The Klezmer Conservatory Band

A Taste of Paradise
The Klezmer Conservatory Band

Hankus Netsky, Director

Judy Bressler vocals
Ilene Stahl clarinet
Deborah Strauss violin and background vocals
Robin Miller flute and piccolo
Mark Berney cornet and trumpet
Mark Hamilton trombone
Hankus Netsky alto saxophone, accordion and piano
Art Bailey piano and accordion
Jeff Warschauer mandolin, guitar, tenor banjo and vocals
James Guttmann bass
Grant Smith drums and percussion

We would like to thank the following people for their help and inspiration:
Sylvia Fuks Fried, Harry Epstein, Dovid Braun, Israel Hochman,
Robert and Molly Freedman, Harry Bochner, Joel Rubin, Sandra Layman,
Freydele Oysher, Ben Gailling, Michael Schlesinger, Betty Silberman,
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Chane Mlotek, Jeremy Bloom, Velvel Pasternak, Joan Friedberg, Roula Balafas,
Henry Sapoznik, Richard Sofinski, Dr. Samuel Katz, and Gwen Servies.
1. Sarba Miracinae
(The Burdock Sibia)
(Music: Joseph Moscows¢, arr. Hankus Netsky
and GB/MIRamy Music, ASCAP).

We learned this lively Romanian Dance tune from a
1928 recording by Alexander Oleshanitskys New
York-based orchestra featuring the extraordinary
timbrel (Romanian hammered dulcimer player).
Joseph Moscows¢. Our version features Art Bailey
at the piano.

2. Sholem Tants
(Dance of Peace)
(Music and lyrics: Abe Blitstein, arr. Hankus Netsky
and GB/MIRamy Music, ASCAP).

This 1949 composition was first introduced by
Yiddish matinee-idol Seymour Rechtzeit and, perh-
haps because of its message of perseverance in the
face of adversity, soon became a favorite among
Holocaust survivors. We base our version on a
recording by the great female cantor and Yiddish
radio star, Freydela Oyster.

Chorus:
A tants fun sholem, un fun fridn
Vein tantsn ale yidn,
Ven es vet zayn sholem of y der velt.
Ven Got vet undz hatslokhe geybn
Yidn vein eybik lebn,
Azoy iz in breyshis festgeshtelt.

Fun land, tsu land arumgetrib
Ober yid iz yid farbilib.

Khotsch gelith tsores on a shir.
Vi lang mir gleyn in zayn toyre
Darfn mir nit hobn moyre,
Eybik eksistern vein mir.

(Bridge)
Tants, Tants...
Oyshneyn vein yunge doyres naye
Tants, tants...
Mir boyen oyf a sheyne velt a fraye.

(Chorus)
In shpanye flegn mir oykh tantsn
Biz fartrib hot men in gantsn, yidn
Keyn rusland zenen mir antlofn,
In pogromen dort gefrofn, oyf yidn,
In dayshland oy a shrek, a moyre,
Mhot farbrent di toyre fun dem yidn...oy,
Vos mir zenen, zenen mir.
Ober yidn zenen mir.
Undz opmekn vet nit keyner,
Vayl di Got bist bay undz eyner.
Tants, tants...
Dem sholem tants, dem yidn “fridn”
tants.

All the Jews will dance a dance of peace
and joy
When there is peace all over the world.

Just as it’s written in Genesis, God will
grant us good fortune.
Jews will live forever.

We’ve been chased around from country
to country,
Suffering endless sorrows,
But we remain the Jewish people.

As long as we believe in God’s Torah,
We need not be afraid.
We will exist eternally.

Dance, dance...
New, young generations will arise.
Dance, dance...
We’re building a beautiful new free world!

In Spain we also used to dance
Until they chased us all away,
We escaped to Russia.
There we found pogroms.
In Germany, oh it was a fearful horror.
They even burned our Torah.
Whatever we are, we are Jews.
No one can destroy us because you are
the one God.
Dance, dance, the dance of peace and
joy.

3. A Glezele Yash (A Glass of
Wine)/Di Kleyne Printsesn
(The Little Princess)
(Music: V. Shainsky, Lyrics: Yoysey Kerler,
Arr. Jeff Warschauer, Hasmode Music, BM/Nattule
Brandwein, Arr. Jeff Warschauer, Hasmode Music, BM)

“A Glezele Yash” is a very poetic song about drink-
ing. The words are by the late Yiddish poet Yoysey
Kerler, who emigrated to Israel in 1971 after years
of being refused permission to leave the Soviet
Union. It’s a drinking song, yes, but also a song of
honor, sadness, and defiance. The instrumental se-
tion, “Di Kleyne Printsesn” (“The Little Princess”),
is based on a 1941 recording by the great kazemir
clarinetist, Nattule Brandwein. Special thanks to
Michael Wex, Nikolai Borodulin and Chane Miotek.
Jeff Warschauer

Ven ikh nem a bisele yash, oy-oy,
Finkt alts un glanzt.
Khigib a vorf di pestse flash, oy-oy,
Un ikh gey a tants.

