

Howard Levy is a musician without limits. His musical adventures include journeys into jazz, pop, rock, world music, Latin, classical, folk, blues, country, theater, and film. He has appeared on hundred of cd's, won a Grammy (1997), won a Joseph Jefferson Award (1986) for Best Original Music for a Play, and has performed many times on American and European television and radio.

Universally acknowledged as the world's most advanced diatonic harmonica player, Howard developed a fully chromatic style on the standard 10 - hole diatonic harmonica, revolutionizing harmonica playing and taking the instrument into totally new territory. He is also an accomplished pianist and composer, and plays many other instruments as well, including flute, ocarina, mandolin, saxophone, and percussion.

Howard was a founding member of the Bela Fleck and the Flecktones. He toured and recorded two albums with Kenny Loggins, and formed Trio Globo with Eugene Friesen and Glen Velez . Howard has also performed and/or recorded with Dolly Parton, Styx, Bobby McFerrin, Paul Simon, John Prine, Paquito D'Rivera, Ken Nordine, and many others, as well as touring and recording extensively in Europe with artists such as Rabih Abou Khalil and Michael Riessler. Recent Highlights

In 2003, Howard released a jazz duo cd with Naumberg Award-winning pianist Anthony Molinaro, entitled The Molinaro/Levy Project "Live". In 2002, he performed "On the Other Side..." (a triple concerto composed for him, a clarinetist and an accordianist) with The Bavarian State Radio Orchestra in Munich, Germany. In 2001, Howard was commissioned by The Illinois Philharmonic to compose a Harmonica Concerto, the first ever written for diatonic harmonica. Since the debut, he has performed it 9 times, with more performances scheduled.

Education

Howard Levy studied piano and theory at The Manhattan School of Music in N.Y. for four years, then studied pipe organ with Carl Lambert for two years. He attended Northwestern University in Evanston, IL for two years, playing in the Jazz band.

As a music educator, Howard has taught hundreds of students privately, and has been a guest lecturer at Harvard, Berklee, Dartmouth College, Northwestern University, Francis Parker School, given jazz clinics at high schools, and has given hundreds performances of "Music from around the World," a program of international music for children and adults.

He also taught harmonica for 7 summers at The Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop in Elkins, WV, and World Music in 1984 at The Omega Institute in New York.

Howard has 2 instructional videos. The first is on Homespun Tapes called "New Directions for Harmonica". It deals with every aspect of Howard's revolutionary techniques, repair and adjustment of the harmonica, improvisational music theory. There is even has a section using ultrasound that shows the inside of a harmonica player's mouth as he plays. The second is a collaboration between Howard Levy's label Balkan Samba and OMRadio.com called, "Out of the Box". Expanding upon the previous release, Out of the Box covers 12 songs in 12 keys all played on a C diatonic harmonica.

Howard has also collaborated with Artist Works to start the Howard Levy Harmonica School online. <http://www.howardlevyharmonicaschool.com/>

Current Chicago Bands

Howard is music director of Chévere, Chicago's hottest Latin-Jazz-Fusion Band, whose first CD was released on Balkan Samba Records. He also leads a 4 piece band called "Howard Levy's Acoustic Express", also with a cd to be released soon.

Movies, Dance, Theater

Howard's harmonica playing was featured on the soundtracks of "A Family Thing", "Striptease", "A Time to Kill", "Straight Talk", and "Vietnam, A Long Time Coming". In the dance world, Howard collaborated with Indian dancer Raneé Ramaswamy in "Where the Hands Go, The Eyes Follow", a fusion of photography, poetry, dance, and music, all live, with poets Robert Bly and Coleman Barks. In 2004 he performed with members of The Hubbard St. and Joffrey dance companies in "Moody Hollow", choreographed by Lauri Stallings. In theater, he won a Joseph Jefferson Award for his music for Brecht's "Puntilla and his Hired Man" (1986). In 1997 he co-wrote the music for "Tales From Trashmania", a one woman show by Bonnie Koloc.

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Some Quotes

"...Playing an extended solo that somehow merged quasi- baroque techniques with swing rhythms, snippets of hokey holiday tunes with passages of brilliant jazz improvisation, Levy unleashed more ideas in this opening solo than many musicians do in an entire set."

Howard Reich, The Chicago Tribune, Dec. 1996

"...Howard Levy is a revelation; there are times when it is hard to believe he is playing only a harmonica, for he has the expressive range and depth of a saxophonist."

Geoff Dyer, The London Observer, March 1994

"... may be the most radical single technical innovator in the history of his instrument..."

Kim Field, Harmonicas, Harps, and Heavy Breathers, Simon & Schuster 1993