

COLIN VALLON

Biography

« ... Vallon's playing and pieces are tonally dense and rhythmically adept. They have something magic that holds the listener captive »

Reiner Kobe, Jazzpodium

After studying classical music for 2 years Colin Vallon (born November 17 1980 in Lausanne) took classes with jazz pianist Marc Ueter at the age of fourteen. He enrolled at the Swiss Jazz School when he was 18 and studied with Silvano Bazan, William Evans, Manuel Bärtsch and Bert Joris.

In 1999, he founds the Colin Vallon trio with Lorenz Beyeler on double-bass and Raphaël Pedroli on drums; in 2004 it released his debut-album « Les Ombres ». At that time, he starts to use and develop his own prepared piano techniques. In January 2005, the trio opens the Swiss Diagonales Festival with New-York guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel.

2005, he forms a new trio with Patrice Moret on double-bass and Samuel Rohrer on drums and records « Ailleurs » published in 2007 by HatHut Records. «Ruga» the third recording of the trio is released in 2011 on the prestigious international Label ECM Records. In 2012 drummer Julian Sartorius replaces Rohrer in the trio. In 2014 the trio releases « Le Vent » followed in 2017 by « Danse » both albums are released on ECM Records.

The trio is very active on the international jazz scene. Numerous concerts at international festivals (Wilisau, Paris, Vienne, Rome, London, Portland, Montreal, ...) and tours in Europe, Canada, USA, Japan, China, South Korea, ...

Apart from the trio, since 2020, he leads another group composed of trumpet player Matthieu Michel and drummer Jorge Rossy.

He is also active as a solo performer and plays acoustic piano recitals.

In 2022, he starts a new solo project called « ITCH » with piano, prepared piano, electronics and a surround diffusion of the music.

Colin Vallon is also active as a composer. 2014, he writes the music of « Hallo » a the choregraphical piece by Martin Zimmermann. The same year, he takes part to the creation of the documentary Film « Gossenreiter ». In 2015 « Bee-Flat » Bern's jazz and world music concert club, gives him a Carte Blanche. He presents on this occasion three new projects : « Ocre », a psychedelic rock oriented quartet with Matthieu Michel on trumpet, Flo Götte on bass, Domi Chansorn on drums, « Coriolis » a minimal improvisation quartet with Joy Frempong, voice, Strotter Inst, electronics, Hans Koch, clarinets, and « Fauna », a composition for cellos, harps, saxophones and drums, inspired by the strangeness of the animal world.

2017 he creates the music of Martin Zimmermann's choreographical piece « Eins, Zwei, Drei » where he performs live on stage on piano, electronics and drums. The « piece » tours from 2017 to 2021 across all Europe and in 2021 he composes the soundtrack to Zimmermann's new piece « Danse Macabre ».

In 2022, he composes a Suite for 9 musicians called « HOWL » exclusively with texts from critically endangered languages.

Colin Vallon won the Fridl-Wald Foundation Prize, 1st Prize in the Competition Nescafé Let's Jazz Together, and 3rd Prize in the Montreux International Jazz Piano Solo Competition. In 2008 he won the Nico Kaufmann Foudation prize and in 2009 the SUISA foundation prize. 2009 the Colin Vallon trio won the Pro Helvetia high priority jazz promotion. He is nominated for the 2016 Swiss Music Prize and in 2017 he receives the « Prix de la Relève du Canton de Vaud ».

Since 2009 he is teaching at the Bern University of the Arts.

He is also playing with Nicolas Masson « Parallels », Wolfgang Muthspiel Quintet, Large Ensemble and Chamber Trio, in duo with Vincent Courtois.

He played with Tom Harell, Larry Grenadier, Jeff Ballard, Andy Scherrer, Ambrose Akinmusire, Tyshawn Sorey, Nils Wogram, Kenny Wheeler...