

The Emergence and Development of L'chaim Kapelye

A report on an ethnographic case study that explores the interaction between a klezmer ensemble and its influencing cultures



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Abstract

This dissertation explores the emergence and development of a klezmer band called L'chaim Kapelye in Manchester. The ensemble, of which I am part of, was created within the music department at The University of Manchester via an Ensemble Performance module, and it has become increasingly successful within the local Jewish community. I have therefore wanted to discover why L'chaim Kapelye has emerged, and how this phenomenon contributes to contemporary ethnomusicological themes. I have engaged in my own fieldwork in Manchester and I have also drawn upon my personal experiences of playing klezmer to produce this report. The first chapter contextualises and conceptualises my case study, and the second chapter outlines the methodology I used in my fieldwork. The third chapter offers a discussion of my findings, and the closing chapter suggests how the reader can relate the emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye to broader ethnomusicological themes.

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The photograph on the title page belongs to L’chaim Kapelye, and was taken by Ben Ferguson on the 19th November 2013.

Each individual cited in this dissertation has given their permission to be named. A full bibliography of all personal communications can be found on page 41, and transcriptions are located in Appendix D and Appendix E.

Preface

L'chaim Kapelye is a klezmer band comprising seven music students, including myself, from The University of Manchester. We came together as an ensemble at university in September 2012 when we took the klezmer performance option within the music department's Performance Ensemble course of study. During this time we were known as the Michael Kahan Kapelye, which is the official name of the university klezmer ensemble. The band completed the klezmer course of study in March 2013, but we decided to continue to play klezmer together, and as we were no longer part of the university klezmer ensemble, we became L'chaim Kapelye. *Kapelye* is the Yiddish term for 'a band' and *L'chaim* in Hebrew is a toast meaning 'to life', and therefore my fellow klezmer students and I thought *L'chaim Kapelye* is an appropriate name for an ensemble that enjoys and celebrates klezmer music.

The transformation of the group from the Michael Kahan Kapelye to L'chaim Kapelye is a particular interest to me for several reasons. Firstly, the band started as a group of students who were strangers to the klezmer tradition, but in the past twenty months our involvement and development means we are now a specialist klezmer band, and we frequently get paid to perform in public in Manchester. Secondly, none of the members of L'chaim Kapelye are Jewish, which is intriguing because klezmer is a musical tradition of the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe. A large part of L'chaim Kapelye's success has been within the local Jewish community in Manchester, which suggests that there is an unusual connection between the band and the 'native' Jewish community. Thirdly, I am particularly interested in ethnomusicology as a discipline, and from an ethnomusicologist's perspective, the emergence of a group of non-Jewish musicians playing Jewish music for both non-Jewish and Jewish

people is interesting because it can be explored in relation to wider themes such as cultural appropriation and identity.

The aim of my ethnographic case study has been to explore the advancement of L'chaim Kapelye within the context of interlacing small cultures and larger ethnomusicological concepts. This report is an attempt to represent my findings and interpretations of the phenomenon, and although my case study is specific, I intend to suggest ideas that contribute towards an understanding of broader musicological concepts. I have adopted an observational, interactive and reflexive narrative to transmit my interpretation of the specific music culture that is the emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye.

Organisation

In chapter 1 I will suggest a specific approach to contextualise my case study, and I will identify and explain the influencing cultures and concepts that are important to understanding the context in which L'chaim Kapelye has emerged. Chapter 2 is a short chapter to outline the procedures of my fieldwork and to expose the reader to wider issues of ethnomusicology as a discipline. In chapter 3 I will discuss the findings of my research, and I will draw directly upon my interactions with others in addition to specific events I encountered during my fieldwork. I will also suggest what klezmer means to different people, and I will employ various theories and approaches to provide an understanding of my discoveries. The concluding chapter will explain the significance of what I have analysed and interpreted, and I will suggest how my case study exemplifies the potential of world music ensembles. I will also illustrate how the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye contributes towards an understanding of cultural appropriation, the notion of musical revival and the relationship between music and identity.

Members of L'chaim Kapelye:

Pippa Goodall – violin and voice

Jemima Kingsland – flute

Dan Mawson - clarinet

Lucie Phillips – bass guitar and voice

George Turner – trombone

Ellie Sherwood – clarinet

Hat Wells – clarinet

Chapter 1

Framing the Case Study

A small culture within other cultures

The development of the ensemble has happened in the midst of individuals, groups, larger communities and discourses that all interact in some way, and there are different methods of contextualising these interactions. The first part of this chapter will discuss influential theories that provide various methods for understanding small music cultures in larger cultures, and I will suggest that an ecological approach provides a suitable framework for contextualising my topic. I will then outline and discuss in further detail the context of the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye. In the second part of the chapter I will present the conceptual backdrop to my case study by discussing the themes that are relevant to the development of the ensemble.

Part 1: Contextualisation

Micromusics

The emergence of L'chaim Kapelye is a specific and unique phenomenon, and it can be related to what Mark Slobin entitles 'micromusics', which are 'the small units within big music cultures'.¹ It can be argued that analysing a small music world is beyond possibility because, as suggested by Lila Abu-Lughod, 'the nature of global interactions in the present makes that now impossible'.² However, Slobin suggests that studying micromusics is possible and indeed useful if the wider picture is expressed, and so one must understand the

¹ Mark Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West* (Wesleyan University Press, 1993), 11.

² Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Chapter 8: Writing Against Culture', in Richard G. Fox (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present* (New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1991), 137-162; here, 149.

local context as well as the global context.³ Slobin continues his argument by stating that small-scale musical networks exist and develop underneath an ‘umbrella-like, overarching system’ called a superculture.⁴ In his book titled ‘Fiddler On The Move: Exploring the Klezmer World’, Slobin defines klezmer in the USA as a micromusic, and he suggests that the small musical culture transforms within the superculture whilst also developing alongside the constant shifting of transregional and diasporic musico-cultural flow.⁵ His perspective is insightful, but Slobin admits that ‘the superculture itself is not a free-standing culture’⁶, and therefore his theory is problematic because the superculture cannot be effectively isolated and determined. L’chaim Kapelye has emerged amongst, and not under, other cultures, and so I believe there is an alternative approach to contextualise my case study.

Small Culture Approach

The topic of my case study can be contextualised by Adrian Holliday’s small culture paradigm, which acknowledges that small groups, or cultures, can emerge as a result of people doing something together.⁷ In this way, the L’chaim Kapelye small culture can be seen as what Holliday calls operationist as the ensemble has emerged as a result of a collective desire to carry out some operation or activity. The L’chaim Kapelye small culture sits within a complex set of possible shaping influences, of shaping cultures, and these background cultures combine to be a host culture complex in which the L’chaim Kapelye small culture sits. Holliday explains how small cultures emerge by suggesting that:

*... there can also be a system of cultures which are not mutually exclusive, with cultures overlapping, containing and being contained by other cultures. Relations between cultures can be both vertical, through hierarchies of cultures and subcultures, or horizontal, between cultures in different systems.*⁸

³ Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds*, 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵ Mark Slobin, *Fiddler On The Move: Exploring the Klezmer World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁶ Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds*, 57.

⁷ Adrian Holliday, ‘Small Cultures’, *Applied Linguistics*, 22 (1999), 2: 237-264.

⁸ Adrian Holliday, *Appropriate Methodology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Text, 1994), 28.

It is this notion of overlapping and interaction that motivates me to contextualise L'chaim Kapelye as a small emerging culture amongst influencing cultures, and not as a micromusic underneath a superculture. The ideas and issues about small music worlds that Slobin proposes are valuable to my case study, but using Holliday's paradigm proposes an ecological approach that focuses on the interaction between living and changing cultures. Holliday suggests that influential cultures can be both large and small, and therefore there may be several 'mainstream cultures' that smaller cultures develop within. I will now briefly outline the main shaping cultures that L'chaim Kapelye is located amongst, starting with the broad influences that illustrate the history of klezmer and then focusing on the contemporary emerging cultures.

The origin of Klezmer in Eastern Europe

Klezmer is a term derived from two Hebrew words: *kley*, meaning vessel, and *zemer*, meaning song, and it has been used since the Middle Ages to signify the Eastern European folk musicians who performed dance music at Jewish celebrations.⁹ The klezmerim (the plural of a klezmer musician) accompanied the central celebrations of Jewish life such as weddings and Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, and thus the klezmerim were essential to Eastern European Jewish societies. However, outside of their musical services, klezmer musicians had a low social status similar to the position of Gypsies,¹⁰ and therefore the klezmerim were not accepted as part of formal Jewish community life.¹¹

⁹ Hankus Netsky, 'Klez Goes to College', in Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 189-201; here, 189.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mark Slobin, *Tenement Songs: The Popular Music of the Jewish Immigrants* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 16.

The Americanisation of klezmer

Between 1880 and 1924, a large number of Jews from Eastern Europe immigrated to the USA, and so klezmer musicians from countries such as Romania, Poland, Hungary and Russia travelled to the West. The klezmerim had to function in a new American context, and this transformed the music they played as their style became increasingly fused with the mainstream musical trends in America throughout the early 1900s.¹² The American-klezmer recording sound therefore became profoundly distant from the traditional live performances at Eastern European Jewish celebrations.¹³ Between 1930 and 1960, the klezmer music scene in the US dissolved because the flow of Eastern European immigrants was restricted¹⁴ and klezmer was becoming difficult to distinguish as a specific music style as it became increasingly fused with jazz and big-band.¹⁵ The terrible events in Nazi Germany also meant that Jewish people in America wanted to create as much distance as possible from their crushed Eastern European Jewish world, and hence the klezmer music scene in America crumbled.¹⁶

The 1970s and '80s klezmer revival in America

During the 1960s, the prominence of blues, jazz and soul music combined with the African-American roots movement inspired many Americans to engage with their cultural or ethnic roots.¹⁷ This period of self-expression was the trigger for American Jews to connect with their Eastern-European cultural heritage, and therefore the klezmer revival that advanced in the 1970s was part of a wider social movement that aimed to promote Yiddish culture.¹⁸

¹² Seth Rogovoy, *The Essential Klezmer* (North Carolina: Algonuin Books of Chapel Hill, 2000), 56-59.

¹³ More information about this process of redefinition can be found in Mark Slobin, 'Klezmer Music: An American Ethnic Genre', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 16 (1984), 34-41.

¹⁴ The restriction was made by the US in 1924, which is discussed by Henry Sapoznik, Liner notes for *Klezmer Music 1910-1942* (Smithsonian Folkways, 1981), 2.

¹⁵ Hankus Netsky, 'Chapter 1: A Brief History', in Slobin (ed.), *American Klezmer*, 13-23; here, 16.

¹⁶ Rogovoy, *The Essential Klezmer*, 75.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁸ This was also known as the Radical Jewish Culture Movement, which is expressed by in Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Chapter 7: Sounds of Sensibility', in Slobin (ed.), *American Klezmer*, 129-175.

American klezmer bands and artists that developed in the late 1970s, such as Andy Statman and The Klezmer Conservatory Band and Kapelye, were inspired by the 78 RPM recordings made by older generations of klezmerim. For secular-Jewish musicians, klezmer was a way to connect with their old Jewish world, and the introduction of klezmer music modules and performance ensembles at various music conservatoires in America meant that non-Jewish musicians were also exposed to klezmer.¹⁹

The discourse of revivals and social movements is critical to any discussion of klezmer music and authors such as Tamara E. Livingstone²⁰, Owe Ronström²¹, and Mark Slobin²² offer profound insights into the notion of historical continuity. The essential idea to understand is that a musical tradition is reinvented during a revival, and it was this process of reconstruction that led to the term *klezmer* being transformed from meaning the Eastern European Jewish musicians to representing a musical genre and a cultural phenomenon that cannot be isolated from the underlying ideologies of revivals.²³ These ideologies will be discussed in further detail in the second part of this chapter.

A spread of klezmer activity in Europe

The revival of Yiddish culture in America prompted a global explosion of different klezmer-style artist and bands.²⁴ For example, in Germany and Poland, an outbreak of Jewish heritage in the 1980s and '90s led to a rapid increase of klezmer music in Europe. Klezmer music became more established in the UK, and in 2000 the JMI (Jewish Music Institute²⁵) created an intensive one-week workshop of klezmer music called KlezFest London, which continued

¹⁹ For example, Hankus Netsky formed the Klezmer Conservatory Band at the New England Conservatory of Music, and he also taught a course titled 'Yiddish Music Performance Studies'.

²⁰ Tamara E. Livingstone, 'Music Revivals: Towards a General Theory', *Ethnomusicology*, 43 (1999), 1: 66-85.

²¹ Owe Ronström, 'Revival Reconsidered', *The World Of Music*, 38 (1996), Part 3: 5-20.

²² Mark Slobin, 'Klezmer Music: An American Ethnic Genre', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 16 (1984), 34-41.

²³ Mark Slobin, 'Introduction', in Mark Slobin (ed.), *American Klezmer: Its roots and offshoots* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2002), 1-8; here, 1-3.

²⁴ Hankus Netsky, 'Chapter 1', in Slobin (ed.), *American Klezmer*, 22.

²⁵ The JMI is an independent Arts organisation based at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies).

annually. Furthermore, the opportunity for klezmer to be studied at an academic level was provided at SOAS, University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies). This hub of klezmer activity was echoed in the north of England as klezmer communities in cities such as Manchester were formed, and in 2010 a weekend-long klezmer festival called KlezNorth was created in Derbyshire. At the University of Manchester in the following year, the Michael Kahan Kapelye became an assessed option within the Ensemble Performance module.²⁶ The klezmer course of study at the university has therefore emerged from the global spread of klezmer activity, and it is important to recognise the distance between contemporary klezmer in Manchester and its original context in Eastern Europe.

The klezmer course of study at The University of Manchester

The Michael Kahan Kapelye is led by Ros Hawley and Richard Fay. Ros is a professional klezmer clarinettist who, after training as a classical musician, discovered klezmer performance during the late 1990s whilst studying in London.²⁷ Richard is an ethnomusicologist and leader of one of Manchester's amateur klezmer bands.²⁸ The klezmer module runs for approximately seven months from September to March, and students attend weekly practical sessions to develop their performance skills of the traditional Eastern-European klezmer style, which culminates with a final assessed performance at the university. The klezmer ensemble performance unit has a fresh intake of students on a yearly basis, and the Michael Kahan Kapelye is transformed annually. There are no restrictions on what instruments the ensemble must consist of, and there has not yet been a cap established on how many students can choose the klezmer course²⁹; therefore, the Michael Kahan Kapelye is flexible and dynamic.

²⁶ The Michael Kahan Kapelye had existed for two years previously at the university as a voluntary ensemble.

²⁷ Ros Hawley, Personally conducted interview, 4th December 2013.

²⁸ Richard Fay, Personal communication, 4th May 2014.

²⁹ The *Michael Kahan Kapelye* consisted of 10 students in its first year, 9 students in its second year and 9 in its third year.

The University of Manchester music department

The music department at The University of Manchester is mainly focused on Western European Arts Music, but some Ethnomusicology and World Music courses of study have been included in the module choices in the past six years or so.³⁰ The klezmer course of study is influenced by this larger culture because the Michael Kahan Kapelye is partly confined to the requirements that are enforced by the music department. The Michael Kahan Kapelye can therefore be labelled as a university world music ensemble because it was created and continues to emerge within an academic institution. L'chaim Kapelye is not part of the assessed klezmer course of study, and therefore the ensemble, though still linked to the university, is more distant from the music department culture.

The local Jewish community in Manchester

With a population of approximately 35,000, the Jewish community in Manchester is the largest in the British provinces.³¹ It can be roughly divided into two cultures: the Reform community and the Orthodox community, and the former is the most influential to the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye. Orthodox Jews consider a woman's singing voice to be immodest and therefore non-Jewish ensembles that consist of men and women are not supported by the Orthodox community. Pippa and Lucie often sing during our concerts, which is why L'chaim Kapelye's interaction within this culture is restricted to the Reform community, where people identify themselves as either Reform Jews or secular Jews. Despite being a 'society', it is important to understand that the Jewish community is formed of

³⁰ R. Fay and M. Hill, 'Educating Language teachers through distance learning: the need for culturally-appropriate DL methodology', *Open Learning*, 18 (2003), 9-27.

³¹ Bill Williams, *Jewish Manchester: An Illustrated History* (Derby: Breedon Books Publishing Co Ltd, 2008) 7.

individuals with diverse patterns of beliefs and behaviour, and as Thomas Turino suggests, ‘there is no single unified culture for a society’.³²

The present-day Jewish community also consists of people whose families stem from the generation of Eastern European Jewish immigrants who came to Manchester during the wave of immigration that directed Eastern European Jews to the USA. By 1914 immigrants from Eastern Europe constituted approximately four-fifths of a Manchester Jewish population of 30,000, and so a vast diaspora community in Manchester emerged.³³ This is significant because Jews in Manchester today have a connection with Eastern European cultural heritage. Bill Williams suggests that the Reform Jewish community has integrated into a more secular society,³⁴ but as I will portray later, a number of Jews still engage with their Jewish cultural identity in addition to their English identity.

The Manchester Jewish Museum

The Manchester Jewish Museum is an important small culture within the Jewish community culture because it is the main venue for L’chaim Kapelye’s klezmer performances. The museum is located in the oldest surviving synagogue building in Manchester, and the opportunity for the university klezmer ensemble to perform there was primarily created by Richard and Max Dunbar (the Chief Executive Officer of the museum). The connection between two emerging cultures – the Manchester Jewish Museum (within the larger culture of the Jewish community) and the klezmer course of study at the university (within the larger culture of the music department) is therefore important to L’chaim Kapelye’s interaction with the Jewish community.

³² Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 110.

³³ Williams, *Jewish Manchester*, 42.

³⁴ Williams, *Jewish Manchester*, 163.

The klezmer revival community

The klezmer revival small culture in Manchester is lively and active and consists of an eclectic group of individual musicians and bands who are either non-Jewish or secular Jews. The nature of this small culture is inclusive as musical activities such as monthly klezmer sessions at a local pub can be attended by anybody. Ros is an active musician within this small culture, and students in the Michael Kahan Kapelye are encouraged to attend the local klezmer sessions. Information of the klezmer events in Manchester is spread mostly on social networking sites such as Facebook or by word of mouth, and this exemplifies the casual and informal nature of the klezmer revival small culture.

