

Celebrity Series is now VIVO PERFORMING ARTS

SUN FEB 15 7PM SYMPHONY HALL

ITZHAK PERLMAN ***IN THE FIDDLER'S HOUSE***

Itzhak Perlman violin

Hankus Netsky music director, arranger, saxophone, piano

Andy Statman clarinet, mandolin

Michael Alpert violin, vocals

Lorin Sklamberg vocals, accordion

Judy Bressler vocals, 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

Selections will be announced from the stage.

There will be no intermission in this evening's program, which will run approximately one hour and 45 minutes.

2025/26 Season Sponsors
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Vivo Performing Arts is supported by the
Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Itzhak Perlman violin

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, Mr. Perlman 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. Mr. Perlman 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 season 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 Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, and 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 U.S. with longtime collaborator Rohan De Silva.

For more than thirty years, Mr. Perlman has been devoted to music education, mentoring gifted young string players alongside his wife Toby in the Perlman Music Program. With close to 800 alumni, PMP is shaping the future landscape of classical music worldwide.

Hankus Netsky music director, arranger, saxophone, piano

A multi-instrumentalist, composer, and ethnomusicologist, Dr. 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, MA. 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 ten by the Klezmer Conservatory Band. He has taught at McGill University, Hampshire College,

Wesleyan University, Hebrew College, and for Silkroad's Global Musician Workshops. 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, and Temple University Press published his book *Klezmer, Music and Community in 20th Century Jewish Philadelphia* in 2015.

Andy Statman clarinet, mandolin

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. Statman started playing bluegrass at age 12 and was soon performing with local bands at colleges, on radio, in clubs, and Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village. At 17, after hearing avant-garde jazz saxophonist Albert Ayler, he began studying saxophone. He became a protégé of legendary klezmer clarinetist Dave Tarras; subsequently, the master wrote a number of melodies for and bequeathed four of his clarinets to the young Statman. Andy Statman has appeared on more than 100 recordings. His *Between Heaven and Earth* album was picked 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 NY State Council on the Arts, Statman has performed at Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Met, and at major venues throughout the US, Europe, Canada, Japan, and Israel. In 2012 Statman 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 Andy made his debut on the Grand Ole Opry stage in Nashville where he continues to make guest appearances.

Michael Alpert violin, vocals

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 USA's highest honor for traditional and heritage artists. 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, he is also a celebrated innovator in Yiddish song, with original compositions on social and political themes. Alpert was musical director of the Emmy / 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 NYC's Center for Traditional Music and Dance, and has 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 vocals, accordion

Lorin Sklamberg is a founding member of the legendary Grammy Award-winning New York Yiddish band The Klezmatics, who are celebrating their 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. He 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' *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 Lurje, pianist / thereminist Rob Schwimmer, and music director / clarinetist Michael Winograd; and *150 Voices* with singer / pianist / composer Polina Shepherd and members of five UK and US choirs. Also: 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, Lorin has served as the sound archivist of New York's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

"One of the premier American singers in any genre."

– Robert Christgau, All Things Considered, National Public Radio.

Judy Bressler vocals, tambourine

Judy Bressler is a third-generation performer whose family includes Yiddish theatre luminaries Menashe Skulnick and Lucy Gehrman. Judy takes after her grandfather, Isidore Lipinsky, Yiddish theatre character actor, singer, and comedian, and her mother, Hannah Bressler, who performed with him in the Catskills in the 1930s and '40s; Yiddish theatre dancers / choreographers, great-aunt and uncle Regina and Senia Russakoff undoubtedly also contributed to Judy's great love of dancing and movement. Since 1980, as a founding member of Boston's Klezmer Conservatory Band (KCB), Judy has been a leading voice in the revival and continuation of 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 the Boston Ballet entitled "The Broken Wedding" (1988). She received a Mass Cultural Council Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Grant (2022-2024) to mentor young singer / songwriter Adah Hetko. Judy has taught Yiddish song and dance at Klezkamp, Klezkanada, Yiddish NY, the Yiddish Book Center, and for the Boston and NY 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." Judy is delighted and honored to be part of Itzhak Perlman's ongoing 30+ years *In the Fiddler's House* concert tours and two related recordings.

