

CWRU
Department of Music
Concert Series

CWRU
Klezmer Music Ensemble
Steven Greenman, *Director*



Old World Meets New World
A Concert of East European and American Klezmer Melodies

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018
7:30pm
HARKNESS CHAPEL
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

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COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

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Program

- “Rumania” Bulgar** Alexander Olshanetsky
-from the recording *Tanz! With Dave Tarras and the Musiker Brothers* - 1955
- Chused’l #10** from *International Hebrew Wedding Music*
 (“Hasidic Dance #10) by W. Kostakowsky - 1916
- Dem Trisker Rebn’s Khosid** Traditional/Dave Tarras
 (“The Trisker Rebbe’s Dance”) Recorded - 1925
- Yiddish Bulgar** Max Epstein
 (“Jewish Bulgar”) Recorded with the Hymie Jacobson Orchestra - 1947
- Romanian Fantasy Pt. I** Joseph Solinski
Recorded in Warsaw, Poland circa 1910
- Second Avenue Square Dance** Dave Tarras
Recorded with the Abe Ellstein Orchestra - 1950
- Doina** Traditional improvisation
 (“Shepherd’s lament”)
- Freylekhs fun der Khupe** Steven Greenman
 (“Freylekhs from the Wedding Canopy”) Composed - 2017
- Shloymele’s Sher** Steven Greenman
Composed - 2018
- Bride and Groom Waltz** Abe Ellstein
- Goldenshteyn Bulgar Suite** from German Goldenshteyn collection

Intermission

Mayn Tayere Odes ("My Dear Odessa")	Dave Tarras Recorded - 1926
Lebn Zol Palestina ("Long Live Palestine")	Naftule Brandwein Recorded - 1925
Der Alter Tsigayner ("The Old Gypsy")	Abe Ellstein
Nakhes fun Kinder ("Joy from Children")	Belf's Romanian Orchestra Recorded - 1913
Der Kholem fun Yid ("The Jewish Dream")	Sam Musiker - from the recording <i>Tanz!</i> <i>With Dave Tarras and the Musiker Brothers</i> - 1955
Simkhes Toyre ("The Joy of Torah")	Traditional Recorded by Yiddisher Orchestra - 1916
Ternovker Sher ("Sher from Ternovka")	Dave Tarras Recorded - 1945
Rudy Tepel Nign ("Rudy Tepel Tune")	Rudy Tepel Orchestra
Freylekhs #30	A. E. Makonovetski from <i>Jewish Instrumental Folk Music</i> collected by Moshe Beregovski
Lemisch Sher	Mile Lemisch ca. 1880
Dobranotsh ("Good Night")	Steven Greenman Composed - 2018
Mazltov Dances ("Dances of Congratulations")	Mickey Katz Orchestra arr. by Henry Samuels

CWRU Klezmer Music Ensemble

Bios

Alexis Balog (harp) - Alexis is a fourth-year double-major studying Biology and Music. She has been playing harp for almost 11 years and currently studies with Jody Guinn. Alexis loves baking and plans to master it someday!

Evelyn Bravo (violin) - Evelyn is a junior violinist from Malvern, Pennsylvania studying music education. This is her second semester playing with the Case Klezmer Music Ensemble and hopes to return again for another successful year. She studies with Dr. Stephen Sims of the Cleveland Institute of Music as well as double bass with Dr. Kathleen Horvath. When she isn't playing music, Evelyn likes to enjoy her time as a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority on campus.

Ethan Bo (viola) - Ethan is a junior History and Chinese double major residing from Natick, MA, a suburb of Boston. A musical fun fact, Ethan bought and taught himself how to play the *Erhu*, the Chinese two-stringed folk instrument.

Isabel Fedewa (flute/piccolo) - Isabel is a first-year student majoring in Biology and English. She has been playing flute for more than 8 years and piccolo for one year. Isabel has considerable experience performing with symphonic bands and is excited to work with a more diverse variety of instruments in an improvisational group.

Alex Gordon (trumpet)- Alex is a 4th year student majoring in chemical engineering and minoring in music. Fun fact: Alex enjoys a good bowl of Matzo ball soup when listening to Klezmer. It is a shame he cannot have one and play at the same time.

