

# **2025–2026**

## **MARIAN ANDERSON HALL**

Sunday, May 3, at 7:00

### **Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler's House**

Featuring:

**Hankus Netsky** Music Director, Arranger, Saxophone, and Piano

**Andy Statman** Clarinet and Mandolin

**Michael Alpert** Vocals, Guitar, Accordion, and Violin

**Lorin Sklamberg** Vocals and Accordion

**Judy Bressler** Vocals and Tambourine

**Frank London** Trumpet

**Klezmer Conservatory Band:**

**Ilene Stahl** Clarinet

**Mark Berney** Trumpet

**Mark Hamilton** Trombone

**James Guttman** Bass

**Grantley Smith** Drums

**Pete Rushefsky** Tsimbl

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 40 minutes, and will be performed without an intermission.

This concert is part of the Brodsky Star Spotlight Series.

This concert is also part of the Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts, established in his honor by **Dr. Richard M. Klein**.

Itzhak Perlman's appearance is sponsored by **Joan N. Stern**.

This concert is sponsored by **Dean S. Adler and Susanna Lachs Adler**.

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#### **Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts**

A passionate violinist from early childhood, Peter A. Benoliel joined the Philadelphia Orchestra Board of Directors in 1980 and served as chair from 1995 to 2000. His huge contributions to the Orchestra as a leader and philanthropist are paralleled only by his deep love for the violinists who help bring the famous Philadelphia Sound to the world.

# SOLOISTS

Lisa Marie Mazzucco



Undeniably the reigning virtuoso of the violin, **Itzhak Perlman** enjoys superstar status rarely afforded a classical musician. Beloved for his charm and humanity as well as his talent, he is treasured by audiences throughout the world who respond not only to his remarkable artistry but also to his irrepressible joy for making music. Having performed with every major orchestra and at concert halls around the globe, he was granted a Presidential Medal of Freedom—the nation’s highest civilian honor—by President Obama in 2015, a National Medal of Arts by President Clinton in 2000, and a Medal of Liberty by President Reagan in 1986. He has been honored with 16 GRAMMY Awards, four Emmy Awards, a Kennedy Center Honor, a GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award, and a Genesis Prize. In the 2025–26 season Mr. Perlman celebrates his 80th birthday with a variety of programs. He performs his iconic PBS special “In the Fiddler’s House” program alongside today’s klezmer stars. His orchestral engagements include “Cinema Serenade” programs with the Cleveland and Louisville orchestras and the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, as well as a play/conduct program with the San Francisco Symphony. He also makes a special appearance with the Colorado Symphony at Carnegie Hall. He continues touring “An Evening with Itzhak Perlman” and plays recitals across the United States with longtime collaborator Rohan De Silva. For over 30 years, Mr. Perlman has been devoted to music education, mentoring gifted young string players alongside his wife, Toby, in the Perlman Music Program (PMP). With close to 800 alumni, PMP is shaping the future landscape of classical music worldwide. He has an exclusive series of classes with Masterclass.com, the premier online education company that enables access to the world’s most brilliant minds, as the company’s first classical music presenter.



A multi-instrumentalist, composer, and ethnomusicologist, **Hankus Netsky** is co-chair of New England Conservatory’s Contemporary Musical Arts Department, founder and director of the Klezmer Conservatory Band, and former vice president for education at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts. He has composed extensively for film, theater, and television; collaborated closely on musical projects featuring Itzhak Perlman, Robin Williams, Joel Grey, Theodore Bikel, Alicia Svigals, Ran Blake, Robert Brustein, Linda Chase, Janice “Octavia” Allen, Eden MacAdam-Somer, Rosalie Gerut, and Robert Pinsky; and produced numerous recordings, including 10 by the Klezmer Conservatory Band. Mr. Netsky has taught at McGill University, Hampshire College, Wesleyan University, Hebrew College, and for Silkroad’s Global Musician Workshop. His essays on Jewish and improvisational music have been published by the University of California Press, the University of Pennsylvania Press, Indiana University Press, the University of Scranton Press, Hips Roads, and the University Press of America. He edited *The Hoffman Book*, a collection of 161 klezmer tunes that formed the basis of Philadelphia’s early-20th-century klezmer repertoire published in 2023. Temple University Press published his book *Klezmer, Music and Community in 20th Century Jewish Philadelphia* in 2015.