Part 2: Setting the conceptual backdrop

The notion of revival

Different perspectives of revivalist ideology have been suggested by various academics. Livingstone suggests that revivals are an opposition to contemporary mainstream culture,³⁵ and Ronström emphasises the idea that revivalists aim to overcome specific struggles in society.³⁶ On the other hand, Slobin argues that the revival of klezmer in the USA was not based on an opposition to contemporary society; it was based on a desire to voice the Yiddish culture of Jewish-Americans.³⁷ Revival ideology is thus important to analysing the Manchester klezmer revival community and to understanding how L'chaim Kapelye both diverges and connects to the klezmer revival.

³⁵ Livingstone, 'Music Revivals', 66-68.

³⁶ Ronström, 'Revival Reconsidered', 8-9.

³⁷ Slobin, 'Introduction', in Mark Slobin (ed.), *American Klezmer*, 6.

Performing Ethnomusicology

One piece of literature that is influential to my case study of L'chaim Kapelye is Ted Solis' 'Performing Ethnomusicology'³⁸, which consists of sixteen essays written by various ethnomusicologists and world music performers that discuss the development and issues of world music performing ensembles. A significant theme presented in the literature is the importance of the social and musical interaction both within and outside the ensemble, and Scott Marcus suggests that ensemble performances are important for local heritage communities because the music can contribute to cultural and personal affirmation.³⁹ One might therefore suggest that L'chaim Kapelye's interaction with the Jewish community is significant, which is important to my exploration of the emergence of the ensemble.

The notion of appropriation

Cultural appropriation is a complex concept, but is one that is important to L'chaim Kapelye. Jonathan Hart suggests that appropriation occurs 'when a member of one culture takes a cultural practice or theory of a member of another culture as if it were his or her own or as if the right of possession should not be questioned or contested'.⁴⁰ One might therefore suggest that ensembles like L'chaim Kapelye are guilty of appropriating klezmer music because none of us are Jewish, and therefore the cultural tradition is not 'ours'. However, this statement shows how contradictory the notion of cultural appropriation is, as the issue of ownership is unavoidably attached to the discourse. Ronald Radano and Philip Bohlman suggest that music is commonly thought of in terms of 'metaphysics of ownership', and only insiders of

³⁸ Ted Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles* (California: University of California Press, 2004).

³⁹ Scott Marcus, 'Creating a Community, Negotiating Among Communities, in Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology*, 202-221; here, 209.

⁴⁰ Jonathan Hart, 'Translating and Resisting Empire: Cultural Appropriation and Postcolonial Studies', in Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao (eds.), *Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 137-168; here, 138.

the tradition can truly understand the music.⁴¹ However, the immaterial and accessible nature of music as a form of art means that music is often ‘taken’, and therefore part of the discourse of appropriation involves the tension between ideas of ownership and the inscribed quality of music.⁴²

One might also suggest that the condition of current Euro-American society enables cultural borrowing to happen on a constant and uncontrolled basis. Jeremy Waldron’s concept of cosmopolitanism suggests that contemporary urban life involves a ‘kaleidoscope of cultures’ and therefore different cultures are regularly being experienced through various channels such as art, language and religion.⁴³ Slobin also implies that multiple options are provided for individuals to select from in contemporary society, as he suggests that ‘Euro-American societies allow considerable leeway for choice along the lines of voluntarism, but within a grid of limitations that no one can change, indeed, that no one even thinks about’.⁴⁴ Hence, people in modern-day communities are exposed to multiple ways to experience and exchange cultures, but the negative consequences of cultural borrowing are not considered. This idea can be related to the increase of world music ensembles in academic institutions, as more students are offered the opportunity to perform a non-Western tradition, but it is questionable as to whether they are aware of the culture they are borrowing from.

Magdalena Waligórska’s book ‘Klezmer’s Afterlife’⁴⁵ is influential to the discourse of cultural appropriation specifically relating to klezmer. Waligórska discusses whether perceiving non-Jewish klezmer music as cultural appropriation frames the phenomenon as a

⁴¹ Ronald Radano and Philip Bolhman, ‘Introduction: Music and Race, Their Past, Their Presence’, in Ronald Radano and Philip Bolhman (eds.) *Music and the Racial Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) 1-53; here, 6.

⁴² Magdalena Waligórska, *Klezmer’s Afterlife: An Ethnography of the Jewish Revival in Poland and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 59.

⁴³ Jeremy Waldron, ‘Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative’, *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25 (1992), 751.

⁴⁴ Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds*, 40.

⁴⁵ Waligórska, *Klezmer’s Afterlife*.

simulacrum and a potential threat to Jewish identity.⁴⁶ She then progresses to argue that understanding the klezmer revival as *cultural translation* instead of *cultural appropriation* encourages a positive approach because it outlines non-Jewish klezmer as ‘cross-cultural borrowing’ which is ‘a procedure of selective and creative adaptation’.⁴⁷ This implies that phenomena such as non-Jews playing Jewish music can be understood in a positive way if one focuses on how the musicians appropriate instead of who the musicians are. The way L’chaim Kapelye appropriate or ‘translate’ klezmer is important to how the ensemble is perceived as a non-Jewish ensemble playing Jewish music.

The notion of identity

The idea that the music we consume, in terms of performing, listening, and composing, determines our identity is important to my case study because it implies that klezmer influences the identity of the musicians who play it. However, theories that portray the link between identity and music are controversial: for example, the once-popular assumption that music homologically reflects a specific identity is now perceived as restrictive because this approach theorises identity as a fixed and static concept.⁴⁸ Instead, identity is undetermined and mobile, and as suggested by Simon Frith, identity is ‘a process not a thing, a becoming not a being’.⁴⁹ Hence the link between music and identity is not constant or balanced. Anne K. Rasmussen articulates this as she suggests that ‘one’s musicality is the result of a patchwork of experience,’⁵⁰ and therefore understanding why music influences the identity of musicians is complex and depends upon the personal experience of the individual.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁸ Keith Negus and Patria Román Velázquez, ‘Belonging and Detachment: musical experience and identity’, *Poetics*, 30 (2002), 133-145; here, 135-136.

⁴⁹ Simon Frith, ‘Music and Identity’, in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1996), 108-127; here, 109.

⁵⁰ Anne K. Rasmussen, ‘Bilateral Negotiations in Bimusicality’, in Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology*, 215-228; here, 225.

Mantle Hood's notion of bi-musicality is also important to understanding the concept of identity, as Hood suggests that Western musicians who wish to study a non-Western tradition can do so via practical training and experience.⁵¹ Therefore, musicians can develop a multi-musical self, which supports Frith's and Rasmussen's arguments that identity is flexible. The notion of bi-musicality has become more prominent as the opportunities for Western musicians to perform non-Western music has increased in academic institutions, and therefore the concept of identity is important to understanding how and why musicians can play music of different cultures and what effect this has on their musical identity.

Summary

This outline of influencing cultures and themes has contextualised and conceptualised my case study of L'chaim Kapelye, and one should now recognise that the ensemble can be viewed as a small emerging culture which is located within other influencing cultures. These effecting cultures can be groups of people, places, or abstract concepts that are constantly evolving and changing. One could suggest that the number of influencing cultures is inexhaustible; however, I have described the cultures that I believe to be most relevant to my case study. I have favoured Holliday's small culture paradigm over Slobin's notion of micromusics because I believe that the small-culture approach allows a better understanding of the different but connecting frameworks that the klezmer ensemble is located within. Despite choosing 'small culture' over 'micromusic' to contextualise my case study, Slobin's ideas have been influential to my understanding of the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye.

⁵¹ Mantle Hood, 'The Challenge of "Bi-musicality"', *Ethnomusicology*, 4 (1960), 2: 55-59.

Chapter 2

Methodology

Fieldwork and fieldplay

The world is not like a text to be read but like a musical performance to be experienced

Jeff Todd Titon

This chapter will describe and explain the methodology used in my research for my ethnographic case study. My style of fieldwork can be divided into two general categories: the first is concerned with observing and collecting data through interviews, conversations and questionnaires; the second is related to my experience and understanding of klezmer. The former of these categories defines me, the researcher, as an outsider of klezmer whereas the latter acknowledges my participation in the klezmer tradition, and therefore my research into the klezmer scene has been a mediation of epistemological methods associated with fieldwork, and the ontological process of being a musician associated with fieldplay.⁵² After a brief explanation of the history of fieldwork involved in ethnomusicology and what constitutes ‘the field’, I will outline and discuss the different methodology techniques I have used in further detail.

History of ethnomusicology and fieldwork

Fieldwork is a crucial part of understanding how music functions within a particular culture or community; however, within the discipline of ethnomusicology, there is not one specific or distinguished approach that can be used in all case studies. Ethnomusicology as an academic

⁵² Timothy Rice, ‘Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience in Ethnomusicology’, in Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 101-120; here, 107.

discipline is a fairly recent phenomenon: from the 1880s it was known as ‘comparative musicology’ which broke down in the mid-1950s to form ethnomusicology,⁵³ and as a field of study it is in a continuous state of experimentation.⁵⁴ One reason for ethnomusicology’s constant transformation is that the discipline draws from different areas of study such as musicology and anthropology, which thus creates a ‘polyphonic theoretical fabric’⁵⁵ as diverse concepts such as preservation and cultural exchange are part of the discipline’s approaches. Perspectives of fieldwork have also changed, as music is no longer perceived as a collectable object that can be examined externally: it must be experienced in order to understand and represent its meaning.⁵⁶

What is ‘the field?’

A definition of ‘the field’ that relates to the outdated approach of ‘music as a collectable object’ is provided by Timothy Rice, who suggests that the field is a place ‘where outsiders might go to encounter these insiders and their culture, and explain to other outsiders the relationship between music and culture posited by our theories’.⁵⁷ This definition cannot be applied to the ‘music as a lived experience’ paradigm of ethnomusicology that is followed today because, through participation, the researcher becomes part of the field they are transmitting, and therefore the dichotomy of insider and outsider is irrelevant to the contemporary fieldwork approach.

My field

The field of my ethnographic case study is multi-dimensional because L’chaim Kapelye has emerged amongst various influencing cultures such as the Jewish community and the revival

⁵³ Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 2.

⁵⁴ Timothy J. Cooley, ‘Casting Shadows in the Field: An Introduction’, in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 3-19; here, 2.

⁵⁵ Rice, ‘Toward a Mediation of Field Methods’, in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 102.

⁵⁶ This is explained in further detail in Alan P. Merriam, ‘Definitions of ‘Comparative Musicology’ and ‘Ethnomusicology’: A Historical-Theoretical Approach’, *Ethnomusicology*, 21 (1977) 2: 189-204.

⁵⁷ Rice, ‘Toward a Mediation of Field Methods’, in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 105.

community, and I have been part of this field since September 2012 when I became a member of the Michael Kahan Kapelye. However, my change in role from a student/musician to researcher/ethnomusicologist has required me to adopt a reflexive approach so that I understand my position within my field. I will now describe the epistemological methods involved in my research before discussing in greater detail the significance of reflexivity and participant-observation.

Interviews

My first set of interviews was with my fellow klezmer students from L'chaim Kapelye. My interview technique was semi-structured: I had a list of topics that I aimed to cover, but the interviews were guided by the responses of those I was interviewing instead of the conversation being entirely controlled by a set of rigorous questions. I was able to map out my interactions and interviews with people outside of the university by tracing the web of connections between musicians and non-musicians who are involved in klezmer, and quite often someone would suggest another person to talk to, or another idea to consider, about my case study.

As a researcher I also faced an ethical issue. Fieldwork that involves collective data such as interviews has been criticised for being exploitive as the informant may be dominated by the researcher who demands, rather than discusses, the experiences of the interviewee. I was therefore aware that some people involved in the Manchester klezmer scene might not cooperate with me if they felt I would misinterpret their experiences of klezmer. Whereas I already had a personal and friendly connection with my fellow klezmer students, there was a pronounced gap between myself (the researcher) and people outside the university field (the informants). Transparency, sensitivity and respect were required in order to bridge this gap, and I managed to make multiple connections with people in the Manchester klezmer scene. When I conducted interviews with people in the klezmer network I was transparent about my

research, and thankfully people were enthusiastic and responsive. My passion for klezmer provided a common ground for communication, and although Titon implies it is naive to believe that field relationships result in friendship⁵⁸, the personal connections I have made with people via interviews and conversations have been satisfying.

Questionnaire at the Manchester Jewish Museum

Part of my fieldwork within the local Jewish community involved a questionnaire, which was handed out to those in the audience at the Manchester Jewish Museum when L'chaim Kapelye performed there in December 2013.⁵⁹ The questionnaire had two purposes: firstly, I wanted to create quantitative data about how many people in the audience were Jewish and how they found out about the concert; secondly, the questionnaire put me in contact with people who were willing to discuss their experiences in more detail, and thus I could also collect qualitative data. Following the concert, I communicated with those who had left their contact details on the questionnaire via email, which allowed me to explore in greater depth their experiences of klezmer music and their opinions of L'chaim Kapelye.

'Real life' situations

Many of my klezmer encounters have been spontaneous and happened outside the context of an organised interview, and these unplanned experiences have also contributed towards my understanding of the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye. Titon suggests that 'real life' situations in fieldwork are valuable, and this reflects the notion that knowledge can be acquired through understanding, which is directed towards people and proceeds through interpretation.⁶⁰ My fieldwork has focused on interacting with people; therefore my knowledge of understanding has happened through the relationships I have created with others. My fieldwork has also been an intersubjective experience because of my practical involvement with klezmer, which

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See Appendix B and C for further detail of the questionnaire.

⁶⁰ Jeff Todd Titon, 'Knowing Fieldwork', in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 87-100; here, 89.

means my interpretation of the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye has been influenced by a participant observation methodology.

Participant observation

I am engaged with klezmer on a practical level in addition to a research level, and this is how I am a part of the field I am researching, as I have been acting musically as well as methodologically. Rice suggests that the ability to play a music tradition narrows the gap between an outsider's etic analysis and an insider's emic analysis,⁶¹ and so one might suggest that I have been able to communicate with people within my field in a more perceptive way compared to if I did not play klezmer.

Titon's paradigm of musical 'being-in-the-world' provides further insight into participant observation methodology, as he suggests that 'musical knowing' is created by 'musical being'.⁶² Musical being occurs when the practical activity of making music causes a temporary disappearance of the self, and therefore understanding a musical tradition comes from the ability to mediate a tradition between the self and the wider world. One could therefore suggest that I have understood the klezmer tradition by experiencing myself in relation to klezmer music and other klezmer musicians, and my experience of playing the music has been a crucial part of my fieldwork and hence my interpretation of kle

Summary

The development of ethnomusicology as a discipline and its emphasis on participation observation methodology has meant that a tension has arisen between fieldwork methods and fieldwork experience.⁶³ Fieldwork methods are more linked to the anthropological aspects of ethnomusicology, where the researcher 'seeks to perceive the meaning of the aesthetic

⁶¹ Rice, 'Toward a Mediation of Field Method', in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 109-110.

⁶² Titon, 'Knowing Fieldwork', in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field*, 93-94.

⁶³ Rice, 'Toward a Mediation of Field Method', in Barz and Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the Field* 106.

experience of others from the standpoint of understanding human behaviour'.⁶⁴ On the other hand, fieldwork experience reflects the musicological influence of ethnomusicology, where the aesthetic experience of the researcher is important to their understanding of the music. The methodology I have used is a mediation of the two: I have been cautious not to completely separate fieldwork and fieldplay because my understanding of klezmer in Manchester is based on both epistemological and ontological methodologies. Collected data has been an important part of my fieldwork, but so has my experience and transformation of the self, and therefore I am an interpreter as well as a researcher: a part of the tradition as well as documenting it. The next chapter will discuss the findings of my fieldwork and what I have interpreted from my experiences of experiencing the field.

⁶⁴ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 25.

Chapter 3

A Discussion of My Findings

The experience and meaning of performing klezmer

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of my research. I have analysed my data in an inductive way, and so I have selected data from my research which is relevant to the purpose of my case study. In this chapter I will make direct reference to interviews and conversations I had with people, and I will also draw upon specific events and experiences. The aim of my fieldwork was to uncover the interactions between L'chaim Kapelye and its influencing cultures, and so I will discuss the ensemble's performances in both the Jewish community and the klezmer revival community and how these interactions have been significant to the emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye. I will also exemplify how klezmer is perceived and experienced by different people within the different cultures, and ideas and approaches to aid understanding of why klezmer is experienced in particular ways will be suggested.

Gaining confidence in the klezmer tradition

Prior to studying klezmer at the university, my fellow students had little knowledge of the musical tradition and nor did anyone have a connection with the Jewish religion or culture. Our knowledge and understanding of klezmer grew steadily during the klezmer course of study because we received focused tuition from Ros and Richard, but it was the experience of playing outside the university small culture that was most impactful in gaining confidence in the musical tradition. For example, Pippa told me: 'Studying klezmer in a classroom doesn't

open you up to the full of it, and the full of it is performance.’⁶⁵ Ros also encourages individual initiative outside of the classroom context, as she told me:

*I think it’s so important because, especially when you’re studying music you’re looking at it in an intense way, and I think because we’ve brought this music into the university it’s also important to acknowledge its relationship outside of it.*⁶⁶

These external performances were how the Michael Kahan Kapelye initially interacted with the Jewish community and the klezmer revival community, and are thus important to the emergence of L’chaim Kapelye. Playing klezmer within the revival community is different to performing within the Jewish community because the two cultures are made up of people with diverging behaviours, or *habits* as Turino defines them,⁶⁷ and therefore klezmer is perceived and experienced differently in each community. The following section of this chapter will portray the experience and significance of L’chaim Kapelye’s performances in the Jewish community, which will be followed by an explanation of the ensemble’s experience within the klezmer revival community.

Presentational Performances in the Jewish community

L’chaim Kapelye’s performances within the Jewish community are what Turino would identify as *presentational performances*⁶⁸ because the ensemble has to carefully rehearse repertoire that is prepared for an audience who are expecting to hear us play. Our first concert as the Michael Kahan Kapelye was at the Manchester Jewish Museum in December 2012, and I remember we were all extremely nervous because it was the first time we were going to perform an entire set list without notated music. Pippa told me:

⁶⁵ Pippa Goodall, Personally conducted interview, 24th November 2013.

