

SWISS  
MUSIC

# JAZZ IX

## ARTISTS



**JAZZAHEAD.SWISSMUSIC.CH**



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Image © Tom Lee

### STEFAN AEBY

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Solo piano is a tough discipline, whether in a hotel bar or in a concert hall. Some play immediately with their muscles, others take refuge in tricks or reveries. Stefan Aeby chooses the Swiss way: don't exaggerate right away, first take a close look at everything. The album "Piano Solo" does exactly that, and at the same time much more. However, the electronic sound sources or the prepared strings do not come to the fore. Do you even hear them on the track "Flingga"?



Image © Caryl Schäublin

### LINDA VOGEL

LINDAVOGEL.CH

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The harpist and singer Linda Vogel brings out an unusual set of instruments on her as harsh as tender debut album "Maps to Others": Harp, electronics, percussion (Vincent Glanzmann). The first track, "Saria", does not answer the jazz question with swing or phrasing, but with everything else that makes jazz an exciting music. We hear overlapping rhythms, simple melodies which then scratch the harmony framework, and a lot of individuality.



Image © Christian A. Meyer

### LOTUS CRASH

MARCOVONORELLI.CH

3

Isn't it one of the hardest things to play cool but never slack? To develop a flow that breathes freely but holds the tension? This is what has always attracted me to New York downtown bands. It's also possible in Switzerland, thanks to Lotus Crash. How Marco von Orelli plays the trumpet over the open snare of Sheldon Suter, how the bass clarinet of Tommy Meier gets into conversation, and Luca Sisera holds the groove: you hear the cold breath of the city, feel the hard shell and the pulse inside, which can only remain so low with a lot of willpower.

# ARTISTS



Image © Gerald Langer

## **JULIE CAMPICHE QUARTET** JULIECAMPICHE.COM

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Is the harp the instrument of the hour, even in jazz? Julie Campiche from Geneva uses it as a matter of course. On the current album "Onkalo", you can't always hear who triggers the electronic sounds, it could also be the saxophone of Leo Fumagalli or the drums of Clemens Kuratle. Or even the bass of Manu Hagmann? "Cradle Songs" deals more transparently with the sound sources. But even on this quiet number, the motifs move from instrument to instrument. Everything sounds like an attentive conversation, only more beautiful.



Image © Florine Leoni

## **BOTTOM ORCHESTRA** BOTTOMORCHESTRA.CH

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Music as a vehicle of ideas: traditionally a mined field. Jazz has to prove that music itself is about freedom; a few catchwords are not enough. The Bottom Orchestra around bassist Kaspar von Grünigen combine criticism of the circumstances with tremendous wit in the lyrics and joy of playing in the music. Sometimes improvised, sometimes notated, always multi-layered. "And what does the union do? They meet – frequently – at the convention – eating and drinking the atmosphere is – really great – I will then get – the report."



Image © Sara Rojo

## **DIMITRI HOWALD ILJA** DIMITRIHOWALD.CH

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The quintet Ilja led by the young Bernese guitarist Dimitri Howald continues to work on a lyrical update of modern jazz. On their soon to be released second album there are swinging vamps who follow harmonies and then stretch them. Even in the solos something is always negotiated – sometimes the abstraction gets the word, at other times the more concrete melody wins. And some chords reveal a pop sensibility. Additional members of the current quintet: Michael Gilsenan (ts), Tom Millar (p), Jérémie Krüttli (b), Tobias Schmid (dr).



Image © Falk Neumann

## **LUZIA VON WYL ENSEMBLE** LUZIAVONWYL.COM

7

"Spark", the last, intense track on the album "Throwing Coins", underlines the prevailing balance: The 10 instruments always sound as if they know exactly why they are playing what they are playing. The arrangements never lose track of what is going on, which does not seem sterile at all, but creates space for air. And for wild climbs like in the flute solo by Amin Mokdad. "Spark": A fitting title indeed.



Image © Peter Hunziker

## **JEAN-CHRISTOPHE CHOLET, MATTHIEU MICHEL** JEANCHRISTOPHECHOLET.COM

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The French pianist Jean-Christophe Cholet works a lot with the trumpeter and flugelhorn player Matthieu Michel from the French-speaking part of Switzerland, often as a duo. On the album "Extended Whispers" the two of them extend the couple form, on "Feu Follet" for example with a bassist. The sound of the trio: totally round and warm. It's still a sound that creates volume, but without softening the edges. That's how relaxed and confident modern jazz can still sound today.



