



Shpil: The Art of Playing Klezmer

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Shpil: The Art of Playing Klezmer is both a history of this popular form of traditional Jewish music and an instructional book for professional and amateur musicians. Since the revival of klezmer music in the United States in the mid-1970s, Yiddish songs and klezmer dance melodies have served as the soundtrack for a resurgence of interest in Ashkenazic Jewish culture across the globe. Klezmer has taken root not only in America's major urban centers—New York City, Chicago, San Francisco—but also in emerging Jewish music hotspots like St. Petersburg, Buenos Aires, Krakow, and Tokyo. Its high energy, emotionally driven sound, and evocative Yiddish lyrics have found audiences everywhere.

Shpil offers an expansive history of klezmer, from its medieval origins to the present era, and its contributors encompass a cast of world-renowned musicians who have recorded, performed, and studied klezmer for years. Individual chapters concentrate on the most common instruments found in a klezmer ensemble—violin, clarinet, accordion, bass, percussion, and voice—and conclude with a selection of three songs that illustrate and exemplify the history and techniques of that instrument. *Shpil* includes a glossary and a discography of both classic and new klezmer and Yiddish recordings, all designed to guide readers in an appreciation of this remarkable musical genre and the art of playing and singing klezmer tunes.

Shpil: The Art of Playing Klezmer is ideal for amateur enthusiasts, musical scholars, beginning artists, and professional musicians, both solo and ensemble—indeed, anyone who wants to experience the joy of listening to and playing this thousand-year-old folk music.

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