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# Paradigm



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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CADENCE

acc: accordion  
as: alto sax  
bari s : baritone sax  
b cl: bass clarinet  
bs: bass sax  
bsn: bassoon  
cel: cello  
cl: clarinet  
cga: conga  
cnt: cornet  
d: drums  
el: electric  
elec: electronics  
Eng hn: English horn  
euph: euphonium  
flgh: flugelhorn  
flt: flute  
Fr hn: French horn  
g: guitar  
hca: harmonica  
kybd: keyboards  
ldr: leader  
ob: oboe  
org: organ  
perc: percussion  
p: piano  
pic: piccolo  
rds: reeds  
ss: soprano sax  
sop: soprano sax  
synth: synthesizer  
ts: tenor sax  
tbn: trombone  
tpt: trumpet  
tba: tuba  
v tbn: valve trombone  
vib: vibraphone  
vla: viola  
vln: violin  
vcl: vocal  
xyl: xylophone

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COVER PHOTO Lester Bowie by Patrick Hinely

# Concert Review: Intakt at The Stone

INTAKT RECORDS  
CURATORIAL  
AT THE STONE, NYC

Concert Review by  
Ken Weiss



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

## MARCH 2012: SWISS IMPROVISATION IN NEW YORK

The path from Zurich to New York City turned out to be a lot harder to traverse for Patrik Landolt, owner and director of Swiss label Intakt Records, than he ever imagined it would be two years ago when musician/club owner, John Zorn, offered him the first two weeks in March, 2012 as a residency for his label. After two years of planning and U.S. government red tape to hack through, Landolt said it was all worth the hassle and financial burden to bring in a dozen (mostly) Swiss musicians, many of whom made their American debuts, to perform at the Alphabet City centered venue – The Stone. The list of imported artists included established Swiss musicians such as Lucas Niggli, Dieter Ulrich, Philipp Schaufelberger, Gabriela Friedli, Jan Schlegel, Co Streiff, along with acclaimed stars Irene Schweizer and Pierre Favre, and newcomers Michael Jaeger, Fabian Gisler, Samuel Blaser and Julian Sartorius. They collaborated with established New York artists such as Oliver Lake, Andrew Cyrille, Fred Frith, Elliott Sharp, William Parker, Tim Berne, Ellery Eskelin, Tony Malaby, Ray Anderson, Tim Rainey and Mark Feldman.

I was able to attend three shows and came away impressed with the Swiss musicians' artistic flare and obvious passion for the music.

Jurg Wickihalder European Quartet featuring Irene Schweizer – Wickihalder (sax), Schweizer (p), Fabian Gisler (b), Michael Griener (d)

MARCH 9, 2012

Wickihalder's quartet proved to be the perfect introduction to the Swiss' inventive and mischievous take on Jazz. The sprightly, multireedist leader manned an energetic set that multitasked a pleasing mash of traditional Jazz and the avant-garde. Working on soprano and tenor saxes, which he blew simultaneously during an early section, Wickihalder kept a close ear out for Schweizer, often trading thoughts and ideas with her. He covered original tunes including "6243D," named for a very difficult somersault routine and showcased sturdy yet evolving timekeeping by Gisler and Griener. "Red

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"Light Jumping Friends" included an early Schweizer solo full of clustered twinkles and indebtedness to Monk. Schweizer climbed to a terrific peak before garnering augmentation from the band. Wickihalder entertainingly took apart his soprano to blow through the mouthpiece and then the sax's body. "Triple Rittberger Exercise," named for a challenging ice skating maneuver, included a percussive exchange between sax and piano, ending triumphantly with a lighthearted circus romp. This set was very entertaining and Wickihalder played with a palpable joy that was infectious.



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

JURG WICKIHALDER (SAX), IRENE SCHWEIZER  
(P), FABIAN GISLER (B), MICHAEL GRIENER (D)

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Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

### DIETER ULRICH (D)/JAN SCHLEGEL (EL B)/ RAY ANDERSON (TBN)

Dieter Ulrich and Jan Schlegel have played together for many years but they needed a third member to round out a trio this night so Ray Anderson was summoned. Ulrich, when asked why Anderson was his pick, said, "He's the perfect fit, we picked the best. When you hear our music you will see." Of course, he knew his business. Anderson was the perfect fit for their fast moving, groove shifting music that went down one hole and out another. Anderson was just the right bad-boy trombonist to sparkle in that setting. Beginning with a bleat of the horn and short fragments of strummed strings, then pressurized low trombone squeals, Ulrich flew into action with flying brushes and powerful, rackety percussion. Schlegel turned in segments of intense string



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manipulations with what looked like a piece of metal and also finger-rapped his wooden electric bass. The second tune began with Ulrich blowing a homemade piston bugle, a weird device that fascinated Anderson prior to the set. As the song progressed, Schlegel became more animated with awkward body movements and monstrous stabs to his bass. Launching himself off-balance to either side, Schlegel seemed to lose himself to a higher plane at these times as his body jerked and his fingers blurred with activity, releasing magnificent climaxes. Post-set he would say his friends have labeled this his Dadaistic ballet but he also did like the newly proposed label of Mick Jagger on crack. After Anderson spewed a quote of "Get Happy" to end it, the excited trombonist announced, "That was a world premier! We just met! Oh man, that was beautiful, yeah!"



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

March 10, 2012    IRENE SCHWEIZER (P) / PIERRE FAVRE (D)

## Concert Review: Intakt at The Stone

Perhaps the most highly anticipated performance of the two week Intakt Records residency was the duet of European heavyweights - Irene Schweizer and Pierre Favre. The two have been close collaborators for over 45 years, they even share the same June 2 birthday (Schweizer – 1941, Favre – 1937). Schweizer displayed her perfectionist side prior to the performance by angling the piano just right, saying, “If I don’t, I will have to look at the bathroom all night.” She also straightened up the nearby chairs which were in her view. Patrik Landolt addressed the overfilled club with, “These two people are the heart of the European scene and this is the first time they play together in the U.S!” The two veteran performers shine brightest when doing free improv and their years together has disintegrated any artistic blocks that could stunt novel interplay. Each piece began with one or the other tackling the mood setting introduction. They commenced with a rousing percussive exchange started by Favre and then proceeded to a moody Schweizer intro that eventually led to a feisty rhythmic dance that clacked off-kilter and was pushed forward by Favre’s explorative brushwork. Schweizer toiled inside the piano only once, manipulating the strings with fingers, mallets and other small instruments. She frequently played segments that sounded rich in Monk, especially at the end, and afterwards, a number of listeners took guesses, trying to name which Monk tune was addressed but Favre assured them that that was no Monk tune, “She wouldn’t play Monk for an American audience,” he assured. So it only referenced Monk but the tribute to a favorite Muse was paid nonetheless. The duet was a joy to watch, the pair’s trust in each other and highly polished skills were uncanny. Schweizer’s muscular playing contained an elegance that fit perfectly with Favre’s richly textured percussion and glittering cymbal play. The only one disappointed this night, I dare say, was Favre (an honest soul who answers a question when asked). He felt the energy level didn’t peak as high as hoped for their first American audience.

By Ken Weiss



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

## Irene Schweizer

Interview by  
Ken Weiss

Pianist Irene Schweizer (born June 2, 1941, Schaffhausen, Switzerland) has been one of the most important European free improvisers since the 1960s. Celebrated as a soloist and for her duets with many of scene's most creative percussionists, Schweizer emerged at the time as one of the few Swiss musicians, and more impressively, perhaps the first woman to dare enter the free jazz arena. The self-taught pianist coupled a highly percussive approach along with creatively explosive improvisation to win over her male counterparts. Schweizer formed a powerful trio from 1968 to 1970 with drummer Pierre Favre and bassist Peter Kowald, later saxophonist Evan Parker would join to make it a quartet. She's had a long-standing musical partnership with multi-instrumentalist Rudiger Carl since 1973 and in the late '70s, joined the Feminist Improvising Group—an influential all female group



whose members included Lindsay Cooper, Maggie Nichols, Georgie Born and Sally Potter. Schweizer was also one of the initial organizers of the Taktlos and Canaille music festivals and a founding member of Intakt Records, an important European label that was formed to document her music. She's a revered figure in Switzerland, transcending the role of musician, she's recognized as a symbol of perseverance and equality.



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

This interview took place on March 10, 2012 at her New York City Lower East Side hotel, a few hours prior to the American premiere duet performance with her

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the gig, announced, "Trevor Dunn booked the tour and we're slightly wiser and more broken," before delivering nine ear-catching tunes. Speed and Noriega were perfect sparring mates, playing on the edge at times but maintained melodic focus. Black churned out his custom made micro grooves that popped up and down and added great interest to each tune. They covered Monk's "Epistrophy" late, starting with a murky opening, and ended with a bombastic tribute to Andrew D'Angelo with "Andrew's Ditty Variation One"...The Steve Lehman Trio tossed more flames the next night at The Rotunda (ANW). Lehman's current project deals with skewed abstractions of revered musicians – John Coltrane, Duke Pearson and his mentor Jackie McLean. With the help of drummer Damion Reid and bassist Chris Tordini, Lehman showed how his rhythmic and forward surging music could totally satisfy without reaching release points. Lehman is a force to be reckoned with once he gets going and his knees piston up and down, adding more force to his musical fractionations... The sterling performances continued on 4/21 at Johnny Brenda's (ANW) with a rare (although he

longest-standing collaborator—drummer Pierre Favre—as part of Intakt Records' two-week curatorial festival at The Stone. Not one to command the spotlight, Schweizer reluctantly agreed to the interview ("I don't like interviews") but she was more than kind even when the interview ran much longer than she had bargained for.

**Cadence: You're in New York City at this time to play at The Stone as part of a two-week series of performances curated by Patrik Landolt of Intakt Records. Would you talk about the importance of this Swiss label to the creative music scene in Switzerland and to Europe in general?**

Irene Schweizer: Most of my CDs and, in the earlier years, most of my albums have been issued on Intakt label and I'm actually a co-founder of this label with Patrik Landolt. He's my producer. I was never too keen to record all my stuff when I played it. In Berlin in the '70s and '80s, we played free music and for me, it was always a paradox to record free music because for me, I didn't feel the need to record everything you do when you improvise so that it will be released. The idea I didn't like very much, but of course, commercially it is very important to have a CD. For the younger musicians who haven't made a recording, they won't find any gigs.

**Cadence: Do you still feel that same way about releasing your recordings now?**

Schweizer: Hmm, no, but it has become so normal to make CDs. [Laughs] I don't know anyone that doesn't. It's very normal now to just record a lot.

**Cadence: So you still feel a little funny about recording?**

Schweizer: Yes. For me, what I like is a live recording. All my duo recordings with drummers are live recordings. I hate studios, I don't feel comfortable in studios. When we have to go to a studio and record written music or if we rehearse something and then you play in the studio exactly the same thing all over and over again to make it perfect, this is not what I like. I like festivals when I play with somebody and it's

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lives not far from this city) Steve Coleman hit. His Five Elements band included Jonathan Finlayson (tp), Miles Okazaki (g) and Damion Reid (d). By this point, they know just what their much praised M-Base leader requires, a heavy groove and a trancelike vibe, grounded but spiritual, and filled with abstract intelligence. Coleman didn't even pick up his trumpet for the first 15 minutes, choosing to clang a cow bell and enjoy the groove. The set ended with Coleman chanting "Come back and see us again," behind the music. The real standout here was Reid's adamant percussion which drove the band forcefully, letting the others churn their airy statements...The next night featured a very exciting mash-up of local stars at the usually performance barren Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts. This city has 3 saxophone titans, each capable of reaching rare highs on their horns and inducing structural damage to the surroundings, and they were all present this night – Odean Pope (ts), Marshall Allen (as) and Elliott Levin (ts, ss, flt). Billed as Odean Pope + Marshall Allen Meet the Sonic Liberation Front (SLF), the special night was organized by SLF's leader Kevin Diehl

recorded but not necessarily to make a CD. I like to listen to the live recording and then I can decide if I want to have it on a CD or not. Now it's so crazy, everybody is recording every shit. I'm sorry, every fart they do. Everything they do has to be released on CDs and the quality of the music sometimes is not really adequate. When the music comes out you think this did not necessarily have to come out on a CD, we could have done without it.

**Cadence:** Do you like listening to your old recordings?

Schweizer: No, I never listen. My latest CD is a solo concert from the Tonihalle in Zurich and I have not heard it once now since it's out.

**Cadence:** Is that because you are afraid to hear what you did?

Schweizer: Sometimes I'm afraid. Yeah, I'm afraid [Laughs] to listen to it but people say it's wonderful music and they write to me that it's such nice music. One day I will listen to it but I need some time. I don't go home and listen to these recordings right away. I do listen, of course, to it before it comes out because I have to pick the tunes, I don't want to have the whole concert on the CD. This latest recording has maybe three quarters of what I played and one quarter I said to Patrik that it's not good enough to have it on the CD. I left two or three tunes out but with the rest I could agree. I've never been satisfied with a whole concert. With this latest solo concert, I did not do the concert to make a CD, that was not the reason. I was invited to do a solo concert at the Tonhalle but now everywhere you play, it will be recorded and then a CD must be out.

**Cadence:** Plus the audience is recording it on their phones and then loading it on YouTube that night.

Schweizer: Exactly.

**Cadence:** How is it for you when the audience really responds to a performance but you come away feeling that you played poorly?

Schweizer: Yes, I think that the audience is very kind [Laughs], it's nice. They are too kind and I'm very

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(perc) whose band explores the Lukumi (Afro-Cuban-Yoruba) and post-modern Jazz. The SLF includes a front line of Bata drum players, a number of Sun Ra Arkestra pros and the fire-breathing Levin. The big excitement was to have snaggletooth veterans, Pope and Marshall, who have played together rarely in the past, side-by-side in the ensemble. The pair each got 2-3 solo opportunities and sounded great, but they were underutilized and never played together as a duo which surely would have been memorable. Speaking of hot, props out to the surprise (read uninvited) dancing lady, apparently attached to SLF and Arkestra member, trumpeter Cecil Brooks, whose turquoise sequin miniskirt and provocative moves added the Bing to the Bata as in Bata-Bing! SLF has a new release coming out and their recordings are always of high quality so check it out...Bobby Zankel led a very special project at Montgomery County Community College (MCC) on 4/28 – his Warriors of the Wonderful Sound (augmented by NY studs Steve Swell and Herb Robertson) Meet Muhal Richard Abrams was a rousing success, one enjoyed by trombonist George Lewis who

critical. I don't want to bring out everything I play all the time. It's not my purpose.