⁶⁶ Ros Hawley, Personally conducted interview, 5th December 2013.

⁶⁷ Turino suggests that habits involve both thoughts and behaviour, and are created by the combination of the physical body and the social environment. See Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 100-102.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

I thought they might judge us, and I think they still do a little bit. I think that the audience know the music, kind of like Ros and Richard, and it's part of their lives and its involved in weddings and celebrations, so the pressure of getting it right was there, and I also worry that we might not do it right and they'll get upset.⁶⁹

In addition to the musical difficulty of playing klezmer, Pippa is expressing the challenge of bridging the gap between us, who are non-Jewish klezmer musicians, and the Jewish audience, who are perceived to have knowledge and experience of klezmer music because it is part of their cultural heritage. The notion of cultural appropriation thus influences my fellow klezmer musicians because we were concerned about misrepresenting the tradition to the culture from which klezmer originates. However, the positive response that we have received from the Jewish audience since that concert, in addition to the increasing number of invitations to perform in the Jewish community⁷⁰, suggests that we are 'doing it right'. I asked Jemima why she thought we were so welcomed, and she said: 'I think maybe because we're trying! They can see that we are really enjoying it and we're putting a lot of effort into it and that's more important than if we perform perfectly.'⁷¹

During my research it became clear that the welcoming response of the Jewish audience has been surprising. When I interviewed Max Dunbar (CEO of the Manchester Jewish Museum), he voiced his initial surprise at the success of the klezmer concerts by saying: 'When we advertised the first klezmer concert I expected 30/40 people to come, but we sold out, and they all have been since then'.⁷² Later in our interview we spoke about how the Jewish audience behave at our klezmer concerts, and he told me:

⁶⁹ Goodall, Interview.

⁷⁰ See Appendix A for a full list of L'chaim Kapelye's performances.

⁷¹ Jemima Kingsland, Personally conducted interview, 26th November 2013.

⁷² Max Dunbar, Personally conducted interview, 10th January 2014.

*...at the second concert where you asked people to dance, and I thought no way, you know, knowing the sort of audiences that come here. Some are retired and are quite elderly – they complain about our seats so they won't get up dancing! But we saw the whole museum come alive: the women were dancing, and they automatically knew how to dance together.*⁷³

Max was therefore shocked that the audience became so involved in the Michael Kahan's Kapelye's performance. At the majority of L'chaim Kapelye's subsequent concerts in the Jewish community, members of the audience have responded to our music in a similar way as many people ended up dancing. I therefore wanted to explore why the audience become so animated when L'chaim Kapelye perform, as this is important to understanding the audience's perception of our klezmer ensemble.

Reactions of the Jewish audience

Following the responses from the questionnaire I gave to audience members at our Jewish museum concert in December 2013, I communicated via email with a Jewish lady called Dorothy Flacks to discuss her experiences of klezmer. She told me she has been 'sold on klezmer' since listening to clarinettist Giora Feidman and that klezmer is 'a big part of Jewish celebrations as it connects with the past'.⁷⁴ Another Jewish lady named Lucette Tucker told me that the klezmer music L'chaim Kapelye performs 'lifts one's mood and reminds of one's heritage'.⁷⁵ These comments suggest that Jewish audience members experience a connection with their past when listening to klezmer, and therefore L'chaim Kapelye's performances prompt this connection.

To suggest why this happens, I will draw upon the ideas of the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, whose theory of semiotics provides an understanding of how a perceived sign

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Dorothy Flacks, Personal communication via email, 9th February 2014.

⁷⁵ Lucette Tucker, Personal communication via email, 4th February 2014.

can initiate thoughts of something else (an object), which creates an effect in the observer.⁷⁶

One type of sign that Peirce suggests is called an index, and this is when people connect a sign with what it stands for by experiencing a sign and an object together.⁷⁷ Using Peirce's theory, one can suggest that people like Lucette and Dorothy have heard klezmer (the sign) at previous Jewish celebrations (the object), and therefore when they hear klezmer in other situations, like at L'chaim Kapelye's performance, they make an indexical connection with their past experiences of attending important events such as weddings. The number of Jewish people who attend L'chaim Kapelye's performances⁷⁸ implies that common indexical associations may exist amongst the audience, and therefore L'chaim Kapelye's klezmer concerts can connect people via their shared past experiences. This provides an explanation as to why people in the audience instinctively know how to dance to L'chaim Kapelye's pieces and to why the music evokes an engagement with Jewish cultural identity.

It is important to emphasise that index signs are reliant on the past experiences of the observer,⁷⁹ and therefore assuming that all Jewish people are reminded of Jewish celebrations when they listen to klezmer would be an imposing generalisation. This was made clear to me when someone mentioned they did not enjoy listening to klezmer. They told me:

I find it a bit irritating that people who aren't Jewish assume that all Jewish people like it [klezmer] ... growing up in the 60s and 70s I was only interested in whatever music was currently popular in the secular world. If I had known about klezmer music at the time I would have regarded it in the same way that I regarded Yiddish at the time, as something very old fashioned and foreign. Is it because I come from a generation which was encouraged to be English first and Jewish second?⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Charles Sanders Peirce, in Charles Harthshorne and Paul Weiss (eds.), *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce Volume II: Elements of Logic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷⁸ In the questionnaire responses, 40 out of 56 people said they were Jewish. See Appendix C for a full analysis of the data.

⁷⁹ Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 6.

⁸⁰ Anonymous, Personal communication via email, 3rd February 2014.

This person has not experienced klezmer in the same way that people such as Dorothy and Lucette have, and this exemplifies that an indexical sign between klezmer and cultural heritage is not experienced by all Jewish people. This also articulates the diversity of the Jewish community because it illustrates how the contrasting personal experiences of individuals signifies different interpretations of cultural heritage. However, my fieldwork suggests that a number of Jewish people who attend L'chaim Kapelye's concerts do feel a connection to their past, and this is important to my case study because one can suggest that the music performed by L'chaim Kapelye enables individuals to identify with their Jewish cultural heritage, and this is important to understanding why the ensemble has emerged within the Jewish community.

Interview with Sue Cooper

In addition to understanding how klezmer influences Jewish listeners, I wanted to explore what klezmer means to Jewish musicians who perform the musical tradition. One of these is Sue Cooper, who began playing klezmer in the mid 1980s when she lived in York, but she moved to Manchester in the early 1990s. In my interview with her, she suggested that klezmer might not be enjoyed by a large number of Jewish musicians because the music reminds one of the horrific events involving Jews in the 20th century.⁸¹ However, for others, Sue suggested that the consequences of Nazi Germany ascribe a powerful meaning to klezmer. She said:

To some, the music gives them something. To some people, it's kind of like saying 'f-you' to the Germans ... it's like saying 'we have survived'. So the people have survived, but to have the music revived too is like that. For a lot of people playing it, this has no meaning whatsoever, but for some people there is a sense that this is the music of peoples who suffered genocide, and they didn't manage to kill us ... one of my great-grandfathers might have been a musician, and it [klezmer]

⁸¹ Sue Cooper, Personally conducted interview, 29th January 2014.

*would have been the music that would have been played at my grandparents' wedding. For me, it's important.*⁸²

Sue's connection between klezmer and the Holocaust is different to the experiences of Dorothy and Lucette, because Sue's engagement with her Jewish identity is more imagined. She did not experience playing klezmer and the events of Nazi Germany at the same time: she instead recalls the notion of 'we have survived' when she performs klezmer, and this is caused by her personal history of having connections with Eastern Europe. Peirce defines this experience as an iconic sign as opposed to an indexical sign, and Sue's experience of klezmer exemplifies the powerful function of music to inspire people's imagination and feelings in this way.⁸³

My interpretations of these findings suggest that klezmer can have a significant impact upon Jewish musicians and non-musicians, and my findings also support Scott Marcus' idea that world music ensembles can have a significant influence on heritage communities,⁸⁴ because one can suggest that L'chaim Kapelye's klezmer performances have a powerful impact on people within the Manchester Jewish community. Of course, many of the people in the audience at our concerts are not Jewish and are there to simply enjoy the music⁸⁵, and as already suggested, not all Jewish people enjoy klezmer. However, for people such as Dorothy, Lucette and Sue, klezmer is important to their engagement with cultural identity, and L'chaim Kapelye is involved in this process.

Understanding Jewish culture

When I asked Dorothy specifically about her opinions of L'chaim Kapelye, she told me:

'You all seemed to love and feel the emotion of the music' and the ensemble has 'respect for

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 8.

⁸⁴ Marcus, Creating a Community, in Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology*, 209.

⁸⁵ In the questionnaire responses, 15 out of 56 people said they were not Jewish. See Appendix C for a full analysis of the data.

the music and what it stands for to the Jewish community'.⁸⁶ Her comments suggest that L'chaim Kapelye reflect and engage in Jewish culture, even though we are not Jewish ourselves. Lucie also told me something that I found interesting. She said:

*When we did the Michael Kahan Day, a guy came up to me afterwards and asked me if I was Jewish, because apparently we performed with 'Jewish Passion' which was amazing because we're still learning all the time, and that was a while ago but it constantly surprises me how the Jewish audience enjoy it and they think we provide a good representation of their music.*⁸⁷

This further supports my suggestion that L'chaim Kapelye accurately understands the klezmer tradition. Part of the reason for our understanding is a result of the klezmer course of study, because Ros and Richard exposed us to the wider Yiddish culture through documentaries and readings. I also asked Dan if he had developed an understanding of Jewish culture, and he replied:

*Yes, I think klezmer alongside world music was really useful ... as we've branched out to the Jewish community more in Manchester, we've had direct contact with Jewish people and that's been a learning experience. We have more of a responsibility to know what we're doing because we're playing a music that is associated with a particular culture.*⁸⁸

From Dan's comment one could suggest that the more L'chaim Kapelye perform in the Jewish community, the more we learn and comprehend about Jewish culture. However, L'chaim Kapelye's interaction with the revival community in Manchester has also been important to the emergence and development of the ensemble. The following discussion will explain my fieldwork within the revival culture, and how L'chaim Kapelye's performances within the klezmer revival community are important to understanding the development of the ensemble.

⁸⁶ Flacks, E-mail.

⁸⁷ Lucie Phillips, Personally conducted interview, 25th November 2013.

⁸⁸ Dan Mawson, Personally conducted interview, 5th February 2014.

Participational performances within the klezmer revival community

Sue Cooper is also an active member of the Manchester klezmer revival scene, and therefore my interview with her was important to my research because I learnt about the beginnings of the klezmer revival in Manchester. Despite the presence of a large Jewish community, Sue told me that when she moved to Manchester in the early 1990s, there was a complete absence of klezmer activity. She decided to form a klezmer band called Klezmic, and throughout the following decade Sue built up a network of musicians (the majority of whom were non-Jewish) who were interested in klezmer by running sessions at her local pub in New Mills. She also attended KlezFest in London with other klezmer musicians. Sue met Ros via these klezmer events, and together they would lead klezmer workshops in Manchester where Ros would lead the band and Sue would teach dances. The creation and organisation of KlezNorth was also influenced by Sue, and therefore she is an important person who has greatly influenced the present-day Manchester klezmer revival scene.⁸⁹

The type of musical performances that dominate the revival community is in contrast to those in the Jewish community. Events such as monthly klezmer pub sessions and ‘jamming sessions’ are identified by Turino as *participatory performances*, as there is no exclusion to who can participate, which creates an environment of strong social bonding.⁹⁰ One of the most enjoyable klezmer events I attended was The Klezmer Folk Train, as Pippa, George and I joined a group of klezmer musicians who performed klezmer on a public train from Manchester to Glossop. When we arrived at Glossop everyone continued to play at a local pub, and then we performed more klezmer on the train back to Manchester. These types of performances are important to the development of L’chaim Kapelye because they provide opportunities for klezmer students to talk to and communicate with other klezmer musicians. When I asked Pippa if these events were important to her learning of klezmer, she told me:

⁸⁹ Cooper, Interview.

⁹⁰ Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 29-36.

*Yes definitely. The klezmer train and the pub were eye-opening. The people we met were incredible and we could just learn from them easily. Those two events built my confidence a lot, even though I didn't really talk to the musicians because I was scared to! They must have thought we were just barging in and didn't know a thing about klezmer. They were very welcoming, though.*⁹¹

The inclusive nature of these events meant that we felt welcome, even if we did not have much experience of playing klezmer at the time. I spoke to Frances O'Rourke, who is an accordionist in a Manchester klezmer band called Yiddlesticks, about her opinion of the klezmer pub sessions. She told me:

*I started the session at the Jolly Angler pub so that I could play klezmer with other musicians because I didn't have anyone to play with. A session offers the opportunity to join in without committing to being in a band or do a gig. It's a great way of learning new tunes and meeting musicians.*⁹²

Frances' experiences coincide with Turino's suggestion that the focus during a participatory performance is on those who are involved in the making of the music.⁹³ Members of L'chaim Kapelye still attend the klezmer pub sessions, and I have also been invited to smaller 'klezmer jams' that take place at klezmer musicians' houses, so my fellow klezmer musicians and I continue to receive opportunities to learn new tunes and to meet other klezmer musicians. The interaction with the klezmer revival community is thus important to the development of L'chaim Kapelye.

Due to the large number of non-Jewish musicians in the revival community, klezmer has a different meaning to individuals in this culture compared to individuals in the Jewish community. For musicians such as Frances, who is Irish Catholic, klezmer contributes to her musical self, but this does not initiate a connection with a Jewish identity. I asked Frances why she began to play klezmer, and she replied: 'Getting into klezmer just seemed like the

⁹¹ Goodall, Interview.

⁹² Frances O'Rourke, Personal communication via e-mail, 29th January 2014.

⁹³ Turino, *Music as Social life*, 29.

next step in my interest in Eastern European music.’⁹⁴ I also spoke to another non-Jewish klezmer musician called Steve Landen, and he told me that he performed Ukrainian folk music before he was introduced to klezmer via the New Mills pub sessions that Sue had started.⁹⁵ An interesting comparison can therefore be made between individuals like Sue, who experiences a connection with her Jewish cultural heritage through playing klezmer, and Frances, who experiences enjoyment and satisfaction through playing klezmer, but this is due to the music itself; not its association with any personal Jewish heritage.

The nature of klezmer music

This idea that klezmer is meaningful to non-Jewish people is important to my case study, because during my fieldwork I discovered that my fellow students have a passion for playing klezmer due to the satisfaction of performing the music together as a group of musicians. For example, when I asked Jemima as to what she likes most about playing klezmer, she told me: ‘I think the interaction between us is definitely part of it. I think the way the performances happen as well, because the gigs are so informal and people get dancing and its fun.’⁹⁶ Pippa also told me: ‘it is all about the interaction amongst us players and I do it because the music is incredible’.⁹⁷ The communication between members of L’chaim Kapelye is what creates such enjoyment from performing the music.

I would like to proffer that there are two important reasons as to why this is: firstly, performing in an ensemble as opposed to performing by oneself relies on the connection between musicians, because as suggested by Benjamin Brinner, ‘more aspects of competence are foregrounded in ensemble than in solo performance’.⁹⁸ Secondly, klezmer is traditionally learnt and performed by ear, and thus the absence of notated music during L’chaim Kapelye’s

⁹⁴ O’Rourke, E-mail.

⁹⁵ Steve Landen, Personal communication, 14th January 2014.

⁹⁶ Kingsland, Interview.

⁹⁷ Goodall, Interview.

⁹⁸ Benjamin Brinner, *Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese Gamelan and the Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 4.

performances further enhances the communication between the musicians. For example, Jemima told me: ‘not having music makes such a big difference, as there’s more interaction amongst us and the audience, too’.⁹⁹ The gamelan player Hardja Susilo expresses the importance of performing by ear, as he says that ‘it [notation] hinders your playing; it makes you less sensitive to interrelationships, less perceptive to signals, oblivious to current events, etc’.¹⁰⁰ Hence, one could suggest that the nature of klezmer, which is an aural tradition, encourages musicians to be alert and in the present, and performing by memory increases trust, awareness and interaction amongst band members which results in the ultimate enjoyment of playing together.

To provide further insight into why my fellow klezmer musicians enjoy performing klezmer together, I will briefly discuss an idea offered by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who suggests that an absorption in a particular activity allows a fuller integration of the self.¹⁰¹ One could therefore suggest that the absence of notated music during L’chaim Kapelye’s performances increases the concentration levels of each individual, and as Turino suggests, this experience creates a collective state of transcendence¹⁰² which enables complete focus on each other and the musical performance. One might argue that performing in a non-Western ensemble, as opposed to a Western ensemble, increases the musicians’ levels of concentration and interaction. For example, Ted Solis suggests that performing in a world music ensemble enhances emotion and participation as ‘we overtly expose, in a highly visible venue, our ability to function in another cultural and aesthetic world’.¹⁰³ I am not of the opinion that high levels of interaction are consistently less in Western performance

⁹⁹ Kingsland, Interview.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Hardja Susilo by David Harnish, Ted Solis, and J. Lawrence Witzleben, ‘A Bridge to Java’, in Solis (ed.), *Performing ethnomusicology*, 53-68; here, 62.

¹⁰¹ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, The flow experience and its significance for human psychology, in Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Isabella Selega (eds.), *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 15-35; here, 24.

¹⁰² Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 4.

¹⁰³ Ted Solis, ‘Introduction’, in Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology*, 1-19; here, 2.

ensembles; however, my conversations with my fellow klezmer students do suggest that playing in L'chaim Kapelye is more interactive compared to ensembles such as an orchestra, and one can therefore conclude that the nature of klezmer performance creates enjoyment and meaning for members of L'chaim Kapelye.¹⁰⁴ This idea is not restricted to specifically L'chaim Kapelye: a passion for performing klezmer is ubiquitous within the Manchester revival community, and it is the interaction amongst musicians caused by the nature of klezmer performance that enables non-Jewish musicians to find meaning in the music.

