



Press Information

About Sheqer

Brooklyn based SHEQER plays lively, danceable and engaging music from all regions of the Balkan Peninsula including Macedonia, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia. Sheqer, which means "sugar" in Albanian, has a bright, upbeat sound that thrills listeners with wild jazz licks from saxophonist JESSICA LURIE, backed up by MATTHEW FASS on accordion, ADAM GOOD on guitar, and TIMOTHY QUIGLEY on drums. The group has mastered many characteristics of Balkan music including the odd time signatures, the unique ornamentation, and the non-Western scales that are found in the region, and adds to this a passion and intensity that drives dancers into a pleasant frenzy.

Sheqer has performed at Barbès on 9th Street in Brooklyn, at Tagine in midtown Manhattan, for enthusiastic folk dancers at the 2003 Golden Festival of Balkan Music, and for passing crowds in the subway stations of New York. Newly formed by experienced musicians, Sheqer aims to perform the exciting music of the Balkans for audiences in the New York metropolitan region and beyond, bringing them a unique and fascinating mix of traditional tunes and modern interpretation.

Jessica Lurie (sax)

A Seattle bred composer and woodwinder, JESSICA LURIE performs and records worldwide with the bass, sax, and drums trio LIVING DAYLIGHTS, the all-woman sax and percussion quartet THE BILLIES (formerly The Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet), her own internationally based band THE JESSICA LURIE ENSEMBLE (which performs in trio, quartet or quintet) and the New York based Balkan band SHEQER. She has collaborated with local and national artists such as BILL FRISELL, THE INDIGO GIRLS, DANIJEL ZEZEJ & PETIKAT, AMY DENIO, PAT GRAINEY DANCE COMPANY, SCOTT AMENDOLA, EYVIND KANG, and WAYNE HORVITZ. Lurie has received grants to compose for small and large ensembles, dance, film, and international multi-media performances, and has led workshops internationally on improvisation and composition. With visual artist Danijel Zezejlj she co-created 6 multi-media performances, presented in Italy, Croatia, and the United States.

Her musical experience also includes work with BOOKER T. JONES, SLEATER KINNEY, the BERKELEY SYMPHONY, STEVEN BERSTEIN, CHARLIE HUNTER, LEO NEOCENTELLI, MACEO PARKER, PAUL MCCANDLESS, FAREED HAQUE, and ROBERT WALTER. She has produced 16 CDs altogether to date, solo or in collaboration with others. Her newest solo CD, "Zipa!Buka!" was released March 2002 and a duo collaborative CD "School Of One" with drummer Will Dowd was released September 2002. She lives in Brooklyn.

Adam Good (guitar)

Multi-instrumentalist ADAM GOOD has lived in Brooklyn since 1996. With a foundation in jazz guitar, Adam's interest in the music of Turkey and Eastern Europe began around '94 and by the time he joined the band TITO'S REVENGE (Electric Balkan Music), he was hooked. His talent on oud, cumbus, tambura, and guitar playing Macedonian and Bulgarian dance and folk music as well as the music of Turkey and Greece has made

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Adam a fixture of New York's Balkan music scene. He plays for the touring ensembles HARMONIA and SHEQER, the Bulgarian group KOLEVI 6, the Macedonian Izvorno ensemble IZGORI and SIDESHOW, a band dedicated to an improvisatory approach to the music of visionary American composer Charles Ives. In 2002 Folksounds Records released his well-received "Dances of Macedonia and the Balkans" an entirely self-produced CD devoted entirely to traditional folk melodies of Macedonia and original compositions inspired by the unusual rhythms of that music. Adam also enjoys teaching private lessons in the New York City area and has taught Macedonian tambura at the East Coast Eastern European Folklife Center's Balkan Music and Dance Camp.

Matthew Fass (accordion)

Accordionist, composer, actor and bandleader MATTHEW FASS plays Balkan dance band music with SHEQER and the ZAGNUT CIRCUS ORKESTER BRASS BAND (which he founded and leads). As a composer and arranger he has worked with the ACTORS CONSERVATORY THEATER of San Francisco, with FINE ARTS CINEMA of Berkeley, and with the BICYCLE PUPPET THEATER COLLECTIVE of New York to create original scores for live theater and for silent films. Recent recordings include Sheqer's "Good for Babies" and the debut recording of his international accordion duo, MAX & MINKA (with Yiddish singer-accordionist JEANETTE LEWICKI). He also trained as an actor with BREAD & PUPPET THEATER in Vermont, and is a widely acclaimed graphic designer specialising in web page and CD design. He lives, works and teaches in Brooklyn, NY.

Timothy Quigley (drums)

TIMOTHY QUIGLEY is a multi-instrumentalist and composer living in Brooklyn. His musical talents can be heard in a wide range of musical genres including Electronic (intelligent dance music, drum 'n' bass), Balkan, Middle Eastern, Afropop, Rock and Jazz. Known for his versatility, he is in demand playing electronic and acoustic drums as well as congas, doumbek, def, riq, frame drums and electric bass. His eclectic sound and abilities have led to recording and performing with such talents as JON BIRDSONG, SMOKEY HORMEL, DOUG WIESELMAN, FRANK LONDON, RASHID HALILAL, ALAN GINSBERG, RON MILES, CHATA ADDY, FAT MAMA and PECTOPAH. He has also worked as a composer and session musician for modern dance, film and television. Credits include: the films "Trans" and "Kingpin"; and the ABC soap opera "One Life to Live". Current releases include rf's "interno", Adam Good's "Dances of Macedonia and the Balkans", Dan Cantrell's soundtrack for the documentary film "Divided Loyalties", and the forthcoming CD by the Pickpocket Ensemble "If I Were a Highway". He performs with the JESSICA LURIE ENSEMBLE, SUKUNET, THE ZAGNUT CIRCUS ORKESTAR, SHEQER and the rock band ARGENTINE, which recently performed on the main stage at the Knitting Factory.