their reunion tour. Svigals also writes and lectures on traditional and contemporary Jewish music.

Michael Alpert is one of the leading performers of Yiddish song, a klezmer fiddler, and an outstanding Yiddish dancer and dance teacher. He is vocalist and fiddler in Brave Old World, one of the leading international ensembles performing traditional and modern Yiddish music. He was musical director of the PBS Great Performances special "Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler's House." An important link between Old World Jewish musicians and the klezmer revival, Alpert had studied the fiddle repertoire of the late Leon Schwartz of Bucovina. He is a former researcher at New York's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and has conducted extensive research of traditional Jewish music and dance throughout the United States and Eastern Europe.

Stuart Brotman is the leading bassist of the klezmer revival, as well as performing on the cimbal and a variety of Eastern European flutes. He plays these instruments in Braye Old World, as well as with various traditional and modern ensembles in the Bay Area. He has toured and recorded with Canned Heat, Kaleidoscope, Geoff and Maria Muldaur, Ry Cooder, appeared in the Los Angeles production of Ghetto, and performs frequently in ethnic specialty roles for TV and film.

Leader of the ground-breaking San Francisco Bay-Area klezmer string ensemble Finef, and a founding member of Los Angeles's Ellis Island Band, he also toured with the Yiddisher Caravan, an NEA-funded Yiddish folklore production. Brotman has been staff arranger for the acclaimed Aman International Music and Dance Company, and produced the Klezmorim's Grammy-nominated album Metropolis.

An accomplished performer, arranger, and recording artist in the ethnic field for over 40 years, Brotman holds a B.A. in music from the University of California at Los Angeles, and has taught at Oxford University, KlezKanada, KlezKamp, Buffalo on the Roof, and the Balkan Music and Dance Workshop.

Smithsonian Folkways sound supervision and digital editing by Pete Reiniger.

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Production coordinated by Mary Monseur
Editorial assistance by Carla Borden
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Zabawa Karczow (Celebration in an Inn) anonymous, (mid-19th century).
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