Interaction between the Jewish community and the revival community

Despite L'chaim Kapelye's passion for klezmer being echoed in the revival culture, my fieldwork within this community has led me to interpret that there is a limited connection between the Manchester klezmer revival small culture and the local Jewish community small culture. Frances implied to me that klezmer performances within the Manchester Jewish community are infrequent, and I discovered that there are few opportunities for revival klezmer bands to experience presentational performances at venues such as Manchester Jewish Museum.¹⁰⁵

I asked Max Dunbar why there is a lack of interaction between the museum and the revival community, and he told me: 'I think it's part of a bigger issue that museums have. We need to have been doing more with all sections of the community and across the city with everyone and we just haven't.'¹⁰⁶ Max's comment made me consider why L'chaim Kapelye has emerged in the Jewish community, and why other klezmer musicians or ensembles have not. One might suggest that it is the gap between cultural identity that prevents the interaction between the revival community and the Jewish community, as the revival community is formed of a large number of non-Jewish people; however, my fieldwork has portrayed that

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix E.

¹⁰⁵ O'Rourke, E-mail.

¹⁰⁶ Dunbar, Interview.

Jewish audience members do not perceive this to be a problem, as they have responded positively to L'chaim Kapelye. Lucette even told me: 'I think it is delightful that you [L'chaim Kapelye] enjoy playing this music and that none of you are Jewish is a compliment to our community.'¹⁰⁷

The enjoyment of playing klezmer is also shared by the revival community and L'chaim Kapelye, and therefore one can assume that the emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye within the Jewish community is quite extraordinary. Thus far in this chapter I have presented and analysed the findings of my research to suggest how klezmer is perceived and experienced by different people, and the final section of this chapter will suggest an explanation of why L'chaim Kapelye has emerged and developed into a successful klezmer ensemble.

Conclusion: The emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye

As I outlined in Chapter 1, L'chaim Kapelye has emerged amongst a number of influencing cultures, and I believe that it is the unique positioning of the ensemble within these cultures that has enabled L'chaim Kapelye to interact with individuals, groups and wider communities and therefore emerge out of the klezmer course of study and into other places. L'chaim Kapelye developed out of the Michael Kahan Kapelye, and therefore the klezmer ensemble is still connected to the klezmer course of study and The University of Manchester; however, the opportunities that have been offered to L'chaim Kapelye have resulted in the ensemble becoming freestanding and independent.¹⁰⁸

The importance of the klezmer course of study cannot be underestimated, for the members of L'chaim Kapelye would have never come together as a band or received the focused tuition of the music tradition without studying klezmer at the university. L'chaim Kapelye's first

¹⁰⁷ Tucker, Email.

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix E.

performances in the Manchester Jewish Museum were also a result of the communication between Max and Richard, and thus the ensemble's interaction with the Jewish community has developed from the initial connection between these two individuals. The connection between Ros and members of the revival community such as Sue has also exposed L'chaim Kapelye to performing klezmer in a participational setting, and this exemplifies an additional interaction between two individuals that has influenced the development of the ensemble.

The findings of my research thus suggest that L'chaim Kapelye has emerged due to the multiple interactions between individuals, groups and communities. Klezmer is a shared interest amongst different cultures, and this can be related to Slobin's idea that people are inevitably tied to similar networks and share related experiences, as he suggests that 'while group histories and social forces separate us, our personal expressive lives are inextricably tied to similar networks and pattern of possibilities, however unevenly and even inequitably they may be applied'. This is not to undervalue what klezmer means to both Jewish and non-Jewish people, for as this chapter has portrayed, performing klezmer has an effect on both the musicians and the audience on multiple levels. Nor is this to suggest that the success of L'chaim Kapelye is due to the actions of others, as our musical competence and understanding of the klezmer tradition has been crucial to our development as a klezmer ensemble. My case study exemplifies how L'chaim Kapelye has become involved in different cultures and communities via the opportunities we have been offered, and therefore we have emerged as a dynamic klezmer ensemble. The long term effect of the development of L'chaim Kapelye is unknown; however, as I will suggest in the last chapter, the ensemble has been influential in the short amount of time it has existed.

Closing Thoughts

The significance of L'chaim Kapelye in the Wider Picture

This report of an ethnographic case study has provided an insight into how and why a small culture can emerge amongst other influencing and interlacing cultures. To finish the report without suggesting how my study of L'chaim Kapelye contributes to the wider picture of global cultural flow would be an injustice to both the importance of world music ensembles and the significance of the klezmer tradition, and therefore this concluding chapter will offer some thoughts of how one can interpret the emergence and development of L'chaim Kapelye in relation to larger and more abstract issues.

Cultural appropriation

People within the Jewish community have responded positively to L'chaim Kapelye, and one can therefore suggest that the ensemble's 'borrowing' of the klezmer tradition has not threatened the integrity of the culture from which the music comes. This supports Waligórska's idea that it is possible to perceive appropriation, or translation, as a positive phenomenon; however, my case study also raises the issue of *who* decides whether a culture is being misrepresented. Is it the musicians who are performing the tradition, the ethnomusicologist, or people from within the culture that deem appropriation as negative or positive? L'chaim Kapelye has developed due to our interaction with the Jewish community, and so their appreciation of us playing klezmer implies that musical borrowing is welcomed. However, in different musical cultures, playing 'their' music is perceived as futile or even immoral,¹⁰⁹ and so regardless of how accurately a musician plays a tradition, appropriation is seen as negative. This contributes to the complexity of the notion of cultural appropriation, as

¹⁰⁹ For example, Nettl discusses his interaction with a Nigerian musician, in 'You Will Never Understand This Music', *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, 149-160.

the perception of those who are part of the culture from which the tradition comes from, in addition to how the musicians appropriate and who the musicians are, is vital to analysing and understanding musical borrowing.

The Potential of World Music Ensembles

If one is to recognise the positive interaction between L'chaim Kapelye and the Jewish community, then one should understand how world music ensembles have the potential to enhance personal consciousness and experience in a community which, according to John Blacking, is the ultimate goal of music making.¹¹⁰ The potential to enhance a world music ensemble's influence in a local community is exemplified in my conversation with Max, who believes that continuing the collaboration between The University of Manchester music department and the Manchester Jewish Museum will help a younger generation of secular Jews to engage with their cultural heritage.¹¹¹ My fellow klezmer students have also been exposed to a different culture through playing klezmer, and therefore one can suggest that world music ensembles provide a 'space of encounter' which influences both the people within and outside the ensemble.¹¹² I can only hope that other world music ensembles take the opportunity to interact with local communities in order to achieve this potential.

Klezmer in Manchester within a global revival

L'chaim Kapelye's involvement with the klezmer revival community expands my case study outwards to contribute to the phenomenon of a global klezmer revival. This report portrays how klezmer in Manchester is being revived by both Jewish and non-Jewish musicians, and therefore the motive for playing and enjoying klezmer for many people is the social and musical satisfaction that is created through performing in an ensemble and through the nature of the music. Some people do play klezmer to engage with their cultural heritage, but from

¹¹⁰ John Blacking, *A common-sense view of all music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 131.

¹¹¹ Dunbar, Interview.

¹¹² Gage Averill, "'Where's One?'" in Solis (ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology*, 93-111; here, 101.

my research it does not appear to be a widespread desire amongst klezmer musicians in Manchester. One can suggest that the Jewish community perceive L'chaim Kapelye to be reviving their culture; however, this illuminates the issue of how a revival is defined, as people interpret music performance differently. Hence, a field to explore further is the distinction between *musical revival* and *cultural revival* within the context of the global klezmer rebirth, as an interesting comparison could be made between klezmer activities in different countries.

The relationship between music and identity

My study of L'chaim Kapelye suggests the idea that musicians can experience different levels of identity transformation. For example, my fellow klezmer students and I have experienced a new style of music which has changed our musical habits, but we continue to perform other traditions.¹¹³ On the other hand, musicians such as Ros, who used to be a classical musician, now focus primarily on performing klezmer.¹¹⁴ Gage Averill suggests this is called 'going native' because one experiences a transformation of habits, personality and even identity, and therefore music has the ability to change an individual's 'musical home'.¹¹⁵ The level of identity transformation is dependent on the personal experiences of an individual, but it is important to recognise that performing a music from another culture has the potential to transform one's musical habits, behaviour and identity.

A final note

The purpose of this closing chapter has been to suggest ideas of how one can relate the phenomenon of L'chaim Kapelye to concepts that are influential to the wider context of music and culture. The subjective nature of ethnomusicology and the notion of participant observation mean that one may interpret the emergence of L'chaim Kapelye differently;

¹¹³ See Appendix E for full interviews.

¹¹⁴ Hawley, Interview.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 100.

however, from the perspective of someone who has experienced klezmer in Manchester, my case study aims to provide an insight of how a small culture can develop amongst other influencing cultures, and how this contributes to an understanding of the function of klezmer, and music more generally, in the world today.

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Appendix A

A List of L'chaim Kapelye's Performances

June 2013 – present

June 2nd 2013

Performance at the Michael Kahan Music Day at the Carlton Club in Whalley Range

June 20th 2013

Performance at the opening of the 'Chagall, Soutine and the School of Paris' exhibition at the Manchester Jewish Museum

November 9th 2013

Performance at the Muslim Jewish Forum at the Ukrainian Centre in Cheetham Hill

December 1st 2013

Performance at the Manchester Jewish Museum with the Michael Kahan Kapelye and the Hard Times Kapelye

January 17th 2014

Organised and performed at a 'Klezmer Keilidh' at Revolution Fallowfield

February 10th 2014

Live performance on 94.4 FM Salford City Radio Jewish Hour

February 16th 2014

Performance at the Whitefield Hebrew Congregation for St Ann's Hospice Fund Raising Group

March 13th 2014

Performance at Whalbar in Fallowfield with the Michael Kahan Kapelye, the Hard Times Kapelye and Deli Babies

March 23rd 2014

Performance at the Manchester Jewish Museum for the 'Manchester Histories: Creative Threads Day'

Appendix B

A Blank Example of Questionnaire at the Manchester Jewish Museum

Please fill in this survey and hand it in to the designated box or a band member

1) How did you find out about tonight's concert? (Please tick one)

- Through a friend/family member
- Via an advertisement in a newspaper/magazine
- Via the museum's website
- Via an advertisement at the museum
- Via Facebook or Twitter
- Via the university
- Other (please state).....

2) Have you previously attended a concert that involves the collaboration between the Jewish museum and the University of Manchester?

- Yes No

3) Are you Jewish?

- Yes I prefer not to say
 No

Please leave your name and contact details if you would be happy for me to contact you

.....

Appendix C

Analysis of Quantitative Data from Questionnaire

1) How people found out about L'chaim Kapelye's concert on December 1st 2013

Through a friend	17
Via an advertisement in a newspaper/magazine	7
Via the museum's website	13
Via in advertisement at the museum	2
Via Facebook or Twitter	2
Via the University	0
Via email bulletin*	4
Through volunteering at the museum *	11
Total	56

* These options were what participants wrote down as 'Other'

2) How many people had previously attended a concert that involves the collaboration between the Jewish museum and the University of Manchester

Had attended	23
Hadn't attended	33
Total	56

3) The number of Jewish and non-Jewish people who responded to the questionnaire

Jewish	40
Non-Jewish	15
Prefer not to say	1
Total	56

Appendix D

Personal E-mail Communication Transcriptions

Name: Lucette Tucker

Date of e-mail: 4th February 2014

- 1) Please describe your experiences of klezmer music. For example, have you listened to a lot of klezmer music at home? Is it only at religious celebrations like weddings and Bar or Bat Mitzvahs when you've heard klezmer music?

I listen at home from time to time as I do with other genres. I am very fond of Klezmer. It puts me in mind of grandparents I never knew.

- 2) What were your expectations of the concert you attended at the Jewish Museum back in December?

That it would be good and I would enjoy it. It was and I did and I left wanting more ☺

- 3) What were your opinions of the concert and L'Chaim Kapelye?

See above. In fact I am hoping to arrange one for the Housing Association I chair. This music lifts one's mood and reminds one of one's heritage. Thoroughly enjoyable. I cannot imagine anyone going away from that concert and saying they did not like it. I am very impressed with L'Chaim Kapeyle – I attended a concert that was not long after it was formed and I am glad that you decided to continue with it. I was at the concert at the Muslim Jewish Forum and was glad to attend another Klezmer concert so soon after.

- 4) We are all non-Jewish university students. Do you think it matters that we are performing a musical tradition that is not part of our cultural heritage?

I think it is delightful that you enjoy playing this music and that none of you are Jewish is a compliment to our community. (Anyway, isn't Tzigane music similar – and gypsies were not Jewish?)

Name: Dorothy Flacks

Date of e-mail: 9th February 2014

- 1) Please describe your experiences of klezmer music. For example, have you listened to a lot of klezmer music at home? Is it only at religious celebrations like weddings and Bar or Bat Mitzvahs when you've heard klezmer music?

I had never heard of klezmer until the 1970s when Lucy Skeaping and the Burning Bush came to play at a synagogue in M/C. It was a wonderful evening. We did know some of the songs- the Ashkenazi ones at least but I just thought they were folk songs.

Then Giora Feidmann came to M/C and we were sold on klezmer. Some time later we were on holiday in Israel and Giora was appearing at the Khan theatre in Jerusalem. This is an old coaching inn which has been turned into an open air theatre. To spend three hours listening to him talk and play under the stars and a black sky was so evocative. It was like going back in time but still relevant today. Also we had never heard Ladino music before. It was so different but somehow the same because it was just a different aspect of the same people.

As the years have gone by it has become so popular and is a big part of Jewish celebrations as it connects with the past. Even when my own daughter married out of the faith and in a registry office, she chose to walk in to klezmer music and also made sure the band could play some in the evening even though they were not Jewish. It might have helped as the pianist was Jamie Cullum in the days before he was 'Jamie Cullum'.

On long journeys in the car we play it when we are sick of Classic FM.

- 2) What were your opinions of the concert and L'Chaim Kapelye?

You all seemed to feel and love the emotion in the music.

- 3) We are all non-Jewish university students. Do you think it matters that we are performing a musical tradition that is not part of our cultural heritage?

I don't think it matters at all. As I said you all seemed to understand all the emotions in the music. You have respect for the music and what it stands for to the Jewish community. I personally would like to know what your other choices were and why you chose klezmer.

Name: Frances O'Rourke (Irish and klezmer musician in Manchester)

Date of e-mail: 12th January 2014

- 1) When we met we talked about the different ways of experiencing klezmer music. For example, you saw Ros' band play at the pub a few times, but if I remember correctly, you didn't feel like this was the best way to experience klezmer. Could you describe why one may think that events such as the Klezmer train, and sessions at the Jolly Angler are more appropriate compared to listening to a band in a more concert-like setting?

This is more about playing Klezmer. Going to a Klezmer concert is a great way to experience Klezmer but if you want to have a go at playing the music yourself then you want to participate. I had to pester Ros to let me play, she agreed to teach a workshop from 8-9pm before her band played in their weekly spot at the King's Arms. I had to find people to attend to make it viable, so I got Richard Fay to come and he brought members of his Hard Times Orkestar. After a few weeks this became frustrating, because after an hour of playing you're just getting warmed up then you have to put your instrument away. One of my friends, fiddler Steve Miles came a couple of times but stopped coming because he didn't want to stop playing after an hour. I tried to persuade Ros to make it more into a session but she wanted to keep it as her band's gig, which was fair enough. Good musicians drifted away, it was a wasted opportunity. Musicians want to play, not listen.

The folk train, which features different genres of music, bands and sessions, is a great way to get involved. About once a year is a Klezmer folk train, so it doesn't occur often enough to provide opportunities to get into Klezmer. I started the session at the Jolly Angler so that I could play Klezmer with other musicians because I didn't have anyone to play with. A session offers the opportunity to join in without committing to being in a band or do a gig. It's a great way of learning new tunes and meeting musicians. In a typical Irish session, nobody brings sheet music, it wouldn't work. Everyone knows loads of tunes and there wouldn't be time to get music out, the spontaneity would be ruined. It is ok to bring sheet music to the Klezmer session because it's much more relaxed.

You learn much more by doing/playing than listening to a concert. Of course it's important to listen to music, preferably live, but also to the many Klezmer albums and YouTube performances out there, to find out about the many different styles and approaches to Klezmer and to learn, but you learn by doing too.

A musician I used to play with regularly in Cambridge, Hazel Fairbairn told me once that the way to get into a new style of music is just to listen to loads of it and fully immerse yourself in that genre. She played Cajun, Bluegrass, Irish all fairly well before embarking on playing Eastern European music and then Indian music. It made for a very interesting ceilidh as she

dropped little ornaments or weird notes into the jigs and reels we were playing. Perhaps she wasn't so good at compartmentalising the stylistic traits.

- 2) Please can you tell me about the klezmer band you have formed in Manchester – I was particularly interested in how you had a few problems finding a suitable bass player! If you can, please can you also tell me what influences your repertoire choices for your band, and what kind of settings/environments you perform in.

I've known the guitarist Paul Cowham for more than 10 years and play regularly with him in Irish music sessions and for ceilidhs. Paul was involved in the Klezmer scene from the late nineties as he used to live in Steve Landin's house and worked with Sue Cooper, who started the Klezmer scene in the North West. He was a partner in her accountancy firm before he started up on his own. We decided to form a Klezmer band because the only Klezmer bands in the area are Ros's band and The Klatsh. Both bands already have accordionists and guitarists so Paul and I were out on a limb.

We thought we would try and get a fiddler because we know a lot more fiddlers than clarinet players. After a couple of different fiddlers came and went we settled on Kate Moran who is a good fit now and was already a friend. Paul knew drummer Rich Sliwa from a ceilidh band he was playing in and I had met him a couple of times. I played on Mike McGoldrick's Future Trad Collective album which Rich is a part of. Rich originally played percussion but as we know he's a really good kit player, we thought it would be great to get him to play his drum kit, which then meant we needed to get a bass player. I had a couple of bass players in mind that I wanted to approach but we decided on Carol Jason because she saw us play at the "Friends of Kersal Moor" event we played at and said she was dying to play with us. Carol then crossed paths with Kate as they were both music teachers at King David School and so we asked her to join. It also didn't hurt that she is Jewish. I would also prefer to play with female musicians if I can.

