



[The Klezmer Shack](#)

Veretski Pass with Joel Rubin / Poyln: A Gilgul
Golden Horn Records, GHP-040-2, 2015
www.goldenhorn.com

Available in the US from cdbaby.com
Oh, my. Take one of my favorite bands, [Veretski Pass](#).
It already contains three of the most experienced,
skilled, and expressive klezmer musicians in the world.
Add in Joel Rubin, one of their few compatriots about
whom the same could be said. Rubin and tsimblist

Horowitz toured together in the mid-90s, and also spent considerable time in the field, gathering the shards of what survived the Holocaust. Rubin and Brotman were half of the seminal klezmer revival band, [Brave Old World](#). Professor Rubin is an acknowledged scholar of Jewish music, something that has evolved more slowly following the murder of most of the Polish Jewish community in the Holocaust. If you are klezmerim, there is an obvious response. Gather old Polish urban and rural music. Mix in what you learned from your own and your colleagues' ethnographic recordings and field research. And transform it all into the music that might have been created had there been no Holocaust, as Jewish klezmer forms mix with the old Polish melodies and update Hasidic and klezmer repertoire.

The result sparkles with life. From the opening "the Master's Song," the album proceeds through several suites of sparkling music. Sometimes it sounds more like a Polish contra dance than klezmer as we know it. Sometimes, the tunes feel so familiar—but they're newly klezmerized, as in the "Polka Szarpana." Others are newer—new enough to have a named composer, as the sad, end-of-the-wedding-ish "Gedankn" by Majer Bogdanski.

As I said, not all of the material is non-Jewish. That's what happens when you mine the rural folk traditions of people who once mixed together (not always, but sometimes to make music). Some of the material comes from previously unknown Hasidic melodies. Some, like the "Kyiver Kozak," in "Rich Guests" suite, is traditional. Horowitz's accordion dances with exuberance as Brotman's bass cello keeps the beat. Others, like Joel Rubin's "Dinover Doina," ("The Dirge" suite) were composed just yesterday. The album title comes from a story by the popular Yiddish author I.L. Peretz. It is not my favorite story. On the surface, it is shmaltz and pathos. But it is also satire and recreation of rural Jewish life and Hasidic belief. Here, there is no shmaltz nor pathos, but Veretski Pass and Joel Rubin instead take these threads of urban and rural Polish life and folkways, Hasidic and Polish, and weave them into a piece that can be enjoyed simply as traditional Jewish music (if composed of many modern threads). On another level, it is a delightful kick in the balls to those who tried to eradicate this culture and who did succeed in murdering millions. We're still here. Still creating. And the music still kicks ass.

This is Eastern European klezmer. No brass. No drum kit. But just about the most exquisite violin, clarinet, accordion, tsimbl, or bass cello you'll ever heard. And music that swings and bows and glides along, from dance tunes to sad doinas to thoughtful Hasidic nigns. It's not just music. It is life in its next gilgul, here, now. I suspect that it is also music that sounds familiar, deeply listenable, and danceable to fans of traditional Polish music as well. Get a few copies, share them, and see for yourself.

Reviewed by Ari Davidow, 23 July 2016.

Personnel this recording:

Cookie Segelstein: violin

Joel Rubin: C clarinet

Joshua Horowitz: accordions, tsimbl

Stu Brotman: bass cello

Songs

- 1 The Master
- 2 **The Master's Song** (comp. arr. Joshua Horowitz) 2:25
- 3 **Petrikever Promenade** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:45
- 4 **Raysher Krakowiak** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein) 2:00
- 5 The Street
- 6 **Belfer's Overture** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein, Stuart Brotman) 2:44
- 7 **Bottler's Gallop** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 3:10
- 8 **Polka Szarpana** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:45
- 9 The Dirge
- 10 **Dinover Doina** (comp. Joel Rubin) 2:07
- 11 **Dinover Nign** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass, Joel Rubin) 3:17
- 12 **Reb Chaiml's Freylekhs** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:01
- 13 The Rich Guests
- 14 **The Old Way** (comp. Joshua Horowitz) 2:05
- 15 **Kyiver Kozak** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 3:06
- 16 **Hutsul Kin** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein) 1:51
- 17 The Theater
- 18 **Gedankn** (comp. Majer Bogdanski, arr. Veretski Pass) 2:29
- 19 **Prince and Princess** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:53
- 20 **Dark House Oberek** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:07
- 21 The Organ Grinder
- 22 **The Rake's Chant** (comp. Cookie Segelstein, arr. Veretski Pass) 1:10
- 23 **Stefciu, The Tumbler** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:40
- 24 **Acrobat Polka** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:23
- 25 The Beggar
- 26 **I Went Away** (Cookie Segelstein) 2:59
- 27 **Beggar's Hymn** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:58
- 28 **Ghost Light** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:54
- 29 The Scholar
- 30 **The Blind Orphan** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein) 0:55
- 31 **Luminous Kujawiak** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein, Stuart Brotman) 1:23

- 32 **Katzner's Obereks** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:10
- 33 The Rabbi
- 34 **Silver Bell** (comp. Joshua Horowitz) 1:33
- 35 **Warshaver Dance House** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 3:27
- 36 **The Lamden's Mazurkas** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:07
- 37 The Disciples
- 38 **Gilgul** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:21
- 39 **Petrikever Recessional** (trad. arr. Cookie Segelstein, Joshua Horowitz) 2:11
- 40 **Feygele Beygele and Hager's March** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 2:16
- 41 **Katz's March** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:31
- 42 **Polka Szabasowka** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:28
- Petrikever Polka** (trad. arr. Veretski Pass) 1:28