



Jazz, klezmer, ethno-world music

„Erik Rothenstein band: The Fools of Chelm“ CD released in 2012.

### The Project **THE FOOLS OF CHELM**

*is dedicated to Erik's late father and to his mother who brought him to read books and think about them.*

The music was inspired by the novel of I.B. Singer's novel *The Fools of Chelm*. It is an interesting fusion of new approach to klezmer and modern jazz improvisation. The album also contains original lyrics, which help better describe its atmosphere. The Klezmer style originates from a characteristic, expressively strong melody, which reminds one of the human voice. Using the „speech“ of klezmer, solo and collective improvisation in interesting author's compositions and mixing folk and jazz features gives the music an unique character.

The author, Isaac Bashevis Singer, wrote a novel called *The Fools of Chelm* (and their History). The book was primarily written for children, but it may also please and advise adults. Using an enthralling style, the book describes the history of a poor town, Chelm. The story revolves around a situation when a word crisis suddenly appears in the vocabulary of the town citizens. The ruler, Gronam and his council of wise men, suddenly realises that the town is in a crisis which needs to be dealt with. Singer is a master in story-telling (presenting). Using plays on words and intelligent humour, he left behind the message that we should learn to distinguish human stupidity and narrow-mindedness, even if born in the heads of our leaders. He amuses the reader with absurd and funny stories, but in the background he raises a warning finger, pointing out the danger that threatens from our leaders, who often act the same as the Fools of Chelm. The purpose of this project is to pass on such message using a musical adaptation.

The Fools of Chelm is a project, which connects written text with written music in the Jazz and Klezmer style. It strives to grasp the main features of Singer's novel *The Fools of Chelm*, and by the use of musical instruments express Jewish humour and wit, as well as the tears hidden behind it.

- the band performed in several jazz and crossover festivals ( Slovakia, Poland, Serbia, Croatia, Czech republic, Austria)
- Erik also arranged the program for CZ-SK Big Band Matúša Jakabčica
- the music was played in Slovak, Serbian and Austrian radio
- the music was used in documentary movie for Slovak National Museum

## Contact&Booking

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## AUDIO

<https://erikrothenstein.bandcamp.com/album/the-fools-of-chelm>

## VIDEO

*document from recording session*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAWJIIQg168>

*live from CD Promotion – song Coffee beans*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KT9qEXc9I8>

## PRESS

*In Slovak language*

CD promotion The Fools of Chelm – review by Filip Hoško for Jazzsk.

*„....the music was good composed, full of colours and energy.....the project contains crossover influences, nice ethno feel with gouluptious performed jazz-style improvisations...*

<http://www.jazz.sk/articles/report-krst-albumu-blazni-z-chelmu-zoskupenia-erik-rothenstein-band-0>

interview for BBoonline

<http://bbonline.sk/erik-rothenstein-singer-a-chelm-su-vdacna-tema/>





## ERIK ROTHENSTEIN

(1973, Slovakia, Bratislava) saxophone player, composer, arranger

He is leading his own band, where the core of the repertoire are his author's compositions. Also performs as a sideman in several bands and projects. His combo, **Erik Rothenstein Band**, plays modern mainstream jazz combined with ethnic elements of middle-eastern and southern Europe. As a leader he recorded with his band albums „*Prater Menuet*“ (2005), „*Erik Rothenstein and the Rainbow project – In Concert*“ (2005), *The Fools of Chelm* (2012) and *Rio Danubio* (2015). Erik had studied alto saxophone at conservatory in Bratislava. After the graduation he left for austrian Graz to Music university to jazz department, where he started playing baritone sax and started doing composition and arranging.

He performed with his quartet and quintet and as a sideman with several slovak and international bands in former Yougoslavia, former Czechoslovakia, middle and western Europe. Erik works together with several combos, Big Bands and orchestras (NikiStein Jazz sextet, Michal Motýl' tentet, Slovak Philharmony, Slovak Sinfonietta, Gustav Brom Orchestra, Hope Gospel Singers ...). He is a member of **Matúš Jakabčič SK-CZ Big Band**, where he also compose and arrange for the orchestra. He also performs contemporary classical music with the group **Lento Ad Astra** and regularly cooperates with musicians from another music styles and genres (flamenco guitarist Flaco de Nerja, Pressburger Klezmer Band and several pop projects). Erik occasionally works as a jazz music journalist and in 2014 he joined as music director production company **PS PRODUCTION**.

### THE FOOLS OF CHELM – concert Line Up

**Erik Rothenstein** – sax, clarinet,  
**Michal Motýl'** – bass trbn  
**Pavol Bereza** – guitar or **Luboš Šrámek** – piano  
**Vlado Máčaj** – double bass  
**Marián Ševčík** – drums  
Opt. Guest **Mirka Záhumenská** – voice



**ERIK ROTHENSTEIN BAND**  
& THE FOOLS OF CHELM