The repertoire is all chosen by me; so far I've got away with that! I think of myself as a benevolent dictator. I canvass opinions from the band and try and make sure they are all happy doing everything the way I want it. The tunes are all well known common tunes and/or tunes that I know I can play well. There is one exception which is Adje Jano, which is a Serbian folk song. There are lots of recordings of it but I particularly love the version on the Cracow Klezmer Band album. I made a CD of Klezmer tunes for one of our previous fiddlers, Thea Spires who has now moved to London and stuck Adje Jano on the CD and didn't say anything about it. She played it lots in the car then came to a rehearsal saying she really wanted to play that tune. Little did she know that that was my cunning plan. Kate had just joined that band and we did a gig in the Hillary Step with both fiddlers as a kind of handover and I also thought that 2 fiddlers would sound great, which it did. As a band we love Adje Jano and are currently trying to move away slightly from the Cracow Klezmer Band version, which we know will just evolve.

The repertoire has plenty of lively tunes, is probably a bit Bulgar heavy. It also has a couple of tunes that speed up, which is a cheesy gimmick but very effective and a couple of horas (or Zhoks) just to slow things down little. There are lots of types of Klezmer tunes that I haven't included in the Yiddlesticks repertoire because I don't think they're exciting enough. I haven't told the band this as they're all quite new to Klezmer and don't know what I've withheld. We have enough tunes for 2 x 45 min spots. Paul has only just started to complain that he finds Terkishers quite boring to play, but I think the way round that is to re-arrange the couple of Terkishers we do so he maybe comes in a bit later or does more picking or something. I haven't quite got my head round Doinas, they're really useful for introducing a lively tune. We have a couple of non-Klezmer sets just to provide variety, namely a set of jigs that we like.

So far the band has played in the Hillary Step twice a year, which is my local pub. We are playing at the Limmud soon, we did that last year and the year before I played with Thea on fiddle and Phil Tomlinson who sings Yiddish songs with The Klatsh. Yiddlesticks weren't really going then. We played at a Poets and Players event, that was passed to us by Ros who was busy donating her kidney to Fish at the time.

We have only just expanded to a 5 piece band so aren't really established with that line-up. Everyone in the band has a very busy life so it is very difficult to arrange rehearsals, it's like herding cats. Our next plan is to record a couple of demos which we will do in February. We will also look to do a couple of pub gigs just to keep us sharp and Carol is going to get us to play at one of her regular jazz night gigs at Cheetham Hill Cricket Club. We're also playing at Mix-Up in February which takes place at the Klondyke club in Levenshulme. They put 3 bands on and split the takings between the 3 bands and it's a really eclectic evening which takes place on the first Thursday of the month.

If we're asked to play somewhere I consider whether it will be an enjoyable thing to do then check if everyone's available to do it. We haven't got to the stage where we're being asked to do lots of stuff. People have started to notice our web site, we were asked to play in an old peoples' home from someone who came across the web site.

We're not particularly ambitious as a band. We don't want to go on tour or get loads of gigs, although more than we have now would be good. it's important that we all get on and enjoy ourselves. Enjoying the rehearsals and hanging out is just as important as the music being of good quality. I try and make sure I've got nice biscuits, real coffee and plenty of tea breaks for the rehearsals and I even gave Paul some whiskey as it was during the festive season.

I don't have a vision of the band sound particularly, but I do want it to sound authentic. Having said that Rich's background is Latin music and some of the tunes have started sounding Latin, that's great.

3) What are your favourite things about playing klezmer music?

I really love the Freyghish mode which gives Klezmer its distinctive sound. Also there are so many different approaches to playing it and bands around the world doing their own take on it. Some use lots of improv and are quite jazzy. It is very challenging and has inspired me to practise. I had got into a bit of rut with my accordion playing and was playing mostly Irish fiddle. I realised that my fiddle playing was not good enough to play Klezmer so I got back onto the accordion again. There is so much good stuff on YouTube. I first heard Eastern European music on Planxty albums from the 1970s. I was then in a band called Horace X playing a strange version of Eastern European music, this was about 1990, they're still going.

Getting into Klezmer just seemed like the next step in my interest in Eastern European music. Klezmer borrows from lots of traditions in Eastern Europe and is a gateway to explore music from those countries further. After watching the film Borat, I bought the soundtrack and then discovered bands like Fanfare Ciocarlia and Kocani Orkestar whose albums I then bought.

I really enjoyed trying to work out how to play the Kopanitsa on the She'Koyokh album that they play after the Philadelphia Sher and also Gaia Rachenitsa on the LKQ album. It's great exploring time signatures that are new to me, getting into those time signatures and finding a way to get a groove going.

Klezmer has given me the opportunity to play with instruments I'd not played with before. When I play for ceilidhs the line-up is usually fiddle, accordion and guitar, with sometimes drums and bass. In Irish music there are banjos, mandolins, bouzoukis, flutes, fiddles, button accordions, whistles, bodhrans. When I started playing Klezmer I found myself next to Simon Carlyle playing the tuba. Brass instruments and clarinets, wow! I have always loved the sound of the clarinet and think the clarinet and accordion is a lovely combination but had never had the opportunity to play with a clarinet. When I started going to the King's Arms and heard Ros playing the clarinet I got really excited. Every time I heard Ros playing over the years I just thought, "I want more of that". Of course since I started the session in the Jolly Angler and have sometimes had 4 clarinets playing at once, the novelty of hearing a clarinet up close soon wore off. I have also heard a lot of loud and out of tune clarinets, so perhaps I have a more realistic view of them now. For years I thought everyone sounded like Ivo Papasov, Ros or Susi Evans. I still like clarinets though, just.

4) Do you have much knowledge about the wider Jewish culture? Has playing klezmer enabled you to find out more about the culture? I remember you saying how difficult it was to interact with the Jewish community in Manchester – do you have any ideas why this is?

I think that I've paid more attention to Jewish culture since I started playing Klezmer. Up until then I didn't know all that much about them.

I now watch any TV programmes about Jews, I wouldn't have watched them before. There was a great documentary called "Strictly Kosher" about Jews in Manchester.

A band called Klezmafour played at the Menorah Synagogue on 23/06/12. I phoned and booked tickets in advance, but when we arrived there was heavy security and I thought we weren't going to get in. I've been told that this is normal for Jewish functions, they're afraid of being attacked so are very secretive and security conscious. Even among the more liberal Jews they don't advertise the fact that they're Jewish. 2000 years of persecution and anti-Semitism has made them very cautious, understandably.

I've also heard that the Jewish community like to keep their business dealings among themselves. I don't know if that's true but I've seen nepotism in jobs that I've had, and growing up in the Irish community I've seen a bit of that, but it might be about just getting people that you know to do things. So it might be human nature rather than a Jewish thing.

I don't think I've gone out of my way to learn about Jewish culture other than watch TV programmes that I might not otherwise have watched. Since getting to know Carol our bass player and Hayley who plays clarinet who is also Jewish, I guess I've spoken to them from time to time about Jewish culture. I met Hayley at KlezNorth last year and she lives in Whitefield, she has become a good friend. They are both quite guarded when they talking about Jewish culture. It reminds me of people in Northern Ireland. My late father was from Fermanagh and you do find people over there being quite guarded, they avoid talking about anything controversial and will only open up if they really trust you or in certain circumstances. Jews have worked quite hard to assimilate, many changed their names. There are also lots of different types of Jews, from very religious wig/hat wearers to liberal reformists, and those Jews who aren't religious at all but regard themselves as Jewish in race or cultural terms only.

5) What is KlezNorth like?

KlezNorth is good fun. It's the only Klezmer weekend that's cheap and relatively easy to get to from Manchester in the country. The format is based on KlezFest which was run by the Jewish Music Institute in London at SOAS, unfortunately they don't run KlezFest anymore because the JMI have had a change of organisation.

At KlezNorth on Friday evening it is usually a session/ceilidh where all the musicians can join in and Judith Plowman usually gets anyone who wants to dance into sets and leads the dances. On Saturday during the day are workshops. This year Christian Dawid is MD so it would be really worthwhile attending his workshops. He is a great Klezmer clarinetist and teacher. On Saturday night they have a cabaret, were anyone who wants to do a spot puts their name down and they perform in the concert. Christian plays too. Everyone else has a sit-down dinner. There is also a pub session in the Bull's Head, led by me, because I didn't

like the formal banquet style and just wanted to play, so they introduced the session for people who didn't want to sit in the hall all night. On Sunday there are a few more workshops and a Groyse Orchestra, where Christians gets everyone to play together in some sort of school orchestra type thing. There are Yiddish singing and history lectures also. It's all done on a shoestring budget which is why it is cheap to attend. You should go.

Appendix E

Personally Conducted Interview Transcriptions

Name: Pippa Goodall (violinist in L'chaim Kapelye)

Date: 24th November 2013

Location: Pippa's house, Manchester

Me: Why did you choose to take the module in September 2012?

Pippa: Because I wanted to do double ensemble performance, and I always liked folk music and I thought klezmer would be quite fun as well, so I just went for it.

Pippa: What did you expect?

Me: I had no idea! I don't know what I expected; I like how it was so relaxed and chilled. I expected it to be quite practical, which it was.

Pippa: What were the first few weeks like if you can remember back?

Me: Well I used to fall asleep in every session! There was a lot of talking. It was because Anna came to the first couple of sessions. In the first two or so when she wasn't there I was the best one at remembering the tunes and stuff, but when Anna did turn up it was a huge confidence blow because she seemed to know everything about it. I really enjoyed learning the tunes.

Pippa: How were you so good at picking up tunes?

Me: I've always been good at remembering tunes I guess. I've done a lot of transcribing from recordings, so I'm used to picking out certain things and remembering that bit for and typing it on the computer. Maybe that helps. Music is kind of like a fluent language to me.

Pippa: What did you find most challenging then, if it wasn't picking up the tunes?

Me: It was actually sekund playing, because I just didn't know what to do. I didn't know what sekund was. When we started I just saw them as chords, and then I had to find the boundaries and experiment. Sekund is just hard to describe, and I remember I wasn't sure whether I should improvise or not. I realised quite a bit later that you need to listen to the whole ensemble to play sekund.

Me: Do you still find sekund challenging?

Pippa: I think I rely on my ear too much. I think of knowing the tune so I know the chords, so I don't actually learn the chords I just know what to expect from the tune.

Me: What did you think about Richard and Ros as teachers?

Pippa: They were great. They were quite chilled and they never got angry!

Me: Did you see them as people who really knew the tradition well?

Pippa: I saw Ros as an actual klezmer musician and Richard as really well-informed.

Me: Did you learn a lot about the wider Yiddish culture?

Pippa: I think they tried to teach us a lot! We watched a couple of DVDs which was really interesting, and then they gave us stuff to read as well.

Me: Do you feel like you got to know a different tradition?

Pippa: The more I played and the further through the year, the more interested I got. Talking to people was most useful to learn about the culture.

Me: So would you say that our experiences outside the university were really important to the overall experience?

Pippa: Yes definitely. The klezmer train and the pub were eye-opening. The guys we met were incredible and we could just learn from them easily. Those two events built my confidence a lot. Even though I didn't really talk to the musicians at those events because I was scared to! They must have thought we were just barging in and didn't know a thing about klezmer. They were very welcoming, though.

Me: So do you think performance is really important to learning klezmer?

Pippa: Yes definitely. Studying klezmer in a classroom doesn't open you up to the full of it, and the full of it is performance.

Me: Yes, well the only time students at the university really study klezmer is in the World Music module when you learn about revivals. Would you call us a revivalist band?

Pippa: I wouldn't say that we set out to do it. We play the music because we love it, but I think we would be happy to be included in the revival, but it's not our main aim.

Me: So how much do you think our klezmer band has progressed since our first performance? If you think back to the Jewish Museum gig we did in December 2012, could you tell me about that?

Pippa: So that was organised by Richard and Ros, and Ros' band and Richard's band were there, too. We were thrown in the deep end a bit, I remember we didn't sort out the arrangements until just before our performance, but I think that was good for us because I think that's what klezmer is about. It's not about planning all the details but seeing where it takes you. The audience were also so welcoming!

Me: Did you feel intimidated playing in front of a lot of Jewish people?

Pippa: Yes. I thought they might judge us, and I think they still do a little bit. I think that audience know the music, kind of like Ros and Richard, and it's part of their lives and its involved in weddings and celebrations, so the pressure of getting it right was there, and I also worry that we might not do it right and they'll get upset.

Me: So do you think we did it right?

I think so! It's all a learning curve! They didn't seem disappointed or angry or that we were intruding. I think it was advertised well enough that we were all beginners so they were quite welcoming. They didn't push us out at all.

Me: I think some of them might be quite pleased that we are learning their music.

Pippa: Yes, I agree.

Me: You're not Jewish, are you?

Pippa: No, not at all! I don't know much about Judaism. I'm quite ignorant about religion in general.

Me: How do our klezmer performances compare to other Western ensembles you play in?

Pippa: Klezmer is much more relaxed and it's way more fun. I look forward to klezmer more than I do for orchestra, because we're a smaller group and because I really enjoy the unpredictability of it. Maybe it's because I know what's going on because I organise quite a lot of the stuff, whereas in orchestra the conductor is who is in control. If I feel that the conductor isn't doing something right then I can't change it, but then in klezmer at least I can discuss it with everyone else.

Me: Do you see klezmer as very separate to your musical experience at university?

Pippa: No, it's very much part of it. I see it as a different style but its all part of the experience.

Me: Does it enhance your Western musical playing?

Pippa: It makes my ear much better with helps with barbershop, which is mostly off by heart. With klezmer, when you play sekund or the tune, you have to listen to the band the whole time so it makes that easier as well. In klezmer you're forced to do it, whereas in orchestra you can get away with not doing it, but playing klezmer makes it more likely to happen.

Me: So why did you continue to play in the klezmer band after the module was officially over?

Pippa: think originally Richard said something about doing a gig in June, so that helped to see something happening in the future that wasn't assessed. Also because most of us wanted to keep playing together it just kind of happened, and I really enjoyed it and making friends with people.

Me: Do you feel like we are quite different from how we used to be?

Pippa: I think we're not so attached to the university. We're all so enthusiastic about it, and I feel like we are much more freelance musicians and we don't have to jump through hoops.

Me: Do you think the assessment limited our creative choices, then?

Pippa: I think our attitudes have changed. I love the violin but I hate being assessed on it as there is so much pressure to get a good mark and if you don't get a good mark then you think that other people don't love it. The only assessment we get now is people booking us, which is much more fun!

Me: Do you think our band has a different identity now we are more freelance?

Pippa: Having said that we're not as connected to the uni, I think we still like that connection to be there because it tells people how we started playing. We still represent the university a little bit but I think we have our own identity now. Our identity isn't Jewish and we don't represent Jewish culture, even though our non-Jewish music friends might see us as doing that but inside we represent ourselves.

Me: So we represent how we like to play music and how we have a connection to it?

Pippa: Yes, and when we play in front of a Jewish audience I think we are still very much external to the culture. It's not that they make me feel like an outsider, I just feel that myself.

Me: Do you ever think you could feel like an insider?

Pippa: Yes, I think that an appropriate number of experience and years. I think it's just getting more performances within the community and knowing more people.

Me: How would you feel playing at a Jewish celebration?

Pippa: Slightly terrified, but as long as it was organised it would be fine! I feel like it would be a big step forwards in being accepted more into the community, because events like Bar or Bat Mitzvahs means that a Jewish family have invited you in to play which would be great. Even the gig we have booked in February 2014 in the Whitefield Synagogue, that's still kind of like they're inviting us in to play and be part of their event.

Me: So what do you think was the purpose of us playing at the gig we did a couple of weeks ago at the Jewish and Muslim event?

Pippa: Our purpose was to help with the bonding of the Jewish and Muslim people.

Me: Do you mean the music helps to create the bond or we did?

Pippa: The music definitely. It was quite bizarre how none of us are Jewish or Muslim, but all that mattered was the music we provided.

Me: Do you think the audience enjoyed our more experimental pieces like Dragons or the one Dan has composed?

Pippa: I would like to think so, but I'm not very good at working out people's reactions. I think our new pieces show our development as a band because we would never have been allowed to perform those kinds of pieces in our assessment. We have a lot more choice now.

Me: Do you think we choose pieces that sound a bit like klezmer to us even if we don't always research it properly?

Pippa: I think we still know what traditional klezmer is, but we are comfortable enough now to know how much we can branch out. If something doesn't work it doesn't matter, but it's worth trying.

Me: Where did you get your 'Peace in the Streets' song from?

Pippa: I went to a Yiddish song workshop in Chorlton which was advertised in one of Richard's emails, and I thought I'd give it a go because we're an instrumental group and I thought it would be quite nice to learn some songs. There were only about 6 of us and everyone else was really Jewish, but this guy led it and he handed out music for songs and we sang it though, and we talked about pronunciations and we had a break about half way through because it was a three-hour workshop but the time just flew because it was so interesting. They were so accepting. Maybe it's just a personal fear of not being accepted so maybe that's why I'm so paranoid about that kind of stuff and am surprised when people are welcoming, but it was so good. When we did Peace in the Streets we finished with it, and we were all just singing it and swaying together, and then we all stood up and put our arms around each other and just stood there singing it and feeling it. A part of my brain was like 'oh my god people are touching me', and then another part of my brain was saying 'this is so weird' but then most of my brain was thinking how natural this is. One of the things we did in the workshop was about the songs about being put in concentration camps and how the Nazis were trying so hard to stop it but years and years later the Jewish culture is still going, and especially with the Yiddish revival that has happened in recent years. It was that feeling in the Peace in the Streets when we were singing it at the end of the session of community, and I knew I was part of a community that was so accepting and we all loved singing, and we were all together.

Me: Were they surprised that you were there?

Pippa: I'm not sure. They knew I was a music student, and they also knew I wasn't Jewish. I think they would have been a bit more confused if I wasn't a student, but then again I also think that they are very accepting people and as long as you love the music, anyone can learn klezmer or Yiddish songs.

Me: So how far do you think our band can go?

Pippa: I think we can go very far. I think we can still play gigs in the Jewish community and maybe do some Bar or Bat Mitzvahs. I want to keep playing because I enjoy it so much and I love everyone in our band – there isn't someone I hate or anything! We all have such a good time together, and we've got to know each other really well even though we're all so different.