Eytan Kaplan (mandolin/concertina) - Eytan is a freshman Computer Science and Math major from Evanston, Illinois. This is his first semester playing with the Case Klezmer Music Ensemble and he looks forward to continuing. In his free time, Eytan enjoys playing Dungeons and Dragons, drawing, programming, and playing various board games.

Alex Lenhart (trumpet) - Alex is a second-year music education student from Rocky River, OH. This is his first semester in Case Klezmer Music Ensemble and he has enjoyed learning the unique qualities of the style. He also performs in

the Case University Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble I, and the Orion Brass Quintet. After graduation, he plans to teach music in a public school and maintain a private lessons studio.

Jon O'Brien (soprano sax/alto sax) - Jon is a third-year music education major from Brentwood, Tennessee. He enjoys listening to and learning new types of music, and he is currently a member of CWRU's jazz band, symphonic band, saxophone ensemble, and glee club. This summer, Jon looks forward to teaching at HIYC sailing camp and Music Lens, a new summer camp in Cleveland.

Zoe Perrier (bassoon)- Zoe is a sophomore music education student from Mentor Ohio. This is her first semester playing with the Case Klezmer Music Ensemble. She studies bassoon with Mark DeMio through the joint music program. Zoe also participates in Case Chamber Music and Symphonic Winds.

Henry Samuels (string bass) - Henry is a double bass player, a teacher, and a graduate of CIM. Henry performs regularly with the Akron Symphony, as well as with the Cleveland Choral Arts Society, and other music groups in Cleveland. He recently obtained his Suzuki Book I Teacher Certification under the instruction of Daniel Swaim, and plans to develop his presence as a Suzuki bass instructor in Cleveland.

Elias Weiskirch (clarinet) - Eli is a sophomore music education major at Case. He plays most single-reed instruments, including saxophones and clarinets. Eli has a particular interest in jazz, composition, and aural learning. He wants to be a high school band director.

Steven Greenman (Director/piano/violin) - Steven Greenman is recognized internationally as one of the finest practitioners of klezmer violin performance, education and composition in the world today. Founder of the CWRU Klezmer Music Ensemble, Steven is known for his soulful interpretations of his original klezmer compositions and is equally adept at performing passionate East European Romani folk music and stunning solo violin works with orchestras.

Old World Meets New World

A Concert of East European and American Klezmer Melodies

Program notes by Steven Greenman

The term *klezmer* refers to the professional Jewish musicians from Eastern Europe who performed for Jewish life-cycle events and especially for the traditional Jewish wedding throughout the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Poland, Galicia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine) and later, the Pale of Settlement (territories from the former Russian Empire in which Jews were permitted settlement from 1791-1917). The musical tradition of the *klezmerim* (pl.) began in the 17th century and continued until the Holocaust (WWII). Jewish immigration to the United States (1880-1920) provided new avenues for Jewish musicians descended from former *klezmerim* to perform for Jewish weddings and bar-mitzvahs.

While the European *klezmer* repertoire included both an artistic listening repertoire and a full dance repertoire, the American *klezmer* repertoire was condensed to mostly the dance repertoire. One reason for this is the fact that the traditional European Jewish wedding was a several-day affair complete with music to greet the family and guests; to escort them to different parts of the wedding; to treat the wedding party to special virtuosic table tunes (*tish nigunim*) and to provide dance music. In this old-world setting, the *fidl* (violin) was the lead instrument in the klezmer ensemble. In contrast, Jewish weddings in America (beginning in the early 20th century) were held inside banquet-hall settings lasting only three to four hours, thus placing the main focus on the dance music over the listening music. In America, the clarinet assumed the main leadership role in the klezmer ensemble over the violin. Despite the diminution of repertoire, the American klezmer repertoire featured a robust collection of Yiddish line dances including the *bulgar*, *zhok*, *khosidl* and *sirba* in addition to the European *freylekhs* and *shers*. In the new world, the *bulgar*, a Yiddish line-dance of Moldavian origin, became the leading form of Yiddish dance music. Complex harmonizations and jazz inflections gave the music a new energized feel and added considerably to its popularity.

The *klezmer* music tradition continued in America up through the 1950's but gradually lost its appeal as Jewish cultural identity shifted from Eastern Europe to the new State of Israel. In the 1970's a revitalization of Yiddish (Jewish-Ashkenazic) culture led by second and third-generation American Jews brought about a renewed and dedicated interest. Yiddish folk arts festivals propagated this movement with the teaching and dissemination of Yiddish language, arts, music and dance followed by international concerts and festivals. Today,

klezmer music is an international phenomenon and a world-music genre with both creative-modern styles in addition to traditional performance practices.

