

Orlando's Dream

KURT BJORLING - basset horn, Eb clarinet

Clarinetist Kurt Bjorling, who also performs on basset-horn, bass clarinet, 'tsimbl,' saxophone, and accordion, is noted for a penetrating understanding of 'klezmer' music. Kurt Bjorling is the music director of the Chicago Klezmer Ensemble, founded in 1984. He has also toured and recorded with the Klezmatics (New York) and violinist Itzhak Perlman, and since 1992 he has been a member of Brave Old World.

He has composed pieces for orchestra and soloists: "Suite of Yiddish Music," commissioned in December 1991 by the Concordia Chamber Symphony at New York's Lincoln Center, "Concertino on Klezmer Music Themes" commissioned by the Huntington Symphony with members of the Cincinnati Klezmer Project and "Barditshever Fantaziye" for clarinet and chamber orchestra, premiered by the Amsterdam Sinfonietta in November, 2003.

Kurt has taught music at the annual Yiddish Folk Arts Program sponsored by the YIVO Institute and Living Traditions, at the Multicultural Folk Arts Center's klezmer music camp at Buffalo Gap, West Virginia, and at numerous European, American and Canadian festivals and workshops including the annual Jewish Culture Festival in Cracow, Poland, the Jüdische Kulturtage in Berlin, Ashkenaz Festival of New Yiddish Culture (Toronto), KlezmerWochen Weimar, (Germany) and 'KlezFest,' London.

Kurt studied clarinet with Lloyd Scott, and with Larry Combs at Northwestern University.

In addition to his involvement with Yiddish music, he has been active playing jazz, chamber music and various styles of ethnic folk music, as well as arranging and performing music for theater.

DON JACOBS - clarinet

Donald Jacobs, clarinet and saxophone, started playing Klezmer music in 1983, and shortly thereafter began playing with Maxwell Street Klezmer Band. He graduated cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis, and has studied with clarinet masters Sid Beckerman, Richard Corpolongo, George Silfies and James Stoynoff. He also plays with Las Guitarras de España and the Jazmer Ensemble, both Chicago-based groups. Don specializes in Balkan music. He has recorded with all the above-mentioned groups, and with the Balkan Rhythm Band. Don's touring career has included two trips to Jewish festivals in London, Vienna and Germany, three Danish tours, and many festivals in the U.S. and Canada. Don also teaches clarinet and saxophone in the Chicago area. Don and his wife Maria live in Evanston.

JEFF KIMMEL – bass clarinet

Jeff Kimmel is a Chicago-based clarinetist, improviser and composer. His work encompasses a commitment to expand the timbral possibilities of the bass clarinet while presenting the instrument in a variety of formats.

Originally from Greenville, SC, Kimmel moved to Boston to attend the New England Conservatory of Music. Since relocating to Chicago in 2007, he has become an active part of the city's vibrant jazz and improvised music scene.

Currently, Jeff performs regularly with a diverse array of ensembles, including ragtime with The Great Crush, notated experimental music with a.p.e.r.i.o.d.i.c ensemble, and maintains regular collaborations with local improvisers. He has been featured on several recordings with groups that emphasize the cultivation of long-standing musical relationships. In 2011, he released a CD of his original quartet music, Charm Offensive, to critical acclaim. His work has been funded twice by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, and in the fall of 2011, he was selected to attend a residency at the Atlantic Center for the Arts.