Me: What do you think about the mix of different instruments in the band?

Pippa: I think it helps us to branch out and do some unconventional or experimental klezmer tunes. I think the balance is really good, and it makes it quite different. We have two bass instruments and then the rest is really well-matched and balanced.

Me: So if someone asked you to describe our band, what would you say?

Pippa: I'd say we are a klezmer band who wants to play to people and provide enjoyment for anyone who wants to listen.

Me: Does getting paid for gigs make a difference?

Pippa: The money certainly helps. I would still do it for free, because it is so much fun but being paid makes it seem more professional.

Me: Ok. So is your involvement with klezmer mainly due to the music itself?

Pippa: Yes definitely. It's all about the interaction amongst us as players and I do it because the music is incredible. I didn't continue it to be part of the Jewish community or to be accepted by the people within that community; I continued to play because I love the tunes and I love the chords and the dynamic of the group. If I make Jewish people happy, or anyone happy, then that's great but I'm not too bothered about being part of the culture, but the idea that I am or I could be isn't a bad thing!

Name: Lucie Phillips (Bassist and Singer in L'chaim Kapelye)

25th November 2013

Location: Starbucks Precint Oxford Road, Manchester

Me: Why did you choose to take the klezmer module?

Lucie: I chose the klezmer module because I was interested in the music through jazz, Some of the county groups I was in back home like big band and some smaller ensembles had some tasters of Eastern European music and I liked the link that it has with improvisation, but I didn't know anything about klezmer music itself I just knew it was Jewish music. I didn't know about the revival or anything. It just interested me to do a type of music that I had never done before, and I didn't want to do Gamelan!

Me: So were you interested in 'world music' generally?

Lucie: Definitely, I'm studying world music currently and doing ethno next year, too. It's just really nice to learn about different cultures and get out of the western world a bit and learn how cultures treat music, and it's really interesting how different they do treat it. In some cultures you don't have to be an elite musician to be good.

Me: What did you find most challenging about the klezmer course?

Lucie: think just getting my head around the actual feel of the music. It's really important to lose your western ear.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Lucie: In western music it's so strict and regimented and there's a set rhythm and there's notation – we never learn anything by ear. Whereas in klezmer, it's more beneficial to learn it aurally because it really frees you up and the whole point of klezmer is not to have everyone playing the same melody at the same tempo, so there's unity and diversity, too.

Me: So what kind of skills did you develop whilst playing in the ensemble?

Lucie: Definitely listening to each other – my ear has broadened in terms of listening to each other and moving as a unit, and also it's improvised my ear in terms of pitches and intervals so that helps you to arrange things.

Me: How would you compare it to playing in your band or other western ensembles?

Lucie: My function band for example is quite free but it's because we know the music inside out, but it takes the westerner a lot longer to mess around with the music, whereas in klezmer we do that from the offset.

Me: And obviously that comes with the social interaction amongst the ensemble. So with your band at home you know each other really well, whereas when we started klezmer we didn't all know each other.

Lucie: Definitely, and now we do know each other better and there is an element of trust so we are more comfortable.

Me: What did you think of Richard and Ros as teachers?

Lucie: I saw them more as tutors/mentors. At the beginning they gave us more guidance, and that was when they taught us about the culture and about the different dances used at weddings, whereas towards our assessment it was our job to find our pieces and arrange it. We weren't left alone in a negative way.

Me: So have you enhanced your understanding of Jewish culture at all?

Lucie: Definitely. We were saying in the world music class the other day that playing the music gives you a window into another culture that you wouldn't necessarily interact with otherwise. But, there's still a difference between accessing the culture and the religious. They're still very separate. We can interact with them socially but not religiously.

Me: So you just mentioned that playing is really important to engaging with a culture. Do you think that performance is particularly important to learning klezmer? And not just rehearsing in a room together?

Lucie: Absolutely. It's such a different atmosphere. The first time we did a gig and people started dancing we were so surprised and it was really uplifting! We realised it's really a music for joy. Performance is so important.

Me: What about the different performances we have done – can you compare our assessment performance, which was in a concert hall with not many people watching, to the performances we have done in the Jewish museum where the audience is mostly Jewish and they have paid to come and see us?

Lucie: The gigs in the museum have been so much more enjoyable. They've been the real thing in a way – its entertaining and enjoyed by people, whereas in our assessment it was more a more formal presentation. People weren't dancing! In our assessment it wasn't as natural, and I think the fact that we had to describe our piece first was different because we usually wouldn't have to do that with a Jewish audience. In the Jewish museum people know our pieces.

Me: So how do you think the Jewish audience perceive us?

Lucie: I think we have been very fortunate in how well we have been received. When we did the Michael Kahan day, a guy came up to me afterwards and asked me if I was Jewish, because apparently we performed with 'Jewish passion' which was amazing because we're still learning all the time, and that was a while ago but it constantly surprises me how the Jewish audience enjoy it and they think we provide a good representation of their music

Me: So do you think you have been able to access a culture through klezmer? Do you feel like an insider or an outsider?

Lucie: From my experience it depends on the people, but they all have been so friendly and very willing to welcome us. I guess it might be different in other communities, but also the nature of the music itself helps us become insiders because it isn't restrictive. Our band is such a combination of instruments and I think there is something for everyone, and this reflects in the feeling of the music. A share of passion for the music is most important and helps everyone unite.

Me: Do you feel as though your identity as a musician has changed at all from playing klezmer?

Lucie: I don't think I was particularly shut off to things in the first place, but it has made me appreciate things in a different way, as I'm more of an insider to the music and I appreciate the people of the klezmer tradition as well as the music itself. I don't feel like an onlooker. I always think it would be interesting for the gamelan musicians at university to experience performances outside of the university like we have as I think they would experience something similar to what we have. My enjoyment of klezmer has definitely made me perform more klezmer so it's a bigger part of my life.

Me: So why did you decide to carry on playing klezmer after the assessment?

Lucie: I think the important thing was that we all wanted to continue it. We all bonded over the music, and we wouldn't have become friends if it wasn't for the course so that was important. Everyone has fallen in love with the music and we were all willing. We had a couple of people who didn't want to continue it, but then we were left with who really wanted to carry it on. The social interaction between us was a massive part of continuing to play in the band. We were improving all the time still and it would have been a shame to just stop.

Me: Do you think we have developed as a band since we have become L'Chaim Kapelye?

Lucie: Definitely. The absence of assessment has taken the pressure off and we've started branching out with what pieces we play. For our assessment pieces we had to play traditional eastern European klezmer, but now we can be a bit more creative. I guess we are more like a revival band now because we can be as creative as possible and are more independent. I arranged the piece by Caravan Palace which I wouldn't have done when we were in the Michael Kahan Kapelye.

Me: Yes, tell me about how you decided to arrange that song?

Lucie: Well I've always thought of Caravan Palace as a mix of Ukrainian and Balkan music, so that reminded me of klezmer. There are a few more songs on their album that could also be arranged for our klezmer band, too. I think it's the off-beat rhythms that remind me most of klezmer, and just the freedom of it. Even though it's electronic, the violin and clarinet solos make it freer.

Me: How do you find playing both bass and singing in the band? Is it a different experience?

Lucie: It's completely different roles! The bass is always the bass line and occasionally a bit of melody, but it gives me a different dynamic and different skills are required. On the bass I'm the bottom, but singing enables me to realise how important the bass is so it's a good experience!

Me: How far do you think our band could go? We're getting more gigs and more visibility within Manchester; do you think we can keep playing for a long time?

Lucie: It's interesting, and I've been wondering that myself recently. We keep getting better but at the same time people are trying to work out what they are going to do next year and if they are going to stay in Manchester. The sad reality of it is that we might end as a band because people might move away. I know I'm staying in Manchester for longer so I would love to keep it going, but I guess it depends what our aims are – so if we want to make a living out of it or if it's just a part-time thing. I think, personally, it would just be a fun part-time thing for me.

Me: So how would you place L'Chaim Kapelye within the Manchester klezmer scene?

Lucie: Well, inside the university we aren't a revival band because we don't really have the politics and it was taught to us instead of us deciding to come together to form a revival band.

But I wonder if it's viewed different in the Jewish community in the Manchester, because they see us as representing a revival of Jewish culture.

Me: Have you been involved in any of the revival scene events in Manchester, like the pub sessions of the klezmer train?

Lucie: No, unfortunately I've always had gigs when those things are on! I really want to though.

Me: Ok, so how would you describe our band if someone asked you about L'Chaim Kapelye?

Lucie: I always started off by describing what klezmer is, and then it's important to explain the rhythms and I always sing a bit of Mazel Tov because everyone recognises it! It's hard to describe to people who have no concept of what klezmer is. We didn't really know what it was until we started playing it

Me: So what has been the most enjoyable thing about playing in the klezmer band?

Lucie: I think it's the bond between us all and how that has been allowed by the music, and I think that's so important because we have accessed a different culture. We have been welcomed by the Jewish community and other musicians which has been amazing. It's like the music allows us to experience a different culture, and then people outside of the university embrace that. My main motivation, I think, is because of the music and playing in a band together and learning a really interesting style of music.

Name: Jemima Kingsland (Flautist in L'chaim Kapelye)

Date: 26th November 2013

Location: Jemima's house, Manchester

Me: Tell me why you decided to choose the klezmer module.

Jemima: I chose it because I thought it would be fun. I remember we did a klezmer arrangement in Hampshire wind band during college, and I saw the klezmer module and I thought it would be good!

Me: What was the arrangement like?

Jemima: It was really cheesy but fun so I thought I'd give it a try!

Me: So did you have any preconceptions about the klezmer style or what the course would entail? Or did you just know that it was probably going to be fun?

Jemima: I didn't have a clue. I knew that it was learning things by ear and doing some improvisation and stuff.

Me: So you knew it was non-Western?

Jemima: Yes but apart from that I didn't know much at all.

Me: So what was the most challenging aspect of learning klezmer in the first few weeks of the course?

Jemima: Probably just how different it is to western classical music. I've never learnt music by ear before; not with anything, so that was really difficult. It was just little things like pushing the beat forward, just because it's going against everything you've been taught previously.

Me: So what did you think of Richard and Ros as the teachers?

Jemima: Great! Those lectures that we had on background and culture were really good. I really liked them.

Me: Why did you like them?

Jemima: Just because it gave you a bit of background about the music and I gained more understanding.

Me: So do you feel like you have more of an understanding now?

Jemima: Yes, I know what it's for and its history.

Me: So, you just touched on this, but how much do you understand about the wider Jewish or Yiddish culture now after playing klezmer?

Jemima: I don't feel like I understand that much still because we've never really seen it in the context it's meant to be in. Maybe if we played in a Bar Mitzvah I would understand more.

Me: So how important do you think the performances of our klezmer band are, compared to just rehearsing?

Jemima: Really important because, well, klezmer is meant to be played to other people. The one at the Jewish museum was good, because it made me loosen up because a lot of things went wrong but it didn't matter! It made me think differently about it and how it doesn't matter if you get things wrong, it was really helpful.

Me: So if you compare the performances we've done outside of the university to the assessment we had, how was the experience of performing in the Cosmo different?

Jemima: It was really different. It was a lot scarier. In our performances outside of the university people sing along or clap or dance, but then in the Cosmo it didn't really feel like the right environment to do klezmer. It sort of felt like if I made a mistake it would be really bad.

Me: So what about the different audiences we perform in front of? When you play in front of a Jewish audience how does that make you feel?

Jemima: It's sort of better and worse because it's reassuring because they know the tunes and they know that we are quite new to the tradition and the Jewish people are really welcoming, but at the same time they would know if we were bad! They've been listening to klezmer all their lives so they know the tunes really well.

Me: So do you think there is more pressure in a way'?

Jemima: Yes definitely, and just to do the music justice because it's so important to culture.

Me: Yes, I agree. So why do you think our band has had such a good reception from the Jewish community?

Jemima: I think maybe because we're trying! They can see that we are really enjoying it and we're putting a lot of effort into it and that's more important than if we perform perfectly.

Me: Do you think they watch us perform because of their Jewish cultural heritage? Or just because they feel like they should go?

Jemima: I think they go for personal reasons. The Jewish community is quite tight knit so I think it's a way to experience something they don't often experience.

Me: So why did you continue to be in the band after the assessment?

Jemima: It's so much fun! It's a nice break from the rest of my degree, like orchestra rehearsals which are great but they can be a bit stressful whereas klezmer is so different and it makes a nice break. Its nice being in the ensemble too because we get on really well together.

Me: So you think social interaction within the group is important?

Jemima: Yes, definitely. We're all good friends which is great

Me: How do you think we've changed as a band now we're more independent from the university?

Jemima: It's definitely changed the choice of repertoire and the gigs we do. Last year we did a few performances, but we've got more gigs now and we're doing a student gig in Fallowfield so we're reaching more people. Doing 'Dragons' is also quite experimental.

Me: Yes. So when we do our gig in Vodka revs in January, what do you think the purpose is?

Jemima: I think, aside from the fact it'll be fun, I think most people at uni don't really understand what klezmer is so if they come to one of our gigs they can experience it. Also, with a range of pieces they can understand both Eastern-European mixed music and more traditional klezmer.

Me: So we can show them traditional and the fusion klezmer?

Jemima: Yes definitely. It should be fun.

Me: How much do you understand about the revival and the revival scene in Manchester?

Jemima: Not really much at all. I know there is a music scene outside of the university, but I don't really know why.

Me: Ok, well basically when the Eastern-European klezmer musicians migrated to America around 1900, the klezmer style really changed because the music became Americanised. So when it was revived in the 70s and 80s in America, they were reviving the 'America-style klezmer' and secular Jewish musicians were kind of engaging with their cultural heritage via music, and non-Jewish musicians just liked the music I guess! I was going to ask if you would identify L'Chaim Kapelye as a revivalist band, but I guess if you don't know much about it, and I don't think many of us do, then we're not.

Jemima: No, not really. I guess we are indirectly because we are bringing klezmer music to the Jewish community, but it's indirect because we're not reviving it for ourselves.

Me: So what's the most enjoyable thing about klezmer, if it's not part of your cultural heritage?

Jemima: I think the social interaction between us is definitely part of it. I think the way the performances happen as well, because the gigs are so informal and people get dancing and its fun. Everyone is enjoying klezmer how they like – some people dance, some people just listen, and it doesn't matter.

Me: So compared to Western ensembles what are they main differences?

Jemima: In klezmer we listen to each other more because we have to. I think not having music there makes such a big difference because there's more interaction between us and with the audience, and they audience feel more involved because there's no barrier there and they feel more comfortable, too. I remember one evening I had two gigs – the first one was playing in orchestra, and then we went straight to a klezmer gig and it really showed the difference!

Me: So how would you describe L'Chaim Kapelye?

Jemima: I'd say it is a student band that started out doing traditional klezmer within uni, but now we've got a few links with the Jewish community and we've started branching out by playing different styles and fusions.

Me: How far do you think we can go? We're getting more gigs, but do you think we will play for a long time or play more traditional?

Jemima: I think it depends on what we get asked to do. If we get asked to do Bar Mitzvahs and weddings than we can quite easily turn into a traditional klezmer band, but if we do more gigs in other places then we might get more experimental.

Me: So do you think the audience we play in front influences what we play?

Jemima: Yes definitely. For example, if we're doing a gig for mainly Jewish people we might not do 'Dragons'. We wouldn't play lots of slow and traditional stuff if we're doing a gig for our fellow music students because they'll want to dance!

Me: Do you feel your identity as a musician has changed at all by learning klezmer?

Jemima: A little bit I think. I feel as though if I hadn't learnt klezmer I would just be a classically trained flautist who just plays in orchestra, but by playing klezmer it's made me realise I can do something else if I wanted. Not necessarily as a career, but it has changed me as a musician. I would never have thought I could do anything like klezmer before – learning things by ear and playing without music would have scared me too much before! I'd loved playing jazz before but wouldn't have been able to improvise before klezmer.

Me: So what's been your favourite or most enjoyable experience so far of learning klezmer?

Jemima: I think our second gig at the Jewish museum in June 2013. There were lots of people in the audience who had seen us in our gig in November 2012 and I think they could see how much we had improved. I felt more comfortable. The audience were so supportive and I loved playing with bands and playing for dancing.

Name: Ros Hawley (klezmer clarinettist and tutor of the Michael Kahan Kapelye)

Date: 4th December 2013

Location: Martin Harris Centre, University of Manchester

Me: Could you tell me how you first got into klezmer?

Ros: Well I started off as a classically trained musician and I did my 4 years at college and then after that, it was on a postgraduate course, I just came across somebody by chance who played klezmer music and probably had a similar feeling at the time. She played in a baroque orchestra and fancied having a change by learning a different music and she'd found some [klezmer] tunes, so that inspired me to find out a bit more. Then I realised there was a folk scene in Manchester, and a klezmer scene, so that's how I then tried to find out more about the repertoire and who was playing the repertoire. So I went from playing from using music to playing by ear, and another really big key point for me was when I bought some CDS and I wrote to a clarinet player called Kurt Bjorling, who is a very important clarinet player in the klezmer scene and he's done a lot of important things about archive recordings in America. I found his address by chance on a CD cover so I wrote to him saying I really want to learn more about the music but I don't know what to do next. He signposted me and said to not use music, try and learn by ear, listen to these recordings, and he talked about playing on a C clarinet and not a B flat clarinet, so he gave me some real concrete information. From that I got involved with the Jewish music institute in London and went to Klezfest in London, so from a basic idea of wanting something different from my music it became more formal learning. In 2004 I got funding to go to klezcamp in America, and I went to Germany and to London which was very important.

Me: Do you play classical music at all anymore?

Ros: No, just klezmer. I do some improvisation as well; not particularly jazz but more modal. But I don't use music anymore, and I used to use it all the time.

Me: You play in a klezmer band, don't you?

Ros: Yes I play in a quartet.

Me: How did you all meet and get together?

Ros: Well John the accordion player was involved in the folk scene in Manchester and the first group I played with he was in that group, and we've sort of stayed together since. He's quite interested in klezmer music but also in other folk musics as well. Mark is a guitarist and he's quite interested in Greek music actually but plays a bit of klezmer as well, and our bass player, he also plays a lot of jazz. We're quite a mixed group really.

