

THIERRY LANG

The Swiss pianist and composer, Thierry Lang, was born on the 16th December 1956 in the small town of Romont in the canton of Fribourg.

He started learning piano at the age of 5 and by 7 years old had decided to make piano his career. He excelled in classical piano studies until the age of 21 while at the same time developing a passion for jazz.

As a fifteen year old, he first heard the pianist Bill Evans who would influence his thinking for many years to come. Inspired by this music, Thierry Lang found the perfect link between classical and piano jazz which rapidly became the characteristic of his own musical expression. As a talented composer with a great sense of melody, he rapidly established himself as a master in this domain.

In 1986, he gave concerts with various jazz groups in Switzerland playing alongside numerous local and foreign musicians from different musical backgrounds. He gained further experience as a professional through accompanying musicians of diverse styles including Blues, BeBop and Mainstream.

In 1987, he created his first trio through which he was able to share his brilliant technique and strong sense of melody with a wider public, who began to recognize the characteristic features of his musical signature.

In 1988, his trio, already famous at a national level, was invited to accompany the world famous harmonica player Toots Thielemans. Through this collaboration, a great friendship was born between the two musicians and led to some musical gems engraved for all time.

In 1990, to celebrate the release of the trio's first album "Child's Memories", trumpeter Matthieu Michel, was invited as special guest to accompany the trio and this was the start of many fruitful collaborations thereafter.

In 1991, the trio continued with a series of concerts and released a new album "Between a Smile and Tears", a title inspired by Thierry's friend Toots Thielemans.

1995: Release of his album "Private Garden", nominated "best album of the year" in Japan

During a US tour in 1996, he met Jim Beach (manager of Queen) who subsequently became his own manager. Thanks to this collaboration, Thierry Lang became the first Swiss musician to sign an artist's contract with the famous label Blue Note. At this time, the cellist Heiri Kanzig joined the trio leading in a new series of concerts, tours, and recordings which rapidly gained worldwide reputation. Very quickly they released their first album "Thierry Lang" under the prestigious label "Blue Note" and obtained international acclaim.

In 1998 accompanying the release of his second album with the label Blue Note the pianist had the unexpected opportunity to play together with the saxophonist Hugo Read and the cellist Daniel Pezzotti. The mix of styles was quite unique for the time and did not meet with unanimous approval.

In 2000, following the advice of his manager, he made a solo recording of certain compositions of Freddie Mercury, the famous singer from the group Queen. His version of the title "Guide me Home" (also the title of the album) became a must for the whole world. The music recorded for this album was subsequently used for the film "The Untold Story of Freddie Mercury" and appears in the last album of the singer.

During 2003 he wrote, arranged and recorded 25 original compositions which formed the basis of a collection of 3 CDs entitled “Reflections vol 1, 2, 3” featuring guest artists Didier Lockwood, Olivier Ker Ourio, Paulo Fresu and Andi Schärer.

In 2004, Thierry Lang won the prestigious “Grand Prize of the Vaudoise Foundation for Promotion of Artistic Creation” and thanks to this prize he could, at long last, treat himself to the piano of his dreams.

During 2007, he decided to pay tribute to the best known composers of his canton of origin, Fribourg, notably Joseph Bovet and Pierre Kaelin. To do this he created a septet “LYOBA” with which he toured Europe. Three CDs were recorded telling the story of these great folk music composers.

In 2012, he recorded his first album “Night Wind” for Universal (owner of Blue Note), enriching his trio with the magnificent sounds of the American trombonist Glenn Ferris and the bugelist Matthieu Michel.

- The same year he presented his creation “Colours of Time” at the Fribourg theatre, Équilibre. This ambitious original creation required more than a year’s work to compose and bring together the Fribourg choir “Accroche-Cœur” of 54 singers, the Fribourg Chamber Orchestra and the top class soloists such as the singer David Linx, the trumpeter Matthieu Michel, the drummer Andre Ceccarelli and the cellist Heiri Känzig. Thierry Lang collaborated with the Belgian Michel Herr to arrange his 13 compositions. In order to record the music, he dedicated another 3 months to studio work. In February 2013, this remarkable album was released to the public.
- In Autumn 2012 he composed and recorded the music for the latest film of Francis Reusser “Ma nouvelle Héloïse”.

In 2013, he created a new trio with which he recorded his album “Serenity” (Universal) in which he changed the colour of his habitual jazz trio by exchanging the bass for percussion. In this way Andi Pupato became the third member of this new trio - which has already gained a wide international recognition and multiplies its tours in Europe, Russia, Japan and S Korea.

In 2015 the same trio released the album “Moments in Time” (Universal), which topped the charts in Japan.

During 2016, the year of his 60th birthday, Thierry Lang was busy on all fronts:

- Concert tours in Japan and Europe
- Duo recording of an album with his faithful companion Heiri Känzig to celebrate 25 years of collaboration together.
- Composition of a new creation “Emotions”, ten original compositions for Jazz quartet and Sine Nominé, the famous classical string quartet (creation, 24th November, Reflet theatre, Vevey).

Thierry Lang has played and recorded with the most prestigious musicians including: Franco Ambrosetti, Ray Anderson, André Ceccarelli, Billy Cobham, Paulo Fresu, Johnny Griffin, George Gruntz, Reggie Johnson, Heiri Känzig, Olivier Ker Ourio, David Linx, Didier Lockwood, Andy McGhee, Matthieu Michel, Charlie Mariano, Bob Mintzr, Adam Nussbaum, Andy Pupato, Alvin Queen, Andy Scherrer, Jimmy Heath, Peter Schmiedlin, Toots Thielemans, Richard Galliano, Tina Turner, Marcel Papaux, Dino Saluzzi, Andreas Vollenweider, Furio di Castri, Pierre Favre, Art Farmer, Daniel Pezzotti, Marvin Stamm, Glenn Ferris and many more.

AWARDS

1994: Winner “Panache d’Or” , Canton of Fribourg

1995: Prize “Album of the year” (Private Garden), Japan

1999: Pianist of the year (Jazz’N More)

2000: Pianist of the year (Jazz’N More)

2004: Winner of the Grand Prize of the Vaudoise Foundation for promotion of artistic creation

2007: Honorary Burgess of Romont

2008: Doctor Honoris Causa of the European Union University

2008: Title of “Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres” in France