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October 13, 2010







## Review: Ronen Chamber Ensemble

by Tom Aldridge

4 stars

Hilbert Circle Theatre Wood Room; Oct. 12. Klezmer music is traditional Jewish music, originating more in Eastern Europe and western Asia, but now played all over. David Bellman and Ingrid Fischer-Bellman opened their Ronen chamber season — in a well-filled Wood Room — with both music composed in a Klezmer style and the actual, unadulterated stuff itself, the latter comprising the second half. Since what followed the break was what I enjoyed the most, I'll start with it. We heard a violin, viola, guitar, cello (Ingrid Fischer), clarinet (David), bass, and a drum set give us a septet of arrangements by one S.W. Milstein, who appears involved in everything Klezmer-related. We heard "Processional," "Freileichs" (the only one not Milstein arranged), "Waltz Medley," "Fraylachs" and "Sher." A common trait of Klezmer music is that much of it is in a minor key, as all these selections were, giving a wistful tinge to music of people often harassed and uprooted throughout their multiple-millennia history. The Ronen's first half opened with Chris Rutkowski three-movement *Passages* for Clarinet, Cello and Piano. Ronen first played this in 2004 when it was brand new. Rutkowski directs the third movement to open with a rhythmically repeated note with its D-string (just below middle C) damped by a right-hand finger — then later an E-string, creating yet another unusual percussive piano timbre (or color, if you prefer). I liked both and what went with it. Noam Sheriff's "Melody" from the movie *The Dybbuk* came next. Finally J. Stutschewsky's *Kaddish* for cello and piano, featuring lovely cello work by Ingrid Fischer. The audience loved it all.

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