



קלעדנייעס KlezNews

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PETE SOKOLOW: A LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT

קלעזקאָנאָדאָ גיט אַפּ פּבּוּד פּסח סאַקאָלאָוו, אַ גלענצנדיקן לערער און קינסטלער פֿאַר זײַן ריזיקן אויפֿטו אין דער וועלט פֿון ייִדישער מוזיק. מיר גיבן אויך אַפּ פּבּוּד הערשעל סעגאַל און דוד סעלאַ פֿאַר זייער ברייטהאַרציקן צושטייער לטובֿת קלעזקאָנאָדאָ ווי אַן אינטעגראַלן טייל פֿון ייִדישער באַניינג אין מאָנטרעאַל און אַרום דער גאַרער וועלט.

This year we honor the incredible achievements of Peter Sokolow, master performer and teacher of Jewish music. We also honour the invaluable contributions of our own Herschel Segal and David Sela in supporting and maintaining KlezKanada as an integral and ever-growing part of the Yiddish/Jewish Renaissance in Montreal and around the globe.

Join us tonight at the first staff concert (the second is on Thursday night) when the presentations will be made.



Photo: Avia Moore

Quebec 400: KlezKanada in Quebec

With the help of Simon Jacobs and Shalom Quebec, KlezKanada participated in the Quebec 400 celebration this past weekend. Featured bands included many KlezKanada alumni, culminating in a wonderful performance by SoCalled. It was crazy wonderful watching a crowd of dancing kids in front of the stage, cheering and screaming as the opening chords of each familiar song began. As usual, clarinetist Michael Winograd and guitarist Alan Watsky helped push the music in interesting, exciting directions. Singer Katie Moore is one of the more exciting new vocalists, and her participation, along with

that of bassist Andrew Horton made the ensemble perfect. At one point, the SoCalled picked up his accordion and the band leapt off the stage into the crowd, playing some pure klezmer. Earlier, Quebec's most famous rapper, Sans Pression, came onstage for several numbers, improvising with SoCalled, a lovely fusion of Yiddish and Quebecois French.

The fun started on Thursday night with a performance by The Lithuanian Empire. According to eye witnesses, the group, formed at KlezKanada a couple of years ago, once again brought down the house.

On Saturday night I arrived with Judith Pinnolis and other friends to catch Allerlay, a band ignited by Simon, comprised of musicians from

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Photo: Bob Blackberg



צער פארטאג יאלאכער לואקאנאצער לויבונג

אַ לויפֿ- אָדער
שפּאַציר-פֿאַרמעסט לטור-
בַת דעם "קלעזקאָנאָדע-
סובסידיע-פֿאַנד"
צו פֿאַרשרייבן זיך, ווערן אַ
וואָלונטיר און פֿאַרזיכערן,
אַז איבער קאָפּעליע זאָל
געפֿענען אָן אָר ט פּאַזע
דער לויפֿרוטע, רעדט מיט
דזשאָן באָרץ!



THE FOURTH ANNUAL KLEZKANADA LOVE TSUNOYF

**A Run/Walk
to benefit the
KlezKanada
Scholarship Fund!**

To **register**, to **volunteer**,
and to get **your band** a
primo spot on the course:
Please see **Joanne Borts**

The Road to KlezKanada

Joyce Romoff

"You slept in a tent?" My voice, never quiet, rose a few octaves in pitch. YOU SLEPT IN A TENT???? At home, we generally prefer to sleep on 300 thread count cotton, yet, the first year he was here, my husband SLEPT IN A TENT!!! Just so I put this in context, we're not "old" but we can remember Khrushchev. If you can't, see Wikipedia. What did he reply? "It didn't matter. Sleep is optional at KlezKanada." So, this year, in the interest of music and family harmony, I joined him here at KlezKanada, not in a tent but in the relative luxury of the Retreat Center. The Ritz, it ain't-but even after just one evening, I've learned

there isn't finer music on the planet.

Our road to KlezKanada started in Pennsylvania, through New Jersey, New York and finally, Quebec. Vieux Montreal, Val-David (where you should try the Blanche Niede café for its fabulous food and even more fabulous hospitality) to...where are we? We found this place through GPS coordinates. I'm sure it has a real address but still, it does seem to be in the middle of nowhere.

Then chaos! Controlled chaos, but chaos nonetheless. We arrived in the rain, found our room (we were supposed to bring towels?), dinner (why is no one sitting with us?), and then the open jamming session ("Slow Jam"?) in the Retreat Center again. My head

spins. Maybe writing about it will help make sense of it all.

The camp itself was not pretty in the drenching rain. Can you tell, I was never real successful at overnight camp? Still, the Retreat Center is a civilization in the middle of the wilderness and everyone was very helpful (we were supposed to bring SOAP, too? Clearly we don't read directions, very well). We found our room, "decorated" a bit (don't tell the staff; we'll return the room to its original configuration before we leave), unpacked, ate and went to the "Slow Jam" after dinner. WOW!

Why do they call it "Slow Jam"? Nothing was slow about the way

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local market and heard a glorious set by Veretski Pass. Cookie, Stu, and Josh were in amazing form, featuring some of the

material from their new CD, *Trafik* and wowing a crowd that seemed determined not to be impressed. They were unable to remain stoic and soon began clapping along with the beat and retired, converted. An excellent time was had by all.

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Quebec City and Montreal. They played a solid set of traditional North American klezmer to great delight.

The next morning, after exploring the delightful Shalom Quebec history of the Jews of Quebec City (who knew that a Jewish woman, Esther Brandeau, disguised herself as a male sailor and made it to Quebec back in the 17th century, and then refused to convert, causing the “good” Quebecers to send her back to France and her family?), we settled in with some food from the



Sunset over Petit Lac Long (the KlezKanada Lake)

Photo: KlezKanada Photographer



groups, most of whom had never played together before, found harmony together and rousing Klezmer music. Clarinets, violins, trombones, an accordion, piano...I couldn't keep track of all the instruments, but they found themselves together, without music, playing such wild and wonderful music that members of the audience clapped and got up to dance. I'd seen nothing like it before.

How do I explain the joy, the exuberance, and the sheer audacity of the improvisations? How wonderfully, everyone seemed to play together. What raucous, enthusiastic music was the result. Quick! Where's the recorder? Who is the producer that's going

to put out the CD? If people are THIS good without rehearsing together, how much more wonderful will they be in a few days? I can't wait to find out.

But wait; what is there for us who do not play musical instruments (or not well enough to embarrass ourselves in public)? There are beginner's classes! There is the needlework circle (I will check that out, later), there are the lectures, there are all sorts of stuff I've heard about and look forward to experiencing over the next week? Is it Shabbat, yet? I'm already over stimulated,

But back to the jam! Music and dancing and such happiness in the room. On and on it went, with everyone playing the same piece but making

it longer, trying out all different variations. There was one gentleman who held up his finger, pointing to himself, and asking for time for a solo. Sure he received his solo opportunity...for 8 bars. Then the rest could not restrain themselves and, slowly, they joined in. Food and drink were outside if you felt the need for sustenance. I was beginning to feel the need for sleep (yeah, I know, "sleep is optional"...NOT!). I had to leave at 11:30 but my husband came in at 1:00 AM. And the jamming went on until... when?

Where are we, again? Probably at one of the greatest Klezmer conventions ever. I'm so looking forward to this week to find out.