Frank London trumpet

Frank Lonconi 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 more than 400 CDs. His own recordings include *Invocations* (cantorial music); Frank London's Klezmer Brass Allstars' *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 & video by Warren Lehrer) for orchestra, chorus, soloists, tabla, erhu, narrator, actors, and film premiered in 2012. He is currently composing a Yiddish opera 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. London's other projects include the folk-opera *A Night in the Old Marketplace* (based on Y.L. Peretz' 1907 play), and the multi-media work *Salomé, Woman of Valor* (with Adeena Karasick).

Klezmer Conservatory Band

A leading voice in the world of klezmer music and Yiddish song for more than 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 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 US, Europe, and Australia and on twelve 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 their CD of the same name. They 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 *Borschtcapades '94*, and performed the music for the much-acclaimed American Repertory Theatre and American Musical Theatre 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 Wolftrap, the Hollywood Bowl, Radio City Music Hall, the Ravinia Festival, the Saratoga Music Festival, Moscow's Barvikha Concert Hall, the Mizner Park Amphitheatre in Boca Raton, and the Mann Music Center in Philadelphia. In December 2002, the KCB performed a concert of orchestral arrangements of klezmer and Yiddish vocal music with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In 2013, the band joined Maestro 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 Thomson 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 *Yiddishe Renaissance*, *Klez*, and *A Touch of Klez* on the Vanguard label and *Oy Chanukah*, *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 clarinet, Klezmer Conservatory Band

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, Ilene became the clarinetist for the Klezmer Conservatory Band. With the KCB, Ilene 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 PBS *Great Performances* programs "In The Fiddler's House," "Eternal Echoes," and "Rejoice!" with Itzhak Perlman; she is also 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 *Borschtcapades* with Joel Grey.

Ilene Stahl and some of Boston's most acclaimed klezmer musicians also perform in Klezperanto, a band which 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 trumpet, Klezmer Conservatory Band

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 trombone, Klezmer Conservatory Band

Mark Hamilton has been a member of the Klezmer Conservatory Band since 1985. As the only trombone player "In the Fiddler's House," he appeared, with Itzhak Perlman, on the *Late Show with David Letterman*. A talented educator, Mark is on the jazz faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. He is the former instrumental music director at Applewild School in central Massachusetts, where his bands consistently won top honors at the International Association of Jazz Educator's festivals. Both an arranger and composer, he specializes in klezmer and jazz music for concert bands and other ensembles. He created HamilTunes in order to publish this music and make it available for school and adult bands. Mark is a busy freelancer (even

though he plays the trombone) and has performed with Joe Williams, Victor Borge, Robin Williams, and Joel Grey, among others. A proud graduate of New England Conservatory and the University of Delaware, he is also a founding member of the ensembles Brass Planet and Klezperanto!

James Guttman bass, Klezmer Conservatory Band

From Carnegie Hall to smoky dives, from the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam to legendary folk music venue Club Passim in Cambridge, 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 of the band has toured nationally and internationally, performed and recorded with Itzhak Perlman and Joel Grey, performed on all the band's recordings and coordinated the production of the last five. He has recorded and performed klezmer music with Andy Statman, Alicia Svigals' 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. Jim 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, the Really Eclectic String Quartet, blues masters Johnny Shines and James Cotton, the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, 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 drums, Klezmer Conservatory Band

Grant Smith studied drumset 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." Mr. Smith 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 Grant has been playing Delta Blues, on Calabash, with Grammy nominee Jimmy "Duck" Holmes and Ryan Lee Crosby.

Pete Rushefsky tsimbl

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 (CTMD), which has worked to sustain and present immigrant performing arts traditions in New York City since 1968. Pete 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' 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 classical 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, Pete 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.