

Romashka

*Gypsy Muzica for
Dancing & Dreaming
From Romania, Russia and Beyond*



Release Date: May 17, 2005

Self-titled debut CD, recorded & mixed by Tamir Muskat (Balkan Beat Box)

Band Members:

Inna Barmash (vocals), Jake Shulman-Ment (violin), Jeff Perlman (clarinet & saxophone), Ben Holmes (trumpet), Stevhen Iancu (accordion), Joey Weisenberg (guitar), Ron Caswell (tuba), Timothy Quigley (drums & percussion)

Like a shot of honey-pepper vodka, Romashka sweetens your lips, hits you heavy in the gut, and induces vertiginous euphoria. Listening to this “lethal dose of gypsy firewater” (DJ Joro-Boro, Mehanata), the brassy Balkan beats make you pound your feet, sexy string and accordion syncopations make your hips shake and the heart-twisting Russian tangos and tales of lost love make your spirit sigh and cry. Lithuanian-born singer Inna Barmash fronts a band of multifaceted American musicians and one half-Romanian madcap accordionist, who bring years of Klezmer, jazz and rock experience to their Gypsy music journey.

Roma is the Gypsy term for the Gypsy people. The complex rhythms and odd harmonics in Gypsy music are enough to enthrall musicologists, but to understand it, all you need are ears, a heart, and... a soul. Romashka draws its repertoire primarily from Romanian and Russian Gypsies – with hints from Spain, Turkey and beyond. The musicians have traipsed around Eastern Europe and the Eastern European enclaves of NYC collecting and imbibing local folk music and culture.

Mashke is Yiddish for “liquor.” This is party music that burns in the belly. Romashka has roused crowds from BAM Café to the Bulgarian Bar, from weddings to late-night house parties that have shaken the walls and drawn the cops. “If you really want a challenge, **try sitting still** while Romashka plays!” (Michael Ginsburg, Zlatne Uste Balkan Brass Band).

Romashka is Russian for “daisy.” Next to raucous dance numbers you will also find aching, world-weary love songs, as sweet and unexpected as a flower in a parking lot.

Romashka detonates its signature Gypsy bacchanalia into this debut album. Count down for music with deep roots and fierce vitality, showcasing both technique and attitude, pulsing between seventh heaven and the nine circles of hell:

8. *Moldovan Batuta*, from the hellish little nation between Romania and Ukraine.
7. A Russian Gypsy medley of *Zaznobila* - a heart-wrenching tale of lost love, and *Baro Faro* (Great City) - in which love is found again.
6. *Rustemul* - a grungy purgatorial Romanian dance.
5. Sinfully jolly Romanian bar song *La Circuma de la Drum*.
4. Confessional Russian tango *Tayna* in which the Secret is you.
3. *Shimdiggy* -an original mixing moist New Orleans with dusty Romanian roads.
2. Seductively Eden-esque Russian Gypsy ballad *Loli Phabay* (The Red Apple).
1. A jazzed-up version of Fanfare Ciocarlia's Romanian classic *Mariana*.

Past Performances Include

BAM Café, Barbès, Hungarian House Balkan Café, Knitting Factory, Maia Meyhane, Mehanata (the Bulgarian Bar), Satalla, Southpaw, Zebulon, Zlatne Uste Golden Festival, and more...

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