Me: How different is teaching klezmer compared to performing it? What's it like to teach in the university, and to teach students who have probably never played it before? What are the challenges?

Ros: There are a few challenges. One of the key ones, which I think gets mentioned in the Ted Solis' book, is timescales. I look at the tradition from my own learning, which is learning a lot by ear and playing for dancing, and being part of a big community and learning in that way, but obviously in the university we only have a set number of hours a year where we can spend time with the students. We have to decide which parts of what the students learn are about ear training, and what we have to use written music for, so that's a big challenge. And then looking at how music is used and interpreted differently to how classical music might be interpreted. When people see manuscript they have a lot of classical reference points, so the key thing is to try and encourage that it's different. What is missing – as in what does the written music not tell you – is important and we have to work on it.

Me: How do you think the actual assessment shapes the course? The course is about learning a new tradition, but in the end we do have to be assessed on our performance. Does that limit the course or change how you approach it?

Ros: At the beginning I probably thought it gave it a limit in some ways, but then you realise there are some things you can't change and our module sits in a very definite place within the university so we can't ever change that. The performance side actually then gives the course a strong focus within a context that everyone understands, so I think it is a really important part of the course. Also, particularly working within the university, learning about klezmer style and learning about the culture brings in the whole idea of being a creative musician where we have to think about instruments and balance. One year we might have 3 cellos, 1 flute and 4 clarinets, so we have to think about how to make that work creatively and the students have to think creatively. What I'd like for the students is that not only do they come away with an insight into klezmer, but they can also think creatively about their music making, so in terms of their music making they can take a melody and realise there are lots of ways to rearrange and play it. So thinking in a way that is more creative is important, and they have an

ownership of the music as it's not just what someone has told them to play. For me, that's very important.

Me: So do you think that klezmer, as compared to maybe playing in orchestra or a western music ensemble, klezmer promotes that creativity more?

Ros: From my own personal experience, I would say so. It gave me something that I was looking for. I was playing in orchestras but it didn't really set me on fire, whereas playing klezmer, you're playing in smaller groups with more of a range of groups, and you come across musicians from different backgrounds, and you're thinking about the music in a completely different way. You're learning by ear which is again very different, and it helped me to make connections with my music that classical music hadn't.

Me: How important are the klezmer ensemble's performances outside the university?

Ros: I think it's so important because, especially when you're studying music you're looking at it in an intense way, and I think because we've brought this music into the university it's also important to acknowledge its relationship outside of it, particularly as there has been a folk scene which has examined klezmer and its important to make a connection with that so the students can see that there are lots of different ways to perform and make music, and there are different cultures that exist. Also very important is the link with the Jewish museum, as we're playing music of a heritage that isn't really ours. There might be one or two Jewish people who join the ensemble but it's important to think about the context. The music comes from somewhere and it has a resonance with people and it's really important to have an understanding of that.

Me: So do you feel as though you're inside that tradition? Do you feel like an outsider, or do you feel like an insider of klezmer music?

Ros: I feel very welcomed. The klezmer scene is very open and the thing that is important to people is that you understand the music and you're fired up to play it and you have a passion for it, and people will recognise that. Whether you're Jewish or not comes as a secondary thing, and with the people that I've met it hasn't really been an issue.

Me: So you've never had a problem with not being Jewish?

Ros: Not within the klezmer scene, but sometimes in communities sometimes, as occasionally I've been cancelled for gigs just because I'm a woman and not a man, so with more orthodox communities it can be a slight problem. I think you're always aware that it isn't your culture, but within the musical sphere I think that people are very open. Everyone has their own take on things, and even the music is very autonomous which can be seen when you're working within the ensemble, and everyone supports each other by playing the sekund or bass line, and I think the same principle is found amongst the musicians who are part of that world.

Me: How do you think that course shapes us as musicians? Does it have a long lasting effect, or is it a temporary musical experience?

Ros: I think it's very individual. I think people take from the experience what they will, and I think that some musicians probably come to the ensemble thinking that they really want to

learn klezmer, some may just want to try something different, and some may even just be there because their options were not what they wanted and arrived at klezmer, so everybody then takes from it, but I think everyone is possibly just looking for something a bit different. I think it depends on how open you are, but I would hope that it gives people an opportunity to be exposed and to experience music of another culture, and they learn there are many ways to learn music, and it's important to open up and broaden people's experience of making music. It will hopefully be a signpost to those who want to go on to study it further, or for people to form their own bands, and as long as people gain something positive from the experience and it enriches their learning then I think it [the course] has achieved something.

Name: Max Dunbar (CEO of the Manchester Jewish Museum)

10th January 2014

Location: The Manchester Jewish Museum

Me: How did the collaboration between the music department and the Jewish museum happen?

Max: I was given Richard's contact details by one of our trustees who teaches at MMU (Manchester Metropolitan University), and he said that Richard was keen to get more involved with the museum. From that, we met and the rest is history as they say. We both could see the potential in the collaboration; we started off with one concert which was a huge success. That was about 18 months ago; I think we did it as a Hanukkah concert. From that we've had two other concerts, and as you know, the Shanahan festival.

Me: What were the initial aims and motivations when you spoke to Richard?

Max: I think for me, I wanted to try and somehow make this museum more of a Jewish cultural centre by trying new artists, and testing new ideas and experimenting with the space, so I think, you know, when Richard and I first spoke it ticked a lot of boxes. It's using Jewish culture and Jewish heritage, and musical traditions, but doing it with a bit of a twist, as we aren't bringing in usual klezmer musicians that members of the community may have seen. It's introducing them to a new set of musicians who sort of give klezmer a bit of a twist.

Me: So do you think there's something quite unique about the fact that we're outsiders to the community?

Max: I think, it's hard to say, but if when you look around when you're performing here, it doesn't look like it matters. You're looking at the faces of the audiences and I don't think it matters to them – they're just enjoying the music and the performance. But perhaps, the way you've done it over the past three or 4 concerts, you've experimented a bit more in terms of using the space and bands playing off each other, which I don't think you'd get, you know, in a traditional community band. That would be very much more just standing in front of everyone and playing in front of an audience, so I think it's maybe different in the sense you're prepared to try new things and you're students and, with the hard times as well, it's an interesting collaboration because there's a sort of generational juxtaposition. There's young

and old, Jewish and non-Jewish, and it's kind of a huge melting pot of different ages and backgrounds that make the performances really special. That's why I'm keen to continue this.

Me: Did you think it would be this successful?

Max: No, when I first started organising events, we had some quite interesting talks and you know we get about 20/30 people come along. When we first advertised the first klezmer concert I expected 30/40 people to come, but we sold out, and they all have been since then. I just think though that with the klezmer concerts, there are serious klezmer fans in the community. I speak to a lot of people who hate klezmer, you know staff and trustees, too, and you say there's a klezmer concert and they run a mile – they're just not interested at all! But then, at the opposite spectrum, there are members of the community who will come, you know, if we put on 5 klezmer concerts over 5 months, they will come to all of them, even if it's the same music. They're huge klezmer fans. So in a way I guess these concerts have made me realise that putting on a klezmer concert will always interest certain members of the community. No matter how experimental we get, we're never going to get other sections of the community in, unless you take out the word klezmer.

Me: Do you think that the fact that it's a musical event makes it more appealing to people? You compare it to the talks where you get maybe 30/40 people, whereas with music it may be more fun or interactive?

Max: Yes, I think the concert, you know, it's more of an entertaining night out. We've done them in the evenings, not in the afternoon, so it's nice to see a concert in the evening.

Me: What are the talks you do about? Are they about Jewish heritage and Jewish culture?

Max: Yes they're a mixture really. A lot of our talks about based around our exhibitions, so the last exhibition was Sehgal so we had Jewish artists. We've had holocaust survivors come in and talk here. We've had students talk about local Jewish history, so there's a mixture of Jewish art, history and culture.

Me: What do you think the audience members get from that? Compared to what they might get from a concert?

Max: I think those talks are very specialist. So if you come to a talk about Sehgal, you're obviously interested in his work. Klezmer is more of a movement and you know it's for klezmer music fans. It's a bit broader –if you like klezmer, then a klezmer concert will always have a more broad appeal than a specific talk than a Rabbi from the 19th century.

Me: Do you think that the audience members might re-experience their past and they come to the concerts to experience their old Jewish heritage?

Max: I'd never really heard klezmer before working with Richard, and I think that was one of the things that struck me. Particularly at the second concert where you asked people to dance, and I thought no way, you know, knowing the sort of audiences that come here. They're retired some, and some are quite elderly - they complain about our seats so they won't get up dancing! But we saw the whole museum come alive: the women were dancing, and they automatically knew how to dance together which goes back to the idea of having a collective identity of growing up and you know a lot of it is based around weddings and celebrations so

you know it's a huge part of Jewish culture. In a way it's very similar to that, it's a celebration of klezmer music, shown by the fact that all those women came up and volunteered to dance!

Me: And they always ask for more dancing – I remember at the last concert a woman came up to me and told me that we need more dancing!

Max: I think it's just so ingrained with the culture. At weddings, the music and dancing is so important. I think a lot of it probably comes from going to Jewish weddings.

Me: How far do you think the collaboration between the museum and the university go?

Max: Well I had a chat with Richard the other week, and I'd like to keep experimenting more and see how far we can push it. We were looking at how klezmer is in Manchester and how it came here from European and American roots, and Manchester has always been in the middle. It's [klezmer] went via Manchester to America and back to Manchester. I'm keen to see how klezmer can evolve in Manchester over the next 50 years. It's had its European and American influences, but I was saying to Richard I wonder how Manchester music and culture might change klezmer over the next 50 years, and thinking like experimenting with other Manchester musicians.

Me: Would you think about communicating with the Manchester revivalist community?

Max: I see no reason why not.

Me: Why do you think you haven't interacted with them?

Max: I think it's part of a bigger issue that museums have. We need to have been doing more with all sections of the community and across the city with everyone and we just haven't. Those relationships haven't been developed how they should have been but hopefully now things will begin to change.

Me: Maybe there's a barrier because the klezmer community are mainly not Jewish. Do you think it matters that we're not Jewish?

Max: Having been at the concerts, then not at all. It would be interesting if you think any of the audiences members do, but I say by looking at their reactions and listening to feedback they say your concerts are their best nights they've had at the museum so I think, as an audience member, it's clearly not an issue. As a musician I don't know - I couldn't comment on how you play klezmer.

Me: How do you advertise us? How do you label us?

Max: We always say a 'gathering of the klezmerim' and we advertise the names of the bands, and then we do mention that there's a university connection and I do like to emphasise that they should expect klezmer with a twist - it's not just a traditional klezmer concert, and we do try new things and you may be surprised at what you see and hear. It's nice to have that kind of quirky twist to it, it just gets people excited.

Me: And you prepare people in case they expect to hear really traditional klezmer

Max: Yes so they'll gather that you are university students, there will be 3 bands, and that it's going to be something a bit exciting so they're prepared. We advertise through the Jewish telegraph, the main Manchester Jewish paper, obviously our website and social media. We send posters to synagogues across the North – Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow - and we email to ask them to put them on their notice boards. An e-bulletin is sent which goes to about 2,500 people. A real mixture of the Jewish community is reached, but the e-bulletin goes to people who visit us who are interested in Jewish culture. There's a real range of people who we target – young and old.

Me: Do you think our band has changed over time?

Max: I think you're more confident, and the act that you're composing your own pieces and talking about them and Pippa was singing in Yiddish, so I think that is definitely coming across that confidence is growing, and confidence with the subject. You're developing the subject further.

Me: And you don't mind that we're developing things and experimenting?

Max: No it's what I encourage. Richard and I were brainstorming and I said it would be great if we could somehow mix it all up and have the musicians working with pop music or jazz or band on the wall, or folk musicians and rap and street. Really sort of get other musicians in Manchester and somehow use the basis of klezmer to see how they react and work together. I think it blew Richard's mind! It could be interesting to work with someone like band on the wall, as a sort of rap artist that could do some work with L'Chaim Kapelye. This is what I'm talking about – klezmer in Manchester and how it develops over time.

Me: I guess because Manchester is thriving with life and it's so musical, it's great to experiment with that kind of thing.

Max: Particularly Cheetham Hill, it's such a diverse place with a Muslim community and a huge Ukrainian centre where you performed. Their music is very interesting because it's all Eastern European folk music, so very similar sound to klezmer.

Me: Klezmer is a fusion anyway, so it's already got that potential to go other places.

Max: Yes, so maybe you could find a hip hop artist to collaborate with you! We could put it on here and think who we could market it at, but I think we'd still get some of our audience but I think we'd have to make it clear that it isn't another traditional klezmer concert. Klezmer with even more of a twist!

Me: Have you got anything else to say?

Max: Just that it's been really exciting so far, and it would be interesting to see where we go next. We're looking at June for another one, and at the same time talking to Richard, and we want to develop it but we also recognise that the formula works right now, and sometimes there's no point changing it when people want this. Or maybe offering what they want but also developing things at the same time.

Me: Is working with Richard important?

Me: Yes, Richard and Ros. We've just put in some funding for a whole day festival in March to work with other museums in Manchester. We'd hope there will be performances and Ros can do a family workshop so it would be interesting to see klezmer workshops beginning which we've never done before. Looking at klezmer from an educational view is new and getting children to learn about the music is just another way klezmer can be used to reach different audiences.

We stopped recording at this point, but we continued to talk and Max said something that I wanted to remember, and so I switched the recorder back on.

Max: For the museum, what we're trying to do is to get new audiences to the museum and learn about Jewish heritage and culture, and at the moment we're finding that younger members aren't engaged with the museum. Their grandparents may be interested, but by collaborating with contemporary Manchester musicians, like hip hop or pop, maybe even Elbow, they might be more interested! It's getting those contemporary musicians that young Jewish people listen to and fusing it together with traditional klezmer so it's a really exciting opportunity to engage with young Jewish people because not only are you providing them with new music but also they can relate to their history and their own culture which otherwise they won't do. A contemporary twist might get them interested. You'd still need to keep the current events for the older generation, but to also start putting on some contemporary klezmer stuff to get younger people, and the workshops, too, to educate children about the origins of klezmer and learning about it.

Name: Sue Cooper (Double bassist in Klezmic and specialist klezmer dance teacher)

Date: 29th January 2014

Location: the Green Fish Resource Centre, Manchester

Me: I'm doing my dissertation on klezmer in Manchester as I play in a klezmer band, and I've been told by many people that you're an important person to talk to about klezmer! How did you discover klezmer?

Sue: I'm Jewish, and my grandparents came here from Poland and Russia. I was growing up in the 50s and 60s with a very secular and left-wing Jewish background. The environment I was raised in hardly ever went to shall apart from weddings and bar mitzvah, and the Jewish identity stuff I came across in my teens was Israeli, so dancing and songs, and I wasn't particularly Jewish identified at all growing up, I just came across these things a little bit it wasn't a big part of my life. I was very active in the women's movement, and then late 70s/early 80s was Jewish women stuff, so awareness of Jewish identity within the women's movement, so I was more aware of Jewish identity through the Jewish women's group. And then one of the women in that group moved to London, who was actually Israeli, she got involved with a klezmer band called Great Klezmerim. I kind of vaguely knew about klezmer through that, but then when I became a parent, I had a daughter in 1984, and I got more involved with things that were Jewish because I wanted her to be involved in Jewish heritage.

As a result of that I got together with some friends, and I was living in York with the time, and we got together and played all kinds of music, so a mix of folk and stuff, so someone in the group was Irish so we did some Irish music, and we did some Eastern-European stuff, and somebody came across klezmer.

Me: Do you remember what klezmer it was?

Sue: It was Giora Feidman. So we played with some of his stuff. We heard about Ray Cohen, who is from Sheffield, so we went to his klezmer instrumental workshops. He would take everybody and anybody, and there would be 50 or so people and he teaches from the dots as he's classical background, so he would do his own arrangements and you would get his arrangements and you would learn them so everybody would learn something. He did a competition a few times, a battle of the bands type thing, and by that point the group had become kind of a klezmer band called 'Klezmadle' but we were still doing non-Klezmer stuff, like European stuff. We would play for circle dancing which was a mix of things. The line up was clarinet, flute, guitar, bass and percussion. This was in the 80s, and there was a thing called 'Klezmer on the rooftops' in Leeds, so there was a one-day event in Leeds. There was a Leeds women's klezmer band as well, and there was one day which they organised which was kind of a couple of klezmer music workshops and there was a singing workshop, so there were Jewish-related activities. That would have been mid/late 80s.

Me: Was it just Jewish people who attended these?

Sue: No, not really. I mean, the klezmer band I was in, I was the only Jewish one in. In York there was a very small Jewish community, and the events I used to do were for Jews and non-Jews. I had friends who were Scottish who would celebrate Bernstein and then I would do Hanukkah and they would come to that. There was a lot of children so it was kind of part of the family thing, I think it came out of being a young parent and wanting to share cultural heritage.

Me: So even though you weren't necessarily sharing it with Jewish people, you were still getting in touch with your Jewish heritage?

Sue: Yes, for me it has been a way to express my Jewish identity, which is secular, because my background is particularly secular and so for me it ties in with that. So we had this band and we used to play for various parties and stuff, we used to rehearse after school once a week. I'd lived in Manchester during the 70s working in the music industry, and then I moved to York, and then I came back here in the early 90s, about 94. There was no klezmer here at all. There's a big Jewish community but there was no interest in klezmer what so ever. I wanted to carry on with what I was doing, so I kind of put together a klezmer band. I was just lucky! There were some people that I knew, friends of friends, and one of them had moved over here, he was a fiddle player, and his friend from York, Jon who still plays for us. So there was Jon and Tim and myself, and then a neighbour called Sheila who is half Iranian who is a fiddle player got together, and I just wanted to pursue the klezmer and they were interested too, and then another friend of mine called Anne, who played percussion. We started playing, and there was Merlin Shepherd from Brighton, who was in a band called

Budavists at the time, which had a fantastic 19th-century sound of klezmer; very authoritative. They came over a couple of times and toured and did a couple of workshops, so I think we went over to Leeds and several of times they would do a klezmer workshops, sometimes they would take 2 beginners and advance in the afternoon, and then in the evening they would do a gig. So Merlin was doing that, and this was the late 90s, and Klezmic, which was the klezmer band I was in, went to some of those. So that's how I got to know Merlin. At the same time Sheila and I were living very close to each other in New Mills, and we had a local pub called the White Heart. It was her idea originally, but she then kind of wasn't so involved but we decided to have a klezmer session there once a month on a Sunday afternoon. When we started it was just the band really, and those who could come along, and lots of children! But then people from Manchester heard about it and started to come, like Steve.

