

## Mp3 Ansambl Mastika - Gde Si, Bre?



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Balkan, gypsy wedding music that rumbles and grooves from the depths of Brooklyn. 12 MP3 Songs

WORLD: Eastern European, WORLD: World Traditions Details: Ansambl Mastika 'Gde si, Bre?', A common expression in Serbia, it roughly translates as 'Where are YOU at?'. It's an apt phrase since the original music on this CD represents a 5-year adventure, for bandleader/woodwind player Greg Squared, among the musical styles and traditions of the Balkan peninsula. The 12 tracks range from the plaintive clarinet 'mirolai' of northern Greece, to the funkier grooves of the Serbian and Macedonia Roma (gypsies), the mysterious qualities of Turkish calgija music, and the driving power of Bulgarian wedding music. The Balkan character of the music is undeniable; made all the more powerful and authentic for its originality. Greg Squared wasn't born or raised in the Balkan region, but he writes his music as if he spent his entire life there. 'Gde si, Bre?': the question has arisen numerous times over the past 5 years. Now, with the end of the road nowhere in sight, the album itself asks the question; but the music provides an answer. 'Gde si, Bre?' ('Where are YOU at?'). ' Tu sam.' ('THIS is where I'm at'). The Ansambl: Coming from such influential NYC-based groups as Zlatne Uste Balkan, Slavic Soul Party!, The Zagnut Orkestar, and Romashka, the musicians in the Ansambl are a group of dedicated performers whose efforts have brought the music of Eastern Europe to a broad audience in the New York City area. It is their willingness and ability to dig into a style, to learn the tradition, that gives the players in the Ansambl the instinct to bring their own personal expression to it. Matt Moran is active as a performer, teacher, and curator in the Balkan folk music scene, Moran plays traditional percussion with artists such as Lefteris Bournias, Raif Hyseni, Demetri Tashie, and other master musicians from the Balkans who have immigrated to New York. As leader of the brass band Slavic Soul Party!, he sparked "Balkan Cabaret", a downtown music series for Balkan and Balkan-inspired music. Reuben Radding was born in Washington, D.C. to a family

of classical musicians, and relocated to New York City in 1988 where he studied contrabass with Mark Dresser and quickly became a busy stalwart of the downtown/improv scene. His powerful sound and sensitive listening have contributed to countless ensembles in styles ranging from jazz to classical, as well as ethnic genres. He has been featured on over 40 recordings on labels such as Leo Records, AUM Fidelity, Tzadik, Clean Feed, and Knitting Factory Works. Joey Weisenberg began performing at age 12 as a harmonica player and guitarist in blues bars in Milwaukee, WI. Joey currently performs with the Village Klezmer Quintet, Romashka, the Marija Krupoves trio, the Zagnut Orkestar, and his own ensembles. He has taught at Klez Kanada and Kehilat Hedar, and has been a long-standing teacher with the Tikvah program, working with developmentally disabled children. Matthew Fass is the founder, director accordionist of the Zagnut Orkestar, with whom he also teaches Balkan folk dance. He has studied Albanian, Romany (gypsy) and Jazz accordion with Raif Hyseni, Ivan Milev, Kalin Kirilov, and William Schimmel, and has researched extensively in Eastern Europe. Matthew is also a Board member of the East European Folklife Center, which puts on the bi-annual, bi-coastal Balkan Camp. Catherine Foster plays sax, clarinet, and trumpet with Kavala Band and with Zlatne Uste Balkan Brass Band, sponsor of the annual Golden Festival in New York City. She has studied, performed, and recorded with the world renowned Bulgarian gypsy sax player, Yuri Yunakov. Greg Squared is the preferred alias of NYC-based woodwind player Greg Schneiderman. He's been a mainstay of the Hungry March Band since the turn of the century. His expressive playing style figures prominently in the sound of several NYC area Balkan music ensembles including The Zagnut Orkestar and Astorian.

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