



Klezmer: Music and Community in Twentieth-Century Jewish Philadelphia

Hankus Netsky

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Klezmer presents a lively and detailed overview of the folk musical tradition as practiced in Philadelphia's twentieth-century Jewish community. Through interviews, archival research, and recordings, Hankus Netsky constructs an ethnographic portrait of Philadelphia's Jewish musicians, the environment they worked in, and the repertoire they performed at local Jewish lifestyle and communal celebrations.

Netsky defines what klezmer music is, how it helped define Jewish immigrant culture in Philadelphia, and how its current revival has changed klezmer's meaning historically. *Klezmer* also addresses the place of musicians and celebratory music in Jewish society, the nature of klezmer culture, the tensions between sacred and secular in Jewish music, and the development of Philadelphia's distinctive "Russian Sher" medley, a unique and masterfully crafted composition.

Including a significant amount of musical transcriptions, *Klezmer* chronicles this special musical genre from its heyday in the immigrant era, through the mid-century period of its decline through its revitalization from the 1980s to today.



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