Born into a family with a long line of cantors, composers, and both classical and vaudeville musicians, **Andy Statman** grew up in Queens, New York. His early musical memories include 1950s rock and roll, big band jazz, and classical music; family get-togethers where the celebrants danced to klezmer melodies and Tin Pan Alley and Broadway tunes; and the rabbi in his afternoon religious school who sang Hasidic songs. He started playing bluegrass at the age of 12 and was soon performing with local bands at colleges, on radio, in clubs, and in Washington

Square Park in Greenwich Village. At 17, after hearing avant-garde jazz saxophonist Albert Ayler, Mr. Statman began studying saxophone. He became a protégé of legendary klezmer clarinetist Dave Tarras, who wrote a number of melodies for Mr. Statman and bequeathed to him four of his clarinets. He has appeared on over 100 recordings. His *Between Heaven and Earth* album was chosen as one of the Top Ten CDs of the Year by *The New York Times*. He has recorded and toured with the Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, Dr. John, Ricky Skaggs, Béla Fleck, David Grisman, and Itzhak Perlman, among others. A GRAMMY Award nominee and recipient of grants from the NEA Fellowship and New York State Council on the Arts, Mr. Statman has performed at Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Met, and at major venues throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, Japan, and Israel. In 2012 he received the National Heritage Award from the National Endowment for the Arts—the highest honor given to tradition-based musicians and artists in the United States. In June 2022 he made his debut on the Grand Ole Opry stage in Nashville where he continues to make guest appearances.



**Michael Alpert** has been a pioneering figure in the renaissance of East European Jewish music and Yiddish culture since the 1970s and is the recipient of a 2015 National Heritage Award from the National Endowment for the Arts—the highest honor for traditional and heritage artists in the United States. He is internationally known for award-winning performances and recordings with Brave Old World, David Krakauer, Itzhak Perlman, Theodore Bikel, Daniel Kahn, Frank London, and others. A native Yiddish speaker and one of the only contemporary singers adept

in the traditional style of pre-war East European generations, Mr. Alpert is also a celebrated innovator in Yiddish song, with original compositions on social and political themes. He was musical director of the Emmy- and Rose d'Or-winning PBS special “Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler’s House” and is featured in film and broadcast media worldwide. An important link to Old World Jewish musicians, he has documented Jewish music and dance throughout the globe, is a leading teacher and scholar of the Yiddish cultural arts, and has played a central role in the transmission of Ashkenazic music and dance to younger generations. A longtime research associate of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, he is currently a senior research fellow at New York’s Center for Traditional Music and Dance. He has also taught at Oxford, Columbia, and Indiana universities, and the New England Conservatory of Music. He is married to the literary scholar Emily Finer.



**Lorin Sklamberg** is a founding member of the legendary GRAMMY Award-winning New York Yiddish band the Klezmatics, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary season. He has been heard on innumerable recordings and live shows, solo and in collaboration with such diverse artists as Jane Siberry, Odetta, Chava Alberstein, Emmylou Harris, Holly Near, Neil Sedaka, Natalie Merchant, Tony Kushner, and the Dance Theatre of Harlem. Mr. Sklamberg has written and performed for film, dance, stage, and circus and has produced a number of recordings

of world and theater music, most recently Broadway vocalist Joanne Borts's *Lush & Hora*. He also teaches Yiddish song from São Paulo to St. Petersburg. Recent projects include the Golden Thread Septet's Yiddish Songs of Social Change with Latvian singer Sasha Lurje and violinist/arranger Craig Judelman; Jac Weinstein's Helsinki Yiddish Cabaret with Ms. Lurje, pianist/thereminist Rob Schwimmer, and music director/clarinetist Michael Winograd; 150 Voices with singer/pianist/composer Polina Shepherd and members of five United Kingdom and United States choirs; Saints and Tzadiks (Yiddish and Irish songs) with Dublin-born chanteuse Susan McKeown; the Semer Ensemble, which draws on Jewish records made in Berlin 1933–38 and is featured in the 2024 German documentary *I Dance But My Heart Is Crying*; and the score for Erik Anjou's film *Deli Man*. His Hasidic "spiritual" programs with Klezmatics cohort Frank London have resulted in three critically acclaimed albums. Since 2000 he has served as the sound archivist of New York's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.