Tonight's concert program "Old World Meets New World" features a major sampling of the American klezmer music repertoire including pieces composed and recorded by the great 20th century klezmer clarinetists: Dave Tarras, Naftule Brandwein, Sam Musiker, Max Epstein, Rudy Tepel, Mickey Katz and German Goldenshteyn. In addition, several klezmer tunes were composed by the great composers of New York City's Yiddish Theater including Abe Ellstein and Alexander Olshanetsky. While most of these "klezmer giants" were born in Eastern Europe, their careers thrived in the new world. Possessing a full mastery of the European klezmer music style and ornamentation, these innovative artists expanded traditional boundaries by creating new klezmer works with both an "American" flair and a sensible East European Jewish foundation.

Program Notes

by Steven Greenman

“Rumania” Bulgar - This lively *bulgar* was composed by the Yiddish theater composer Alexander Olshanetsky and recorded by the clarinetists Dave Tarras and Sam Musiker for the ground-breaking klezmer album “Tanz” (recorded 1955). “Rumania” Bulgar is arranged as a duet and often performed in thirds throughout the piece. While Tarras was the “old” master, Musiker was an exceptional klezmer performer and composer who also performed with the Gene Krupa Orchestra.

Chused’l #10 - The *khusidl* (also “*khosidl*”, “*khosid*”, “*chusedl*”) is a slow to moderate tempo Yiddish dance with Hasidic origins and a strong vocal content. This *khusidl* is from the repertoire of the violinist and band-leader W. Kostakowsky.

Dem Trisker Rebn’s Khosid (“The Trisker Rebbe’s Dance”) - A more upbeat *khusidl* that was recorded by various klezmer musicians including Dave Tarras in 1925.

Yiddish Bulgar - This *bulgar* was recorded by the great American klezmer clarinetist Max Epstein (1912–2000) with the Hymie Jacobson Orchestra in 1947. Max Epstein was the lead performer with the “Epstein Brothers”, an ensemble that included Max and his brothers William “Willie” Epstein (1919 – 1999), Julius “Julie” Epstein (1926 –2015) and Isidore “Chi” Epstein (1913 – 1986).

Romanian Fantasy Pt. I - The violinist Joseph Solinski recorded four tracks titled “Rumänische Fantasien” accompanied by a *tsimblist* (Jewish hammered-dulcimer player). These pieces evoke a dream-like atmosphere and utilize the Romanian *zhok* rhythm underlying Jewish melodic content.

Second Avenue Square Dance - Composed by Dave Tarras in homage to New York City’s former Yiddish Theater District located on Second Avenue in Manhattan and recorded with the Abe Ellstein Orchestra, this virtuosic *bulgar* is

filled with syncopations and off-beat accents together with the traditional *bulgar* rhythms.

Doina - The *doina* (also “*doyne*”) is a Romanian-improvised display piece in rubato rhythm favored by both Romanian musicians and *klezmerim*. A solo improvisation is performed over a prescribed chordal structure. The *doina* is one of the few rubato display pieces that were still played in America.

Freylekhs Fun Der Khupe (“Yiddish line-dance from the wedding canopy”) - Composed by Steven Greenman, this march-like *freylekhs* induces the wedding party to dance directly after the ceremonial breaking of the glass at the traditional Jewish wedding.

Shloymele’s Sher (Greenman) - The *sher* is the Jewish contra-dance with its musical content similar to the *freylekhs* but with choreographic differences.

Bride and Groom Waltz - This sentimental waltz was composed by Abe Ellstein (1907–1963), a Jewish-American composer deeply involved in New York City’s Yiddish Theater District.

Goldenshteyn Bulgar Suite - This set of *bulgar* melodies was collected by the Jewish-Moldavian clarinetist German Goldenshteyn (1934-2006) from his experiences performing for Jewish weddings in post-WWII Moldova.

Intermission

Mayn Tayere Odes (“My dear Odessa”) - This dance piece composed by Dave Tarras is a *hora*, the Romanian line-dance also known as *zhok* (the Bessarabian term for *hora*). The *klezmerim* from Bessarabia (today’s Moldova) and Romania were enamored with Romanian and Moldavian folk repertoire and the *zhok* became a favored display piece for *klezmerim*.

