

KLEZTORY

Klezmer Ensemble

Kleztory's adventure began in 1999 when Mark and Alain, already musical partners for several years in a previous klezmer band, met Airat. Together, the three formed the band Simha with violinist Alex Aptecar. The band did not do many shows and ultimately dissolved in the summer of 2000. At the end of that year, on Airat's suggestion, they reformed the band with Elvira on the violin and began anew. At the beginning of 2001, a common friend introduced Henri to Airat, who invited him to audition for the band, resulting in Henri becoming the newest member of the band.

At this juncture, the band, now dubbed Kleztory, found its sound and really began to gel. Henri, a highly talented accordionist, arranger and composer, became the binding force between Alain and Mark's solid and dynamic rhythm section and the impressive virtuosity of the soloists Airat and Elvira.

The band played relatively few shows in the beginning, but regularly played on the streets of Montréal and Ottawa where they expanded their repertoire and polished their arrangements. In the fall of 2001, they recorded their first album, simply called *Musique Klezmer*.

The band now found itself playing more and more regularly in cultural centers and festivals around Montréal where its success was growing rapidly. In 2003, the director of the world renowned chamber

music orchestra I Musici de Montréal, Yuli Turovsky invited the band to record an album with them. The 21 musicians and conductor were in the studio by fall, recording 15 pieces taken from Kleztory's repertoire that had been magnificently arranged by Henri and Airat. The resulting album, and the subsequent shows performed with the orchestra introduced Kleztory to the classical music world and enabled them to reach a whole new public. They performed the same repertoire with the 13 Strings Ensemble of Ottawa and the Québec Symphony Orchestra in 2006, the Laval Symphony Orchestra in 2007 and the Brussels Chamber Orchestra in 2007 and 2008. Previously, Kleztory had had the honor of appearing as soloists with the Montréal Symphony Orchestra to perform a musical version of the tale "Bone Button Borsht" in the spring of 2005.

In March 2007 they released a third CD called *Nomade*. This album won them an Opus Prize in 2007 as the best Jazz / World Music album of the year in Québec.

Over the past several years, with the band's popularity always growing, Kleztory has traveled throughout Canada, from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island, passing by Nunavut. Kleztory has also toured several times to the United States and to Belgium and Romania. Their emotionally charged shows, replete with humor and energy, bring happiness to everyone present.