

Preface

The twelve vocal and instrumental pieces in this volume provide an introduction to the genuine, living klezmer tradition through practical music-making. They offer a glimpse into the typically bittersweet melody and harmony of Yiddish music, which emerged from a mixture of Yiddish, Slavic, Rumanian and German stylistic elements and is currently undergoing a revival in the folk music scene. Since we did not grow up in a klezmer tradition ourselves, we have, of course, no special claim to authenticity. Nevertheless, it is worth getting to know this highly emotive music by playing it rather than simply listening to it. The point is not to come as close as possible to the style of Giora Feidman or other *klezmerim*, but to express feelings which are your own and therefore believable. Listening to CD recordings of authentic klezmer music may be a useful aid and model, but an unfeeling imitation of clarinet sobs and violin glissandos will only produce a poor caricature of the real thing. So treat this music cautiously at first!

The twelve pieces are arranged for an "open scoring", i.e. you can choose the instruments, add octave doublings, leave out voices or improvise your own ideas to suit your taste. You are also free to choose your own articulation (e.g. by taking repeats legato or staccato), dynamics, and tempo.

Here are some pointers:

- The vocal numbers can also be reworked into instrumental pieces.
- The focus should fall as often as possible on the small instrumental group of melody instrument, harmony instrument, and bass.
- Don't use too many ornamental virtuoso accompaniment parts, especially in vocal pieces where they can drown out the words.
- Klezmer solos are usually played an octave higher.
- Play syncopations gently and naturally rather than emphasizing them. There are many syncopations in this music and they can otherwise become obtrusive.
- Embellishments, such as inverted mordents and portamentos, should be handled differently according to the instrument concerned and the taste of the player.
- The harmony instruments (e.g. guitar or accordion) should take the piano as their rhythmic guide.
- If there is no bass, the piano should play the left hand in octaves.
- It is especially effective to use the widest possible variety of percussion instruments (hand-held drums, tambourines, triangles etc.) depending on your personal taste and the wishes of your fellow-musicians. When accompanying vocal and instrumental solos, play with great restraint and set bold accents in the forte passages! The louder the ensemble (e.g. brass, saxophone and piano), the more justification there is for using percussion instruments, even a drum set.

Henner Diederich

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(translated by J. Bradford Robinson)

Di Mesinke ojsgegeb'n

Gave away the youngest daughter

Mark M. Warshawsky (1840-1907)

Intro

Em Am Em B⁷ Em B⁷ Em

Mel. I

Lied / Song

5 Em E⁷ Am D D⁷

1. Shtar - ker, bes - ser! Di Rod, di Rod macht gres - ser! Groiss hat mich Got ge - macht,

8 G Em Am⁶

Glik ___ hot er mir ___ ge - bracht. Hul - jet, Kin - der, a gan - ze ___ Nacht! Di Me -

10 B⁷ Em B⁷ Em C

Nachspiel / Postlude

sin - ke ojs - ge - ge - bn, di Me - sin - ke ojs - ge - ge - bn.

13 Am Em B⁷ Em

16 Am B⁷ Em B⁷ Em

1. Shtarker, besser!
 Di Rod, di Rod macht gresser!
 Groiss hat mich Got gemacht,
 Glik hot er mir gebracht.
 Huljet, Kinder, a ganze Nacht!
 Di Mesinke ojsgegeb'n, di ...

2. Motl! Shimen!
 Do orime Lajt senen gekimen,
 Shtelt sej dem shenssten Tish,
 Tajere Wajnen, tajere Fish,
 Oj wej, Tochter, gib mir a Kish!
 Di Mesinke ...

3. Ajsik! Masik!
 Di Bobe gejt a Kosik.
 Kajn ajn-ore, set nor set,
 Wi si tupet, wi si gejt,
 Oj, a Ssimche, oj a Frejd!
 Di Mesinke ...

Di Mesinke ojsgegebn

Gave away the youngest daughter

Mark M. Warshawsky (1840-1907)

Intro

Mel. I

Mel. II

Piano

Bass

Em Am Em B7 Em B7 Em

5 Lied / Song

1. Shtar - ker, bes - ser! Di Rod, di Rod macht gres - ser! Groiss hat mich Got ge - macht,

Em E7 Am D D7

8

Glik _ hot er mir ge - bracht. Hul - jet, Kin - der, a gan - ze Nacht! Di Me - sin - ke ojs - ge - ge - bn, di Me -

G Em Am6 B7 Em

Her nor, du sheyn meydele

Listen pretty maiden

Vor- u. Zwischenspiel / Intro, Bridge

Mel. I

Mel. II

Mel. III

Piano

Bass

B $\flat$ D 7 Gm D Cm 6

Lied / Song

4

Her nor, du sheyn mey - de - le, her nor, du fayn

D D $^7/9$ D Gm Gm D 7 Gm

8

mey-de - le, vos ves tu to - en in a - sa wai - ten — weg?

Gm F B $\flat$ F 7 B $\flat$ Gm Gm F B $\flat$