

For Immediate Release: Monday, December 5, 2011

**Jenny Scheinman**  
***Mischief & Mayhem***  
w/ Nels Cline, Jim Black, Todd Sickafoose  
(Release Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012)

"Best Fiddler 2011: Jenny Scheinman" -*Village Voice*

"Jenny Scheinman leads an electrifying group of experimental musicians [in her new band Mischief & Mayhem]...there is an emotional element to her playing that makes her music deeply satisfying." -*Wall Street Journal*

"Protean musician Jenny Scheinman plays all the positions: She's a stellar violinist, a keen improviser, a sharp composer and an appealing singer. She's [now] leading an exceptional group featuring guitarist Nels Cline, bassist Todd Sickafoose and drummer Jim Black..." -*Time Out NY*

"Over the last decade Ms. Scheinman, a violinist drawn equally to folksiness and experimentation, has been a key arrival to jazz, an outsider with a voice and ideas. She's not a stranger to the Village Vanguard, thanks partly to an affiliation with the guitarist Bill Frisell. But in [Mischief & Mayhem] she has a more backbeat-driven, abstract vehicle than the club typically condones." -*New York Times*

"...when [Scheinman] cocks her fiddle to her chin, draws back her bow, and starts shredding along with her excellent bandmates in [Mischief & Mayhem,] the result is beautiful havoc unleashed." -*NY Magazine*

"Inspired infractions are behind the first part of the band's name (*en garde*, jazz orthodoxy!). The violinist leads an aggressive bunch, and they're constantly tweaking each other. The mayhem arrives when all that good-natured frolic hits the red zone, a ploy often hastened by drummer Jim Black's wallop or guitarist Nels Cline's need to tear the universe a new butthole. Either way, M&M calibrates its dynamics, so some true titillation is up front. But don't forget the luminous moments - in Scheinman's world, they're always just around the corner." -*Village Voice*

*Mischief & Mayhem* is Jenny Scheinman's edgiest album to date. Filled with spunk, humor, and several full on rock tunes, the acclaimed composer and violinist's latest album proves to be the rebellious child of the litter. Not to say that it doesn't contain many of Scheinman's trademark classic melodies, but the overall approach is aggressive, and more about spark than perfection.

Jenny Scheinman is set to independently release *Mischief & Mayhem* on Tuesday, March 6, 2012. *Mischief & Mayhem* includes all original instrumental compositions written by Scheinman and features the inimitable guitarist **Nels Cline** who, after several decades of cult status in the world of experimental music, has garnered mainstream fame through his work with the rock band **Wilco**, the powerful bass player **Todd Sickafoose**, a band leader in his own right and long time member of **Ani DiFranco's** various groups, and **Jim Black**, one of New York's most idiosyncratic and exciting downtown drummers. The album was recorded at Brooklyn Recording by Scheinman's longtime engineer **Sascha Von Oertzen**, and mixed by GRAMMY Award-winning engineer **Tucker Martine** – who recently produced new albums from **My Morning Jacket** and **The Decemberists** – at Flora Studios in Portland, OR. *Mischief & Mayhem's* CD packaging highlights singular design by GRAMMY Award-winning **Gail Marowitz** (c/o The Visual Strategist). Interviews and photos are available upon request.

Since moving to New York City in 1999, Scheinman has steadily developed her career as a bandleader and has worked alongside some of today's most lauded artists including **Bill Frisell**, **Lucinda Williams**, **Norah Jones**, **Rodney Crowell**, **Jason Moran**, **Madeleine Peyroux**, **Lou Reed** and countless others. Her playing and singing is featured on several of this year's outstanding albums: Bill Frisell's *Sign of Life* as well as his tribute to **John Lennon** *All We Can Say*, Bruce Cockburn's *Small Source Of Comfort* (she toured as a show opener and member of Cockburn's trio on a 50-date North American tour in spring and summer 2011), Madeleine Peyroux's *Standing on the Rooftop* (on which she co-wrote several songs), and she wrote and performed string arrangements on Lou Reed and **Metallica's** latest album, *Lulu*.

For the past nine years (2003-2011), Scheinman has taken the **#1 Rising Star Violinist** title in the *Downbeat Magazine Critics Poll* and has been listed as one of their **Top Ten Overall Violinists**. Her fourth instrumental release, *12 Songs*, was named by the *New York Times* (Ben Ratliff) as one of the **Top Ten Albums of 2005**. In 2008, Scheinman released her fifth instrumental release, *Crossing The Field*, and her debut vocal album, *Jenny Scheinman*, which received national press attention in such distinguished publications as *Rolling Stone*, *Billboard*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, and many others. *NY Magazine* touted *Crossing The Field* as being "one of the essential New York jazz albums of the past 40 years."

Of her latest album, *Mischief & Mayhem*, Scheinman is thrilled to present new music from the perspective of a real band. She notes, "I've been lucky to play and record my instrumental music with so many wonderful musicians - Bill Frisell, Jason Moran, Ron Miles - but

hear in my head, that I can write for, that will stay around for a long time."

