

David Krakauer - Biography

Clarinetist David Krakauer, praised internationally for his astounding ability to play in a myriad of music genres with “prodigious chops” (*The New Yorker*) and “soulfulness and electrifying showiness” (*The New York Times*), occupies the unique position of being both one of the world’s leading exponents of Eastern European Jewish klezmer music, plus a major voice in classical music and avant-garde improvisation. His klezmer sound has been described by *RootsWorld* as “an electrifying amalgam of cozy Eastern European traditions, free-form jazz, and dissonant howls of rage and pain ... a bittersweet statement of personal and collective race memory.”

In recent years, Krakauer has emerged as a compelling soloist, introducing his distinctive sound to symphonic audiences in the US and Europe. He has performed with distinguished orchestras including the Dresdener Philharmonie, the Pacific Symphony, the Weimar Staatskapelle, Detroit Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Colorado Music festival orchestra, Quebec Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, New World Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Komische Oper orchestra and the Orchestre Lamoureux. He has premiered and championed concertos by Osvaldo Golijov, Paul Moravec, Jean Philippe Calvin, Ofer Ben Amots, George Tsontakis, Mohammed Fairouz, and young rising star Wlad Marhulets.

Throughout his career, Krakauer has enjoyed major ongoing artistic collaborations with a diverse group of the world’s foremost performers and composers. Highlights include his renowned partnership with the Kronos Quartet on Osvaldo Golijov’s *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, touring with the Emerson String Quartet; performing during the inaugural season of Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall with renowned jazz pianist Uri Caine; an eight-year tenure with the Naumburg Award-winning Aspen Wind Quintet; tours with Music from Marlboro; composing the music for *Offering*, an homage to the victims of September 11 by modern dance duo Eiko and Koma; numerous performances of David Del Tredici’s *Magyar Madness*, commissioned by Music Accord for Krakauer and the Orion String quartet; and performing in the International Emmy Award-winning BBC documentary *Holocaust, A Music Memorial from Auschwitz* with music by Osvaldo Golijov.

Krakauer and his band Klezmer Madness! have performed around the world since 1996, forging alliances between his branch of world music and a multitude of musical genres including jazz, funk and most recently, electro. While firmly rooted in traditional klezmer folk tunes, the band “hurls the tradition of klezmer music into the rock era” (*The New York Times*). Touring internationally to major venues and festivals including Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, Stanford Lively Arts, San Francisco Performances, Hancher Auditorium, the Krannert Center, the Venice Biennale, Krakow Jewish Culture Festival, BBC Proms, Saalfelden Jazz Festival, La Cigale, the Marciac festival, WOMEX, the New Morning in Paris and many others has enabled Klezmer Madness! to leave a lasting impression on diverse music scenes around the world.

In 2006, Krakauer co-founded the multi-genre super group Abraham Inc. with legendary funk trombonist and arranger Fred Wesley and Jewish hip-hop renegade and beat architect Socalled. Abraham Inc. heralds a time when boundaries are eroding, mutual respect is presumed, and musical traditions can hit with full force without concession or appropriation. Recent and upcoming highlights include performances at The Apollo Theater and Symphony Space in New York, The Krannert Center in Illinois, Hancher Auditorium in Iowa, The Miller Outdoor Theater in Houston, The Strathmore in Maryland, Cal Performances, The Heineken Open’r Festival in Poland, The Cracow Jewish Culture Festival, the Transmusicales de Rennes, and Jazz a la Villette in Paris. The group’s 2010 debut release *Tweet Tweet* on Krakauer’s own Table Pounding Records label peaked at No. 1 in Funk and No. 1 in Jewish and Yiddish Music, and at No. 35 in music sales on Amazon. It reached No. 7 on Billboard’s Jazz Chart and was featured at No. 40 on the Billboard Heatseekers Chart for fastest sellers.

In addition to *Tweet Tweet*, Krakauer’s discography contains some of the most important clarinet recordings of recent decades. His first release on the prestigious French jazz label Label Bleu *A New Hot One!* was hailed as a masterwork. *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* (Osvaldo Golijov and the Kronos Quartet/Nonesuch) received the Diapason D’Or in France. *The Twelve Tribes* was designated album of the year in the jazz category for the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. *Klezmer*, NY on John Zorn’s Tzadik label features his visionary suite, *A Klezmer Tribute to Sidney Bechet*. *Klezmer Madness* (also on Tzadik) was one of the label’s best selling discs. *Krakauer Live in Krakow* (Label Bleu) remains a classic, and *Bubbemeises: Lies My Gramma Told Me* (Label Bleu) features his collaboration with Socalled. Other CDs include the groundbreaking *Rhythm and Jews* (Piranha/Flying Fish) and *Jews with Horns* (Piranha/Green Linnet) with the Klezomatics, plus *In the Fiddler’s House* with violinist Itzhak Perlman/ the Klezomatics (Angel) and *Ayre* with Dawn Upshaw/ Osvaldo Golijov (Deutsche Gramophon). His unique sound can be heard in Danny Elfman’s score for the Ang Lee film *Taking Woodstock* and throughout Sally Potter’s *The Tango Lesson*.

Krakauer has had major profiles in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The International Herald Tribune*, and *Downbeat*, *Jazz Times*, *Jazziz* and *Chamber Music* magazines. A passionate educator, Krakauer is on the clarinet and chamber music faculties of the Mannes College of Music of the New School University, NYU, the Manhattan School of Music and the Bard Conservatory of Music.

Krakauer makes his home in New York, and is managed by Bernstein Artists, Inc. He is an artist and clinician for the Selmer, Conn-Selmer and Rico companies. For more information, visit www.davidkrakauer.com or www.bernsarts.com.