**Cadence:** Intakt Records was started in 1986 in order to document your work. How did that come to be?

Schweizer: Because I had made several albums before '86 for FMP Records in Berlin and the distribution of FMP was so bad that in Switzerland, nobody could buy my LPs. They were not available in the record stores. The distribution in Germany was so bad that I thought I didn't want to record for FMP if they could supply the music internationally. You could only get the recordings if you lived in Berlin or Germany. And then Patrik decided when we made the first Taktlos Festival in Zurich that we would record the whole festival and then there came the first LP Live At Taktlos which came out in '86. Then Patrik thought why not stick to it and bring out some of my work.

**Cadence:** Your American appearances are rare, how often are you playing in this country?

Schweizer: My first time playing in the States was in the early '80s. I was here when Peter Kowald was here and he was opening up a lot of doors for Europeans to play with American musicians and also having black and white musicians together. He founded a festival here in New York in '84 [the Sound Unity Festival – the precursor to the Vision Festival] and European and American musicians played together. Don Cherry played and also Peter Brotzmann and Rashied Ali. I also played there with Rudiger Carl.

**Cadence:** What's been your experience performing for American audiences?

Schweizer: I always thought it's a great audience here. They're very critical and they know a lot, I enjoy playing for an American crowd.

**Cadence:** Is it a different experience for you versus playing for a European audience?

Schweizer: Yes, well now maybe not so much anymore, but then it was different. You could feel that Americans knew about the music and you didn't have to be careful not to play too extreme. When you played free music first in Europe, people walked out of the

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made the trip down from Columbia University to catch his good friend, the 81-year-old NEA Jazz Master and AACM leader Abrams, leading the big band through his newly composed piece written for the ensemble. This marked the third year in a row that Zankel and his "Warriors," now in their tenth year, performed work commissioned by noted musicians at MCCC. Projects with Rudresh Mahanthappa and Steve Coleman preceded Abrams. Rehearsals started 2 months prior to the performance and Abrams made 5 trips to town to teach the piece so when it came time to premier the work, Abrams spent the grand majority of the time to the edge of the stage, dancing out to the podium rarely to point directions, and then happily dancing back to the shadows. The order of the solos was all planned and many took full advantage of their time in the limelight. Special nods to Zankel (as), Craig McIver (d), Elliott Levin (on an old Conn curved soprano with a cracked reed that made for an interesting sound challenge), Daniel Peterson (as), Dave Champion (tbn), Julian Pressley (bs) and Swell (tbn). The top solo hands down belonged to Robertson who burned a crazy two-hand defying



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

room. They could not stand this music for a long time in Europe, it was too out, too complicated for the audience. They didn't know what to do, the sound was too heavy, too experimental. They didn't like experimental, they liked the mainstream Jazz. Here they liked both, the audience was more advanced here.

**Cadence: Your first name is a common name in America but it's pronounced differently.**

Schweizer: It's [ear-rain-e].

**Cadence: What questions are you most frequently asked by those new to hear you perform?**

Schweizer: Where did you learn to play like that? How did you start? Why do you play jazz? I've always played jazz, I never studied. I have no diploma, no nothing. I'm autodidact, I never had a teacher in the common sense. I never visited a (music) school in the '50s, they didn't exist. There were no jazz schools



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performance that dropped Abrams' jaw, playing a megaphone and a voice modulator attached to a soprano hunting horn and also a mute, all at the same time, leaving him sucking wind afterwards. Zankel and Peterson had an early alto duo that was cool – playing in a high range bending off notes and rubs while working the melody with multiphonics. Abrams' composition was not loaded with melody, thus it wasn't an easy listen and some of the listeners were lost but for those "friendly" listeners, high art was fashioned this night. Post-set, Abrams was asked to talk about his new composition. "Well, I will tell you its name – "Soundpath" – but I won't tell you more about it," he said. "I just want to play music. I'm just funny that way." Elliott Levin, who was having a stellar week of work with the likes of Odean Pope, Marshall Allen and now Abrams, said that Abrams was the most direct leader of the three stars commissioned for the ensemble. "He's a great leader. We knew exactly what to do. He's like the guy who invented this shit..." The Ruins, otherwise known as drummer Tatsuya Yoshida, played Kung Fu Necktie on 5/1, finally hitting the stage after Inzinac, Child



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

in the whole of Switzerland. Most of my colleagues started in the classical scene and started to improvise slowly. At the age of 12, I started to play jazz. I started with the old dixieland, boogie-woogie, ragtime.

**Cadence:** Would you talk about playing composed music versus free improv and how that relates to your work?

Schweizer: I always hated to play composed music because I could not read music very well. I learned everything by ear when I started, but now it's OK, I can read. I like both now, playing completely free and playing compositions.

**Cadence:** When you are playing as the leader, how much of your playing is free improv versus composed work?

Schweizer: It's all improvised. I also play tunes,

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Abuse and Gun Muffs, which featured the monstrosity Octover-enhanced tenor sax of David Fishkin. Yoshida's Ruins packed quite a wallop. It's hard to imagine one other drummer putting on such a display. He ran sound clips off a laptop and drummed a hyper-aggressive punk-rock assault which was not just battering, there was melody and tension. One longer segment incorporated short snippets of popular and well-known tunes that he viciously rendered. Each segment ended with a courteous short "Thank you!"... The Sonic Arts Union Retrospective put on by International House Philadelphia was completed on Cinco de Mayo with a thoughtful presentation by Robert Ashley. The pioneering composer sat behind a table on stage with a mic to either side of him and a bright lamp to his right and read a collection of thought-provoking pieces. Starting with "Love Is Good Example," which had him frequently saying "Love sure is a good example," with the word "sure" being the only word spoken into the mic to his right. Another piece was "When Famous Last Words Fails You," which dealt with crossover factors, often humorously, such as his report of an above aver

sometimes a Monk tune. I'll play what I like, if it's not an original I don't care. My background is people like Monk, Herbie Nichols, Bill Evans and McCoy Tyner. That's the music I listened to when I grew up—hard bop and bebop.

**Cadence:** You're playing style is very personal, you're clearly in the avant-garde camp but you reference the entire history of jazz music from ragtime to traditional modes. How did you come to incorporate this unusually wide-reaching approach?

Schweizer: Really? [You think it's that uncommon?]

**Cadence:** The only other artist I know who uses such a wide approach on a constant basis is Dave Burrell.

Schweizer: Yeah, yeah, Dave Burrell, I love him, I respect him a lot. Well, I don't go as far back as ragtime.

**Cadence:** You do things that draw on ragtime. Even last night when you played with Jurg Wickihalder, you played a segment that had a ragtime feel.

Schweizer: Really, I don't even think about that. That was my background and it's still there, it's still happening without even knowing. It all comes out unconsciously. I don't go on stage and say I will start with a ragtime just to show people that I can also play like that. What I do is completely unconscious.

**Cadence:** When you go on stage to perform a set of solos, do you have an idea of what's going to happen?

Schweizer: Well, yes, but not really written down. I have no repertoire. I don't really want to have that when I go solo. I go on stage and then I start very free with something and I let go. It then depends on how the audience reacts and how I feel, how it sounds, how the acoustics are, how the piano feels. This is all important for my playing.

**Cadence:** Playing inside the piano is a technique that you're fond of. What does that add to your music?

Schweizer: It goes further than the normal piano

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aged intelligent black male who cooked for three family members morphing into a nasty white female who refused to cook for anyone. Ashley's voice and delivery were both captivating and really sold the work ...Tessa Souter's silky soft, sweet voice was on display at Chris' on 5/5 with the support of Tom Guarna (g), Sean Smith (b) and Billy Drummond (d). Her second set was devoid of the Beatles and Cream covers she's done in the past but there was a thoughtful mix of songs, starting with some Milton Nascimento, who she explained was her first introduction to Jazz. Her alto vocals on "Baubles, Bangles and Beads" were transfixing and a piece from her new recording of classical repertoire turned into Jazz with her original words was the high mark of the set. Souter ended with an impressive new original composition dedicated to Japan's environmental recovery that was colored by Drummond's forceful martial groove. She encouraged the listeners to buy her new work – "It doesn't take much to have a Jazz CD at the top of the charts. Just buy two!"...Eva Cortes, the young Honduran-born, Seville-raised vocalist, who now lives in Madrid, was making her 6th trip to the States and first hit

sound with the keys. If I use the strings, it has a completely different sound. I like to use the whole instrument, not only the keys. I like to play the chords, maybe with mallets or with sticks and with the cymbals. It gives a nice sound, it makes a nice addition to the normal piano sound.

**Cadence: A number of people play inside the piano these days and there's a risk of it coming off gimmicky. How do you avoid that trap?**

Schweizer: That's true. When I hear some pianists doing that sometimes I think it's not very nice how they do it. They'd do better to leave it alone.

**Cadence: So how do you do it and not have it become gimmicky?**

Schweizer: I don't know, for me it's a matter of taste.

**Cadence: I've seen numerous musicians refuse to play a piano they found to be off tune. How picky are you about the quality of the piano?**

Schweizer: I'm not very picky. Sometimes the organizers phone me up and ask how I would like to have the piano tuned and I tell them I don't care but it has to be in tune. I don't play with violinists or cellists, where it would be important. I play with saxophones and drums so it just has to be tuned correctly. I'm not particular about the tuning.

**Cadence: Let's talk about your past a bit. You were raised in Switzerland near the German border and grew up listening to dance bands in your parents' restaurant. What effect did that have on your future career as a musician?**

Schweizer: It was great for me, that's when I first heard a student's group, a quartet. They rehearsed on the first floor above the restaurant. We had a large hall above the restaurant where there were weddings, banquets and dances on the weekends and one Saturday afternoon there was a student band from the university rehearsing in that room and they were copying the music of the Dave Brubeck Quartet. This is when I first heard modern jazz and from then on, I wanted to play that. I bought records and soon other groups came to play and I was listening to all this. I didn't know how

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at Chris' on 5/12. Her flamenco roots were showing as he rendered original works and some standards in Spanish, as well as English. "I have a hell of a band tonight," she said before introducing Mike Moreno (g), Madison Rast (b) and Francois Zayas (d). A beaming smile added to her charm along with buttery vocals and joyful dancing. Good friend and local Cuban singing sensation Venissa Santi was present along with other local powerhouse vocalist Joanna Pascale... Ars Nova Workshop's season finale came 5/14 in the form of the Chicago Underground Duo with Rob Mazurek (cnt, flt, el) & Chad Taylor (d, el) at the Philadelphia Art Alliance. The Underground is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year and have built up quite a telepathic connection. Mazurek, who's been described as a sound abstractivist, is adept at floating out ethereal, haunting lines. He also sang and performed on flute behind the skittering background of Taylor's drums. Taylor was also creative on electrified thumb piano and other segments of blistering percussion. Their set was opened by Ches Smith and his solo Congs For Brums project which utilized drums, vibraphone and electronics.

to play chords and I had no ideas of harmonies but I listened to these groups and the records and I learned myself. It took me years and years to know how to do it. At one point, some of the young musicians from the university found out that I'm a pianist and that I wanted to play jazz and they asked me if I wanted to join their group so I joined a student's group when I was 14 or 15 and we played a lot. We rehearsed every week.

**Cadence: Your parents didn't mind you playing Jazz?**

Schweizer: Oh, they didn't even notice, they had no time. [Laughs]

**Cadence: At age 20, you spent two years in England as an au pair.**

Schweizer: It wasn't two years, I went first to England to study English in a language school. I was there for a year and then I didn't want to go home so the secretary at the school found me an au pair job in London and I did that for a year.

**Cadence: Did you have important Jazz experiences there?**

Schweizer: Yes, I had a lot of experiences. I was at Ronnie Scott's club every evening and I heard all the musicians there, all the important English musicians in the '60s. I heard Joe Harriott, Tubby Hayes, Ronnie Scott and Johnny Dankworth. I was there in '63-'64. There was a bass player who was a friend of a friend of mine and he helped me a lot to make contact with English musicians. Later on, maybe around '66, I found out that there was also a free music scene with John Stevens, Tony Oxley, Evan Parker, and Trevor Watts so I got to know those people. I lived in Switzerland at that point but I spent a lot of time in England to rehearse, learn and play with them. I was in a quartet with Pierre Favre, Evan Parker, and Peter Kowald. These were very important years for me.

**Cadence: Please talk about the Club Africana in Zurich, that's the club where you heard a steady stream of South African players such as Johnny Dyani and Dollar Brand during your early life.**

Schweizer: I heard Chris McGregor and the Blue Notes with Johnny Dyani, Mongezi Feza, Dudu

## SHORT TAKES

Philadelphia, PA

Smith's use of electronics and drums hinted at a similar vision from The Ruins but differed in the absence of viciousness. Most enjoyable was the percussive ending that rampaged on for five minutes... Incoming hits: Chris' Jazz Café ([chrisjazzcafe.com](http://chrisjazzcafe.com)) presents - 7/14 Ali Ryerson; 7/24 The Moscow State Jazz Orchestra led by Igor Butman; 7/28 The Hot Club of Detroit; 8/11 Kevin Mahogany...Ars Nova Workshop ([arsnova-workshop.org](http://arsnova-workshop.org)) presents - 9/4 Peter Brotzmann/Jason Adasiewicz & Chris Corsano /Bill Orcutt @ International House Philadelphia...Kimmel Center ([kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org)) presents - 9/21 Hannibal Lokumbe's Can You Hear God Crying...Fire Museum Records ([museumfire.com](http://museumfire.com)) presents - 7/7 Little Worlds - Bela Bartok's Mikrokosmos Reimagined & The Horrible Department; 8/10 Straylight - Calendar Islands @ Angler Movement Arts...Sunset Jazz Music Series ([ccparks.com](http://ccparks.com)) @ Wiggins Park in Camden, New Jersey presents - 7/10 Eddie Palmieri Latin Jazz Septet; 7/17 Buckwheat Zydeco; 7/31 Monnette Sudler's Ladies Night Out; 8/14 Urban Guerilla Orchestra.