**Judy Bressler** is a third-generation performer whose family includes Yiddish theater luminaries Menashe Skulnick and Lucy Gehrman. She takes after her grandfather, Isidore Lipinsky, Yiddish theater character actor, singer, and comedian, and her mother, Hannah Bressler, who performed with him in the Catskills in the 1930s and '40s; great-aunt and uncle Regina and Senia Russakoff, Yiddish theater dancers/choreographers, undoubtedly also contributed to her great love of dancing and movement. Since 1980, as a founding member of Boston's

Klezmer Conservatory Band, Ms. Bressler has been a leading voice in the revival and continuation of, and one of the most renowned interpreters of, Yiddish song in our time. She is heard on all 10 KCB recordings and was featured in the PBS documentary *A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden* and with Joel Grey in *Borscht Capades '94*. Her a cappella voice inspired choreographer Bill T. Jones to choreograph a piece for Boston Ballet entitled *The Broken Wedding* (1988). She received a Mass Cultural Council Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Grant (2022–24) to mentor young singer/songwriter Adah Hetko. Ms. Bressler has taught Yiddish song and dance at Klezkamp, Klezkanada, Yiddish New York, the Yiddish Book Center, and for the Boston and New York Workers Circle. Her gentle approach to singing uses deeply embodied head-to-toe physical relaxation combined with basic bel canto technique in a course entitled *Singing Secrets of a Gentle Diva*. She is delighted and honored to be part of Itzhak Perlman's ongoing 30+ years of "In the Fiddler's House" live concert tours and two related recordings.



**Frank London** is a GRAMMY Award-winning trumpeter and composer, a member of the Klezmatics, and leads the Hungarian-New York band Glass House Orchestra, the bhangra funk group Sharabi (with Deep Singh), and his Shekhinah Big Band. He has performed and recorded with John Zorn, Pink Floyd, Mel Tormé, Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy, LaMonte Young, They Might Be Giants, and David Byrne, and is featured on over 400 CDs. His own recordings include *Invocations* (cantorial music); Frank London's Klezmer Brass Allstars's *Di Shikere Kapelye, Brotherhood of Brass; Nigunim* and *The Zmiros Project* (Jewish mystical songs, with Klezmatics vocalist Lorin Sklamberg); *The Debt* (film and theater music); *The Shekhina Big Band*; the soundtrack to *The Shvitz*; the soundtrack to Perl Gluck's *Divan*; and four releases with the Hasidic New Wave. His first symphony, *1001 Voices: A Symphony for Queens* (with text by Judith Sloan and video by Warren Lehrer) for orchestra, chorus, soloists, tabla, erhu, narrator, actors, and film premiered in 2012. He has composed a Yiddish opera set in a Cuban nightclub, *Hatuey: Memory of Fire*, with Elise Thoron, and his latest collaboration is an exploration of klezmer and cantorial music with Cantor Yaakov Lemmer and clarinetist Michael Winograd. Other projects include the folk opera *A Night in the Old Marketplace* (based on Y.L. Peretz's 1907 play) and the multi-media work *Salomé, Woman of Valor* (with Adeena Karasick).

