

## The HENDRIK MEURKENS CHORO PROJECT

This unique group brings together Brazilian Choro masters based in New York with Hendrik Meurkens' harmonica. The repertoire includes Hendrik's own original Choros, in addition to standards from the classic Choro repertoire.

The sound on this group is truly unique because Choro has not been played on the harmonica as the main solo instrument. Hendrik Meurkens' virtuosity enables him to play this extremely difficult style on the harmonica, adding an exciting chapter to the history of this highly respected Brazilian music style.

Mr. Meurkens includes Chorinhos on his recordings, and they have always been part of his concert repertoire. Given the overwhelming response to this genre, Mr. Meurkens now devotes an entire evening to the music, as The CHORO PROJECT.

In addition to Meurkens, the group includes Pedro Ramos, cavaquinho; Zé Maurício, pandeiro and Helio Alves, piano, among others. Ramos, originally from São Paulo, Brazil, is a true virtuoso of the cavaquinho, one of the key instruments in Choro. A native of Rio, Ze Maurciio is widely respected for his absolute mastery of the pandeiro, another important instrument in this music. Born in Sao Paulo, Helio Alves has performed and recorded with everyone from Joe Henderson to Yo-Yo Ma. He is known as *the pianist* in Brazilian jazz music.

### ABOUT CHORO MUSIC

Choro, or Chorinho, is a Brazilian music style that originated in Rio de Janeiro in the 19th century. It evolved from a blend such European styles as Polka, Waltz and Mazurka and, the emerging Samba. The result was a sophisticated, polyrhythmic, lively musical form which demanded the best from its performers. It became, over the years, a form of popular chamber music based in acoustic instruments, mostly guitar as well as seven string Guitar, mandolin, cavaco, flute and light Percussion (pandeiro, tamborim -- a small hand held Drum, and shakers). Choro influenced many Brazilian Composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Tom Jobim and Hermeto Pascoal.

A Blend of different traditional European and Afro-Brazilian music forms, Chorinho was born in the first half of 19th century in Brazil. Many believe the origin of the name comes from the Portuguese verb 'chorar' (to cry), stemming from choro's lilting melodic lines which sound like weeping. Also another theory states that the term originated from xôlo, a word used by Afro-Brazilians for vocal or dance concerts.

Choro is not only the Brazilian music which is closest to European classical, it is the essentially Brazilian genre. Developing from European forms, African rhythms, and a classical spectrum of harmony that had been modified by the early masters, choro eventually acquired its own identity. Among all the styles that come from Brazil, it is the genre that speaks most of the Brazilian personality.

For more information about the choro style go to  
<http://www.choroensemble.com/paginas/about.html>

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