Oy, oy, tsuker zis
Halt mir bay di hent.
Flekhnt beygeylek di fis,
Di neshome bren.

Vos mir shivger, ver mir sayb, oy-oy,
Veys ikh zey—di shlek!
Mith ershn kalishk vaen, oy-oy,
Shivmen zey avek.
Oy, oy, tsuker zis
Bridri, kurnt in kon,
Lomir vayzn vind un vist
Vos a kabsn kon!

Vos mir dayges, ver mir zorg, oy-oy,
Shnorf nit far di reydr.
Gib mir, gotenyu, af borg, oy-oy,
Khotsh a tropa freyd.

Oy, tate, tsuker zis,
S'redele zikh dreyt,
S'kostn tsorens halb umzist
Shpringt tsezetsterheyt!

Ven ikh nem a bisele yash, oy-oy,
Bin ikh gornit der.
Kh'gib a vorf di pistre flash, oy-oy,
Un ikh gey a sher.

When I take a little drink of wine,
Everything sparkles and shines.
I throw away the empty bottle
And start dancing.

Oy, oy, sweet as honey,
Take my hands,
It's as if my feet are braiding bagels,
And my soul is on fire!

What do I care about my mother-in-law or my wife,
I know just how to deal with them.

With the first sip of wine.
They simply disappear.
Oy-oy, sugar sweet,
Brothers, join the circle!
Let's show them, despite everything
What a poor man can do!

Who cares about worries?
Don't take offense to what I'm saying,
But give me, dear God, just a drop of joy.

Oy-oy, sugar sweet,
The circle turns
Troubles cost very little
Dance like mad!

When I take a little drink of wine,
I'm not myself,
I toss aside the empty bottle,
And I dance a sher.

4. Dovidl Bazestl Di Kale
(Dave Seats the Bride)/Khusidl
(Hasidic Dance)
(Music: Dave Tamass, arr. Itam Stahl, Hankus Nersky,
and KCB/Miramu Music, ASCAP)

In a traditional Jewish wedding, a poignant moment
known as the kale bazest (seating of the bride)
takes place before the ceremony, when the wedding
bark regales the bride and her guests with images
of married life designed to bring on tears. Then, just
at the very saddest moment, the band strikes up a
khusidl, a lively Hasidic style dance tune. The instrumen-
tial kale bazest heard here is based on a 1939
recording by klezmer legend Dave Tamass with Al
Gasser's Bukoviner Kapelye.

5. Mayn Ershte Vals
(My First Waltz)
(Music: traditional, lyrics, Chaim Towber,
arranged Hankus Nersky and KCB/Miramu Music, ASCAP)

A classic Russian waltz, "Odyssey" (usually known
in English as "Expectation"), set here in Yiddish by
singer and actor Chaim Towber.

Mayn ershte groyse freyd,
Dit kristolene likht fun dem zal,
Dayn ershte lange kleyd,
Ongeton hostu tsim ershtn bal.
Dayn sheynkayt yene nakht,
Viel ikh shoynt nisht fargesn keyn mol.
Ikh gedenk dos haynt, host aroyg-se-
shaynt
In dem zal-shendel fun kristol.

Dem ershtn tants bay dir,
Hot farlandt yeder bokher in zal.
Ner du geshenkt host mir,
Ershtn tants, ershtn valts fun dem bal.
A shtoltser, ful mit freyd,
Hob ikh dikh un ter orem gefirt.
In dayn vayzn kleyd hostu likht
geshpreyt.
Vi a kening, bal host batis.

Din gevebt, elegants,
Vi geshvebt in dem tants.
Tsu mayn harts hostu zikh gedrikt.
Mikh mit grester freyd baglikt.

Glik dergantst, grandiez,
Un du tantst gratsiez,
Vi in kholen drey ikh zikh,
S'ez mekane yeder mikh.

Mayn kening fun bal,
Du aleynt bext gevun yene nakht.
Dayn blik vi zuben-shtral,
S'eshter glik in mayn lebn gebraukt.
Oyslesn vet keyn mol,
Fun dayn blik shendel fun krishtol,
Brengst mir zuben-shayn, eybik vestu
zayn,
Sheneste kening fun ershtn bal.