A leading voice in the world of klezmer music and Yiddish song for over 45 years, the **Klezmer Conservatory Band (KCB)** continues to thrill audiences all over the world. With a repertoire ranging from Yiddish standards to rousing dance medleys and little-known gems, the KCB's musicians have served as important ambassadors in promoting the universal appeal of Eastern European Jewish music. Over the years the band has appeared at dozens of international music festivals in major venues across the United States, Europe, and Australia and on 12 international broadcasts of NPR's *A Prairie Home Companion*. The KCB was prominently featured in the 1988 documentary film *A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden* and, in 1988 world-renowned choreographer Bill T. Jones choreographed a major work for the Boston Ballet based on selections from its CD of the same name. The band also provided the musical accompaniment for "The Fool and the Flying Ship," a 1991 video featuring Robin Williams; played an integral role in Joel Grey's *Borscht Capades '94*; and performed the music for the much-acclaimed American Repertory Theater and American Musical Theater Festival production *Shlemiel the First*. Since the mid-1990s Itzhak Perlman has featured the KCB in his CD, video, and touring project "In the Fiddler's House", including performances at Wolf Trap, the Hollywood Bowl, Radio City Music Hall, the Ravinia Festival, the Saratoga Music Festival, Moscow's Barvikha Concert Hall, the Mizner Park Amphitheater in Boca Raton, and the Mann Center in Philadelphia. In December 2002 the KCB performed a concert of orchestral arrangements of klezmer and Yiddish vocal music with the Atlanta Symphony. In 2013 the band joined Mr. Perlman as an integral part of his cantorial/Hassidic/klezmer/Yiddish folk music project, "Eternal Echoes", which received rave reviews as a Sony CD release and for live concert performances at venues including Boston's Symphony Hall, Brooklyn's Barclay's Center, Roy Thompson Hall in Toronto, and the Hollywood Bowl. The band was also featured with Mr. Perlman in 2013's *Great Performances* 40th Anniversary Gala broadcast from Lincoln Center and 2014's "Rejoice," a full-length PBS *Great Performances* Jewish music special. The band's recordings include *Yiddish Renaissance, Klez*, and *A Touch of Klez* on the Vanguard label and *Oy Chamukah, A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden, Old World Beat, Live! The Thirteenth Anniversary Album, Dancing in the Aisles, A Taste of Paradise*, and the highly acclaimed *Dance Me to the End of Love* on Rounder.



**Ilene Stahl** always wanted to play in a rock and roll band but “says she didn’t know” she picked the wrong instrument. She is known for her passionate performance style as well as her soulful interpretations of traditional Yiddish music. In 1987, while still a student at Hampshire College, she became the clarinetist for the Klezmer Conservatory Band (KCB). With the KCB she has performed extensively throughout the United States and on all international tours. She has been featured on numerous recordings and on radio and TV broadcasts, including the *Great Performances*

programs “In the Fiddler’s House,” “Eternal Echoes,” and “Rejoice” with Itzhak Perlman and is a soloist in his ongoing concert touring klezmer ensemble. Her musical theater experience includes the world premiere of the American Repertory Theater production of *Shlemiel the First* and *Borscht Capades* with Joel Grey. She and some of Boston’s most acclaimed klezmer musicians also perform in Klezperanto, a band that expands the possibilities of traditional Yiddish and Mediterranean melodies, rips up Romanian surf tunes, covers cop show themes and cumbias, slays some standards, and burnishes it all to a funky finish. Her six-piece band plays dance music from everywhere except your cousin’s bar mitzvah.



**Mark Berney** is hailed as one of New England’s most handsome and versatile middle-aged trumpeters. He joined the Klezmer Conservatory Band in 1998 and has appeared at the Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, and the Sharon Public Library. Professor Berney teaches trumpet, improvisation, and music history at the University of Rhode Island. He has been known to perform a lively wedding celebration on a Saturday night, then run a full marathon the following morning.



