

BERKELEY CHORO ENSEMBLE



ABOUT BERKELEY CHORO ENSEMBLE

The Berkeley Choro Ensemble (pronounced “shoro”), is a group of world-class musicians from the SF Bay Area that made its debut in January, 2010, at the Berkeley Public Library. The group celebrates the music, culture and history of Brazil, with a special emphasis on the Choro genre, a style of music which emerged in the 1800’s in Brazil, fusing the music of Brazil’s European immigrants and the native music of Brazil’s indigenous and African-Brazilian population. In particular, the choro sound is somewhat akin to a combination of European classical music, ragtime, and blues. Historically, the choro style influenced Brazil’s most famous classical composer, Heitor Villa Lobos, to compose some of the world’s most hauntingly beautiful music, the Bachianas Brasileiras. Our repertoire also includes samba, bossa nova, jazz, and the music of Northeast Brazil.

MUSICIAN BIOS



Jane Lenoir grew up in Tampa, Florida, and left home at 15 as a SCHOLARSHIP student to the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan and then to Oberlin Conservatory of Music. A performer comfortable in many diverse styles, Jane appears regularly as a soloist, chamber player, orchestral musician, and jazz performer. She first began her study of Brazilian music in 2006, and has since performed with Marcos Silva, Jovino Santos Neto, Hermeto Pascoal, and recorded with Carlos Oliveira and Ceilia Medeiros, Live at Anna’s Jazz Island and Brazilian Choro 2009. In 2010 she visited Brazil and studied with Hermeto Pascoal, Jovino Santos Neto, Paulo Sergio Santos, Alessandro Pennezzzi and Ted Falcon. She is principal flutist with the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra in Grass Valley, and also performs with Sexteto Matiz, an Afro-Cuban ensemble, and numerous jazz, and new music and chamber ensembles in styles ranging from early music (baroque flute) to free improvisation. www.janelenoir.com



Saxophonist/clarinetist **Harvey Wainapel** (pronounced “wine-apple”) has been called “one of the most promising and versatile players of his generation” (All Music Guide to Jazz 1998). He has performed with the likes of McCoy Tyner, Joe Lovano, Ray Charles, Dave Brubeck, and Joe Henderson. Besides working with these and numerous other leaders, Wainapel has toured extensively under his own name, and has performed in 22 countries. His heavy involvement with the music of Brazil has led to performances with top-level musicians such as Airtó Moreira, Flora Purim, Dori Caymmi, Guinga, and Jovino Santos Neto. www.myspace.com/harvjazz



Originally from Rio de Janeiro and based in the Bay Area, guitarist/composer **Ricardo Peixoto** is among the top representatives of Brazilian guitar in the US, with a fluid melodic style and a keen compositional sense. His performances explore Brazil’s rich and diverse traditions, both in his original work as well as in arrangements of Brazilian classics. His approach is grounded both in the jazz and Brazilian music traditions, but always ventures well beyond their borders, combining rich melodies, sophisticated harmonies, and the unmistakable rhythms of Brazil. Ricardo came to the US on a scholarship to the Berkeley School of Music in Boston, and later continued his studies in classical guitar at the SF Conservatory of Music. He has recorded, performed, and collaborated with, among others, Claudia Villela, Flora Purim and Airtó, saxophonist Bud Shank, percussionist Dom Um Romão, Toots Thielemans, Dori Caymmi, Guinga, guitarist Carlos Oliveira, Harvey Wainapel, Marcos Silva and Terra Sul. He has performed throughout the US, Europe, Canada, Japan and Brazil.



Percussionist **Brian Rice** graduated from the Interlochen Arts Academy and Oberlin College Conservatory of Music with a B.M. in Percussion Performance and Ethnomusicology. Brian’s study of the Brazilian pandeiro began in 1986 when the Sao Paulo State University percussion ensemble visited Oberlin and percussionist/composer Carlos Stasi, then a student at SPSU, gave Brian a quick pandeiro lesson after the concert. Brian has performed with numerous Brazilian artists including, Jovino Santos Neto, Paulo Sergio Santos, Danilo Brito, Dudu Maia and Jorge Alabe. It was studies with Marcos Suzano that inspired Brian to expand his use of the pandeiro outside the Brazilian music world and apply it to Balkan, Celtic, Middle Eastern, Spanish, and Cuban music with great effect. www.brian-rice.com

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REVIEWS

I discovered chorino music, as it's called in Brazil, quite by accident when I heard it at a club in Rio. The lilting sound mixes African-based percussion with classical European instruments such as guitar, sax and even clarinet. It's not samba nor Bossa Nova. "If samba is like rhythm and blues," one chorino musician in Brazil told me, "then chorino is jazz."

Berkeley Choro provides a great introduction to the chorino style. Flutist Jane Lenoir knows the intricate Brazilian rhythms and melodies. Saxophonist Harvey Wainapel combines his years as a jazzman with a deep study of Brazilian music. Together with guitarist Ricardo Peixoto and percussionist Brian Rice, Berkeley Choro is a real musical treat.

Reese Erlich, Jazz Perspectives
www.jazzcorner.com/innerviews

On November 7, 2010, I went to hear Berkeley Choro at Avonova. I expected it to be pretty good, but it wasn't—it was excellent. The musicians played cohesively and very musically and it swung like crazy. The sound and blend was musically beautiful. The songs were a nice mix of choro and bossa classics and originals. You could go and hear this group of players again and again and never get tired of it.

Review of Berkeley Choro's November 7th Concert at Avonova by Mark Rosengarden—drummer, percussionist and producer who played and toured with Walter Wanderly, Vince Guaraldi, Herbie Mann, Viva Brasil and others; He produced Viva Brasil's debut album, "Viva Brasil" in the 80's