

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS  
**Boyer College of Music and Dance**

**Klezmer Dance Class**  
Dan Blacksberg's Frielachs Music

February 5, 2025  
Tyler B04

Wednesday  
7:00 and 8:15 PM

Dan Blacksberg brings the best of classic and contemporary klezmer music with a special Philadelphia twist. Named after his grandmother-in-law's exclamation "Where did you learn to play that Frielach's Music!?" when he first played her a classic yiddish song, Dan's band brings the best of the tradition with them right into the present moment. Klezmer music is an umbrella music term that refers to a wide variety of music that comes from the Yiddish-speaking Jewish people of Eastern Europe and their descendants on many continents. Since the 1970s, the music has grown far beyond its Jewish roots to become a global music, played in all corners of the world by Jewish and non-Jewish people alike, and taking up residence in various parts of popular culture. This has been in part due to the tireless efforts of many musicians who act not only as performers, but as teachers and scholars, who dove deep into scratchy old 78rpm recordings, discovered home recordings hidden away in bedrooms and estate sales, and unearthed archives of never before heard music in state libraries of post-Soviet countries. Klezmer is a music and cultural heritage that is still being discovered and defined today by the people making it.

In this hands-on, feet-on-ground class, we will get our ears and bodies attuned to the sounds, and rhythms of the instrumental dance repertoire that is a central pillar of klezmer music. This is dance music that was to accompany life celebrations like weddings and is meant to express the full emotional spectrum of this big, complex events. The primary emotion is joy (Freilach in Yiddish) but there is room for many others in this music.

This range of emotions is brought out through a rich variety of nuances of phrasing and ornamentation are rarely written down, and each instrument is expected to approach a melody, harmony, or rhythm part in it's own unique way to make up the whole.

To experience this we'll learn a tune by ear, and within the class period, get to a performance-ready state. And we will learn the basic dance to the tune we'll play and feel in our bodies specific bounce these tunes need to make us dance'

After the class, sheet music of the tune will be provided so you can keep the tune with you and also see how different the notation is from the actual playing of the piece. In addition, Dan and his trio will play some traditional and modern compositions and answer questions about it all.

### Bios

A major voice in experimental music and a living master of klezmer trombone, **Dan Blacksberg** is a leader in the Philadelphia music community and beyond. Through performance, composition, and improvisation, he creates new territories to explore inside and across genres, forging new pathways

Two hundred fourth and two hundred sixth performances of the 2024-2025 season.



between tradition and innovation. Dan has performed with *Anthony Braxton, George Lewis, Joe Maneri, and Joe Morris* and recorded multiple records with experimental noise rock legends *The Body*. In Yiddish music he has worked with *Frank London, Adrienne Cooper, Elaine Hoffman Watts, Daniel Kahn, Theodore Bikel*, and was a founding member of *Alan Bern's klezmer/lautari supergroup, The Other Europeans*. He currently records and tours with Michael Winograd and the Honorable Mentshn. He's been honored as an Artist in Residence at the Kimmel Center for Performing Arts (2019) for which he composed the jazz-klezmer suite Name of the Sea, and as a Pew Fellow in the Arts (2012). He received critical acclaim for his jazz trio albums Bit Heads (NoBusiness Records, 2008), Perilous Architecture (2013), and groundbreaking Hasidic Doom Metal band Deveykus (Tzadik Records, 2013). In 2017 he released Radiant Others, the first klezmer album to feature the trombone as the lead instrument. His newest album, The Psychic/Body Sound System (Relative Pitch Records, 2024) is his first foray into solo trombone improvisation. Dan also creates the Radiant Others Klezmer Podcast, and keeps working to blast exuberant Freylekhs for a better world.

Trumpeter **Eva Boodman** is a veteran of klezmer and Balkan music scenes from Montreal to New York and now Philadelphia. Eva has played with many of the top brass bands in New York, notably the Veveritse Brass band, and was a founding member of the generation-defining all-women, queer, and non-binary band klezmer band Tsibele. Eva Boodman is also a scholar who specializes in social and political philosophy, feminist and applied ethics, critical race theory, and carceral studies. Her current research develops normative approaches to the ways that institutions like schools, prisons, nursing homes, and social service organizations reproduce or mitigate structural dynamics. Her recent work has appeared in *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, the *Journal of Ethical Urban Living*, and *Radical Teacher*, and she is currently working on a book project on community care.

Accordionist **Rob Curto** has played regularly for over 25 years with renowned klezmer musicians David Krakauer, Frank London, Michael Winograd and Susan Watts. He has a long history of music-making, with roots in a musical family steeped in the music of swing-era America, over 20 years of experience playing Brazilian dance music, and half a decade deeply immersed in Irish traditional music through his mentor Billy McComiskey. Rob has been described as bringing a “workingman’s spirit to the bellows-craft of the accordion”.

**David Licht** was born in Detroit and raised in Greensboro, N.C. where he studied drums with jazz drummer Sam Anflick. He went to the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, N.Y. in 1978 and met Eugene Chadbourne, who along with keyboardist Mark Kramer became the legendary rock trio, Shockabilly. Licht moved to NYC in 1985 to help Kramer manage the recording studio, Noise NY, and they formed the band Bongwater. He met Frank London the first week he was in NYC and by the end of that year the Klezmatics were formed. Licht later left the Klezmatics as a full time member to become a touring musician part-time and spends more time with his family and works as a painter and plasterer, something he started back in 1974 in order to be able to play drums for a living! He currently is one of the most in demand klezmer drummers in New York and the world, playing with younger generations of musicians like Michael Winograd and the Honorable Mentshn, Dena Ressler, Dan Blacksberg, and Ira Temple.