**Mark Hamilton** has been the trombonist with the Klezmer Conservatory Band since 1985. He has toured throughout Europe, Australia, and North America; recorded LPs and CDs; and been featured in Joel Grey’s Yiddish music revue *Borscht Capades*. He has appeared both on stage and in the pit orchestra with the American Repertory Theater’s production of *Shlemiel the First*, which received rave reviews in *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *The New Yorker*, and *Newsweek*. He has performed in the PBS special “In the Fiddler’s House” and on *The Late Show with David*

*Letterman* with renowned violinist Itzhak Perlman. He is currently the director of BlueJazz Strings and Combos and professor of trombone, euphonium, and tuba at Wellesley College. He is a proud graduate of the New England Conservatory and the University of Delaware and a founding member of the Boston-area ensembles Brass Planet and Klezperanto. An arranger and composer, he self-publishes klezmer and jazz music for concert bands and other ensembles at hamiltunes.org. He also performs pop, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, and jazz music on electric bass and trombone throughout New England.



From Carnegie Hall to smoky dives, from the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam to legendary folk music venue Club Passim in Cambridge, Massachusetts, bassist **Jim Guttman** has played everything from klezmer to classical—and most styles in between. He joined the Klezmer Conservatory Band at its inception and as a member has toured nationally and internationally; performed and recorded with Itzhak Perlman and Joel Grey; and performed on all the band's recordings, coordinating the production of the last five. He has recorded and performed klezmer music with Andy

Statman, Alicia Svigals's Klezmer Fiddle Express, Art Bailey's Orkestra Popilar, and with Michael Winograd and Pete Sokolow's Tarras Band, a tribute to the great klezmer clarinetist Dave Tarras. He is a founding member of the Really Eclectic String Quartet and has worked with renowned entertainers and musicians, including singers Eartha Kitt and Mark Murphy, blues masters Johnny Shines and James Cotton, the Boston Philharmonic, Texas swing legend Tiny Moore, new acoustic music guitar virtuoso Russ Barenberg, the Artie Shaw Orchestra, and many more. In 1986 he organized and served as the musical director and bassist for the Tufts University Jazz Festival's Soul to Soul: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin. He was a member of the 2004 GRAMMY Award-winning ensemble that recorded Yehudi Wyner's *The Mirror*. In 2010 he released *Bessarabian Breakdown*, his first CD as a leader.



**Grantley Smith** studied drum set with Alan Dawson, frame drum with Jamie Haddad, tabla with Kazi Jalal, Afro-Cuban percussion with Enrique Pla, and handance with Glen Velez. *The Boston Globe* called him a "brilliant improviser." He has toured globally from Krakow to Thailand and New Zealand. He has performed with Yo-Yo Ma, Don Byron, the Violent Femmes, Garrison Keillor, and Jane Wang. Most recently he has been playing Delta Blues, on calabash, with GRAMMY nominee Jimmy "Duck" Holmes and Ryan Lee Crosby.



**Pete Rushefsky** is a leading performer, composer, and teacher of the tsimbl (cimbalom), the traditional hammered dulcimer of klezmer music. He serves as executive director of the Center for Traditional Music and Dance, which has worked to sustain and present immigrant performing arts traditions in New York City since 1968. He is a founder of Yiddish New York, the world's largest annual Yiddish cultural festival, and has performed internationally at major venues and festivals such as New York's Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Town Hall, and Symphony Space;

Amsterdam's Concertgebouw; Paris's Cité de la Musique; the Smithsonian Folklife Festival; the Hollywood Bowl; Krakow's Jewish Culture Festival; Vienna's KlezMore Festival; and Toronto's Ashkenaz Festival. He concertizes and records with violinist Itzhak Perlman as part of the Klezmer Conservatory Band and with many of Jewish music's leading performers, including Lisa Gutkin, Steven Greenman, Joel Rubin, Cantor Yitzchok Meir Helfgott, Andy Statman, Alicia Svigals, Eleonore Biezunski, Michael Alpert, Adrienne Greenbaum, and Jake Shulman-Ment. A popular instructor of klezmer who has taught at institutes and camps across North America and Europe, he is the author of pioneering instructional books on klezmer for hammered dulcimer and five-string banjo. He frequently publishes and lectures on ethnic music in America.

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feature discussions of the season's music and music-makers, and are supported in part by the Hirschberg–Goodfriend Fund in memory of Adolf Hirschberg, established by Juliet J. Goodfriend.

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