

## Remembering Holocaust-Era Hanukkah Melodies

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Morris Hollender, left, with Hankus Netsky at WBUR's studios (Jeremy Bernfeld for WBUR)

When Hanukkah begins Wednesday at sundown, Jewish families all over the world will come together to light a menorah and eat traditional potato

pancakes called latkes. Some families and congregations will sing Hanukkah songs.

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"Music is a huge part of the American celebration of Hanukkah," says Hankus Netsky, founding member and director of the [Klezmer Conservatory Band](#).

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This year, Netsky wants to introduce listeners to a whole new genre of melodies. For some time, he's worked with Morris Hollender, a Boston-area resident and Holocaust survivor originally from the former Czechoslovakia. Together, they've documented melodies indigenous to Hollender's pre-WWII village, also known as a shtetl.

This effort is part of the [Discovery Project](#), a program based at the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst and spearheaded by Netsky.

The project "works to recover what is left of immigrant and post-immigrant heritage, mobilizing college students and others to seek out the kinds of Jewish cultural treasures that they are most passionate about," Netsky said.

Hundreds of melodies later, Netsky feels like he's actively preserving an element of the pre-World War II Jewish life that was almost completely lost.

"I find it very important in particular to preserve this music because this music represents a time when this culture really had a voice, a sound, and a spirit," Netsky said.

Netsky and a group of musicians will perform the music at Hollender's synagogue in Waltham, [Temple Beth Israel](#), on Saturday.

**Guests:**

- **Hankus Netsky**, director, [Klezmer Conservatory Band](#); chair, [Contemporary Improvisation](#) department at New England Conservatory; director, [Discovery Project](#) at the National Yiddish Book Center
- **Morris Hollender**, singer, Holocaust survivor

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*This segment aired on December 1, 2010.*