Ken Weiss

Pukwana and Louis Moholo. I heard them almost every day at this café. This was after my first stay in England and after a while, this group had to leave Zurich because the Africana stopped the concert series. The Blue Notes all moved to London then except for Johnny who went to Sweden because he had a woman friend there.

### **Cadence: Why was there such an influx of South Africans in Zurich?**

Schweizer: It's because of Dollar Brand, he was the first who came as an exile from South Africa. He came to Switzerland and then he helped the Blue Notes come to Europe and he looked for a job for them at this Club Africana.

### **Cadence: Why did the club stop the series?**

Schweizer: The owner of the café stopped the music. This was in the late '60s and the Beatles came out and jazz was out. Beat music was now in and jazz was dead.

### **Cadence: You mentioned earlier that your early bands played hard bop like that done by Horace Silver and Art Blakey. I've read varying reports that it was either an Ornette Coleman or Paul Bley record that turned you on to free music.**

Schweizer: Exactly, "This is Our Music" by Ornette was the first album I listened to and then Albert Ayler with Gary Peacock and then Paul Bley's trio record. Before that, my favorite piano player was Bill Evans playing standards and McCoy Tyner.

### **Cadence: What was that first experience like for you hearing Ornette and Paul Bley for the first time?**

Schweizer: I thought it was so beautiful and so different. I had my own trio at the time that rehearsed a lot and we played standards and mainstream jazz and one day we rehearsed and without anyone talking about it, we suddenly realized that we didn't play changes anymore. We had stopped playing time. We had opened up and were playing free. It happened just like that. Everybody was ready to leave the functional harmonies and leave straight time and we were so surprised to find that we now played free jazz!

### **Cadence: How did your audience take to that?**

Schweizer: Oh, it was not good, they were not happy. They said, "Oh, now they can't play anymore,



## SHORT TAKES

Portland, OR

As I write this in mid-May there appears to be no apparent shortage of venues for a wide array of jazz and improvised music in Portland. The state of this situation is, of course, always in flux. It seems like we're on a bit of an upswing at the moment. So this quarter's column will lay out a generous, but by no measure complete, list of some of these wonderful havens of the real and the new. It should be noted that there are many more events at each of these locales than will be referenced here. On a further note the modern age has made it so easy to check out just about anything via the internet that I will only be listing that link and a surface address. The latter for the curious to establish coordinates within a map search. Many of these organizations now have Facebook sites as well.

The BLUE MONK [thebluemonk.com](http://thebluemonk.com) (3341 SE Belmont) is a warm and beloved venue. The soulful basement lounge has hosted a long list of exciting jazz events both IN and OUT. Thursdays: drummer Alan Jones hosts a jam session which is attended by many accomplished local talents. Sundays always feature jazz and original jazz at that. This long-running series consistently presents

it's over." [Laughs]

**Cadence: It didn't matter to you that you couldn't work?**

Schweizer: No, it didn't. We thought we were on the right way, we knew we were on the right way. It was hard sometimes but Germany was more open to this music than Switzerland because there were a lot of free music players like Kowald and Brotzmann. We started at the same time in the late '60s. We got to know these other players and they helped us to find gigs in Germany, but in Switzerland, it took years before they accepted what we did.

**Cadence: Was Mary Lou Williams an important inspiration for you as a female pianist playing Jazz?**

Schweizer: Yeah, but I only knew her very late. I didn't listen to her, unfortunately, but I got to know her when she made the LP with Cecil Taylor. That was the first time I came to realize what she did.

**Cadence: So you didn't make a concerted effort to seek out other women in the field?**

Schweizer: Carla Bley I knew, I got to know her. She came to Zurich many times when she was with Michael Mantler. I got to know her quite well and we respected each other. I loved her tunes.

**Cadence: Please talk about your experience hearing Cecil Taylor live for the first time in 1966.**

Schweizer: This was when I heard him playing solo in Berlin but I had also heard him before in Stuttgart with Jimmy Lyons and Andrew Cyrille or Sonny Murray. Well, it was a shock for me the first time I heard him play. I thought it's not possible to play like that. 'How does he do it?' I wanted to stop piano playing. I said, 'I think I better stop, I could never do like that,' but I was influenced by the energy he had. That was it really for me but it only lasted a year or two. When I had this trio with Rudiger Carl, he was copying Brotzmann and I tried to copy Cecil Taylor, playing with arms and elbows and clusters all the time with the high energy playing. Later on I heard Monk and Taylor playing solo opposite at the same festival in Berlin. Of course, I knew the music of Monk, I had a couple of his solo LPs and trio and quartet recordings, but I had never heard him live because he didn't often come to Switzerland. So I heard Monk solo in Berlin and I thought it was

## SHORT TAKES

Portland, OR

great stuff and all at a low (all bread to the band) cover to boot! An early Sunday in April featured the Rich Halley 4 presenting their latest "Back From Beyond" compositions and it was an exciting night, indeed. It seemed like everyone was at the highest state and each player displayed unwavering focus and superb intuition. The ensemble passages were properly tight, the collective sound a joy to hear and each soloist really dialed-up something special. Murderer's Row. The other cats: Michael Vlatkovich (tbn), Clyde Reed (b), Carson Halley (d). Sundays in May featured: John Stowell and friends; BAD LUCK (from Seattle featuring Cuong Vu); Joel Freun with NYC musicians; George Colligan Ensemble.

JIMMY MAKs jimmy-maks.com (221 NW 10th ave). An evergreen among jazz clubs here or (nearly) anywhere Jimmy's club puts on a fine show featuring many talented local legends spiced with the occasional visitor (just lately the great Cedar Walton was seated at the piano for a couple of nights). Mainstream jazz, funk, blues, it's a down home vibe with a Greek menu. Regularly featured: Mel Brown (in several settings weekly), Lloyd Jones, Dan Balmer, Andre St. James,

for me. It touched me really and I thought this was the music that I really liked, it went right into my heart. The Taylor thing was OK but I didn't want to play like that anymore. [Laughs] I didn't want to play the high energy playing all the time anymore. Monk convinced me that less is more.

**Cadence:** That's ironic to hear because in the past, you've been labeled as the female Cecil Taylor.

Schweizer: I know, of course a lot of people heard me in the '70s and '80s when I still played like that with the musicians from FMP. They were all playing like that, as loud and as fast as possible and I had to compete. I had to do that too and for a while, I enjoyed it and I did it but after a while it got boring for me to always start at the high level and keep it like that.

**Cadence:** I wanted to ask you about that. Your playing has changed through the years, it's become calmer. Was that a decision you made or is it just part of the natural progression? It's certainly not just you, it's also evident in Peter Brotzmann, Marilyn Crispell and even Cecil Taylor's later playing.

Schweizer: It's both I'd say. It's how things change and it's not my goal to show that I can play as fast and loud as possible anymore. It's conscious and unconscious. I feel OK now. I must say that I haven't heard Cecil Taylor for a long time. I don't know how he plays now. I think the last time I heard him was a solo concert he did in Willisau about ten years ago. I don't know what he's doing now, is he still playing here in New York? I would love to hear him now.

**Cadence:** In the late '60s you had an influential trio with (German bassist) Peter Kowald and (Swiss drummer) Pierre Favre, which later grew to a quartet with the addition of (English saxophonist) Evan Parker. How did that group come about?

Schweizer: Evan is one of the greatest tenor players in free music and Evan and Kowald were very close friends and colleagues. I was quite happy to play with Pierre and them in this quartet. We played free music and, for me, I thought it was a very good group. After a while, it was over for reasons I don't know anymore. I don't know why this band split up, it's a mystery. I don't know why we stopped.

**Cadence:** Were there bad feelings?

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Portland, OR

Devin Phillips, Andrew Oliver, Patrick Lamb, Linda Hornbuckle, Soul Vaccination, Portland Soul All-Stars. 7/30: Ben Wolfe trio (w/ Rob Scheps, Orrin Evans)

IVORIES JAZZ LOUNGE (1435 NW Flanders St.) is, like Jimmy Maki's, a venue with fine dining. May featured a well chosen lineup of exciting local jazz groups: Andrew Oliver Trio (w/ Ji Tanzer (d), Andrea Neimic (b). Bill Harris Quintet with Paul Mazzio (tp), George Mitchell (p), Dick Berk (d), Dave Captein (b). John Gross Trio (w/ Dave Frishberg and Dick Berk). Mike Longo (p) w/ Ed Bennett (b) and Tim Rap (d). I haven't been to this venue yet but with talent like this it looks like I really ought to amend that oversight.

THE CREATIVE MUSIC GUILD (CMG) [creativemusicguild.org](http://creativemusicguild.org). While this long-running avant jazz/improv organization has never been accused of being a "venue" they've certainly utilized a huge number of them over the years. They're still at it. Searching for the often unheard and almost always un/under appreciated sonic pioneers. For the last year they've presented the OUTSET MUSIC SERIES (1st/3rd Wed each month) which features solo/duo/small group settings

Schweizer: Sort of, there were misunderstandings. The music was great for the short time we were together. It was a very intensive time for me.

**Cadence: That quartet combined four players from three different countries. Was that common for the time period and did that have a major drawback on the band's ability to get together and play?**

Schweizer: Sometimes it was a bit difficult but the distances in Europe are not too difficult. Evan was used to coming to the continent to play because in England he didn't play a lot. He earned nothing there so he was glad to come to Switzerland, France, Germany and Italy. He's still touring a lot. He's still on the road playing everywhere. At that time, it was difficult at times to ask Peter to come from Germany and Evan from England but Pierre and I were used to going out because Switzerland was such a small country that there were not enough gigs for us to live and stay in Switzerland. We toured all over Europe.

**Cadence: You were one of the first women on the jazz scene in the '60s and '70s. Please talk about your experience?**

Schweizer: Sometimes it was not quite easy to be the only woman instrumentalist and play with men all the time, but I had no other choice. I had to do it or stop playing. I got to know Marilyn Crispell in the late '70s and I appreciated her a lot as another woman piano player who played free music and I was happy that there was another woman on the scene. It was Jost Gebers' [FMP label founder] idea to have a duo CD of Marilyn and I and that was the first time I played with another woman who played free music. It was great.

**Cadence: I read a quote of yours regarding the hardcore free jazz scene of the '70s where you said you got tired of playing with the men because you didn't want to drink your head off every night.**

Schweizer: Yes, exactly. This was, of course, the German scene. It was so excessive, really. The German male musicians drank a lot, every night they were drunk. I could not. I didn't want to cope with that.

**Cadence: Did that create problems with your peers?**

Schweizer: No, they didn't care, it was my own

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at REVIVAL DRUM SHOP (1465 NE Prescott) Some of the recently featured performers: Daniel Menche, Demolition Duo (John C. Savage/Ken Ollis), Jonathan Sielaff....and so many more. 3/2: A dynamic duo bill at the Alberta Rose Theater (3000 NE Alberta St.) brought local heavy jazz quintet BLUE CRANES ( Reed Wallsmith, Joe Cunningham, Rebecca Sanborn, Ji Tanzer, Keith Brush) out to open (in magnificent fashion) for Tim Berne's SNAKE OIL (w/ Oscar Noriega, Matt Mitchell and Ches Smith). Whoa! Off the charts fire and beauty ensued. The always circuitous and perversely accomplished tunes by the saxophonist/leader were admirably handled by the band, which sounded very familiar (but not self-satisfied) as they worked their way through tight ensemble passages. Whether solo or ensemble it was a finely focused and inspiring evening from beginning to end.

CMG will be presenting their first edition of THE IMPROVISATION SUMMIT OF PORTLAND on the nights of June 8/9. Each evening will feature a large collective ensemble of improvisers directed by a visiting artist from the SF Bay area (one night: John Gruntfest the other: Gino Robair). There'll also be

business. I could have done it too but it did not interest me to be drunk every night. Sometimes I went with them and after an hour or two, I had enough and I wanted to go to bed but they never stopped. Even in the morning, they never stopped [drinking]. I could not believe then why they did it. In the '60s and '70s, every night after playing they had to go and drink in the bars, especially Peter Kowald and Brotzmann and also others, especially the British musicians, were drunk a lot.

**Cadence: How did the audience respond to you as a female jazz instrumentalist in the early days? Was there much negativity?**

Schweizer: No, I didn't have any problems.

**Cadence: Another important distinction you had at that time was that you were openly lesbian. Please talk about that and the hardships it created.**

Schweizer: No, it wasn't difficult. The male musicians always accepted it. They knew it, I never spoke it. I never told them right away but they knew that I had women friends and I wasn't interested in having sex with the male musicians like a lot of women musicians have to. You know, they have to do that otherwise the men wouldn't play with them. That never happened to me so I'm very glad I never had to do that.

**Cadence: Your sexuality is frequently brought up during your interviews, is it a topic that you feel deserves to still be brought up?**

Schweizer: It shouldn't, no. Well, actually it depends, but now it should not be an issue. I think for most musicians it's now OK.

**Cadence: You were a member of the Women's Lib. Movement. What exactly did you do in the movement?**

Schweizer: Yes, I was a member in Zurich which is where the homosexual women's movement started in the mid-'70s and I was part of it. I was very engaged to bring this issue out and to let people know. It was very important. We had lots of meetings and demonstrations to show people who we were and who we liked.

**Cadence: You spoke earlier about finally having the opportunity to play with other women in the late '70s. You also were in an all-female group then called the Feminist Improvising Group. Was there much of an artistic difference playing only with women?**

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two live musical scores to films. Some of the participants: Grouper, Blue Cranes, Tenses, Megan Bierman, Anton Hatwich, John Gross, Kevin Shields, Tim Du Roche, Thicket, Linda K. Johnson, Linda Austin, Danielle Ross, Richard Decker, Samuel Coombes, Rebecca Gates.....there will be more. Check out their site.

PDXJAZZ.COM Again, not a venue but the non-profit organization responsible for the Portland Jazz Festival and a number of individual productions throughout the year. They're also connected to a good number of community and educational programs as well. Recently they've begun a monthly series showcasing jazz musicians both local and from afar. 5/17: Amina Figarova Sextet. 6/21: David Friesen + Glen Moore "Bass on Top". 7/19: Devin Phillips w/ Richard Arnold (Coltrane tribute).

CAMELLIA LOUNGE (510 NW 11th Ave) An occasional player on the scene but a surprising number of special musicians pass through this cozy teahouse/lounge on a semi-regular basis. Recently: John Gross/ Eugene St. James. KIN trio: Eugene Lee/Andre St. James/ Tim Du Roche.