It was my first great happiness,
The glow of the crystal chandelier from
the dance hall,
And your first formal gown,
You put it on for the first ball.

I will never forget your beauty that night.
I remember it even today.
You in the light of the crystal
chandelier in the dance hall.
6. O Mortis (The Tough Guy)
(traditional, arranged Harkus Nitsky and KCB/Miram Music, ASCAP)

This lively Greek dance tune, better known as "To trikouverto" ("Three Times the Fun"), was recorded by Dave Trapani with the Abe Schwartz Orchestra (calling themselves the Columbia Greek Orchestra) in 1929.

Your thinly woven dress, elegantly floating in the dance,
You pressed yourself to my heart and made me so very happy.
Complete joy, and your graceful dancing,
I spun around as if in a dream.
Everyone was so jealous of me.

My queen of the ball.
You alone were queen of the ball that night.
Your glance like sunshine upon me,
The first time that true happiness was brought into my life.
Your glance will never be extinguished.
It will always be like the light from the crystal chandelier.
You bring me sunshine,
Eternally, you will be the most beautiful queen.
Of the first ball.

7. A Fishele (A Little Fish)
(Music and Lyrics: traditional, arranged Israel Hochman and Judy Breslau)

A Zionist song from the early twentieth century. Judy learned it from Mr. Israel Hochman of Stoughton, MA who came from Tamropol, Poland. Judy's account here reflects Mr. Hochman's dialect.

A fishele hot amol in Yardin gelebt.
Gefilt zikh azoy gut in dem tagh.
Es iz arum geshvimun, freylekh khalyomene geven.
Ver iz den tsu dem fishele gevezn gaykh?
Es iz arum geshvimun, freylekh khalyomene geven.

Nor plutsem iz dos fishele aver.
Es iz avek fun dem taykh mit fishelekh zeyer a sakh.
Yetst vandert dos fishele arum un arum
In farshidene taykhn umetum.

Fun taykh biz tsu taykh, fun yam biz tsu yam.
Vos iz far dem fishele vi a sam.
Ven der roybfisch efnt oyl zayn moyl,
Azh khapt on dos fishele a groyl.
Ober dos fishele iz klug un kert zikh in taykh tsurik
In Yardin, in Yardin tsurik, tsurik.

A little fish once lived in the Jordan River.
It felt so good, swimming around with happy dreams in the Jordan.
Who is equal in happiness to this fish?
But, suddenly, the fish left the river along with many other fish.
Now it wanders around and around in many rivers all over.
From river to river, from ocean to ocean, and such wandering is like poison to the fish.
When a predator opens up its mouth and threatens the little fish, the little fish starts to tremble in fear.
But the fish is smart and turns itself around and goes back to the Jordan River.

The Jew and the fish, they are both the same.
The Jew wanders like a fish in the river.
And never comes to rest on any shore, to sit on any one spot.
People say to him, "You're a Jew. You're a wanderer. There's no place for you."
The Jew stands up and takes walking stick in hand.
Now he wanders around and around in many lands throughout the world.
From land to land, from city to city, the Jew wanders, and the wandering is like poison to him.
When the enemy opens up his mouth, the Jew begins to tremble with fear. But the Jew is clever and returns to the land, to the land of Israel.

8. Oyfn Oyvn (At the Hearth)
(Music: traditional, arranged Hankus Netsky/Miriam Music, ASCAP)

A girl sits by the hearth and sews. In walks a boy who distracts her; soon the two of them are sitting together, and no one is sewing. Hankus is featured in a solo piano rendition of this classic Yiddish love song.

Ver s'iz nit geven,
Un ver s'hot nit gezen –
Tayere Malkele!
Veyst nit, vos s'iz sheyn,
Un veyst nit, vos s'iz kheyn,
Tayere Malkele –
Heybt zi oyf di bremen,
Daf di zun zikh shemen,
Tayere Malkele.
Eint zi di oygn,
Shteyt a vont geboygn,
Tayere Malkele.

(Chorus)
Ver s'iz nit geven,
Ver s'hot nit gezen
Tayere Malkele,
Veyst nit vos s'iz sheyn,
Un veyst nit vos s'iz kheyn,
Tayere Malkele.
Flakern di blikn:
Dakh zikh srofin kukan,
Tayere Malkele.
Shener vi Shulamis,
Heyser nokh vi Tamez,
Tayere Malkele.

There is nothing in the world more beautiful
Than my dear Malkele.
To be with her is to be in Paradise,
My dear Malkele.

Whomsoever has not seen my dear Malkele
Knows nothing about beauty and charm.
When she raises her brows, she puts the sun to shame,
My dear Malkele.