Lebn Zol Palestina (“Long live Palestine”) - A virtuosic *bulgar* composed by the brilliantly talented and enigmatic klezmer clarinetist, Naftule Brandwein (1889-1963) and recorded in 1925.

Der Alter Tsigayner (“The Old Gypsy”) - This *bulgar* was written by the Yiddish Theater maven Abe Ellstein and possibly used in his Yiddish operetta *Bublitski* (“Little Bagels”). Although the piece has lyrics written by Jacob Jacobs, Der Alter Tsigayner is most commonly performed as an instrumental.

Nakhes fun Kinder (“Joy from Children”) - This soulful *khosidl* is unique in that the melody in the first two sections begins on the offbeat instead of the more usual downbeat.

Der Kholem fun Yid (“The Jewish Dream”) - A typical Romanian *zhok*, this beautiful piece was composed and recorded by the great klezmer and jazz clarinetist Sam Musiker for his 1955 album “Tanz.”

Simkhes Toyre (“The Joy of Torah”) - *Simkhes Toyre* is a joyous Jewish holiday celebrating the final reading of the *Torah* (the five Jewish books of law) and beginning again. This particular piece however, was recorded as a rather somber *khosidl*.

Ternovker Sher (“Sher from Ternovka”) - This magnificent tune composed by Dave Tarras is actually not a *sher* but instead a hybrid composition consisting of several sections of *bulgar* and one section of *freylekhs*. In America, Tarras was an innovative composer of the *bulgar* with his virtuosic melodies and creative arrangements.

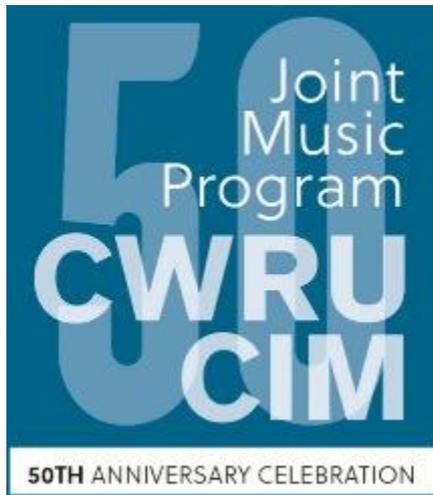
Rudy Tepel Nign (“Rudy Tepel Tune”) - Clarinetist, saxophonist and flutist Rudy Tepel led one of the most popular New York City Jewish wedding bands, the Rudy Tepel Orchestra. This ensemble specialized in Hasidic, Hebrew and Yiddish wedding music and has for over 50 years. His *nign* here was recorded by the Klezmatics, one of the most popular klezmer bands in the world today.

Freylekhs #30 - This *freylekhs* tune is actually a *skotszhne*, an elaborate klezmer display piece collected by the Jewish Ukrainian-born ethnomusicologist Moshe Beregovski (1892-1961) from the informant A. E. Makonovetski.

Lemisch Sher - This set of *shers* was from the working repertoire book of the violinist Mile Lemisch (also “Lemes”) from Iași, Romania ca. 1880. The collection includes Jewish instrumental melodies and Romanian/Moldavian folk repertoire and Romanian violin showpieces. *Lemisch Sher* contains groups of Moldavian *shers* played in succession and a slower section reminiscent of the Greek *syrto* dance reflecting the interaction of professional Jewish musicians (*klezmerim*) and Greek and Turkish Romani professional musicians.

Dobranotsh (from the Russian “Good night”) - These artistic klezmer melodies were performed for the wedding guests at the end of the celebration (or the night before the wedding) to bid everyone a “good night.”

Mazltov Dances - This suite of klezmer *bulgar* melodies concluding with a fast Ukrainian *kazatzke* is from the repertoire of Cleveland-born Mickey Katz (1909-1985), a Jewish jazz musician and bandleader, best known for his “Yiddish” parodies of popular American tunes. All his parodies have a distinct “Yiddish” flavor either throughout the entire piece or as a brief “break” in the middle of the song. His songs often lampooned both Jewish and American culture. This suite was arranged for the CWRU Klezmer Music Ensemble by our bassist, Henry Samuels.



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