SECRET SOCIETY (116 NE Russell St) An occasional

Schweizer: Yes, this was really a relief because we didn't have to prove anything when we played. We didn't have to prove that we could play loud or fast or technically brilliant. There was a different way of communicating with the other women than with the men. When Lindsay Cooper asked me to join the group they were forming I said, 'Yes, why not, I'd like to try.' That's how the Feminist Improvising Group started with Maggie Nichols, Lindsay Cooper, Georgie Born, and Sally Potter. We toured a lot in Italy, Germany and Austria. It was fun for me, I liked it.

**Cadence: There are a good number of female jazz leaders these days including Joelle Leandre, Marilyn Crispell, Sylvie Courvoisier, and Myra Melford. Do you take much pride in knowing that you made their paths easier?**

Schweizer: Ah, did I? I don't know. It could be.

**Cadence: You don't think that you widened the path?**

Schweizer: No, I've never thought about that. That's fine, of course. I remember meeting Myra Melford when I was here in the '80s. I had gotten a grant from the city of Zurich to live in New York for half a year and that's when I met Myra for the first time and she asked me to join her to rehearse, so she located a room and then we played together sometimes and she was very happy to have met me. I also went to visit Marilyn (Crispell) in Woodstock at that time. It was nice to meet other (female) pianists. That was nice, finally, after so many years.

**Cadence: You made five acclaimed duet recordings with drummers (Louis Moholo, Gunter Sommer, Andrew Cyrille, Pierre Favre, Han Bennink). What's the attraction to drummer duets for you?**

Schweizer: I'm actually also a drummer, I started to play drums at the age of 12. Also at the same time that I started to play piano, I realized that I liked to play percussion. I like rhythm. I tried to play drums also free and sometimes when the band played at my parents' house, the drummer left the instrument there overnight and I would sneak in and try to play the drums. I thought it was a lovely, great instrument. I loved to play them. With the Feminist Improvising Group we didn't have a drummer and when we played concerts,



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presenter of some interesting projects. Recently: Battle Hymns & Gardens ( Reed Wallsmith, Joe Cunningham, John Shaw, Tim DuRoche). Why I Must Be Careful (Seth Brown, John Niekrasz), Honey Ear (Erik Lawrence, Rene Hart, Allison Miller).

WORLD FAMOUS KENTON CLUB (2025 N. Kilpatrick) A new address to me but looks like it might be amenable to some interesting OUT visions. Recently: Why I Must Be Careful. Realization Orchestra (from LA).

GOODFOOT PUB & LOUNGE (2845 SE Stark St). A regular presenter of all sorts of exciting shows. Many genres happen in the cozy lower level performance lounge and some great edgy jazz gigs have been welcomed as well. Recently: Shuffle Boil (Wayne Horvitz/ Bobby Previte/ Joe Doria/Timothy Young)

WILFS AT UNION STATION (800 NW 6th Ave). Big time old school sort of dining establishment but (really) user friendly setting for a cocktail and some quality piano trios. Some favorites: John Gilmore. Gordon Lee.

ARRIVEDERCI ( ) Weekend nights often feature significant local talent. This is a nice place. A bit off the beaten track and worth it. Recently: Steve Blackman. Gordon Lee trio

we asked for a small drum set so that I could switch over from piano to drums sometimes. In Zurich, much later after that, I played drums in a quartet with Swiss musicians that played all the music of Thelonious Monk. Now I don't play drums anymore in public, just for myself sometimes.

**Cadence: So Pierre Favre's job is not in jeopardy?**

Schweizer: [Laughs] Yeah, yeah. But I still like to play drums but I have no special need to play in public. It's still a hobby though.

**Cadence: So for the drummer duets you recorded, how did you decide on the drummers to play with?**

Schweizer: These were all the drummers I played continuously in Europe with. It changed all the time but whenever I was asked to play a duet with a drummer I phoned Han and if he couldn't do it, I phoned Pierre, or they asked me sometimes to play. These were the five drummers I played the most with from the late '60s to early '70s to now.

**Cadence: Two of the drummers you recorded with, Han Bennink and Gunter Sommer, are two of the most comically inventive musicians around. When playing with them, how aware are you of their physical humor and do their actions alter your playing?**

Schweizer: Not always, it depends. I've seen the duo of Misha (Mengelberg) and Han many times and when Han started to make these jokes, Misha never responded to it and he even stopped playing sometimes. He sat and smoked and figured he'd let him do this. Sometimes I go with it or I stop too and let him do what he likes. Han and I have a nice companionship musically and Gunter, I haven't played with for some years. There's actually another drummer I should record with—Paul Lovens. I used to play with him a lot in the '60s to '80s. He actually belongs to this list of drummers also. Maybe one day it will happen before I am too old.

**Cadence: What drummers would you have liked to work with but never got the chance?**

Schweizer: Elvin Jones and Ed Blackwell.

**Cadence: You've said in the past that the piano has been your companion for over 40 years and that friendships and relationships have played second fid-**

## SHORT TAKES

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(w/ Kevin Deitz, Carlton Jackson).

TOUCHE (1425 NW Glisan St) I've yet to see this venue but have heard good things and it appears that it has the proper room for larger ensembles. Recently: Rob Scheps (various projects). Farnell Newton's Soul 3 (w/ Chris Turner, Tyrone Hendrix). On June 8 it'll be Dave Frishberg/Rob Scheps duo.

KMHD 89.1 FM : all jazz (ok, some blues as well) all the time. This station has really improved after joining the OPB fold (among other changes). Most, if not all, of the DJ's are true believers, sentient beings, mensches, musicians, assorted aficionados and generally just the kind of people you want to open up their own collections to you over those crazy airwaves. Talk about your old (cool) school! Jazz from all dimensions.

KBOO 90.7 FM: Not so very long ago this was the station to tune to for forward thinking jazz. . Now, really, not so much. Occasional outbursts of the real thing (Check our Dan Flessas, Nick Geffro, David Lifton....) are why it's still listed as a viable connection. (Oh, and blues?: Tom Wendt has that covered for sure).

Further afield: I headed up I-5 to Seattle to take in an evening at the ROYAL

**dle to music for you. Music has inspired you to great highs but also deep loneliness. Has it been worth these sacrifices for you?**

Schweizer: Yes, it's been worth it, of course. It hasn't always been easy but it went the way it went and I would not change anything. All the sufferings belong to the music, it belongs to my playing. I had to go through it but it was worth doing it.

**Cadence: You play piano with great passion, would you talk about your intimate connection with the instrument. What does it mean to you to touch the keys, the strings, to feel the wood, to feel the vibration of the piano when playing it?**

Schweizer: Yes, it's a physical experience. It's a nice feeling to touch all the keys, all the strings. I feel comfortable to do it.

**Cadence: The Irene Schweizer that the world sees on stage is very focused. What's the real Irene like that the world doesn't get the chance to see?**

Schweizer: Oh that depends, I don't know. We can talk about food. [Laughs] There are a lot of different things I like such as art and museums.

**Cadence: What are your hobbies and guilty pleasures?**

Schweizer: I go swimming a lot in the summer and to the mountains in the winter. Nature is very important to me. I go to the forest, I was in the Swiss mountains right before I came here. I used to ski but not anymore, now I just like to go walking in the snow. It's the most beautiful scenery. I like to bike and I couldn't live in a place where there was no water. If there's no river or lake, I couldn't live there. Zurich has a big lake and you can swim in it.

**Cadence: Most of your playing is in the duo or solo setting. Why don't you play more often in a larger setting?**

Schweizer: I do play in larger settings, yesterday I played with a quartet. It's because I don't write music and if you play free music it's very difficult with a quartet or quintet. The easiest is solo or duo. Trio could also be possible but I prefer small groups because I don't write music, I improvise.

**Cadence: There's a movement afoot by some African American musicians, such as Nicholas**

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ROOM (5000 Rainier Ave South-Seattle). The Dutch trombonist Wolter Wierbos was in town for series of concerts and workshops coordinated by the fine EARSHOT JAZZ non-profit organization. They've been instrumental in keeping a whole lot of great jazz moving through a wide number of venues in the Emerald City. I was focused on the last gig of the two nights where this master improviser would perform with Wayne Horvitz' Sonny Clark Memorial Sextet and treat the audience to a mid-concert trombone soliloquy. The evening featured two long sets each of which began with vocalist Johnaye Kendrick singing from the Billie Holiday songbook. Then the singer would leave the stage and the ensemble would dig into a heaping helping of Herbie Nichols fine compositions. The band featured Wayne on piano with Al Keith (tpt), Stuart MacDonald (ts), Geoff Harper (b), Andy Roth (d) and, of course, their super Dutch guest. The program was obviously a rather wild stretch but came off very well. I would note that more than a few of those in attendance had come to hear Wolter specifically and several of these folks stated that they wished that there had been more time in this large program for extended free solo

**Payton, to rename jazz as BAM – Black American Music – a term many people find to be exclusionary. As a European musician, what's your reaction to this newly proposed label?**

Schweizer: I've never thought about that. In Europe we don't talk about all this. I don't agree with this because I've played with black American musicians such as Hamid Drake, Fred Anderson, Andrew Cyrille, Oliver Lake, William Parker, many people, and I've never thought, 'Ah, they are black and Rudiger Carl and Peter Brotzmann are white.' When I started, I listened to Art Blakey, Horace Silver on LPs. I never saw these people before, I never heard them live, I didn't even realize that they were black. I was young, it was only afterwards that I was told that these were black musicians. It didn't make a difference. It was only later that I saw what was happening when I first came here in the late '70s. It was very separated, the black Americans and whites didn't play together. There were not too many mixed groups. Now I'm glad that this separation is not so big anymore. This was also the work of Peter Kowald while he lived here in New York and organized his festival with black American musicians and white European musicians. He did a lot.

**Cadence: The last few questions I have are from other artists. Marilyn Crispell said – "Irene has been very inspiring to me. Ask about growing up in Switzerland and if she was at all influenced by Swiss folk music?"**

Schweizer: I must tell you that before I started piano, I played harmonica and I played Swiss folk music at the age of 8. That was my first instrument.

**Cadence: Does that come out in your music these days?**

Schweizer: No, I stopped after 4 years, when I was 12 or 13. I was so focused on jazz that I left everything behind. It didn't interest me anymore. I can listen to it when it's played well, and we have a lot of very good folk musicians in Switzerland. There's a new reemergence of folk, it's crazy now in Switzerland. The cultural foundation is really supporting this music, more than anything.

**Cadence: Evan Parker has a tough question. I ran this by Pierre Favre and he didn't know what I**

## SHORT TAKES

Portland, OR

work by the trombonist. The Royal Room is a real gem for this sort of gathering. Comfortable, good food and drink, a good sound system and piano. It's all there and folks in the Seattle area should definitely keep an eye out for more exciting events.

After a drive back to Portland the next afternoon it was time for Wollo to get down to some serious solo work. An RSVP house party in Southeast Portland took place that evening. After a casual meet and greet and some good food and drink the master was at it. His 40 minute solo set (two improvised pieces) was an event of stunning beauty and audacious chops. His use of mutes, breath, timbre and time are superlative. All of his outrageously impressive technique is balanced by a razor-sharp, heart-felt musicality and the end result both amazes and enchants. All in attendance were deeply moved. More food, drink and good conversation kept the night alive far beyond the announced end. It was a very special evening and we were all very pleased that the trombonist had been happily willing to adjust his US tour schedule to fit in one more gig in Portland.

Well, that's a pretty good rundown around P-town. The scene isn't always bursting with visiting talents as we're generally not on the way to other places.

was talking about. Parker said, - "Ask what happened to all the old cop sets?" When asked to explain what the question meant Parker said that "It refers to the title we gave one of the pieces on the quartet record with Kowald. It is a quote from a short piece by William Burroughs that I assume means something like: police corruption and the consequent loss of communal respect means that children no longer want to dress up as policemen. The sales of 'cop sets' have declined."

Schweizer: I can't remember this, it's too long ago.

**Cadence:** Patrik Landolt of Intakt Records didn't have a question for you but...

Schweizer: He didn't? Did you ask him?

**Cadence:** I did but he wanted to point out how politically important you are in Switzerland. You're a symbolic figure of freedom as someone who was open early about their alternative sexuality and that the country really relates to you. He said that in Switzerland you are not just a musician but a personality, and just last year you sold out a performance hall of 1300 people. He wanted Americans to understand your importance.

Schweizer: Well that's very nice, that's very kind of him.

**Cadence:** I saved the best for last - Pierre Favre. He asks - "This question may embarrass Irene but we've been playing together since 1967, that's 45 years. In that time, I haven't heard about how she feels about my playing so please ask about how she sees the particularity of my drum playing and musicianship."

Schweizer: [Laughs] I'm sure he knows. I'm not telling him every day but I appreciate his playing and have always appreciated his playing, of course. He's a melodic drummer and I'm a percussive pianist and that's why we go together so well.

**Cadence:** He's been your longest collaborator. What's special about the two of you together that allows you to achieve things with him that you can't achieve with others?

Schweizer: It's just the confidence that we have in each other after so many years. We don't have to speak about anything when we play. Before, he doesn't

## SHORT TAKES

Portland, OR

Of course anyone working the West coast will be interested in coming through but the airport is not a true hub and the road distances between gigs out here presents a number of challenges. Small(er) market cities in the mid and eastern US have the advantage of a certain amount of realistic proximity to other burgs when musicians set out to cobble together a road tour. That said, many great gigs take place here and when there seems to be a shortage of visitors one can certainly take comfort (and entertainment!) from a surprisingly deep pool of talented local luminaries.

One last plug: for my dear friends at the COASTAL JAZZ AND BLUES SOCIETY (shout out to Ken, John, Rainbow and all the crew) who for more than a quarter century have produced the always exciting TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival. This years 10 day party begins on June 22 and ends on July 1st (Canada day). Check out their website for the line-up. If you can get there..... you'll be glad you did.

For a peek at some of the great shows I've had the good fortune to attend (and write about) you can check out my YouTube channel: BRADWINTERPDX.

Brad Winter

come and say, "Oh, what should we play today?" And I never ask him because I have no idea. We just start and see what happens. We are open to it and have confidence in each other.