When her eyes sparkle,
It is as if seraphs are gazing,
My dear Malkele.
She is more lovely than Shulamis,
Hotter than the month of Tammuz,
My dear Malkele.

9. Tayere Malkele (Dear Malkele)
(Music: traditional, lyrics: Nokhren Sternheim, arranged Hankus Netsky/Miriam Music, ASCAP)

A beautiful love song by one of the most beloved Yiddish folk poets. We based our arrangement on a rendition recorded in the 1940s by the great Yiddish vocalist, Miriam Kressyn.

Chorus:
Lomir zikh dermanen
Oyb shener s'iz faranen,
Tayere Malkele,
Nor mit ir in freydn,
Iz dakh a gan-eydn,
Tayere Malkele.

Bistu yung, lakh un zing.
S'iz eyn sho nor do fun glik.
Nekhtn – veyn? Morgen – den?
Nisht ahtin un nisht tsurik.
Kh'bin ale mayne yorn
In lenger oysegforn.
Ikh hob nisht lib tsu shporns.
Ikh leb a gutn tog.
Ikh hob gezon fil zakhn,
Fun veynen un fun lakhn.
Kh'nok a sakhl-akl makhn
Fun lebn ven ikh zog, yo...

(Chorus)
Ikh vil ir zolt mikh hern,
Un zorgn zikh oyfhnern.
Dos lebn nisht farsthnern.
Mit dayges un mit lut.
Ir zolt zikh nisht baktlgn.
Vi lang di fishekh trogn.
Kolzman es kohkht der mogn
Iz lebt a gutn tog...

10. Khaye Sho
(Seize the Moment)
(Music and Lyrics: Chaim Towber, arranged Art Bailey)

A swinging treatment of Yiddish actor and poet Chaim Towber's radio theme-song.

Haynt is do, khaye sho,
Morgn ver veyst vos kon zayn?
Haynt iz gut, oder nit,
Nor der haynt er iz dakh dayn.

Nor der haynt, er iz dakh do.
Leb un lakh a khaye sho.

Today is here, seize the moment.
Tomorrow, who knows what will be?
Today is good, or it's not
12. Rejoicing
(traditional, additional lyrics by Warschauer. Arrangement by
Deborah Strauss and Jeff Warschauer/Hasmode Music, BMI)

"Rejoicing" begins with the versatile tune, "S’iz Nito Keyn Nekhtn" ("Yesterday’s Gone"), a popular
Lubavitcher Hassidic melody, a Yiddish song and also a klezmer tune. Lyrics are in both Yiddish and
"Belarusian." After a brief journey to a European Jewish wedding, the medley concludes with a frenzied
Moldavian tune. Special thanks to Jeremy "Klezdude" Bloom for lending Deborah his beautiful violin
for this recording, and to Velvel Pasternak.

- Deborah Strauss, Jeff Warschauer,
and Hankus Nitsky

S’iz nito keyn nekhtn,
S’okh nito keyn morgn;
S’iz nor do a pitsele haynt,
Shert im nit mit zorgn.

Khap arayn a shnepsl,
Kol-zman ir zent bayrn lebn;
Im-irtse-HaShem ofl yener veit,
Vet men akhyk nit gebn.

Ay yah...

Nye zhurishe, khloptsy,
Shhtoy s’ami budyet.
My payedym na kartshomiku,
Tam i vodka budyet.

11. Bessarabian Breakdown
(traditional, arranged Jim Guttmann, Hankus Nitsky
and KGB/Miramu Music, ASCAP)

Two renditions of a tune originally recorded by L.J.
Hochman’s Klezmer Orchestra in 1921, played here
first as a traditional bulgar and then as a bass and
drum duet in hip-hop style.

Nye zhurishe khloptsy
Shhtoy s’ami budyet
My payedym na kartshomiku
Tam i vodka budyet.

We’ll go to the inn.
There be vodka there.

Uncle Nosn has arrived,
Bringing with him the handsome groom.
It’s beautiful, it’s wonderful, Uncle Nosn
Has brought the handsome groom!

Aunt Male has arrived,
Bringing with her the beautiful bride.
It’s beautiful, it’s wonderful, Aunt Male
Has brought the beautiful bride!

As beautiful and wonderful as the sweet-
est wine!
Listen up to how she plays!

13. Tif Vi Di Nakht
(Deep As The Night)
(Music and lyrics: Abe Elstein & Eva Franklin, Music Sales
Corp., ASCAP, arranged Art Bailey)

A poignant ballad originally composed for Lucy
Gormman (Judy Bressler’s great aunt) who sang it in
the classic 1930s Yiddish film, A Brivle Der Marnen
(A Letter to Mother). Art Bailey is featured on the
piano chorus.

