



Founded by harmonica innovator, Jason Rosenblatt, and named for the traditional fur hat worn by Chassidic Jews, Shtreiml blends elements of klezmer, gypsy music and jazz to create a vibrant sound that is at once Eastern European Folk Music and Down-Home Blues. Shtreiml's debut album, *Harmonica Galitzianer*, nominated for a Montreal Independent Music Award for Best World Music Album 2003, showcases Rosenblatt's unique approach to playing the 10-hole diatonic harmonica or "blues harp." One of a handful of people in the world who can play the diatonic harmonica chromatically, Rosenblatt uses recently devised techniques pioneered by harmonica master Howard Levy, to fit the instrument generally associated with the blues into an Eastern European context. Along with Rosenblatt the group members include trombonist Rachel Lemisch, one of the leading figures in klezmer brass revival, founding member Thierry Arsenault on drums and Montreal jam band scene mainstay Adam Stotland on bass. Frequent guests include, the stellar voice and incomparable stage presence of Yiddish folksong revivalist, Abigail Rosenblatt, along with founding member and internationally acclaimed hip-hop klezmer guru Josh (SoCalled) Dolgin. Shtreiml is at present working with virtuoso Turkish musician [Ismail Hakki Fencioğlu](#) on a project which explores the connections between Turkish and Eastern-European Jewish music. The group has performed at festivals, concerts, clubs and private functions in Canada, Europe and the U.S.



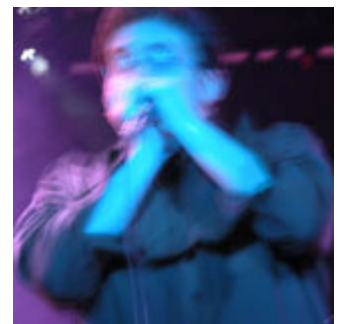
Montreal Jazz Fest



Montreal

Performances of Note

- 2006 Musique Multi-Montreal
- 2005 Berkeley Richmond Jewish Music Festival
- 2005 SPDTQ Harmonica Summit
- 2005 Strictly Mundial World Music Showcase
- 2004 Festival du Monde Arabe
- 2004 Montreal International Jazz Festival
- 2004 Toronto Ashkenaz Festival
- 2004 Vienna Klezmore Festival
- 2004 Cleveland Workmen's Circle Concert
- 2003 Crakow Jewish Culture Festival



Live in Berlin

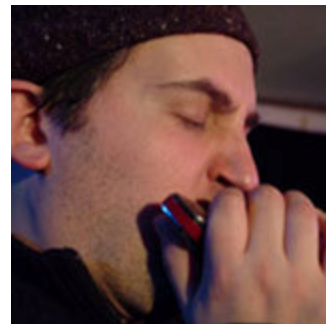
Jewish Artist Regional Touring Service



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Jason Rosenblatt

Jason Rosenblatt studied jazz piano at the Rimon School of Jazz in Ramat Hasharon Israel and at the McGill Conservatory. He is one of only a handful of people worldwide who can play the diatonic harmonica chromatically and is at the forefront of popularizing the use of the diatonic harmonica as an instrument capable of playing virtually any style of music, including jazz, klezmer and Turkish music. His achievements as a composer and harmonica player were most recently recognized by the Canada Council for the Arts, which awarded him a grant to study with his mentor, harmonica master Howard Levy. In addition to Jason's career as a performer, he is an educator who teaches youth ensembles and is on faculty at KlezKanada, the world's largest folk-arts festival dedicated to klezmer music.



Jason Rosenblatt

Rachel Lemisch

Rachel Lemisch, Philly native and trombonist extraordinaire, is a member of the Philadelphia chamber orchestra and hails from the famed Lemisch family klezmer dynasty of Iasi, Romania. In addition to performing with Shtreiml, she has guested with the Klezmer Conservatory Band and Frank London's Klezmer Brass All Stars and is member of Susan Watt's the Fabulous Shpilkes.