**Cadence:** You were Pierre's secretary at Paiste and I asked him about that. He said you were a terrible secretary.

Schweizer: He did say that?

**Cadence:** Yes, he said you were smoking all the time and were a terrible secretary. Are you going to let him get away with that?

Schweizer: No, I don't agree. Of course, he also smoked too at that time, he smoked more than I did.

**Cadence:** He didn't mention that.

Schweizer: [Laughs] I'm sure. I just started to smoke then. I was never a heavy smoker.

**Cadence:** How was he as a boss then?

Schweizer: Oh, he was not my boss, the boss was the Paiste brothers. I just typed letters for him. I was a very good secretary, I could type as fast as possible. Nobody else in this bureau office could type as fast as I could.

**Cadence:** Well, he said that with a big smile so I think he was just trying to be funny.

Schweizer: Of course. He thought it was terrible that I had to be a secretary instead of earning my life with the music.

**Cadence:** Do you have any final comments?

Schweizer: Well, I'm glad that I don't have to make my life as a secretary anymore. I can just play my music.

**Cadence:** Can you say anything about a career in music?

Schweizer: I think I'm very happy now that I'm still able to play and still feel healthy enough to play and play with all these wonderful musicians. I'm very lucky, I'm playing with the best drummers in the world. Yes, it's true and now I am glad to be playing with younger people, they inspire me.

Ken Weiss



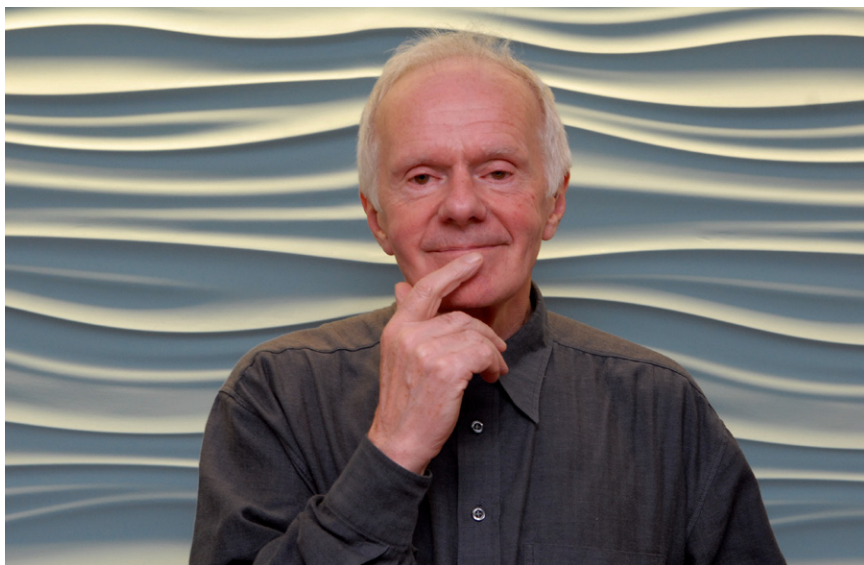


Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

## Pierre Favre

Interview by  
Ken Weiss

Drummer/composer Pierre Favre (June 2, 1937, Le Locle, Switzerland) has been at the forefront of European jazz and contemporary classical music for over 40 years. He taught himself to play drums at the age of 15, exploring dixieland, swing and be-bop prior to becoming an early participant in the late '60s free jazz movement with a quartet including Irene Schweizer, Peter Kowald, and Evan Parker. Ever the innovator with an on-going interest in how sound functions and the relationship between sound and substance, Favre influenced many other musicians through his numerous recordings and sound changing work with the Paiste cymbal company. His playing has evolved over time due to his interest in world percussion music and an in-depth study of classical composition. He displays impressive sensitivity to tonal nuance on his instrument and strikes a balance between ultra-sophistication and earthiness. He has also made his mark in Europe as an outstanding teacher and mentor. I found Favre to be a gentle soul who was very generous with his time. When asked a question, be it during the interview or



Photo Credit: Ken Weis

afterwards, he never avoided the answer. If asked, he thought before he spoke but he spoke from his heart, even if the topic was not an easy one to talk about, especially to a stranger. The interview took place in New York City at his hotel close to Union Square on March 9, 2012. He was in town to play at The Stone as part of Intakt Records' two-week festival.

**Cadence:** We'll start with an easy one. How do you pronounce your last name?

Pierre Favre: Faahv-rah, the R is French.

**Cadence:** There's a famous retired quarterback in this country by the name of Brett Favre so I have two questions for you. One, is Favre a common Swiss name and two, how's your throwing arm?

Favre: Oh, really? It's found all over the French

## SHORT TAKES

Toronto, ON

In downtown Toronto there is a place called Trane Studio. In the past couple of months such performers as Hilaro Duran, Joe Sealy, Norman Amadio, Stacey McGregor, Eddie Bullen, Richard Whiteman, Robi Botas, Quincey Bullen, and Marc Auguste have performed there.

At Hugh's Room, in the West side of the city, such people as Alfie Zappacosta, Singer Liberty Silver, and Guitarist J.P. Cormier have performed there.

At the Rex Hotel in April, on Sunday nights saw the Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band, on three Monday nights The Peter Hill Quintet performed. On Tuesdays Norman Marshall Villeneuve's Jazz message performed with Eric Boucher on piano, Ron McBride on bass, and Villeneuve on drums. Wednesdays featured the Trevor Giancola Trio. Thursdays saw the Richard Whiteman Five. Fridays had the Hogtown Syncopators. Saturdays featured Danny Marks opening, followed by different groups each week.

But the big news is the Toronto International Jazz Festival, running this year from June 22 to July 1 in over 30 venues from small clubs to concert halls to large outdoor venues. Local performers include Lady Kane, Jackie

speaking part of Switzerland, the origin is French. You know, we have departments called cantons in Switzerland and only in the French one do you have Favre.

**Cadence:** You're in New York City at this time to play at The Stone as part of the two-week block of shows curated by the Swiss label Intakt Records. How do you feel about the opportunity to play with a number of your Swiss musicians for an American audience?

Favre: I had a great feeling before (the series of concerts started) and during the playing. We played the first concert yesterday with Mark Feldman and the audience was beautiful, very receptive, very open, very concentrated. It's a pleasure because the people are so nice.

**Cadence:** Would you give us a few names of impressive Swiss musicians we should be aware of?

Favre: There are many but I will mention guitarist Philippe Schaufelberger, trombonist Samuel Blaser, and drummer Chris Jaeger.



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

## SHORT TAKES

Toronto, ON

Richardson, Dave Young, The Samba Squad, Phil Dwyer, Peter Appleyard, and Jim Galloway. Big Names include Cindy Blackman with Santana, Lorne Lofsky, The New York Jazz Ensemble, Bill Frisell, and dozens more.

In London, Eric Stach is hosting another open series in June and July at his Studio 105. The early part of the evening will feature two alternating groups: Eric's Free Music Unit and The Art Of Streaming led by Dennis Siren. The midnite hour is open to various experimental groups.

Bernie Koenig

**Cadence: How important is Intakt Records to the Swiss and European creative music scene?**

Favre: It is especially important for Switzerland of course but he has a lot of people from France, from Germany and from the States. A lot of artists are playing on Intakt now.

**Cadence: How healthy is the Swiss jazz scene?**

Favre: It is quite good because there are lots of festivals and it's a country where you can make your living out of just playing music. It's a very small country but there are lots of different spheres. You can play on top of mountains, it's incredible. Sometimes somebody will call you from the middle of a forest, he has a restaurant, you go there and you play and he will get all the people from the neighborhood. I think Switzerland is not really a cultural country but the culture exists in all sorts of places because people need it so they organize it.

**Cadence: Switzerland is interesting in that it's a small land-locked country between powerhouses France, Germany, Italy and also Austria. Obviously, there are significant influences based on which bordering country one lives near. How did your experience growing up in the Swiss Jura region near France differ from someone like your friend, (Swiss pianist) Irene Schweizer, who grew up near the German border?**

Favre: Actually, Switzerland is so small that you live near all the borders somehow but on the other hand, like I was born in the French part and if you are born in the French part, this is Paris and you have to go to Paris to play, otherwise you're not really worth it. If you live in the German part of Switzerland, you have more chances because you can go to Frankfurt, you can go to Berlin, it seems to be more open. That's why for a long time, I lived in the German part because I felt more centric there. You know the supremacy of Paris is something very difficult. If you're not from Paris, it doesn't work. If you live in Switzerland, it's OK but you're not from Paris. To the French-speaking world, Paris is the center of the French culture. I don't know if it's the same here, if you have to be from New York, but probably not to that degree. In that area of the world, Paris is it.

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

The Van. Jazz festival ended July 1, but the groove continues through the summer at Cory Weed's Jazz Cellar and at MusicFest Vancouver in August. At the Cellar in July, bassist Paul Rushka's 5-tet (clarinetist James Danderfer, Dave Sikula guitar, Jillian Lebeck piano & drummer Joe Poole) is in 7/5 followed 7/6 by R&B/Soul/Blues group Incognito and 7/7 by the Bradley/McGillivray Blues band (with Ruth McGillivray vcl and guitarist Sheldon Bradley). Blue Mondays continue in July with host Rob Montgomery on guitar/vcl and guest James Rogers. B3 Beatdown on 7/10 has The Collective (guitarist Bob Voytcheff, Steve Ranta organ and Loren Etkin drums). Pianist Misha Piatigorsky 3 appears 7/12&13 with bassist Neil Swainson and drummer Jesse Cahill. 7/14 it's "We Take Requests" with vocalist Melody Diachun, Tom Keelyside sax/flute, pianist Bob Murphy, Doug Stephenson bass and Joe Poole drums. A Tribute to Jim Hall and Bill Evans with guitarist Bill Coon and pianist Ross Taggart is on 7/15. Latin Jazz group Zapato Negro (Jack Duncan perc, Andre Carrasquesro, bassist Allan Johnston & drummer Soto) are at the Cellar 7/19, while pianist Ross Taggart, Jodi Proznick and Jesse Cahill

**Cadence:** So they won't accept you in that area unless you are living in Paris?

Favre: Yes, that's about right.

**Cadence:** I've heard from musicians that in Switzerland there is a lack of collaboration amongst the artists that live in different sections of the country. If you live at the German border, you don't necessarily work with the French section. Is that true?

Favre: Yes, there is a barrier there. With the Italians you have the Alps, this is a natural barrier, and between the Germans and the French, there is such a different mentality. All this diversity of cultures makes Switzerland strong but also it makes parts of the country so different that of course, it creates a barrier. You feel that in Switzerland.

**Cadence:** In America we don't realize the separation that exists in Switzerland, we think of it as a little country so it's surprising to hear about this lack of camaraderie.

Favre: Yes, you see there is a difference of mentality. I have a great advantage living in the German part of Switzerland now because I am a foreigner in my own country. I come with a French culture and they find that so charming but here I have to add that the Swiss Germans have accepted me the way I am and play and have allowed me to realize what I am today. This would probably not have been possible if I would have stayed in the French part.

**Cadence:** Switzerland is known for producing great timekeeping, that includes clocks and drummers such as Daniel Humair, Fritz Hauser, Fredy Studer, Charly Antolini and yourself, to name a few. What's behind all the great drummers coming out of Switzerland?

Favre: This is a question that no one could ever answer because it's not the watches; it's not the mechanical timing. You know they have a great tradition in Basel for drumming but I don't know if it's that because the jazz drummer doesn't have that kind of timing, they don't play the same way. It's difficult to say, but perhaps it's because we never had a king so we don't know how it is to obey and drummers cannot take their hair down. I don't know if that's an explanation but I feel it's something like that.

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

do a tribute to the soul Jazz piano genre of the 1960s on 7/21. On 7/22, there's a Cole Porter tribute with the Tyler Hornby 3 (with Hornby drums, Brad Turner piano & bassist Jodi Proznick) and vocalist Johanna Sillanpaa. On 7/24 Jesse Cahill's Night Crawlers in with Cahill drums, Chris Gestrin organ, guitarist Dave Sikula, Steve Kaldestad, tenor sax and Cory Weeds on alto. Argentinian Gabriel Palatchi's band (Palatchi piano/Hammond/vocals, Bogdan Djukic violin/vocals, Manual Gonzalez conga, Alexis Baro trumpet, Gabriel Gonzalez electric bass and Chema Gonzalez drums/timbales/vocals) appear 7/25. Next up is multi-cult group Tambura Rasa is in 7/26. Pianist Amanda Tosoff returns from Toronto for a Cellar visit 7/27 backed by Jodi Proznick and Jesse Cahill. Guitarist Bill Coon has a CD release gig 7/28 with Ross Taggart on tenor, Darren Radtke bass & drummer Dave Robbins. On 7/29, it's Susana Abreu & Terra (Abreu vocal/percussion, Andre Carrasquero piano/guitar, percussionist Jack Duncan, Cameron Hood bass and Peter Serravalle guitar) present a mix of Jazz, Brazilian, Venuzuelan, Afro-Cuban and Pop music. August start off 8/2 with Toronto pianist Richard

**Cadence: How do you view the role of the drummer?**

Favre: Mainly the role of the drummer is to keep the time in case anything goes wrong. You also need to be like a good orchestra director. You let the people play but you give them space. The drummer should be proposing the time, giving the way to work for the group but not dictating. That is the main point. The drummer is also there to know the music and also know, if you are backing a soloist, where is he trying to go in order to help him. Never follow but be with the other player the way he wants to go. And provoke, also provoke some dangerous parts to see how the other person is going to jump over it in order to create some tension in the music.

**Cadence: Let's talk about your unique approach to percussion and music. Many who've written about you have used the term poet. You've also been called "the master of the quiet sounds." Please talk about your approach to percussion.**

Favre: I would say my approach to percussion is a very old one. I feel you should be one with your instrument, with the sound of your instrument, and try to make the music move organically not mechanically in a musical way that may sometimes be interpreted as not having timing or as having wrong timing but it's not so. That's what I look to do and that's what I learned from my teachers, all the old drummers. Sid Catlett was the first that I really loved and then Baby Dodds. Philly Joe Jones told me, "You have to listen to Baby Dodds." You have to listen to them to go to the source and also go back to Africa. You have to listen to African drummers because that's where this thing really comes from.