Ven di nakht kumt tsu geyn
Un ikh blayb dan aleyn,
Alts iz shitl nor mayn havs benok on
a shir.
Dan tsit mikh tsu dir.
Deep as the night,
Is my love for you, my beloved.
To be with you is all that I desire.
I sit and wonder: will we always have such joy?
If I should lose you, my life would be worthless.

Like the sun and the moon,
Like the stars that light up the night,
It's God's gift from heaven.

Whatever happens,
Even if the world disappears,
My love will forever be as deep as the night.

When the night arrives,
And I'm all alone,
Everything is quiet except for my heart,
Which is endlessly longing.
Then, I am drawn to you,
Beloved, come to me,
Like the night in her splendor,
Which always reminds me of you.
When Rabbi Elimeylekh became even happier,
Became an even happier Elimeylekh,
He recited the prayer to end the Sabbath
With the sexton, Reb Naftule,
And sent for his two drummers.

And the drumming drummers, they drummed drummingly,
Drummingly, they drummed.

When Rabbi Elimeylekh became exceptionally happy,
Became an exceptionally happy Elimeylekh,
He took off his ritual garment,
And put on his cap,
And sent for his two tsimblers (hammered dulcimer players).

And the tsimbling tsimblers, they tsimblingly tsimbled,
Tsimblingly, they tsimbled.

And the fiddling drummers tsimblingly fiddled,
Drummingly they tsimbled.

17. Nakhes Bulgar
(traditional, arranged Hankus Netsky and KCB/Miramu Music, ASCAP)

Hankus learned this lively tune from Bessarabian klezmer Edward Kagansky (now of Burlington, Ontario) while the two of them were washing dishes at his house one night. It comes from the repertoire of Kagansky's klezmer mentor, badkhen (traditional Jewish folk poet) Yefim Nakhes.

1. Sarba Miracinae (The Burdock Sirba) 1:49
2. Sholem Tants (Dance of Peace) 3:02
3. A Glezele Yash (A Glass of Wine)/Di Kleyne Printsesin (The Little Princess) 4:47
4. Dovid Bazest Di Kale (Dave Seats the Bride)/Khusidl (Hasidic Dance) 4:30
5. Mayn Ershte Vals (My First Waltz) 4:45
6. O Mortis (The Tough Guy) 2:20
7. A Fishele (A Little Fish) 4:47
8. Oyfn Oyvn (At the Hearth) 5:18
9. Tayere Malkale (Dear Malkale) 3:20
10. Khaye Sho (Seize the Moment) 2:35
11. Bessarabian Breakdown 4:10
12. Rejoicing 5:41
13. Til Vi Di Nakht (Deep As The Night) 4:39
14. Dem Zeydn's Tants (Grandfather's Dance)/Tants Istanbul (Dance from Istanbul) 4:31
15. Sabbath Prayer 3:17
16. Az Der Rebe Elimeylekh (When Rabbi Elimeylekh) 3:02
17. Nakhes Bulgar 3:33
Executive Producer: Hankus Netsky
Produced by Hankus Netsky and John Servies.
Production coordinator: Jim Guttman
Recorded and mixed by John Servies at Blue Jay Studios, Carlisle, Massachusetts.
Second Engineer: Will Sandalls
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Translations by Sylvia Fuks Fried, Judy Bressler, Israel Hochman, Harry Epstein,
and Dovid Braun.

While our transliterations follow standard YIVO orthography, Judy and Jeff's pronunciation
varies from song to song, depending on the dialect of its composer or its region of origin.

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Like the "drop of joy" in "A Glezele Yash" (A Glass of Wine), the music of the Klezmer Conservatory Band is A Taste of Paradise (or, as we say in Yiddish, "a taman-eydn"). For a quarter of a century members of the Klezmer Conservatory Band have served as ambassadors for klezmer – performing their music across the globe and inspiring a true renaissance. Poignant and lively vocals mix with instrumentals, by turns wild and mournful, all performed with virtuosic skill and a staggering range of emotion – this Taste of Paradise provides lasting satisfaction.

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JUDY BRESSLER vocals
ILENE STAHL clarinet
DEBORAH STRAUSS violin
and background vocals
ROBIN MILLER flute and piccolo
MARK BERNEY cornet and trumpet
MARK HAMILTON trombone
HANKUS NETSKY alto saxophone,
    accordion and piano
ART BAILEY piano and accordion
JEFF WARSCHAUER mandolin, guitar,
    tenor banjo and vocals
JAMES GUTTMANN bass
GRANT SMITH drums and percussion