Rachel Lemisch

Thierry Arsenault

Thierry Arsenault, humanist, VW mechanic and amateur mycologist, is for the most part, a self-taught drummer. Thierry performs with a wide variety of acts on the Montreal scene, ranging from klezmer to blues to jazz. It was his deep love of Indian music, which led him to study tabla in Varanasi, India. Thierry has a degree in French literature from Universite de Montreal. One day he would like to live on a hill.



Thierry Arsenault

Adam Stotland

Adam Stotland graduated from Concordia University with a degree in music performance. He has long made his presence felt on Montreal's Jam-Band scene leading such acts as Stotland Yard and Jambolaya, not to mention his weekly stint hosting free jam nights at local Montreal clubs. He is a music educator who works with youth choirs and is on faculty at several Montreal day schools as a general music instructor.



Adam Stotland

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Press

"Rosenblatt and the band forge their own path into new musical ground...Infused with spirit of playful inventiveness, Spicy Paprikash is an album that continues to offer something new to the listener on each exploration." *Philly Markowitz. Rootsworld. May 2005*

"Some of the best world music to come out of Montreal." *Ici. July 2004*

"Shtreiml might just be the first klezmer act to really crack the jam-band scene. 8.5/10"
Rupert Bottenberg. Montreal Mirror. May 6-12, 2004

"Shtreiml just gets better. For an outstanding band, that is no small feat. This Montreal-based klezmer band mixed Yiddish song with new and old klezmer instrumentals on "Spicy Paprikash" in a way that makes everything feel fresh and wonderful." *Ari Davidow. Klezmershack. April 12, 2004*

"Shtreiml's sophomore effort is a deliciously seasoned stew that combines blues/rock arrangements of klezmer standards with newly composed music that hearkens back to traditional styles." *Elliot Simon. All About Jazz. February, 2004*

"There's no disputing that Jason Rosenblatt is a gifted musician. He cites the likes of Sonny Terry, Howard Levy and John Popper as his harmonica "teachers," and he certainly does them proud." *John Bobey. Dirty Linen #105 April/May 2003*

"Sometimes my ears need to be shaken up. This CD is just such a shake-up. It's a marvelous breath of fresh air and rhythm. I hope that it is merely the first in a long line of CDs by Rosenblatt and the talented Shtreiml." *Ari Davidow. Klezmershack. May 24, 2003*

"From the first frantic pulses of the Statman composition "Parah Adumah" to the hyper-uptempo "Bulgar Popular", this quartet brings its animated approach to a familiar genre. In the process, these young, energetic Montrealers have reinvigorated klezmer music." *Jack Falk KBOO 90.7FM Portland, Oregon*

"The new CD Harmonica Galitzianer by Levy pupil and burgeoning Canadian harmonica wizard, Jason Rosenblatt, extends the simple diatonic even further into the world of klezmer and klez-jazz. This is no mere novelty record. The playing is focused and reflects the band's commitment to their music." *Elliot Simon. All About Jazz. Oct. 12. 2002*

"Both Jason's various harmonicas and Josh's accordion sound perfect together as the unique frontline of this inspired quartet. Jason's harmonica or blues-harp add an earthy, blues drenched vibe to these often ancient melodies. Jason's blues-harp playing has a very vocal quality to it, like a baby crying, this adds a dimension of ancient sadness that thousands of years of persecution can often provide." *Downtown Music Gallery. New York, NY. December 2002*

"His playing still bears some of the mellow melodiousness of Sonny Terry, but the unmistakable influences of Paul Butterfield, John Popper and Howard Levy are evident as well." *George Robinson. The Jewish Week. August 8, 2003*

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Shtreiml: Spicy Paprikash

*Reviewed by Rupert Bottenberg for the Montreal Mirror
May 6-12.2004*

It's not just that Montreal's Jason Rosenblatt hauls his harmonica and Hammond into the klezmer arena, a rather novel angle. It's that his mastery of the mouth harp dispels any sense of gimmickry. While much neo-klezmer has gone a more abstract and challenging route, Rosenblatt and his cohorts conversely aim for a more friendly sound, with bits of dancefloor jazz adding to an already light and lively feel (Rosenblatt's crisp production helps too). While firmly in touch with the roots of the music, Shtreiml might just be the first klezmer act to really crack the jam-band scene. 8.5/10

Shtreiml: Spicy Paprikash

Reviewed by Elliot Simon for All About Jazz

Shtreiml's sophomore effort is a deliciously seasoned stew that combines blues/rock arrangements of klezmer standards with newly composed music that harkens back to traditional styles. Partaking in this enjoyable mix, you quickly realize that the main ingredient in each serving is a healthy dose of fun. The addition of brass, cimbalom and some kishka circuit Hammond B3 to the standard Shtreiml lineup, fronted by Jason Rosenblatt's hot Hebrew Hohner harpin', does much to expand the band's bluesy take on klezmer.