**Cadence: You've explored solo percussion, it's obvious that you have an interest in how sound functions.**

Favre: The sound is directly related to, of course, first, to your ear, the way you hear, but the movement, your physical movement. The way you try to make something sound is not by hitting, you never hit a drum or any instrument, you make sound on the drums by stretching them and saying, 'Hey, my friend,' you must



## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

Whiteman with Brandi Disterheft bass and drummer Sly Juhas, followed 8/3 with Wendy Biscuit & Here Dirty Swing Band (Wendy Le Van vocals, Dave Webb keys, bassist Jack Lavin & John Nolan drums) offering a mix of swing, blues, jazz, and R&B. Vocalist Armi Grano is in 8/4 backed by Ron Johnston piano, bassist Tim Stacey and Nino DiPasquale drums. The Vanvic 4 (Dylan Cramer alto, Ron Johnston piano, Bruce Meikle bass & drummer Kelby MacNayr appear 8/5. B3 Beatdown on 8/7&21 features Soul-Jazz-Blues trio The Collective (Bob Voytcheff guitar, Steve Ranta organ & drummer Loren Etkin), followed 8/9 by vocalist Tamara Rhodes. Trumpeter Jim Rotondi returns to the Cellar 8/10&11 teaming up with Cory Weeds' Stet (Ross Taggart piano, bassist Ken Lister and Jesse Cahill drums). Vocalist June Katz' 4tet (Miles Black piano Jodi Proznick, trumpeter Derry Byrne) are in 8/12. Rotondi's gig is part of 2012 MusicFest Vancouver. The Cellar is a venue for some of the concerts. Others are guitarist Marc Atkinson 3 (Brett Martins guitar and bassist Joey Smith) 8/14, acoustic string group Van Django 8/15, altoist Campbell Ryga & pianist Mark Eisenman 8/16, and Phil Dwyer:

get the instrument to react with sympathy to you. You are really with the instrument. You have to know what the material is going to give you. I used to play on walls to see how it would sound and some materials answer and some don't, no way. It is like two human beings [interacting]. In old Greece, the drummer was a dancer and a philosopher. He was always these three—a drummer, a dancer and a philosopher. And there is in the drums some kind of great philosophy, I think.

**Cadence: What are your feelings these days when you listen to a very busy and loud drummer?**

Favre: Oh, that's a good question. It's not that I get nervous when someone plays like that. I think that when I hear that, the person needs a few years to come down. I want to add here that somebody like Elvin Jones never ever sounded too loud to me, he sounded big but not loud. You can tell that sometimes when you see a drummer working, he's not playing, he's got no time. Also I listen to a lot of drummers at concerts and I've learned a lot, like is he going to keep the tension and develop it? No, he broke, he doesn't have that strength to develop the line. Last night at The Stone, there was a saxophone player [Tony Malaby], he has that strength to keep the line going really the way the line goes. You can't take it the way you want to take it today, it goes already so just respect it and give everything. You need a certain type of patience. So, it doesn't make me nervous to hear a busy drummer, but sometimes I think, 'No way' and sometimes I think, 'In a few years (he'll be ready).'

**Cadence: Did you meet much resistance when you transitioned from the explosive European free jazz style of the time to a more sensitive style of playing?**

Favre: A lot, when I was going with free jazz, people put me down. They were saying, "How can you do this?" But later, they were even more aggressive when I left [free jazz] because it seems every style has a certain milieu and you are not allowed to change once you are part of it. They called me all sorts of names when I started my solos at first. The public liked what I played, some critics and musicians liked it, but the scene didn't

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

Generation 8/18 with Dwyer tenor sax & piano, bassist Ben Dwyer and Hans Verhoeven drums. Other Musicfest gigs are described after the Cellar schedule. Other August Cellar gigs are Tom Wakeling-Brad Turner 3 with Turner piano, Wakeling bass and drummer Andrew Millar 8/22, followed 8/24&25 by Toronto vocalist Maureen Kennedy along with Cory Weeds on tenor, Bill Coon, bassist Adam Thomas & Andrew Millar. NYC-based Out To Lunch (David Levy, reeds/electronics, Josh Deutsch & Jamie Reynolds keyboards and Zack Lober bass) is in 8/26 and Kevin Elashuk 4tet (Elashuk trumpet/flugelhorn, Ross Taggart tenor, Andre LaChance bass and Joe Poole drums) takes the month out 8/31. Sept. starts with The Collective is back for B3 Beatdown 9/11. On 9/21&22, NYC-based saxist Ian Hendrickson-Smith visits with Hendrickson-Smith on alto, Cory Weeds tenor, Miles Black piano, Adam Thomas bass & drummer Julian MacDonough. And last but far from least, the Cellar celebrates its 12th anniversary 9/28-30 with tenor saxist Jerry Weldon, P.J. Perry alto, Chris Gestrin B3 & Rudy Petschauer drums. As mentioned above, MusicFest Vancouver, (8/10-19) will

like that. Oh, they put me down very badly but it's supposed to be like that, I guess, huh?

**Cadence: What's your dream goal on percussion? If you could make the drums do something beyond their limits, what would that be?**

Favre: I guess they would do what they already do - they change your perception of being there, they extend your horizons. I remember a concert by Billy Higgins, I was sitting a few feet away, and it was so great what he was giving us. It was so great that, I would say for ten days afterwards, I was different. I felt that when I ate, I ate, and when I moved, I moved, when I played, I played, and I played so much better because I deeply personalized myself. I went, probably, into his personality in my playing for a while. I guess a little bit is left but this is a lot when a drummer can achieve something like that. I also heard Sid Catlett on YouTube do a two bar solo and he did something so simple but I had to cry because he was touching something inside me like, I don't know, like a friend. He played with such authority, in a way that I don't often hear today from our drummers, they are too busy.

**Cadence: You're a self-taught drummer, I think it's impressive that you turned professional after only two years of practice.**

Favre: Oh, yes, you see I was a kid and I was so fascinated by the drums once I started on them. I didn't want to play them at first but my brother said, "You play!" because I had to play in his band. I didn't want to play, I wanted to be a farmer, but today I say thank you because immediately, once I started, I was playing all day. I had no teacher but I was playing all day, listening to the radio. I had one record and I played one side after the other and I did it all by listening. I was kind of innocent but I could play with any band and I could play the right thing. Also, I could remember very well, any kind of arrangement just from listening to the music. That's probably the reason I play the way I do, I didn't learn by patterns, I learned by melody.

**Cadence: Certainly your playing and composing don't seem bound by many rules. Would you talk more about this freedom?**

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

use the Cellar as a venues for some of its Jazz performances. Other MusicFest Jazz concerts include Harpa Bossa Jazz 8/13 @ Christ Church Cathedral with harpist Cristina Braga and percussionist Sal Ferreras, La Bottine Souriante 8/14 @ The Vogue, and the New York Voices 8/19 @ VanDusen Botanical Garden... O'Doul's closed for renovations at the end of May with its after-reno music policy (if any) unknown at this point. The restaurant featured local and visiting Jazz players most nights for many years. It also served as the venue for after-hours jams during the Jazz fest. Tenor player Mike Allen, also leader of the festival jams, led his quartet in the venue's last gig...Visitors to the Cellar include pianist Hal Galper and his trio (bassist Jeff Johnson and drummer John Bishop) played a set of standard and originals. As usual, Galper's take on standards tends to be a bit abstract at times. Embraceable You's melody didn't manifest itself until near the end of the tune. Other standards included Conception, Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry, Take The Coltrane and Alice In Wonderland, which was played in an up-tempo, 4/4 instead of as a slow waltz a la Bill Evans.

Favre: It's because I didn't go to school. When I say that my teachers were the great black drummers, it's really because they probably didn't go to school. I did study with an old musician, he was a student of Anton Webern. He was from the Viennese classical school and a very special man. I studied with him but I wasn't used to study with anyone, I had done everything by myself up to that point. I had to taste first what I liked. I think also with composing that if you go to school, you are going to make some exercises and you are going to compose like these exercises, so I don't do that.

**Cadence: Would you talk about how you form your drum solos?**

Favre: Yes, I've always loved to play with them because every new phrase, even if you repeat it, is a development, a becoming of something. So when I do a solo, I start with something and on the way, some commentaries come. I do this and out of this, I do that, and I never force something into it. I never think that I have to play that pattern now. No, no, it comes naturally.

**Cadence: Do you have a game plan ahead of time or are your solos all improvised?**

Favre: I improvise. You see, there were times I played, oh, so many solos, and I tried to write pieces and to play them to the public but, no way, they were not interesting because the drums, to me, allow for a conversation with the public. You can't do that ahead of time, it has to be immediate contact. It is more interesting and it's more rich when you improvise because you play what is coming now and you develop that. People say I have a good source for the form, this I don't know but I guess it's due to not forcing things into it. It's in letting them come in and come out, so you go higher this way.

**Cadence: What's your approach to composition and what does composition mean to you?**

Favre: Composition to me is mainly a kind of not hiding myself behind a mask and saying that I am not just a drummer improviser. The first time I tried to write was difficult. I said OK, you take that mask down now and you say what you have to say and you want this to be played with your friends and if it's wrong, OK, you'll

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

His originals included Sonar which was based on Solar. The following Tuesday Ted Nash's 4tet played some of the most amazing, original Jazz I have heard in ages. The 4tet (with Nash on alto, trumpeter Ron Horton, Paul Sikivie bass and drummer Ulysses Owens) is modeled on Ornette Coleman's original piano-less 4tet and has the same free but swinging sound. Most of the tunes were originals by Nash, from his latest CD, "The Creep", which is based on a play featuring a plastic alto-playing superhero. This was the first time hearing Ron Horton and I thought why don't I know this guy? He has endless chops and superb melodic flair. Sikivie is a marvelous bass-player from Julliard filled the Charlie Haden role, while Owens is the most amazing drummer I've seen with a seemingly totally different approach to rhythmic expression. I highly recommend hearing this group live given the chance or failing that, picking up Nash's CD. Returning to the Cellar for a 1-nighter is former local trumpeter/vocalist Bria Skonberg who now lives in NYC and plays with Nicholas Payton's big band and studied with Warren Vache. Bria comes from a trad background which is reflected in much

accept that it was wrong but say it. It was an act of courage then. You see, now it has become more like a habit. Now I am used to it, I'm not so emotional about it anymore but it meant coming out of the ghetto of the drummers. [People think] there are the musicians and then there is the drummer, no, I wanted to be a musician, that's why I compose. The other thing is that by composing, I have to really go deep into myself to know what do I like. That is the main question you can ask yourself. When you play, is it something you like or you don't like it and if you don't like it, it's a lot of work. That's how I became a better improviser because I had more material, more things to play with.

**Cadence: You were an early explorer of world rhythms and percussion from countries such as India, Africa and Brazil. Why did you take that direction?**

Favre: Because at that time, this was the end of the era of Miles and Coltrane and all that, but to me, I had the feeling that the hand of the father was not there anymore. Like where is jazz going now? This was the end of the '60s, things were not so straight anymore and I was looking for something I could believe in so strong so I started to listen to African musicians and Indian music, because I needed these roots. That's why I was interested in that and, of course, I went to also listen to Japan and all the other's music to get the inspiration. That's what happened.

**Cadence: Please talk about your unusual drum set, it's full of gongs and other interesting instruments.**

Favre: I use different ones but mainly, today, I use one for solos and I have more sound material like different cymbals. My instrument is a jazz instrument, the only difference is I use two different bass drums, one high, one low. I realized, OK, this is fine with the hi-hat, I still play the hi-hat sometimes, it's fine, but if I have that big bass drum on my left foot, I have an incredible reserve of sound because it goes very far down in the sound so it keeps the bottom to the sound and also it makes me play around the town with like four different hands or legs and it's kind of a realization of your dancing. You play up, you mix it, and then you can play

## SHORT TAKES

Vancouver, BC

of her playing and choice of tunes. Along with Bria were pianist Solomon Douglas, bassist Sean Cronin, Bernie Arai drums and Jack Duncan percussion. Tunes included oldies like *Them There Eyes* and *Let Yourself Go* (which had a touch of the Beatles' *Come Together*) and well as wonderful version of Satie's *Gynopedie*. Compared with her gig last summer, Bria is singing more and developing an engaging on-stage personality. Her star continues to ascend...For local jazz info and links, go to [www.vancouverjazz.com](http://www.vancouverjazz.com) or call (604) 872-5200. For Cellar information, visit [www.cellarjazz.com](http://www.cellarjazz.com).

like, I wouldn't say like a piano player with two hands, but it's like a dance and the hi-hat makes it a little bit too mechanical. If you have the rhythm here inside you, you don't need it.

**Cadence:** You worked for Paiste & Sohn [the drum and cymbal company], for a number of years. What were your duties for them?

Favre: the first thing was the testing of cymbals to make sure they were OK to be sold and if they were not OK to be sold then I was playing them. I make a joke about this but it was true. Every cymbal in the Paiste line had to be inspected and, as you can imagine, they were not so uniform back then. Those that didn't fit could not be sold. I choose mine from the one's that didn't fit in because they had all kinds of character, they were unusual. This way I could choose a cymbal set that was more personal. It's the same thing with human beings, not everyone fits in "the line." It's like the best students in music schools don't very often become the best and most creative musicians. When I was teaching in universities in Stuttgart, Germany, and Lucerne, Switzerland, the other teachers shook their heads because among the students I always chose, they were not the ones who sounded perfect and polished but they were the ones who I felt had a potential to develop. They were usually unsure of themselves but they became the best. The other duty I had at Paiste was to create an office called The Drummer's Service. I started to make contact with all the drummers in the whole world. I also doing clinics all over the world, it was two months in the States, and two months in England and all over. We had Joe Morello, we were together in the clinic in England many times. I was also working on the development of sound because Paiste was always interested in developing sound – better cymbals and so on. We had workshops where we talked about what the musicians were hearing and what they were doing. This was mainly my job.

**Cadence:** Working at Paiste you had the opportunity to explore a lot of equipment. How did working there change your approach to music and sound?