Image © Caroline Mardok

## **SYLVIE COURVOISIER, MARK FELDMAN** SYLVIECOURVOISIER.COM COPYRIGHT INTAKT RECORDS, INTAKTREC.CH

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The pianist Sylvie Courvoisier from French-speaking Switzerland has lived in New York City for over 20 years, almost as long as she has been playing in a duo with her husband, violinist Mark Feldman. "Éclats for Ornette", written by Feldman, contains, like any truly convincing music, a model of living together. How unanimously complexity is possible in the theme, how autonomy and equality go hand in hand in the freer parts, how sovereignty also means letting the other one take precedence. All this, in just under four minutes.



Image © Martin Bonetto

## **CHRISTY DORAN'S SOUND FOUNTAIN** CHRISTYDORAN.CH

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Christy Doran, a guitarist from Lucerne with an Irish background, already associated jazz rock with the greatest possible freedom in the seventies. This raw intensity has remained with him. Doran has a tone that is immediately recognisable: He works on the instrument, his fingers on the fretboard are not processed away by effects or control-fixed perfection. The first track from the album "For the Kick of It" shows all of this, but "Every Dog has Its Day" does not hide the harmonically more subtle side of Doran and his sparkling band featuring Franco Fontanarossa on bass and Lukas Mantel on drums.

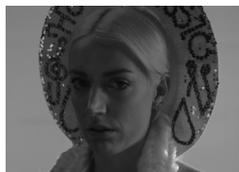


Image © Gregor Brändli

## **EVELINN TROUBLE** EVELINNTROUBLE.COM

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The question whether this is jazz can also be effectively asked in the present case. The singer and composer Evelinn Trouble from Zurich gives a strong answer with her song "Made of Rain". On the one hand, it has to do with a sense of time, with the certainty of singing the theme the way the pulse demands and not necessarily the way the beat dictates. On the other hand, it is the courage to put a melody on display in all calmness of mind, and to stop when the time comes. You can hear it after about two minutes in the song. Time and courage: that's also Jazz – "Trouble" with a masterful miniature.



Image © René Mosele

## **SIMON SPIESS TRIO** SIMONSPIESS.COM

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Simon Spiess plays tenor saxophone at the southern foot of the Jura mountains, in the region of Olten, where the Swiss transport axes cross on rail and road. Things are also in transit in Spiess' musical crosshairs. Under the name Late Bloom, he releases rugged electronic tracks, as if they were cut into a rock. But his trio, with Bänz Oester on bass and Jonas Ruther on drums, takes narrative jazz into focus by combining grooves and horizontal narrative styles. It's amazing how mature the leader's tone sounds at a young age.



Image © Olivier Baumann

## **IKARUS** IKARUS.BAND

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He started the compositions in Berlin and finished them in São Paulo, as Ramon Oliveras writes, drummer and head of the band Ikarus. On "Meridian" the electronic techno-minimalism of Berlin and the tropical playfulness of Brazil can be heard in a single track. The fact that this groove music – released on Nik Bärtsch's label – breathes so organically is also due to Anna Hirsch and Andreas Lareida, whose voices are used like instruments and often in a percussive way. Together with Mo Beyer on bass and Lucca Fries on piano, this results in a band with great stage experience, without which the conceptual strictness would never be as hip-laxed.



Image © Reto Andreoli

## **AKKU QUINTET** AKKUQUINTET.COM

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As with Ikarus, the pieces for the Akku Quintet are also written by a drummer: Manuel Pasquinielli. The rhythms and phases are in the tradition of minimal music, but this is only the first impression. Groove as a collective discipline. Sound and pressure are reminiscent of psychedelic post-rock, but then other spaces open up, time is bent again. The track "Cyan" from their fourth album "Depart" slides into new zones after 3 minutes. This kind of music can't be created in just a few sessions, it needs the persistence of a working band: Michael Gilsenan (s), Maja Nydegger (key), Markus Ischer (git), Andi Schnellmann (b).



Image © Laura Pleifer

## **SARAH CHAKSAD ORCHESTRA** SARACHCHAKSAD.COM

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The second album of the 18-piece Sarah Chaksad Orchestra is called "Tabriz", after the city in northwestern Iran, where the father of this female saxophonist/composer comes from. So one is immediately tempted to look for Persian references in the song "Mehamn". Maybe right at the beginning of the song in the breathy, valveless goat horn of Norwegian trumpeter Hildegunn Øiseth? The title of the song refers to a village in the northernmost part of Norway, which can still be reached by ships! Sarah Chaksad plays with such attributions in an elegant way: We hear old big bands, European modernity, folk music from...well...where again?