They cut loose on 'Galitzianer Tantz,' with its Bo Diddley beat hurtling Rosenblatt's harp and Josh Dolgin's accordion forward to turn the Shloimke Beckerman classic into a fiery blues rocker. It is in these surroundings that Shtreiml excels, as they bring a hard edge to time-honored tunes. The whimsical 'Halevai' is a fun filled romp as the trumpet and vocals of Susan Watts cross with Dolgin's scat singing; while 'Nign' has Rosenblatt using his diatonic to express both the sorrow and joy inherent in its musical phrases.

Rachel Lemisch adds her trombone's tasteful tone to a reworking of the Mickey Katz classic 'Trombonic Tantz.' This offering also features Madelien Verheij's swing violin calling forth the ghost of Stephane Grappelli, before Ariel Harrod's bass moves it into a club arrangement emceed by Dolgin. "Rachel's Hora" again has Lemisch front and center adding beautiful coloration to her own special dance. Nicolae Margineanu plays an upbeat cimbalom on the title track that sets up some interesting harmonica harmonics before he reels off a country banjo opener, a la Earl Scruggs, on 'Gas Nign' to turn it into a Jewgrass hoe down.

'Hora Ca Din Caval' moves to breakneck speed as accordion, harp and cimbalom rev it up and 'Romanian Sirba' is a forum for some harmonica pyrotechnics that play off Dolgin's electric piano repartee. So come on, eat, dance, party and delight in this tasty musical treat.

Shtreiml: Spicy Paprikash

Reviewed by Philly Markowitz for Rootsworld

The spirited harmonica blast that opens Spicy Paprikash is your first clue that this group isn't serving up your zaidie's klezmer. Shtreiml, named for the furry hats worn by Chassidic Jewish men, is a group of young and talented musicians from Montreal's perennially fertile Jewish community. The group offers a banquet of old and new klezmer sounds with influences from Moldavia, Romania, Hungary, NYC, the Catskills and even the Mississippi River.

Jason Rosenblatt is the harp player whose musical vision guides the group through a klezmer repertoire equally informed by blues, R&B and jazz. A student of diatonic harmonica innovator Howard Levy (ex of the Flecktones), Rosenblatt also sits on the faculty of KlezKanada, the annual klezmer summer camp in rural Quebec that draws musicians, folklorists, academics and lovers of klezmer (and indeed, all things Yiddish), from around the world. In addition to playing a mean chromatic streak on diatonic harp, Rosenblatt writes solid neo-klez compositions that showcase his harmonica prowess, his respect for the conventions of traditional klezmer, and his desire to shake those foundations. The core band's sound is rounded out with Rosenblatt's keyboards (including piano and Hammond B3), Rachel Lemisch's soulful trombone, Ariel Harrod's bass and Thierry Arseneault's drums. That's right, there's no clarinet.

In the liner notes Rosenblatt ponders: "would the tough klezmer audiences upon hearing the harmonica in lieu of traditional instrumentation shout 'where's the clarinet'" followed by 'what, \$10 for a ticket and no cake'" He answers: "after

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a year of performing klezmer music on the diatonic harmonica [now closer to 3 years] I can answer with certainty that there is a greater acceptance of the harmonica as a klezmer instrument than there is of a klezmer concert without coffee and a little Danish."

On most tracks, Rosenblatt's harmonica occupies the space normally allotted to the clarinet. However, he refuses to emulate the greats of klezmer clarinet like Naftule Bradwein or Shloimke Beckerman, (whose "Galitzianer Tanz" starts off startlingly like Bow Wow Wow's "I Want Candy" but is actually given a incendiary blues-rock treatment). Instead, Rosenblatt and the band forge their own path into new musical ground, reminding me in some ways of Margot Leverett's recent forays into klezmer-bluegrass hybrids.