Favre: Yes, it happened in quite an organic way

## OBITUARIES

**Maurice André,**

*trumpeter, born on May 21, 1933; died on February 25, 2012. He was 78.*

**Graeme Bell,** *pianist,*

*bandleader and composer, died in Sydney, Australia, on June 13, 2012. He was 97.*

**Chuck Brown,** *guitarist*

*and singer who is affectionately called "the Godfather of Go-go," born on August 22, 1936, died in Baltimore, MD, on May 16, 2012. He was 75.*

**Michael "Iron Man"**

**Burks,** *bluesman, died on May 6, 2012, after collapsing at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. He was 54.*

**Teddy Charles,** *vibes,*

*piano, drums, died on April 16th, 2012. He was 84.*

**Joseph E. (Chev)**

**Ciavardone Sr.,** *trombonist, died on March 26, 2012 in Staten Island. He was 83.*

because I used to play with two cymbals normally and a hi-hat, that's it. At Paiste I found that three cymbals together was very good because three makes a melody and they taught with four, and then it was four with a gong. So all that changed the music because if you changed a cymbal, you changed the whole harmony of the band. That's the way it developed and then what happened also was the musicians were not so fond of these sounds, they wanted me to hit the drums because, I think in their minds, you hit the drums. They were drummers and drummers hit the drums. So what I thought was, OK, I will develop solos and boom, I was on stage doing solos. That's the way it happens, you don't mean to do that but it happens to you because this is the only way.

**Cadence:** I know that Irene Schweizer was your secretary at Paiste. How was she as a secretary?

Favre: Terrible! [Laughs] Smoking all the time and saying, "I don't feel like it."

**Cadence:** Yeah, but you had to keep her.

Favre: It was OK because we started playing and then we played every day. We played a lot and then we went on tour. We organized these clinics and we had another young man who helped in the office because Irene and I played so much, you see? These days are over, in those days it was possible. Then I was giving the clinics and therefore I had the hotel paid by Paiste, the bus was paid by Paiste, all the traveling expenses were paid by Paiste, of course, because of the clinics. That's how we could travel all through Europe and play because with that kind of music we didn't earn anything but we could travel and play.

**Cadence:** Irene Schweizer has been your longest collaborator, going back to 1967 or so. What makes the two of you such great musical partners? What does she bring out in your playing that's so special?

Favre: It's something mysterious in a way, I don't know what it is. We are born on the same day but four years apart. We are Gemini's, I don't know if that works, perhaps it does, but from the first minute we played, it was together and all the things I tried to play for myself in secret, I could play with her, and that was



## OBITUARIES

**Pete Cosey (born Peter Palus Cosey)**, a Chicago session guitarist mostly known for his work with Miles Davis, died in Chicago, IL on May 30, 2012. He was 68.

**Michael Davis**, bassist for Detroit group MC5 born on June 5, 1943; died on February 17, 2012. He was 68.

**Jerry Dorn**, trombonist with the bands of Georgie Auld, Henry Jerome, Johnny Long, and Woody Herman's Third Herd, died in Philadelphia on May 22, 2012. He was 90.

**Donald "Duck" Dunn**, bassist, died in Tokyo, Japan on May 13, 2012. Truly one of the most influential bassists of our time, having played with Otis Redding, Booker T and the MG's, Isaac Hayes, most of the Stax/Volt artists of the 60's. He was 70.

**Eddie Fritz**, piano, died on February 27, 2012 in St. Louis, MO. He was 69.

**Jef Gilson**, the French pianist, died on February 5, 2012. He was 85.

it. The best concerts are always like that, that's what people don't understand. Sometimes the listeners ask how did they rehearse this but it's not rehearsed, it just happens. She's a very rhythmical player, I guess this is another reason we work well together.

**Cadence:** You made many great records for ECM Records through the years but 1984's recording Singing Drums was special because it was your first time composing for a percussion ensemble and because of the personnel – Paul Motian, Nana Vasconcelos, Fredy Studer and yourself. How did this unlikely combination come together?

Favre: Ahh, it was like a dream. With Fredy, we were playing duos and then we had the idea it would be nice to enlarge the group so Fredy asked Paul and I asked Nana and then I went to compose for a few months. It was supposed to be composed but how? I thought about how am I to compose for these people? So I composed the music and I put it on cassettes and in three days we rehearsed the whole program. Not everybody could read it so I had to sing it for them but it was like a dream because everybody liked the music. I was telling them stories—you play the baritone cymbals and you play the tenor cymbals and we were like singers. The results were really fantastic and after these three days we had a concert and we recorded the concert. It was made fast.

**Cadence:** Would you talk about your latest projects?

Favre: What comes next now is a reissue of my three first solo albums in a box set. Besides that I have a new group of four drummers. I don't know if you've watched any videos of my eight drummer groups? The eight drummer groups were fine, they were good, but sometimes we could have been phrasing better and with more precision, but now with these three people, it is fantastic. They come to my house and we rehearse, and I write the music and, oohh, they love it. So I look for something more soaring. I guess we will record after one year, not before because we have to make it very natural. My last record is The Voyage, it's a ten-piece band and we are going to play the Berlin Festival this

## OBITUARIES

**Rodgers Grant**, pianist, wrote '63 jazz hit *BLADE STAFF*, died in Defiance, OH, on April 12, 2012. He was 76.

**Andy Hamilton**, saxophonist, born in Port Maria, Jamaica, died on June 12, 2012. He was 94.

**Levon Helm (Mark Lavon Helm)**, musician, born on May 26, 1940; died on April 19, 2012. He was 71.

**Margie Hyams**, vibraphonist who played with bandleaders Woody Herman and George Shearing as well as with her own jazz trio in the 1940s, died in Monrovia, CA on June 14, 2012. She was 91.

**Sonny Igoe**, drummer with Woody Herman, Benny Goodman and others, and father of drummer Tommy Igoe; died on March 28, 2012. He was 88.

**Harold Baron "Hal" Jackson**, disc jockey and radio personality who broke a number of color

year. I also do the solo concerts. I love to do solos because it's like my special Formula 1 studio. That's where things happen, the ideas happen.

**Cadence:** You mentioned your Drummer 8 ensembles of which I did view a number of YouTube videos. It's impressive that there's such tight interaction and the power that's generated is very exciting. How does it feel to sit in the middle of all that percussion?

Favre: Yes, but I'm more of an orchestral director/conductor because I am there to not be satisfied all the time but when it really works, it was impressive. The group had great power but the things were not easy to play. Two voices going back and forth but it was good, it was like a kind of a drummer's zoo and with all different people. It was quite nice.

**Cadence:** Patrik Landolt, the head of Intakt Records, told me that you were the top teacher in Switzerland and that nearly every significant drummer in the country was taught by you. How did you come to teach?

Favre: This is a good question because I didn't look for teaching. I remember I was in Basel, a long time ago, and one guy came and said, "Why don't you show me what you do?" I said, 'I don't know,' and he said, "Show me what you do." So I did and that was my first lesson. I always repeat that I am not a teacher. I am still not a teacher, I am somebody on his way and if you want to have a look, come with me, I'll open the door, come with me and we'll walk. If you have the feeling that you are a teacher and you show them what to do, to me, it's not really right because with my best students, I let them do what they do but I suggest it. You see, one was ready for an examination and he had some form of melodies to play on the drums so I said, "Oh, it's better if you start the other way, through the hi-hat because melodically it makes more sense. He worked for months until he could do it. I guess that's good teaching and from a technical standpoint, it was incredibly difficult. So provoke, you see?

**Cadence:** Do you have any philosophies regarding life that you try to live by?

Favre: Music, I believe in life and in music.

## OBITUARIES

*barriers in American radio broadcasting, born on November 3, 1914, died in New York, NY on May 23, 2012. He was 96.*

**Virgil Jones**, *trumpeter, born on August 26, 1939 in Indianapolis, Indiana, died on April 20, 2012, in New York, NY. He was 72.*

**Jackie Kelso**, *saxophonist, died on April 28, 2012 in Beverly Hills, CA. He was 90.*

**Mort Lindsey**, *orchestra leader and composer, worked for Merv Griffin and Judy Garland died on May 4 in Malibu, CA. He was 89.*

**Andrew Maurice Love**, *saxophonist with the Memphis Horns. born on November 21, 1941; died on April 12, 2012. He was 70.*

**Walter Muhammad Malli**, *saxophonist, drummer, born in Graz, Austria, July 13, 1940, died in Vienna, Austria, May 25, 2012. He was 71.*

Everything is in the music and I don't need to make special declaration. Music is music, it is what it is, and to me, it is the top. Also, it is the perfect parallel to your life, your musical development is your life development. It's been said that music is the most demanding mistress you can ever have because the music sometimes is no good. Sometimes she says "Ok, you can play" and other times you work and work and nothing happens. So this is life, that's the philosophy.

**Cadence: During your early years, you had the opportunity to play with a number of traveling American musicians. I loved the YouTube video of you backing up Louis Armstrong. What do you remember about that day?**

Favre: All the things I remember are normally very small things but I remember that Louis was just next to me and I felt suddenly his strong sense of time. He had time down in the earth, it was very far down in the earth and you could not move, you had to go with it. It was a very strong impression. I liked it because you had to give up. You see, if you had Billy Higgins playing with Armstrong I don't know if it would fit because they're from different times, Louis came from New Orleans so it's different. So I had to give up and go with Louis, he was the lead, he was a leader. Also, afterwards he sat with the musicians and it was great, we were like kids, it was so nice.

**Cadence: You also had the experience of playing with his wife, Lil' Hardin Armstrong.**

Favre: Yes, but I was very young and I was playing in the area where I was born, in the mountains of Switzerland. There was a town there that had so much jazz happening every week and I played there in bands and that's where I had the chance to accompany her. She was more like a showgirl, she was not deep into the music. She was happy to be there and smiling and I tried to keep her back from rushing because she was so happy. She was a very nice woman.

**Cadence: Maybe she was trying to speed you up?**

Favre: [Laughs] That is possible!

**Cadence: Let's talk about some of the prominent people you've worked with in the past starting with**

## OBITUARIES

**Anthony Vincent Stewart Marsh,**

*percussionist, born on August 19, 1939, died on April 9, 2012. He was 72.*

**Jerry “Boogie” McCain,**

*gained international acclaim as a prolific singer/songwriter and blues harmonica player, died on March 28, 2012. He was 81.*

**Hal McKusick**

*saxaphonist, died on April 10. He was 87.*

**George Mesterhazy,**

*pianist, died on April 11, 2012. He was 55.*

**Joe Muranyi,**

*clarinetist, died on April 20, 2012. The last clarinetist in Louis Armstrong’s celebrated All-Stars group. He was 84.*

**Francis David Parr,**

*trombonist: born on June 1, 1928; died in London on May 8, 2012. He was 83.*

**Louisiana Red (Iverson Minter),**

*blues musician, born on March 23, 1932, died on February 25, 2012. He was 79.*

one of my favorites, Mal Waldron. You recorded *Black Glory* with him. The last time I saw him was at the Blue Note club in New York City. He was trying to give the young lady at the souvenir stand, who he obviously knew, a hundred dollar bill to buy him some sushi but she kept pushing it back, saying it was too much money. What do you recall about Mal Waldron?

Favre: Yeah, Mal was making jokes all the time, very intelligent jokes that got exactly to the point. He was a very, very good chess player and he also performed, in a way, like that. His combinations, he didn’t think about, they were just there, he was just moved to do it musically, like a chess player. He loved to laugh and he was a real philosophe. He could also be like a kid, telling things and he enjoyed life and playing. In his youth he had some very hard times he told me, very hard times, but later on he was very happy. He worked a lot in Europe and Japan where everybody loved him.

**Cadence: What unforgettable encounter did you have with Papa Jo Jones?**

Favre: I’ll never forget that. I had a drum clinic at the American Hotel in New York and many drummers were there and Papa Jo Jones was there and I was playing that free business. Everyone later went to the buffet, of course, and Jo Jones came over and said to me, “Son, come here.” He sat at my drum set with two brushes and he was just stretching the drums, not hitting, just smiling. It was like some fresh air came into the room, you know? This is all he did for a few seconds, just stretching the instrument and then he said, “You dig it son? OK, let’s go have a drink.” It was a short lesson but it was a lesson for life in a few minutes.

**Cadence: So that encounter changed how you played?**

Favre: No, it was confirming what I was looking for, otherwise it would not have worked. If somebody puts his finger exactly on what you are looking for, boom, then you have it. He was a wise man, the drums were his world. I know he was not always gentle with young drummers, he was very hard on them if he didn’t feel they were really concerned about it so his interest in me was a real complement.

Cadence: You also had an experience with Philly

## OBITUARIES

**Pete Saberton**, *pianist, died on April 22, 2012. He was 61.*

**Earl Scruggs**, *master of the 5 string banjo, died on March 28, 2012 in Nashville, TN. He was 88.*

**Khahil Shaheed**, *trumpeter and jazz educator, died on March 23, 2012, in Oakland, CA. He was 63.*

**Carrie Smith**, *blues singer, died in Edgewood, NJ, on May 20, 2012. She was 86.*

**Abram Wilson**, *trumpeter died on June 9, 2012. He was 38.*

**Don Wilson**, *trumpet and piano, noted jazz musician and retired Philadelphia police officer died in Philadelphia, PA on May 17, 2012. He was 76.*

**James Van Buren**, *jazz and blues vocalist, died on June 4, 2012. He was 77.*

Joe Jones.

Favre: Yes, we played together and it was nice. The first time he came to hear me in Paris he said, "I don't know what the hell you play but it sounds good." Later on, we played with Daniel Humair, Philly Joe, and myself and it was great to play with him because you can feel much more when you play with someone about how he does it and I could feel his sound. It wasn't loud but it was big, a big sound and it didn't hit my ear once. You know, some rimshots can break your ears, some drummers, but he was perfect. He was also a melodist.

**Cadence: What was your experience with Reggie Workman?**

Favre: It was something so special because I played in a quartet with Reggie, Freddie Hubbard, and Jaki Byard and it was quite impressive. It was around the time I played with Louis Armstrong. Reggie, while playing a tune, came to me and put his arm against mine. So he played and I played and I felt automatically secure. To me, this is the jazz world, it's brotherhood, we support each other. We played again together many years later in a trio with Irene Schweizer and I asked him if he remembered doing that and he said, "Did I do that?" Sometimes it's just a little gesture that you never forget and it makes you improve.

