

# Metropolitan

◆ KLEZMER ◆

METROPOLITAN KLEZMER \* METROPOL

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PHOTO: ANGELA JIMENEZ

“With influences that range from old school Arabic music to Latin Jazz to Motown, Metropolitan Klezmer interprets aged Yiddish favorites with a mixture of tradition and irreverence. Don’t worry if you’ve never heard of the accordion-rich, Eastern European genre of Klezmer. Led by percussionist Eve Sicular, the NYC-based eight-piece produces a sound that is not only exuberantly eclectic but also very danceable. Expect an eccentric cultural lesson from these modern-day purveyors of time-honored traditions.”

– **Jen Bachman, Flavorpill**

“Fantastic players... excellent vocals... strength and diversity.”

– **Scott Atkinson, RootsWorld**

“Metropolitan Klezmer is anything but stereotypical, and nothing but terrific... One of the best klezmer bands in the world today.”

– **Shaun Dale, Cosmik Debris**

“One of the best traditional klezmer bands around... wildy variegated flavors... Clever, spirited and smart musicianship... Formidable.”

– **George Robinson, Jewish Week**

“Delightfully rambunctious... hard-swinging... an outstanding group.”

– **Village Voice**

“As befits New York’s best klezmer band, the music is breathtakingly good.”

– **Lucid Culture**

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**HAILED AS "ONE OF THE FINEST AMERICAN KLEZMER BANDS"** by *Songlines Magazine*, **METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** performs an exhilarating range of musical treasure with astonishing agility and refreshing depth. Formed in 1994, this collaborative adventure of eight exceptional New York musicians combines the best of downtown, classical and world music scenes to create inspired neo-traditional interpretations and compositions around a panoply of eclectic Yiddish repertoire: ethereal trance, rollicking dance, imaginatively-arranged Yiddish swing and tango, plus genre-expanding originals such as klezmer cumbia. **METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** bandmates bring together stylistic backgrounds from Albanian to Zydeco, and from Latin jazz to baroque, complete with a panoramic instrumental array and multi-lingual vocals. Led by drummer/archivist Eve Sicular, the group also explores such lesser-known gems as Soviet Yiddish theater melodies and gorgeous overlooked vintage soundtrack tunes, in addition to bringing unexpected elements together to transform familiar yet surprising favorites. *The Essential Klezmer* cites their "topnotch" sound, lauding the band's "exuberant spirit and wit."

**METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** recent debuts included full houses for the band's Lincoln Center premiere (David Rubenstein Atrium) and sold-out Miami concerts (Yamaha Concert series). The octet has played repeat engagements at Caramoor Center, East Hampton Guild Hall, World Financial Center, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, The 92nd St Y's Kaufmann Concert Hall, Mason Gross School of the Arts, BlackRock Center (Germantown MD), Usdan Center, City Winery, National Yiddish Book Center, The Jewish Museum, The Knitting Factory, and the legendary Bottom Line. Other venues of note: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Joe's Pub at The Public Theater, The Museum of Jewish Heritage, Kingsborough Community College, Cape May Music Festival, Rams Head (Annapolis), The JCC in Manhattan, The Museum at Eldridge Street, and NYC's Center for Jewish History. Upcoming tours include debuts for Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Tucson AZ's Rialto Theatre, Northern Arizona University, and Lodi CA as well as the Count Basie Theater (Red Bank NJ).

**METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** recordings have been featured by HBO's *SCHMATTER: Rags to Riches to Rags*, PRI's *Sound+Spirit*, London Royal Ballet's *First Drafts* (Covent Garden), SITI Theatre Co's *SCORE* (NY Theatre Workshop & national tour), documentary films *Grace Paley: Collected Shorts* and *I Guess I'll Never Get to Vegas*, and live/concert broadcasts: CNN *WorldBeat* (with sister sextet Isle of Klezbos), Ebru TV's *Rhythm & Roots*, ARD German TV's *Rhythms of NY*, WFUV (CityFolk), WFMU (*TransPacific Sound Paradise*), WVBR (*Bound for Glory*). Exhibitions: *Chagall & the Artists of the Russian Jewish Theater* (The Jewish Museum, NY; and Contemporary Jewish Museum, SF). Airplay has also included CBC's *Roots & Wings*, Polish Radio Lublin, WDR's *Funkhaus Europa/Mondo Cannibale*, Australia's *Hot Club*, UK's *Folkswagon*, Argentina's *Radio Jai*, Northeast Public Radio Live from The Linda, PRI's *This Way Out* and over 200 stations worldwide.