What helps this album to shine is the inclusion of several special guests. They include Josh Dolgin (a.k.a. DJ SoCalled) on accordion, piano and borscht-belt vocals on classics like the schmaltz-laden "Halavai" and Mickey Katz's swinging "Trombonc Tanz" (where Lemisch struts her stuff alongside Dolgin and Madelien Verheij on violin while the rest of the band suddenly morphs into a be-bop jazz combo). Of special interest is the cimbalom playing of Nicolae Margineanu, who is featured on several tracks. Infused with spirit of playful inventiveness, *Spicy Paprikash* is an album that continues to offer something new to the listener on each exploration.

Shtreiml: Spicy Paprikash

Reviewed by Ari Davidow for Klezmershack

The first Shtreiml album wasn't a fluke. The band really does play a very contemporary, albeit entirely traditional-sounding klezmer with verve and skill and lots and lots of pleasure. The lead on several songs, starting with the opening title track is played on harmonica. When it sounds this danceable, to whom would it occur not to state that harmonica is a klezmer instrument? Once that premise is accepted, the lonesome prairie sound of a harmonica "Nign" seems also wonderful. Heh. Hold your horses. Wait until you hear Shloimke Beckerman's "Galitzianer Tantz" backed by the Bo Diddley riff (according to the album notes, via Blues Traveler). John Cipollina's guitar wouldn't be out of place there. Rosenblatt's harmonica serves quite well in the guitar's (Diddley's or Cipollina's) absence.

In addition to traditional klezmer dance fare, the band also resurrects some wonderful Yiddish pop tunes, such as "Halevai," here sung by Josh Dolgin with Susan Watts (an nth generation Philadelphia Klezmer, also of Frank London's Klezmer Brass AllStars, Mikveh, KlezMs, Fabulous Spielkehs) and Jason's mother, Abby Rosenblatt. Another classic is Mickey Katz's "Trombonc Waltz" featuring Rachel Lemisch on trombone, herself another nth generation Philadelphia klezmer. Lemisch's playing inspires not only the listener. Rosenblatt penned both a bulgar and hora, both featured here, for her. Tapping along to her playing as the sounds come out the CD player one muses, "as well he might."

The band's rendition of a "Gas-nign" from the Beregovski collection, featuring guest tsimbl by Nicolae Margineanu is delightful. Josh Dolgin's accordion (he is also "So-Called" of **Hip-Hop Khasene** fame) is splendid, as are Ariel Harrod's excellent jazz-inflected walking bass lines. The album closes with an infectious version of Alexander Olshanetzky's "Rumania", convincingly brimming with full Second Avenue verve (and di ganze Rosenblatt family!).

In short, as I said, an old-fashioned album, but played with an entirely contemporary feel. Rather than recreate music that was, Shtreiml play music that was, and write new music, as if it all is now. With the possible exception of Andy Statman's albums, I can't think of any other klezmer band mixing old and new like this, much less featuring so many of their own (in this case, Jason Rosenblatt's own) compositions.

Then or now, it's great music. Given Rosenblatt's compositional skill, there is a lot more great music to come.

Shtreiml: Harmonica Galitzianer

Reviewed by Ari Davidow for Klezmershack 04-05-04

Harmonica doesn't usually get much respect, especially in klezmer circles where it is almost unknown. This new album by Shtreiml may change that. Featuring the harmonica-playing of **KlezKanada** staffer Jason Rosenblatt, it is one of the most delightful and refreshingly traditional (to the extent that a klezmer album featuring harmonica can be called "traditional") albums to come along in a while. The opening "Parah Adumah" (by Andy Statman) grabs the ears as Rosenblatt demonstrates that his chosen instrument can sound as heimish, and as forceful, as the more common solo instruments.

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His work on the slower, more thoughtful "Yedid Nefesh Nigun" shows that harmonica can reach into a Jewish soul without playing the blues. And even when he strays from klezmer into gypsy music, on the "Cacurica Dances," the music still winds up sounding like it belongs, and sounding wonderful.