Cline, Sickafoose and Scheinman, all originally from California, have been collaborators since the late '90s when they toured together in **Scott Amendola's** band and when Jenny released her first recording, *Live at Yoshi's*. Scheinman comments, "Those early tours with Nels were hugely influential. He is full of love but can still be so aggressive. He pushes the limits without ever losing the feeling. He's a very sentimental player really, Todd too." But it was the pairing of Black and Cline that served as the original inspiration for her band Mischief & Mayhem. Scheinman adds, "When I was called to play an instrumental show at The Bandshell as part of 'Celebrate Brooklyn,' I got this sound in my head - all swamy, very romantic, but at the same time a bit excessive, thrashy. I put down the phone and tried to figure out who it was that I was hearing - It was Nels and Jim whom I later learned had never even played together - that's it!... mischief! mayhem!"

"Celebrate Brooklyn" served as a starting point for their debut East Coast tour in 2007, which came to a sudden halt when Cline came down with chicken pox and had to be rushed to the hospital and subsequently quarantined. Never one for playing it safe, Scheinman decided that a show with Mischief & Mayhem would be a perfect sendoff into motherhood, so she set up a show at Le Poisson Rouge (NYC) in August 2009 when she was 8 1/2 months pregnant. In July 2010, Scheinman presented Mischief & Mayhem at the Village Vanguard for 12 sets of music over 6 days. She wrote all new material for the occasion, and by mid-week the band was sounding so solid, she impulsively scheduled a two-day recording session for the few days following the run. That recorded material is highlighted on her new release, *Mischief & Mayhem*.

In August 2011, Scheinman returned to the Village Vanguard with Mischief & Mayhem and brought a small run of limited-edition, hand numbered CDs to sell to audience members only. *Mischief & Mayhem* will now be available in stores and online with major digital retailers including iTunes in March 2012.

*Mischief & Mayhem* opens with the composition, "A Ride With Polly Jean." The simple phrasing and rhythmic structure of the melody has that signature Scheinman suggestion of words, as if the tune were being sung. After establishing itself clearly at the start, it soon dives below the increasing density of the rhythm section. Scheinman notes, "'Polly Jean' is a fantasy about driving down the California coastline with **PJ Harvey**, one of my all-time favorite artists. The drum part is what Jim has come to call the 'serenity backbeat,' a seductive groove, a steady but not quite repeating pattern, soft but insistent. I love the way the piece starts so small and simple, then imperceptibly transforms into this giant swirl."

"After mixing what I thought were the main tracks with Tucker Martine out in Portland, I dug up some of the 'B' tracks and brought them to a studio with Sascha Von Oertzen, and found 'Sand Dipper,'" says Scheinman. "It's now my favorite song on the album (such are the mysteries of the artistic process!). Sascha did an amazing job with this little sandstorm. I remember that before we recorded it I whispered 'amniotic galactic' into the mic, a phrase that was born in my eight month of pregnancy when Mischief & Mayhem was touring together. I wanted the band to be the cosmic whirl and for me to be song in the din."

The third track on the album is "Blues for the Double Vee," a nod to the Greenwich Village club where Scheinman and the band have resided for a week of each of the last two years. She comments, "Underneath its surfpunk attitude is a framework of simple, modulating intervals in the style of **Thelonious Monk** and **Paul Motian**, two artists who had a defining influence on the ole Double Vee." "Devil's Ink" captured the imagination of Gail Marowitz's graphic design work in her two devil illustrations presented on the cover and inside of the album. Scheinman notes, "One of the things I do fairly frequently is sketch out 12 tone rows. It clears the mind, and is good strategy for counterbalancing my natural melodic songform impulses. Three of those rows ended up providing the framework for 'Devil's Ink.'"

Next up is "The Audit," a twisting narrative where words are unnecessary; her violin bares all. Scheinman explains, "I wrote this as an attempt to calm my nerves during the three-hour period when the taxman was going through all my files." "Ali Farka Touché" is a song in honor of the great Malian musician **Ali Farka Touré**. It is the second song to appear on one of Scheinman's albums dedicated to an African musician, the first being "Song For Sidiki" on *Crossing The Field*, for **Sidiki Camara**, the Malian musician with whom Scheinman extensively toured with in 2004. "Ali Farka Touché" begins with one of Cline's unmistakable trance loops, an ethereal bed for the improvised melodic intro in the bass, then comes in an infectious groove made of Black and Scheinman's interlocking parts. Pretty soon the whole thing lights fire. Scheinman points out, "Mom's gotta have a few dance parties now and then right?"

"July Tenth In Three Four" is a simple waltz, and as Scheinman directly puts it, "the tune probably shows how much **Charlie Haden** I shot up in my early years." The only song on the album written some years ago, and which serves as the album closer, is "The Mite," a precocious little rocker that has become one of the defining songs of the band. She originally composed "The Mite" for her album *The Rabbi's Lover*, which came out on Tzadik in 2000, but the arrangement didn't quite fit with the Jewish music theme of the release, so it ended up not being released. Scheinman comments, "I guess it was just waiting for Mischief & Mayhem."

In working with Mischief & Mayhem, Nels Cline comments, "The name of our band is appropriate, though perhaps it leaves out the fact that we also whisper and caress, playing as much with restraint as with abandon. The music documented on *Mischief & Mayhem* seems to possess an underlying volatility, as if at any moment the whole thing could erupt into, well, mischief and even mayhem! I love being in a band with Jenny, her melodic sensibility is at once classic and memorable as well as sly and refreshing."

A collaboration of champion innovators, Scheinman and her quartet are excited to nationally release their debut album as a band. Mischief & Mayhem will appear at Le Poisson Rouge on Monday, February 20, 2012 for their NYC CD release party.