**METROPOLITAN KLEZMER**'s stellar bandmates have individually performed, recorded and toured with the likes of Rufus Wainwright, Mark Morris, Indigo Girls, Bill Frisell, Bonnie Raitt, David Del Tredici, Burning Spear, Balkan Brothers, Jimmy Scott, Anthony Braxton, New York City Opera, Hazmat Modine, Marshall Crenshaw, Natalie Merchant, Butch Morris, Elliott Sharp, Dave Douglas, Sounds of Taraab, Robin Holcomb, The Microscopic Septet, Smyrneiki Kompania, The Voodooillies, Toots & the Maytals, Los Mas Valientes, Seattle Baroque, Toshi Reagon, Opera Omnia, and Scissor Sisters, as well as Jewish musical artists including Alhambra, The Klezematics, Yemen Blues, David Krakauer, Andy Statman, Michael Alpert, Isle of Klezbos, Basya Schechter, and Charming Hostess. The band's accolades include support from NYC's Department of Cultural Affairs, Sparkplug Foundation, and multiple Outmusic Awards. Recent projects by bandleader Eve Sicular – *J. EDGAR KLEZMER: Songs from My Grandmother's FBI Files*, and *The Yiddish Celluloid Closet* – have premiered at NYC's Dixon Place, Galapagos ArtSpace, and The JCC in Manhattan. For the centenary of the Triangle Fire, **METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** performed the band's own original arrangements of Yiddish ballads from 1911 (including a recently rediscovered, strikingly poignant period piece) at Cooper Union's Great Hall memorial concert.

In addition to the band's four CD releases by Rhythm Media Records, **METROPOLITAN KLEZMER** tracks also appear on numerous compilations including *Music from the Winery* on John Zorn's *Tzadik* label. The UK's *Phat Planet* lauds their music as "brilliant and breathless... mixing levity with the gravity," while Belgium's *Rootstown* acclaims "the absolute top of the genre."

**DISCOGRAPHY: CD'S ON RHYTHM MEDIA RECORDS** (distributed worldwide by Stern's Music, Ltd.)

- **Traveling Show**, 2007: Best CDs of the Year, *Jewish Week & LA Jewish Journal* – 5 stars!
- **Surprising Finds**, 2003: Worldbeat Top 30, *The Phat Planet* (UK); *Outmusic Award*
- **Mosaic Persuasion**, 2001 (with Isle of Klezbos): *Outmusic Award*; Top Ten, *Jewish Week*
- **Yiddish for Travelers**, 1998: Top Ten lists, *Moment Magazine* and *KlezmerShack*; selected for *The Essential Klezmer Library* Top 20

"Excellent klezmer...  
impeccable yet  
electrifying"

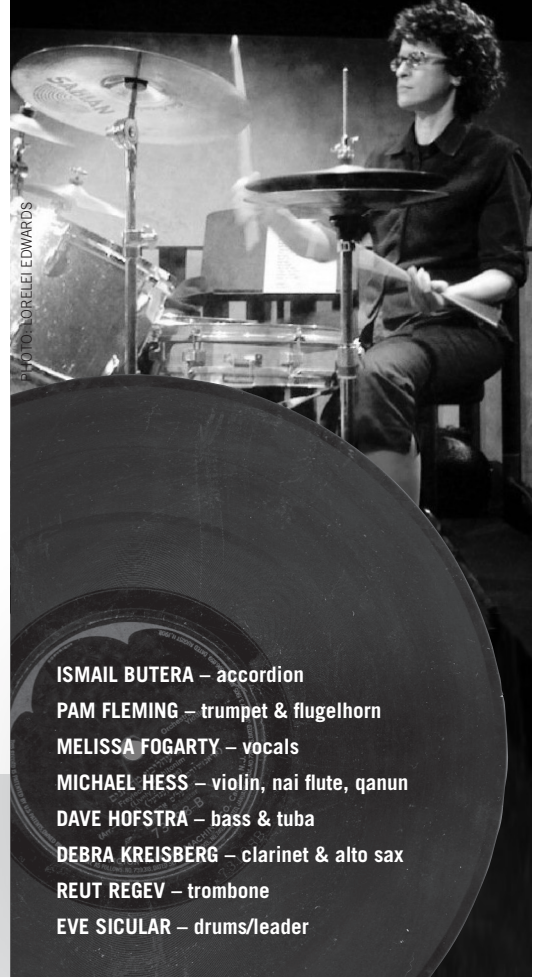
– **Richard Gehr, Village Voice**

"Metropolitan Klezmer takes a  
scholarly approach to the genre's  
history, yet never skimps on the  
exuberance at its core."

– **Time Out NY**

"Originality, expert musicianship  
and a keen world music  
sensibility" – **All About Jazz**

LIVE at Lincoln Center



ISMAIL BUTERA – accordion

PAM FLEMING – trumpet & flugelhorn

MELISSA FOGARTY – vocals

MICHAEL HESS – violin, nai flute, qanun

DAVE HOFSTRA – bass & tuba

DEBRA KREISBERG – clarinet & alto sax

REUT REGEV – trombone

EVE SICULAR – drums/leader