**Cadence: How about Jimmy Giuffre?**

Favre: I had a very nice experience with him because he was telling us all about the jazz history, he knew a lot. We were playing in France in front of a big audience at a big festival and we played a ballad and he stepped to me and said, "Solo." And I played a solo in the same way, slow, and in the end it was as if I had played the most powerful drums, he said, "Yeah!" and he went back to playing. [Laughs]

**Cadence: How about Buddy Rich?**

Favre: I don't know if it's important to say? I was in Hollywood doing a clinic there and all the people there said I had to come see Buddy Rich. So somebody took me to see him playing with his band and I saw all these other drummers sitting there and they were jumping off their chairs when he played some usual thing like a roll, but from what I saw, he was overestimated and under-

## SHORT TAKES

## The Netherlands

North Sea Jazz Festival

With up to 70,000 visitors, North Sea Jazz is the biggest indoor jazz festival in the world. This year, the organisation expects more than a thousand musicians, spread out over 150 performances and thirteen different stages.

As always, there will be many living legends, like Jim Hall, McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter, and Archie Shepp, just to name a few. Over the years we see more and more tribute bands: Kenneth Garrett and Wallace Roney play Miles Smiles, and Joe Lovano and Dave Douglas pay tribute to Wayne Shorter. Joshua Redman is this year's artist in residence. We can expect remarkable collaborations from John Scofield and Kurt Rosenwinkel, who share their love of the guitar, and tenorist David Murray, who shares the stage with soul diva Macy Gray.

Below are some highlights of the festival.

Trumpet and Drums: Evans, Wooley, Black, Lytton  
Peter Evans tpt, Nate

estimated because he was much more of a musician than we think of him. He was doing things that were so musical. That's what impressed me. At the break, I went to see Don Menza, the tenor sax player who was playing with Buddy's band. Menza said, "Great, you are here, let me introduce you to Buddy!" I said, 'No, no.' He said, "What? You don't want to meet Buddy?" I said, 'No, I'm not interested.' I didn't want to meet him like a fan, that's what he always got from people. So Menza called over the rest of the band, "Guys, look at this guy, he's a drummer and he doesn't want to meet Buddy!" They all came and said, "What? Who's that?" [Laughs] You know what really impressed me with Buddy was that he came on stage just after that with just one stick in one hand and a key in the other and he tuned his drum. It was a drum symphony what he did tuning up there. That was fantastic, better than the whole concert. That sound that he had and the phrases that he played when he was just tuning were very impressive and also the things that he did behind the soloist and behind the band were so musical and so fast. These things I tell you are things that I learned on stage, just looking at things and seeing. 'Oh, how does he do it? Ahh, that's how,' and then I could do it too.

**Cadence: Stealing.**

Favre: Yeah, stealing, exactly.

**Cadence: How about Joe Morello?**

Favre: He just died, it's a shame. We were touring in England doing these clinics and Joe was such a character. It's not such a nice story so I hesitate to tell it but he was putting me down a lot, like, "Pierre is going to play first," because it was a two-part clinic. So I said, 'Ok, I will play first,' and then he said, "No, Pierre is going to play second." So I said, 'OK, I will play second,' I didn't care, you put me where you want me to play and I play. But he was putting me down in front of the audience and we were in a music shop and he said, "You play this free thing, show me what you do." So I played and in the evening he put me down by saying, "I'm going to play like Pierre," and he hit (funny) on the drums. By the way, he came back to America and he had a new album, Another Step Forward, and in its introduction, it's Pierre Favre. He did the same thing that I was doing! [Laughs] You know, we didn't



## SHORT TAKES

## The Netherlands

Wooley tpt; Jim Black d,  
Paul Lytton d.

All four members of  
Trumpet and Drums enjoy  
experimenting equally as  
much, and like to push the  
limits of their instruments.  
Oguz Büyükberber with  
Simon Nabatov, Wolter  
Wierbos & Tobias Klein

Oguz Büyükberber cl,  
Tobias Klein cl, Wolter  
Wierbos tbn, Simon  
Nabatov p.

Büyükberber mixes jazz  
with modern and Turkish  
music, live electronics and  
visuals. For this occasion  
he has invited three great  
European improvisers.

Kinan Azmeh, Dinuk  
Wijeratne, Eric Vloeimans  
Kinan Azmeh cl, Eric  
Vloeimans tpt, Dinuk  
Wijeratne p.

Syrian clarinetist Kinan  
Azmeh and Sri Lankan born  
pianist Dinuk Wijeratne  
both studied Western  
classical music, but have  
transgressed the boundar-  
ies of that musical frame-  
work long time ago. On  
this occasion they will be  
joined by the Dutch lyrical  
trumpeter Eric Vloeimans.  
Michiel Braam hybrid 10tet  
Modern Creative  
Magnus Broo tpt, Nils

leave each other on good terms but a year ago I called him and he said, "Oh, Pierre, how are you?" He was so nice and so friendly and he said, "Pierre, I always thought you were a good drummer, come visit me," but he passed away.

**Cadence: How about Wild Bill Davidson?**

Favre: Oh, this was a long time ago, in the '50s. I have had a lot of fathers in the music, I didn't study or go to school, I just played, but all the musicians pro-  
tected me and they always gave me some presents and Wild Bill was like that. He was a fantastic player and in the playing he took care of me, I could feel him giving me the chance to play and it was a great joy to play with him.

**Cadence: The last questions are from other notable musicians. Han Bennink asks "Do you remember being on Lou van Burg's TV show years ago with the Max Greger Band along with Louis Armstrong and that at one point Armstrong and van Burg fell down on the floor on their backs? That was one of the best musical moments for me."**

Favre: No, Louis was trying to sit and he missed the chair and he fell on the floor with the trumpet in his hand. This is Han Bennink going for a joke. I can imagine that he loved that, he loved Louis Armstrong falling down. You know the Dutch scene, they make jokes all the time.

**Cadence: Oh, so he set me up with that question?**

Favre: Yeah.

**Cadence: Gunter Baby Sommer said, "Say hello to him and tell him I admire how he made his way from a drummer who was focused on playing time and noises many years ago to a musician who plays the drums like a piano, a melody player or singer... Yes, he is not a drummer, he is a great musician and open-minded composer. Ask him about the moment he started to become a composer, when it was, and what was the point of inspiration to do it?"**

Favre: He said that? Incredible, this is incredible, yeah, he never told me that. When I started, I was playing with John Tchicai, we had a very good group with bassist Peter Warren and a piano player from Denmark, and it was called The Naked Hamlet Music Ensemble because we played in a Hamlet theater. We

## SHORT TAKES

## The Netherlands

Wogram tbn Carl-Ludwig Hübsch tba, Maria-Paula Majoor vln, Daniel Torrico Menacho vln, Karsten Kleijer vla, Arno van der Vuurst cel, Michiel Braam p, Pieter Douma b, Dirk Peter Kölsch d.

Michiel Braam's new group has an adventurous line-up that is made up of musicians from around the globe, combining the Matangi String Quartet with three brass players. Braam's compositions always leave room for improvisation and individual voices.

Check the website for the complete line-up: [www.northseajazz.com](http://www.northseajazz.com)

6, 7, 8 July, Ahoy, Rotterdam

Summer Jazz Cycle Tour

On the last Saturday of August the 26th edition of this musical cycling adventure will take place. In the beautiful scenery of the Reitdiep valley, with concerts in old churches and barns, new ways of jazz can be explored, along five cycling routes.

With, amongst others: Håkon Kornstad/Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Jorrit Dijkstra/Pandelis Karayorgis, Atomic,

never recorded but it was a very good band. This is so funny because one day, John came to me and said, "Pierre, do a second voice for this thing here." This was a step out from playing the drums so perhaps he provoked me. I did it and we played it. Secretly I was writing pieces but I never dared to bring them on stage. I had complex feelings about being a drummer but not a musician because being a musician was my highest dream but I didn't dare pronounce it. So it started with John Tchicai and later on I started to take things out like that for groups. I tried four or five groups and nothing ever happened and suddenly, snap, it happened. One band was there and it worked and we did it.

**Cadence:** Trevor Watts said it was hard to come up with a question because it was so long ago. He remembers the lakes, snow and mountains. He also recalled playing with a French bass player named Beb Guerin who never forgave the British for defeating Napoleon at Waterloo.

Favre: [Laughs] That was a very good band. You see, this is the whole thing between France and England, they never forgot that they both lost the war in a way.

**Cadence:** Andrew Cyrille said "Ask when and where was the first time we met. Because of whom did we meet and why?"

Favre: It was at that drum clinic in New York where I had the experience with Papa Jo Jones. Andrew took me around. He took me to his home, his wife had been cooking some turkey, and then he took me to a club in Harlem where we heard a young guitarist who was very talented, he played fantastic. His name was George Benson. I remember that I was the only white person there and in those days, it wasn't so good, and some people came to look at me and probably, I had the look of the innocent because nothing happened.

**Cadence:** Andrew Cyrille also said to ask, "When and where was the last time we were in each other's company?"

Favre: It was in Switzerland in the mountains at the border of Italy. We were at a festival there.

**Cadence:** I asked him if this was to be a test of Pierre's memory.

Favre: It sounds like it is.

## SHORT TAKES

The Netherlands

Arkady Shikloper/Jon Sass, Paul van Kemenade/Stevko Busch, Electric Barbarian, De Beren Gieren, Das Kapital, Sean Bergin New Mob, Talking Cows, Spinifex Quintet, Kapok, Dutch Impro Academy, Corrie en de Grote Brokken. The complete line-up will be available on their website soon: [www.zjft.nl](http://www.zjft.nl)

Jappe Groenendijk

**Cadence:** Milford Graves recalled you traveling to his old home in Brooklyn in the '60s to interview him about new gong designs for Paiste. He wanted you to know that he still uses the large gong you gave him. So the question is why you did seek him out and what other drummers did you consult with?

Favre: No, we were sitting in a restaurant and we talked. He was telling me about his herbs and the flow of energy and that when he plays, his arms get so big from the energy. I asked him what I could do for him and he said, "Send me a gong!" So I sent him a gong. I could do that at Paiste, I was the boss so I could give sets away. It's not like today. I wasn't looking for information from him, I admired him and I wanted to know him. I'm happy to hear he still uses the gong.

**Cadence:** Paal Nilssen-Love wants to know what you think about today's young drummers and if there is something you miss in their playing or thinking.

Favre: This is a very difficult question because they are very young. Some I would say, the way they look for the line of the melody in their life, the development, where do they want to go with this is made very difficult through the business because it is difficult in this world to say I do it for the music because the reality is so strong and life is hard. You have to come and do it. I had the chance to do it my way, like I compose. Let things come when they come, you work and things come and it is the way it should be, it's an organic thing. But for the young players now, with the kind of future that we have, it's difficult. That's why it is so difficult to answer such a question. I find drummers too busy, usually it's too busy and no time to be "there." I have a fantastic little story. Somebody gave me a Zarb [an Iranian goblet drum] and told me to take a course in Basel on how to play it. So I took the course and after the workshop, the master was playing with an old singer and in the middle of the concert, the singer grabbed a drum and gave one stroke and I was sitting in the middle of the world. Do you know what I mean? There are things that put you in the perfect place, it takes perfect timing. I remember seeing a DVD of the Buddy Rich memorial service with Steve Gadd, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Dave Weckl. They first each played with the band. Colaiuta played with the band and the band

sounded like that [holds nose to make a nasal sound]. Weckl played with the band and the band sounded like that [again holds nose]. And then Steve Gadd played with the band and the band sounded [makes large roaring sound]. He was doing almost nothing. They then played little solos and a lot of things happened there. Steve Gadd came and always he brought it back right on track with simple things. That's what I mean, that's what I miss. Too busy, that's what I would say about the young drummers, and that's what was so important about Jo Jones' lesson— to play the essential but go down. This is an incredible strength.

**Cadence:** Kahil El'Zabar asks, "Everything in the universe vibrates, everything vibrates at a different pulse. How do you interpret the telepathic rhythms and how do you feel connected to them?"

Favre: This is a very good question. Sometimes through the free jazz, I could sometimes feel certain things because I came out of the path of this and I discovered my breath. I could breathe. I found you didn't have to hurry, and this is one point where I felt that. Another thing was this so-called playing whatever came, playing free. Yes, free, but it was not, it was a pulse and I felt that it was not soldier's work anymore, in a way, but it was completely organic. Another realization was that I started to make rhythm lessons for my students, and at certain points I had a center and everything around me was moving completely related to each other but free, it was a dance. I think also that you have to believe. Some people believe in Communism, my mother believed in God, I believe in music. We believe about the same thing, we just call it different. If you can believe, you can start taking some strength in your life and in your playing. It gives you confidence and everything is OK.

**Cadence:** Gerry Hemingway asks "What, as an improviser, is your ear drawn to while interacting with others? Phrasing? Pitch? Color? Rhythm? Space? Or do you ever consciously not listen to the other player to facilitate an independent relationship in the content of the music?"

Favre: I think I listen but I don't know what is more, that I listen or that it listens because sometimes I am

# Interview

not consciously listening but I react, whap!, to it. But more and more, I see that I listen, but listening in a way of not analyzing it, I go with it. You jump in the water, if it's cold or not, and you go with the stream and where you go, you find yourself. It's the same when I play, sometimes it doesn't work, I don't know why, but when it works, I do things that later people ask me how I did it and I say, 'I don't know how,' it's just reaction. Actually, it is just listening, just listen and the ear does it. Phrasing for me is very important because it still happens that I play with musicians where if it's off, I have to stop, I can't play. The phrasing is what gives you the strength. Space is also important, the drummer is there to make you feel the space and when you feel space, it opens everything up and it can make the audience also feel the fantasy. That's what space does, it calls you to dance.

**Cadence:** The last question is from Vladimir Tarasov who played with the Ganelin Trio. You two share similar interests in sound production and solo performances. He said, "I don't have a question for Pierre but I would appreciate if you tell him that I listened to his music since 1967 when he came to the Tallinn Jazz Festival (in Estonia). I and all my colleagues know and appreciate how he changed percussion sound and how he influenced all of Europe's drumming schools. His CD "Portrait," was a great example for percussion sensitivity and freedom! Thank you!"

Favre: Whew! Thank you.

**Cadence:** Any final comments?

Favre: Students and listeners often ask me how I did a certain thing when playing but it comes from some other place, a place that is somewhere else, I don't know from where. When you have these inspired moments, you can try to analyze where they came from but it's impossible. You don't know where it comes from, it's magic. Music is the best thing, it is complete.

Ken Weiss