Me: How did they hear about it?

Sue: I don't know how Steve heard about it! I don't know how they heard about it. People who played Irish music got into it. So we got all of them turning up, and that ran for 10 years. It was before email and stuff, so I used to do a flyer every 3 months and post out to about 50 people. I built up a network of people who were interested who could come to the sessions.

Me: Was it a mix of people?

Sue: Yes, a mix of ages and a mix of instruments. I've got some photographs. The

Me: there many Jewish people who came?

Sue: Not, not really. There were some but not many. So there were the sessions at the pub, there was Klezmic, we got asked to play on the folk train, and we got asked again to do that late 90s. The first time we did that was as Klezmic and then we invited anyone who wanted to come along. Through that we met Apanca which is the Romanian dance group. They turned up and we got to Edale and it was jammed, and when we were playing there were 3 women dancing with no space, and then they came along to the pub on a Sunday and did some dancing so we did some stuff with them. This is all late 90s, the band the sessions and folk train. Then, after building up a network of people, I met Ros because Jake brought her along to the folk train. I remember at the pub one time, Veronica was getting people dancing, and there were a bunch of Squadies at the pub and they were forced to dance by their sergeant! It was bizarre. So that was all going on. I think Ros and I made contact with the Bridgewater Hall and we did some events where Klezmic did a lunch time concert and Merlin did a workshop in the afternoon. So there was someone at outreach who was interested in broadening their musical styles, so they gave us premises to do workshops there. A lot of people from New Mills would come to those, and then it continued to expand the audience who involved. It was in the Bridgewater programme, so more people came and we gained a higher profile. We got recorded of us playing there. I got to know Merlin a lot better, and of course he teaches traditional klezmer which is, you know, you learn it by ear and then you sing it and then you play it, and you dance it. But we were learning from sheet music and listening a lot. Jon and Tim wrote some things in folk stuff, too. But only through

knowing Merlin did we start learning the traditional way, so by listening to it and learning by ear.

Me: Did you find that hard?

Sue: Well I don't play a melody instrument so yes I found it very hard, I still struggle, but I'm getting better. We kind of made it up a bit. IN 2000, the Jewish music Institute appeared with Klezfest in London, and so the first Klezfest Ros and I went to, and we got funding through the JMI. So Klezfest in London every summer introduced us to all these people from mainly the US, so people like Deborah Strauss, Michael Output, and so all these kind of people from m the US. I had been researching the music and coming at it from a more authentic approach now. Merlin had been doing it for a long time and there were a lot of people coming from that part of the revival of klezmer, so that introduced us to them. I supposed the big impact of that for me was finally learning the dance because we had been playing gigs and stuff but I had just been doing Israeli dancing because that's what I knew, but I was thinking there must be klezmer dancing. So finding the klezmer music was much easier because you've got the recordings and sheet music, but the dancing is much harder because you have to learn from people doing it. So that introduced me to the dance which was great, and I've ended up teaching it and leading it a lot more and that's more than I do now compared to playing. That was a big boom. Then we got the JMI award in 2000 so we were able to put on workshops in Manchester, so we had klez barns down in Altringham where we'd go for an overnight stay. That idea came out of the folk train, as we decided to have an all night session. It was all-night as people were playing until 4 in the morning! With the funding we had lots of different musicians to do a workshop, then do a meal, then do a massive jamming session. We did a few of those and then we did klez orchestra things, where people would come to an afternoon and play in a 30-piece klezmer orchestra and learn them in the afternoon and then do c concert. Steve was musical director for that. Bands would also play, but the concert would begin and end with the orchestra. There was dancing, too. All of that was building on the same networks of people, creating a klezmer scene. Before Klezfest stopped, we had already thought about doing KlezNorth. We couldn't use the barn anymore, so we decided to do a weekend thing. The first one was 2009. We didn't have the sort of money Klezfest had, and we weren't sure who would come, so we based it on the barns we organised where it was less formal and more folky. There was also the dance thread, because after the award money ran out, I applied to a dance award, and was thus able to do a series of dance workshops. So we did 4 Sundays over a period of months where we would teach dance to live music, and Ros was the band leader and I organised and taught the dance, and then I also did lectures on the history and background of klezmer.

Me: Was that talking about your own experiences or did you research?

No I researched a lot. There are more books around now, but I was trying to read books and play music, too. We had funding for that, so we got a bunch of people who were interested in dance which is where Judith came along. She has a big dance folk background. She got interested in klezmer dance, and that continued and then I carried on doing a klezmer dance session in Manchester with recorded music, and it passed it on to Judith. She also organised

other klezmer parties. She took over the dance stuff from me, so when we did KlezNorth, we wanted it to include Yiddish song, dance and instruments, and other things like talks and food. It's a very Jewish thing to be interested in food, so it was quite important. It's quite a cultural experience.

Sue: So is there quite a bit focus on Yiddish culture at KlezNorth?

Yes, if you want it to be. There are people like Frances who just do it for the music, and that's great, so there are some people from a folk background who just want to play and learn, but there's other people who have Jewish heritage, they're secular but it's a really great way to really immerse yourself in Yiddish culture. It's not obligatory.

Me: Do you attract a wide audience at KlezNorth?

Sue: Yes! France, Wales, Ireland, London. Scotland. It's national. The Edinburgh klezmer scene was inspired by Klezfest and KlezNorth, and I told a Scottish musician to just start up a scene.

Me: It's spreading quite a lot then?

Sue: Yes, it's great. I think I really wanted to play klezmer and wanted something to happen and I was very lucky I think in coming across other people, who once they were presented it, they wanted to play it, too. I don't think I'm responsible for the klezmer scene totally but it was because I wanted to do something!

Me: I think it's obviously part of your leadership, but also for the nature of the music. It's so much fun.

Sue: Yes, people just took it on.

Me: Yes, so if you wanted to play music that people didn't like then it wouldn't have happened.

Sue: Yes, and I think there's a curious relationship between klezmer and the Jewish community. When Klezmic came to an end, there were various other bands, and there still are a lot of bands, and all of us do a certain amount of playing within the Jewish community. Klezmic did a fair bunch of weddings and stuff, but within the Jewish community what I would call traditional klezmer, like the sort of thing that Ros teaches, you know isn't particularly popular. I don't understand why that is but it does seem to be the case. Some people do like it, and you have to look at the whole context of Jewish history and what happened to the Jews in the 20th century. I think that in the 1950s and 1960s there was an attitude of not wanting to look back but look forward to Israel. So there's a history where there is a real disconnect with Yiddish culture – you don't speak Yiddish because it's old fashioned, you don't listen to klezmer because that's part of the old world. You don't want to think about what happened to all those people. The next generation, which is mine, I knew nothing about klezmer growing up.

Me: When you first listened to it, did it jog any memories?

Sue: Well yes, although I very rarely went to Shawl, the sound of it was familiar which the scales are. It was the same as Yiddish, so when I've done Yiddish workshops it was really profound. My mother died when I was very young, and when she was alive my father and her would speak Yiddish when they didn't want us to understand, but then when she died he never spoke Yiddish anymore. His second wife was German, and she didn't speak Yiddish. But what I realised when I did the Yiddish course was that it was my parent's first language – that was their first language, that would have been what they spoke in the home, and so even though I don't remember them speaking it I think when we were very young it would have been spoken, and what I also recognised was that, for people of my parent's generation, English would have been their second language, so their English was Yiddish-English, so their intonation and sentence structures are still very Yiddish-influenced. So there's a familiarity in the language and it's probably the same in the music, too. I had never heard any klezmer, but there was familiar. There was also the identity thing, so I wanted to find some way of validating my Jewish identity so klezmer and dancing has been a way of doing that. My background is also in the arts and about culture, and art being an expression of identity and politics, so it all kind of meshes together for me.

I've talked to people who do a lot of research about Jewish identity, and I've spoken to people myself, so I know that for some it's important to have a place where people can come and enjoy Jewish culture in a way that they felt comfortable with because it doesn't have such a direct relationship with the religion.

Me: I guess it doesn't really matter who is Jewish and who isn't.

I don't know, but I think for some Jews there's a resonance about it, that it is about their Jewish identity and you see for some gentiles there's a resonance, too. When I went to a klezmer dance course, lots of Germans were there. And there's a German klezmer band called Tickling the Heart who has been to Klezfest in London and they're great, and talking to them and some of the younger German musicians, they learn about the holocaust in school. Germany have embraced looking about their past, and for some of them playing klezmer has a real personal resonance so there's a thing about the music that really touches them and klezmer is significant. So it can be significant for gentiles as well as Jews who relate to the history in some way. To some, the music gives them something. To some Jewish people, it's kind of like saying 'f-you' to the Germans, really, and you may think you've won but you can't really. It's like saying 'we have survived'. So the people have survived, but to have the music revived, too, is like that. For a lot of people playing it, this has no meaning whatsoever, but some people there is a sense that, you know this is the music of a peoples who suffered genocide, and they didn't manage to kill us all. And for me that's important. And one of my great-grandfathers might have been a musician, and it would have been the music that would have been played at my grandparents' wedding. It's, for me, it's important. The rest of my siblings, they're very happy that I play it and they come along to concerts but they don't take it on board in the same way. It's not for everyone at all.

Me: Yes, I understand. But once you've experienced that feeling, you're going to keep trying to play and explore it more.

Sue: Yes, if you have the opportunity. I don't really have much of a chance to play it anymore, my life has gone in a different direction, but I love it.

Me: When you hear bands they have hints of klezmer but might not be completely klezmer, what do you think?

Sue: Well I'm quite open-minded, but actually no I'm not. A friend lent me a CD once, and she told me it was klezmer, but I was listening to it thinking 'this isn't klezmer'! Well it is klezmer influenced by jazz. It's not that it is great music, and I enjoy listening to it. My friend Jake who moved to London now plays in a band called the Motzaboys that do loads of Jewish weddings and they do covers and all kind of stuff. Half the band is South American so they do loads of that stuff, too. They're really good. They've bought me in to dance with them, and every time they do a klezmer tune, which they do great as they have a Polish fiddle player who is fantastic, and they always just speed them up but that's so hard to dance to! But playing for dance is different. Bands that play a few klezmer tunes are great, but it doesn't mean they're a klezmer band. Talk to mainstream Jews, they think klezmer is anything a bit folky and Israeli stuff, but that's not what I think. Orthodox Jewish music is very different. I've been to orthodox weddings and klezmer is very different there. I think, my definition of what is klezmer, is quite traditional in terms of repertoire and rooting it in the traditional repertoire. Not just being traditional, because Merlin did a lot of his own compositions, and he plays in an electric band with electric instruments. Doing things different are good. You can't be purist about it.

Me: So it's important to learn about the dancing?

Sue: Yes, because it's obvious that it makes a difference to people's playing. When I came into the university to do the workshop with the year below you, there was a real difference in how they played before learning and the dance and afterwards. Embedding the beat is important. You don't have to be a dancer, and not all the repertoire is dance music, but it's important to understand. I never wanted to do the dancing, but now I can see the connection and it's really useful to be a musician and a dancer. Some people might struggle if they're not musicians, but if you're both it really helps to understand the music. I struggle with the music because I'm not classically trained, as I'm mostly self-taught and so I don't have a lot of knowledge about certain things.

Interview with Dan Mawson (Clarinetist in L'chaim Kapelye)

Date: 5th February 2014

Location: Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama, University of Manchester

Me: So tell me why you chose to study klezmer for the ensemble module?

Dan: Ah that was a while ago. I think part of the reason was because I had heard the music before, and I had a couple of friends back home who were in a kind of Balkan jazz gypsy band, and I knew them from school and they lots of gigs and I enjoyed their music, so I thought I would do klezmer. I also like improvisation because I've been bought up playing jazz, so I thought I could do some more of that with klezmer.

Me: Yes, so what is your experience of jazz?

Dan: I've learnt jazz alongside classical since the beginning because my teacher was mainly a jazz musician, so I learnt classical alongside jazz and a few African tunes because she used to live in Africa, so she did a lot of arrangements and learning by ear and improvisation. I found the classical stuff a bit boring really so I kind of neglected that!

Me: So what were your initial expectations of the course, with those ideas in mind?

Dan: I think I just wanted to develop a new style of playing because I quite like doing lots of different things rather than being good at just one thing. I think I wanted to know different traditions, and it wouldn't be too similar to what I've done before but still something new.

Me: So what were the first couple of klezmer sessions like?

Dan: It was probably slightly more difficult to get into than I'd imagined. I felt like I was more comfortable with learning without music compared to others. It was challenging but not too difficult. Some of the tunes were quite hard to learn because they were different to jazz melodies and used different modes. It was difficult but I think I was more comfortable than others. I had confidence but I didn't click straight away.

Me: What did you find most challenging about learning klezmer then?

Dan: I think the accompaniments are hard because I'm not used to thinking in a vertical way because visualising the chords is quite hard. There's a lot going on at once! Once you've got a feel of the chords and the modes it's quite easy.

Me: So have you developed an understanding of Jewish culture?

Dan: Yes, I think klezmer alongside world music was really useful. I went to a C of E school so there is a lot of focus on studying religion, so I do understand things about general Jewish culture but more from a theological point of view instead of a cultural or musical point of view. I think learning klezmer helps me see the community and social side, and not just religious side, of Jewish or Yiddish culture. As we've branched out to the Jewish community more in Manchester, we've had direct contact with Jewish people and that's been a learning experience. We have more of a responsibility to know what we're doing because we're playing a music that is associated with a particular culture so there is more of an obligation to understand and be sensitive to their culture. We have to be respectful. We have to find out what is respectful in their culture.

Me: Do you still feel like an outsider to the Jewish community?

Dan: Yes a bit. I feel accept as an outsider if you know what I mean. I don't feel part of the community but a man came up to us after a concert once and said something like 'you're embodying the Jewish spirit and joy through the music', and although that's not the reason we're doing it, it was nice for him to say that but we're not really experiencing that ourselves. We don't really experience the 'Jewish spirit' on a religious level.

Me: Yes, so we're kind of symbolising it?

Dan: Yes, for them we are symbolising it, but for ourselves, or me personally, it's something that I'm allowed to do almost. There are similar sort of arguments with jazz about it being a music for black people. With klezmer, which has seen to have died and then revived, it's a music from the past that has been brought back and it's even more so associated with a particular culture now, and there are clear roots with it in the Jewish community.

Me: So when you perform in the Jewish community with our klezmer band, what do you feel their responses are? I know you have just explained that a bit, but do you think they ever get offended?

Dan: I'm a bit self-conscious about that, but I don't know if that's just me being sensitive but I do think they might be glad that we're continuing their tradition. I know some Jewish people have mentioned that and they encourage us to keep playing.

Me: So, is it the musical characteristics of klezmer that keep you playing it?

Dan: Yes, well that's the reason I started it, but I continued to play klezmer because I enjoy working together with everyone in the group, but it's similar to why I enjoy barbershop, which is very different stylistically, but it's still very much based on a community spirit, so when we go to the klezmer sessions anyone can turn up and it's not competitive, and I like that idea because everyone is just happy to play and enjoy the music. If it was more classical, it would be way more competitive and judgemental, but in klezmer you can be any ability and play it.

Me: So what gave you inspiration to write a piece for L'Chaim Kapelye to play?

Dan: I think it was going through some klezmer tunes over the holidays and just improvising and seeing what sounded good (to me) in my head. From experimentation it went to be written down and structure it to a fixed composition.

Me: Did you ever think 'is this traditional klezmer' or did you want to it to just be a free composition?

Dan: I think I wanted it to include different styles of music. I think part of it was my own interest in the piece, and I thought it would be good for us to play it as a group, and not just us as a klezmer band. The scales and modes I use are inspired by klezmer, but there's a section that is definitely more jazz and free. I didn't write it to be authentic. I sent it to Richard and he said that there are a few things that traditional klezmer players would argue to not be authentic, like the time signature, but obviously I wasn't aiming for it to be traditional

klezmer so I was ok with that. As long as no-one tried to dance to it! It's also a dedication, so I think most Jewish people would appreciate it.

Me: Do you think we've changed as a band then, since being independent from the university?

Dan: I think in terms of taking responsibility for our own development then definitely. We think more critically about our playing because we haven't got Richard or Ros telling us all the time. We've learnt new tunes and chosen them ourselves so we're using our own interpretations more. Our arrangements are also our choices, as we haven't got an assessment to guide us anymore. We also make sure everyone plays an equal amount of solos and stuff, like Jemima and George. It's important to have a balance, and so we need more of a range of tunes to make that happen

Me: Would you say that your musical identity has changed at all since learning klezmer?

Dan: It's an interesting point actually. In previous years before klezmer, I have felt as though my thing, as it were, was jazz clarinet but actually, after doing more klezmer and less jazz, than I've felt as though my thing is klezmer now. My brain has kind of shifted and we're doing more gigs within the klezmer community, so I feel as though my allegiances have shifted a bit. I still enjoy doing jazz clarinet, but I don't do it as much. I'm not sure if that's the reason for the shift or the music itself is, but there's definitely a shift.

Me: So if someone asked you, 'Dan, what kind of music do you play', you'd say klezmer first?

Dan: Yes, I'd say I play a few things but the thing I enjoy the most is klezmer.

Me: Do you want to keep playing klezmer? How far do you think our band can go?

Dan: I've been thinking about that. Pippa and George probably won't be in Manchester, and they give us depth. The reason I thought I'd carry on playing is because of the community feel, and in Manchester there are lots of opportunities to just turn up and play like at the pub sessions so I know klezmer will always be accessible to me. People are very helpful and welcoming and I know I will always be able to play with anyone for fun. Maybe if we keep getting gigs and getting paid, Pippa and George could come to Manchester and play, but if not then I can keep playing it. It's not like orchestra with auditions. Klezmer is much more free and more of a hobby and not really a career for me.