

Mp3 Red Hot Chachkas - Family Album



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Blending classic klezmer tunes and spirited originals, the Red Hot Chachkas inject their music with a smoldering sensuality, making "Family Album" a red-hot joy from start to finish. 14 MP3 Songs WORLD: Yiddish, FOLK: Traditional Folk Show all album songs: Family Album Songs Details: * Julie Egger (violin) * Paul Alexander(clarinet) * Michael Arrow (drums) * Stuart Brotman (bass) * Laurie Lippin (accordion) * Tony Phillips (mandolin) THE BUZZ: First album by a West Coast-based klezmer band, playing in what seems at first to be a fairly traditional vein. Then clarinetist Paul Alexander starts to play way 'outside,' and the Chachkas start stretching and twisting tempos and in a very subtle way all hell breaks loose. Innovative and unexpected, passionate and witty. Who said klezmer was dead? AAAAA -- George Robinson, The Jewish Week (of New York) (Sept. 13, 2002) ----- The sound of Old World and New interweave subtly and with grace on "Family Album," the debut CD by Northern California instrumental-klezmer group, The Red Hot Chachkas (redhotchachkas.com). On the CD, classics like Naftule Brandwein's "Firn di Mechutonim Aheyem," are taken into modern jazz territory through improvisations by clarinetist Paul Alexander and violinist/bandleader Julie Egger, pushed along by klezmer great Stuart Brotman's swinging bass lines, while remaining grounded in the music's Ashkenazic foundation. The musicians evidence a strong command of klezmer fundamentals in traditional dance numbers like "Kolomeyke," but they also exert their creative muscles in several original compositions by Egger and mandolinist Tony Phillips. The group gets particularly soulful with a waltzified version of "Avinu Malkenu," and Egger's "Shtetl Swing" has a haunting, Gypsy tango pulse. Playing of this caliber is rarely found on independent efforts such as this one; Egger and Alexander in particular make a terrific violin-clarinet pairing in the tradition of former Klezmatics Alicia Svigals and David Krakauer. -- Seth Rogovoy, Berkshire Jewish Voice (Oct. 24, 2002) ----- Local klezmerim put red-hot

sensuality into 'Family' CD -- DAN PINE, Jewish Bulletin of Northern California (Dec. 20, 2002) While the unschooled may view klezmer as merely a delightful relic of the shtetl, true-blue fans understand the music's enduring vitality. The best of contemporary klezmer bands not only honor the past, but move the genre forward with an amalgam of innovation and passion. Among the most visionary of klezmerim is the Bay Area's own Red Hot Chachkas, who just released a new CD, "Family Album," on their own, independently distributed label. Blending classic tunes and spirited originals, the Red Hot Chachkas inject their music with a smoldering sensuality, making "Family Album" a red-hot joy from start to finish. While a pronounced Eastern European/Yiddish inflection dominates most klezmer, the music actually carries traces of every tradition absorbed by Jews during the course of the diaspora. The Red Hot Chachkas celebrate that diversity, drawing on Yemenite, Balkan and even modern jazz elements here and there throughout "Family Album." Like snowflakes, no two klezmer bands are alike, especially when it comes to instrumentation. Unlike the countless clarinet-centric bands that crowd the field, The Red Hot Chachkas place Julie Egger's uniformly brilliant fiddle work right up front, although clarinetist Paul Alexander does make his commanding presence felt many tunes. On tracks like "Sarah's Bulgar" and "Araber Tanz," Egger and Alexander play off each other with skillful ease, engaging in a wholly satisfying musical dialogue. Mandolinist Tony Phillips performs on a variety of instruments from the mandolin family, greatly broadening the band's scope, while drummer Michael Arrow switches effortlessly from standard kit to evocative dumbek on the more Middle Eastern-flavored tracks. Accordionist Laurie Lippin and bassist Stuart Brotman round out the line-up, providing a sturdy foundation for each of the album's 14 songs. Stately processionalists like "Firn di Mechutonim Aheym" and "Levin Hora" simmer with fiery conviction, while Phillips' mandolin work turns the familiar High Holy Day prayer "Avinu Malkeinu" into a sultry, even sexy, waltz. Middle Eastern influences abound on "Family Album," especially on the fabulous "Shtetl Swing," a runaway train of syncopated dumbek-driven rhythms. The frenetic quality of "A Nakht In Gan Eyden," "Dulitski's Skochne," and the Zorba-esque "Kolomeyke" serve as counterpoint for more down-tempo tracks like the wistful "Romanian Fantasy" and "Boyberiker Mazeltov Hora," the latter reminiscent of a New Orleans funeral march. Perhaps most striking of all is "Wedding Sher," a traditional tune that starts off as a tender fiddle-mandolin duet before morphing into a full-frontal be-bop jam worthy of Dave Brubeck. Purists might question whether it's OK to go in this radical direction. The fact that the Red Hot Chachkas gleefully take chances underscores the vigor of contemporary klezmer music. Egger,

who founded Red Hot Chachkas in 1998, expresses in the album's liner notes her hope that the band's audience would "become addicted to these melodies and our collective sound, adding our voice to the contagious pulse of the klezmer revival." Given the remarkable artistry and unalloyed love of traditional Jewish music so evident on "Family Album," it's unlikely that any listener could help but be swept up in that revival. Copyright (c) 2002, San Francisco Jewish Community Publications Inc., dba Jewish Bulletin of Northern California. All rights reserved. This material may not be reproduced in any form without permission. Copied here by express permission.

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