



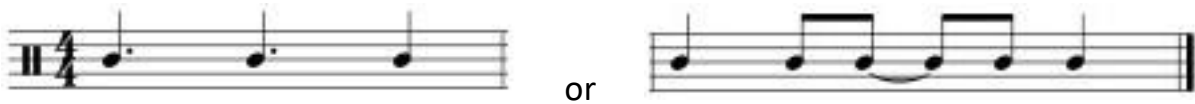
**Your song-of-the-month** for March is a klezmer tune, "Beresh Katz' Bulgar," originally recorded by the Epstein Brothers Orchestra. Max (clarinet), Willie (trumpet), Julius ("Julie," drums) and Isidore ("Chi," clarinet and saxophone) were born in New York City and worked up and down the east coast playing Jewish gigs as well as popular and jazz stylings from the 1940s through the 1960s. Then, during the '70s, they all gradually migrated to South Florida and

eventually got the band back together there.

The 1998 NEA National Heritage Fellows made a couple of recordings as old men in the 1990s and what stands out to me is their deep authenticity. Their ornamentation, their melodic language, their tempos and pockets, Julie's tone on the snare drum - these all display a cultural wealth that could only be accumulated by devoting their entire lives (from childhood on) to playing in and for their community. I especially recommend checking out the 1996 documentary film *A Tickle in the Heart* as well as their 1995 album, *The Kings of Freylekh Land* from which we learned "Beresh Katz' Bulgar."

Which leads us to our next question, who was Beresh Katz? And what is a bulgar? Beresh Katz was a violin and banjo player, composer and co-leader of the Boibriker Kapelle, a Jewish band who made quite a name for themselves in the dawn of radio. In fact we've covered one of their tunes twice! Originally titled "Ch'sidische Nigunim" ("Hassidic Melodies") we put it out first in November 2014, under the title "Home for the Holidays" and then again in December of 2020 (a new recording with a vocal chorus) as "*Staying Home for the Holidays.*" (Note: If you go looking for "Ch'sidische Nigunim" online, Boibriker Kapelle made two quite different records with the same title. The one I'm referring to is the one that *doesn't* have the subtitle "Hassidic Melodies," even though that is the correct translation in both cases.)

A bulgar (pron. "bul-GAR") is a Jewish rhythm, similar to (though slower than) a Cuban "tresillo" or "half clave" or what we in New Orleans call "pocky-way."



The name implies that it's a Jewish impression of a Bulgarian groove (perhaps a "graovsko" rhythm which you can look up online – very cool). Check out Doug laying down the bulgar on drums throughout this entire track.

We hope you enjoy this one and tell all your friends!

At your service,

*Ben*

(Much gratitude, by the way, to my klezmer rabbis, Hank Sapoznik and Mark Rubin, for help with the track notes.)

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Credits:

Panorama Jazz Band:

Ben Schenck - Clarinet, tambourine

Aurora Nealand - Alto saxophone

Charlie Halloran – Trombone

Simon Moushabeck - Accordion

Mark Rubin - Tenor banjo

Matt Perrine - Tuba

Doug Garrison - Drum set

Music by Beresh Katz/PD

Arranged by Ben Schenck

Publisher - Snack Daddy Music

Recorded and edited by Chris Butcher February 15, 2024 at Butcher Studios, New Orleans, LA.

Mixing and mastering by Lu Rojas

Cover photo by Chris Butcher

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