The play back and forth between harmonica and accordion on pieces such as "Mazeltov Dances" further emphasizes the degree to which this instrument "belongs" when played this well. When the harmonic breaks loose in the "Kazatzke" section, the effect is sheer bliss - it's that feeling of awe you get when watching Vassar Clements dive into "Orange Blossom Special". The duet with Pete Rushefsky on tsimbl ("Romanian Sirba") does have a bit of a lonely prairie sound to it. Rushefsky, it should be noted, also recorded with Rosenblatt's brother, Elie.

One of the notable aspects of this album is the very tight, forceful drumming. Usually such insistence on an obvious beat makes me think of bad bar mitzvah bands. Here, there is a military band feeling in the insistence of percussion. But it seems to help the rest of the band swing. Much to my surprise, as I reach to type in my usual standard paragraph 237b about how klezmer needs to have a more varied beat and fewer taradiddles, I have to hold my fingers. This, I like. I like it a lot.

On another note, many bands are betrayed by vocalists who don't have the range or the ear to sing the songs that the band has chosen to record. On this recording, however, Rosenblatt's mother, Abby Rosenblatt, is superb. Her a capella "Fishelach in Vasser" (Fish in the water) is perfect. On "Mechutenesteh Meine" she turns an old chestnut into something that really *did* want to be recorded again.

Sometimes my ears need to be shaken up. This CD is just such a shake-up. It's a marvellous breath of fresh air and rhythm. I hope that it is merely the first in a long line of CDs by Rosenblatt and the talented Shtreiml. I just really like this. I think that you will, too.

Shtreiml: Harmonica Galitzianer

Reviewed by Elliot Simon for All About Jazz

Diatonic Harmonica CDs are certainly not on many jazz fans' "Best of" lists. As designed, it is not a jazz instrument and is more at home with straight blues or country. Players like Toots Thielemans use a chromatic harp in order to go beyond second position and get that jazzy feel. Recently, Howard Levy and John Popper have redefined the diatonic instrument and through full bends, overblows and breath control have opened up the instrument to jazz, Caribbean and mid-eastern influenced world music. The new CD *Harmonica Galitzianer* by Levy pupil and burgeoning Canadian harmonica wizard, Jason Rosenblatt, extends the simple diatonic even further into the world of klezmer and klez-jazz.

This is no mere novelty record. The playing is focused and reflects the band's commitment to their music. Backed on accordion by the inimitable "So-Called", Josh Dolgin, who has fused klez-jazz with hip-hop and techno, a repertoire of klez standards and some novel arrangements of more obscure material delight the listener. Thierry Arsenault and Ariel Harrod, on drum and bass respectively, provide just the right amount of punch to allow Jason to slip effortlessly between genres without allowing the CD to become a parody of styles. With a nod to klez revival father Andy Statman and homage to klez grandfathers Dave Tarras, Mickey Katz and Shloimke Beckerman, Jason and his band Shtreiml break new ground while keeping true to the music's roots and "soul".

The bluesy aspects of the harp are still in evidence and at times Jason fuses disparate styles into a true "klez-jazz/blues". On tunes like the re-workings of "Para Adumah" and "Galitzianer Tantz", Little Walter meets Shloimke Beckerman and the harmonica melds the two traditions. Bulgar Popular is taken at breakneck speed and showcases some awesome breath control as Popper's style is klezified while Alte Sher is Mid-Eastern with rock overtones. The lovely duet "Romanian Sirba", with guest tsimbalist Pete Rushefsky, has an Appalachian dulcimer/country feel to it while "German's Moldavian Bulgar" is an uptempo treatment of a selection from the repertoire of German Goldenshteyn.

This is a premier effort from young cutting edge musicians who are not afraid to push limits and redefine genres. Although the two vocal selections would be more at home on a Yiddish theatre CD, this is mostly fresh new music that stretches boundaries for traditionalists and opens up new musical experiences for jazz and blues fans.

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Shtreiml: *Spicy Paprikash*

Reviewed by Philly Markowitz for Rootsworld

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