

TALES FROM TEREZIN
THE BRIDGE PLAYERS

Trio for violin, viola & cello (1944)

- [1] Allegro
- [2] Variations on a Moravian folk song
- [3] Molto vivace

Gideon Klein (1919-1945)

Two Chasidic Dances (1941)

- [4] Allegretto moderato
- [5] Allegretto

Zikmund Schul (1916-1942?)

[6] Dance (1944)

- [7] Passacaglia & Fugue

Hans Krasa (1899 - 1944)

Duo for violin & cello (1940)

- [8] Lento (unfinished)

Gideon Klein

[9] Fantasy & Fugue (1943)

Gideon Klein

[10] String Quartet No. 3 (1943)

Viktor Ullmann (1898 - 1944)

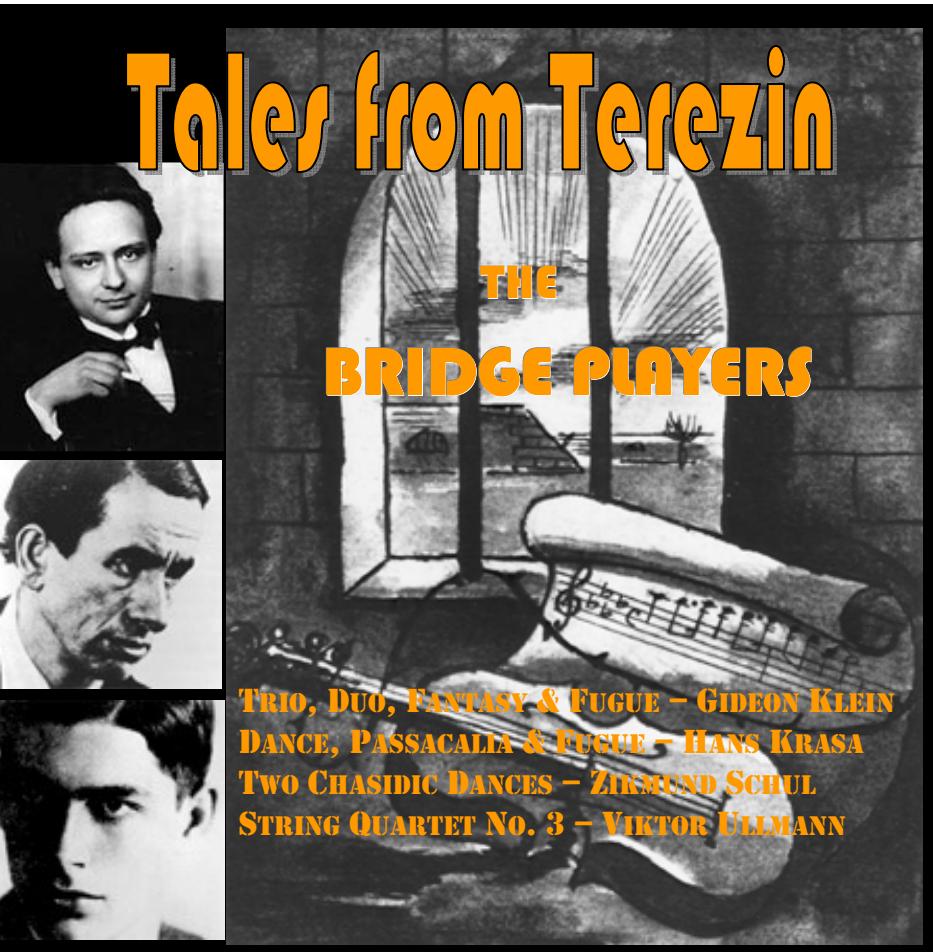
**Randall Weiss,
Leslie Ludena,
Natalia Vershilova,
Victoria Ehrlich,**

**violin
violin
viola
cello**

*CD recording and cover design by Frank Daniels
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Congregation Sha'ar Zahav
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*Cover Photos of
Viktor Ullmann, Hans Krasa
and Gideon Klein,*



In 1992, I was asked to perform the Gideon Klein trio at the Eastern Music Festival, where I work in the summer. I received the music in the mail and began practicing the violin part. I liked the music right away...it reminded me a little of Bartok and a little of Janacek. I had never heard of Gideon Klein, but luckily, on the title page of the music was a short biography of the composer. I learned that Gideon Klein was Jewish, that he was born in Moravia in 1919 and grew up in Prague, that he was a phenomenal pianist, and a very adventuresome composer--he even wrote atonal and quarter-tonal pieces while still a teenager.

In 1940, at the age of 20, he was offered a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy in London, but because he was Jewish, the Nuremberg laws - codifying Germany's state-sponsored discrimination against the Jews - prevented him from leaving Czechoslovakia. The very next year, 1941, he was deported to Terezin, a concentration camp outside of Prague, where he continued composing. He wrote the trio for violin, viola, and cello in September of 1944. Two months later he was deported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered. He was 26 years old.

After reading this biography, I immediately thought of my mentor and former violin teacher, Paul Kling. Mr. Kling was also Jewish, had lived in Prague and had been interred at Terezin, and I wondered if he had ever met Gideon Klein. So I wrote a letter to Mr. Kling, telling him that I would be performing a piece by Gideon Klein, and asked if they had ever crossed paths.

A few weeks later, Paul Kling called me, and in his elegant Czech accent he said, "So, you are playing the music of my chamber music partner from There-

sienstadt." He went on to explain that he was a 13 year-old violin prodigy when he arrived at the concentration camp, and how Gideon Klein, at the ripe old age of 22, became his mentor and teacher. He told me about his experiences playing in a piano trio with Gideon Klein. And over the years, Mr. Kling told me about the extensive series of concerts and theatre performances, and the remarkable cultural life, which existed at Terezin.

Viktor Ullmann, Hans Krasa, and Zikmund Schul were also interred at Terezin in the early 1940's. Like Gideon Klein, they were Czech Jews who played integral roles in the cultural fabric of Terezin. Many of their Terezin compositions are presented on this CD.

None of these composers survived the Holocaust, but remarkably, their music did. Violinist Paul Kling, my teacher and mentor, lived until 2005, after a wonderful life of teaching and performing. This CD honors the memory of these great musicians.

-Randall Weiss



THE BRIDGE PLAYERS reside in the San Francisco Bay Area and regularly perform chamber music throughout Northern California. Since 2001, they have been ensemble-in-residence for Music in the Mishkan chamber music series at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco.