



SYLVIE COURVOISIER MARK FELDMAN

LIVE AT THÉÂTRE VIDY-LAUSANNE

Sylvie Courvoisier Piano

Mark Feldman Violin

Recorded live by Walter Quintus at the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne, November 27- 30, 2012.
Mixed by Marc Urselli. Mastered by Scott Hull. Liner notes: Bert Noglik, Cover art: Amy Silman, Graphic design: Jonas Schoder, Photo: Roberto Cifarelli. Produced by Mark Feldman and Patrik Landolt, Intakt Records.

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Since their move to Brooklyn, New York, in 1998, Sylvie Courvoisier has been at home in both worlds, Europe and America. In both her playing and her composition she shows neoclassical influences mixed with European improvised music and the experimental non-conformism of the New York downtown scene. Mark Feldman is an equally versatile musician, a composer and improviser with multiple perspectives on the world. Sylvie Courvoisier plays with Mark Feldman in the quintet Lonelyville and in the quartet which includes the bassist Thomas Morgan and the drummer Gerry Hemingway. The duo remains the nucleus of their many diverse activities, the condensed form and also the greatest test of courage – „ the illumination of pure emotion“, writes Bert Noglik in the liner notes. "I had the impression this was a music of desire, music of the here and now, with a longing for what has passed and what will be."

Liner notes by Bert Noglik

Sylvie Courvoisier – Mark Feldman. Live at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne

Yet again, listening to powerful music, I reflected that it needed no words. But clearly liner-note culture creates environments for the music, the space for associations, reflexions, tangents, and in the best cases a means of access. It also encourages subjective statements – polemic or poetic. As the sounds of Sylvie Courvoisier and Mark Feldman filled the space I had the impression this was a music of desire, music of the here and now, with a longing for what has passed and what will be. This harmonious yet unresolved quality inspired some – admittedly exaggerated – reflections:

The return of beauty. This doesn't necessarily mean melliflence, and it accommodates tension and friction – Schönberg's 'emancipation of dissonance' – but it has been coupled with a new freedom: the rediscovery of consonance.

The rescue of classical music. The new music having released classical from the crisis of ceremonial insignificance, it is now in danger of losing itself in fresh dogmas. A strenuous game, its vigour deriving from the directness of the playing, comes to the rescue.

The reinterpretation of jazz. This is not achieved via new interpretations of standards or styles, but via an insight into the essences of jazz: individual expression, unique intonation, freedom in improvisation.

It's hard to believe that these tracks, in which much of the above is reflected, were recorded live. The atmosphere is one of intense concentration, as in a studio production. But there is also a sense of excitement which could only have been generated with an audience present: creative tension from the first note on. And at the same time they are playing on home turf: Sylvie Courvoisier is in familiar territory at the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne, designed by Max Bill. She has often performed here, sometimes in a duo or quartet with Mark Feldman, her partner in life and in music. Since their move to Brooklyn, New York, in 1998, she has been at home in both worlds, Europe and America. In both her playing and her composition she shows neoclassical influences mixed with European improvised music and the experimental non-conformism of the New York downtown scene. Mark Feldman is an equally versatile musician, a composer and improviser with multiple perspectives on the world. Sylvie Courvoisier plays with Mark Feldman in the quintet Lonelyville – which acquires its frisson partly from the use of electronics – and in the quartet which includes the bassist Thomas Morgan and the drummer Gerry Hemingway. The duo remains the nucleus of their many diverse activities, the condensed form and also the greatest test of courage. Together they have performed and recorded compositions by the great

musical provocateur John Zorn; together they have engaged in performing their own pieces, freely elaborating them, opening the way to improvisation.

The return of beauty. These duo recordings are full of singing. This is contrasted with percussive and noise-like sounds. But the sounds are not self-referential, do not lose themselves in abstraction. They are consciously personalised and reflect the emotional world of the people who have come together to play – nuanced, gently pitched, with dynamic escalations and painful, cutting tones. They narrate both little stories and major dramas. And there can scarcely be anything more radical than the illumination of pure emotion.

Rescuing classical music. History resonates throughout, from the history of violin sonatas with keyboard instruments by Bach, to classicism, romanticism and impressionism right up to Bartók, Shostakovich, Schnittke... The violin and piano, two string instruments with sounding boxes of wood, seem made for each other. Both musicians individualise the sound of their instruments with new ways of playing and special techniques, Sylvie Courvoisier also makes use of idiosyncratic and skilful preparation of the piano's strings. Both are capable of absolute virtuosity – and not just for a moment as was once the case with classical violinists, when solo cadenzas were still largely improvised. The fluidity of the playing results from compositional inspirations, from intellectual concentrates, and also at times from the momentum of the extempore, and, with great persuasiveness, allows a range of diverse forms to be created.

The reinterpretation of jazz. In the duo's playing the cerebral finds its way to the physical. Thus twenty-first century chamber music gets a kick from Charlie Parker – even if this has nothing to do with bebop.

No further words seem appropriate to me; instead, with the sense of having gone on too much of a tangent, I wish for nothing more than that everyone may find their own way to approach these sounds.

Bert Noglik

Translation: Steph Morris

SYLVIE COURVOISIER UND MARK FELDMAN BEI INTAKT RECORDS



Sylvie Courvoisier

LONELYVILLE

Sylvie Courvoisier, Mark Feldman,
Vincent Courtois, Ikue Mori,
Gerald Cleaver

Intakt CD 120

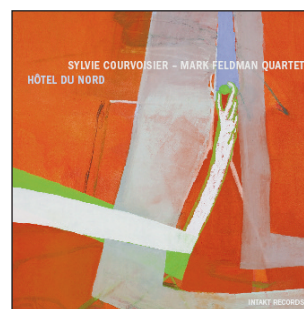


Sylvie Courvoisier Mark Feldman Quartet

TO FLY TO STEAL

Sylvie Courvoisier, Mark Feldman,
Thomas Morgan, Gerry Hemingway

Intakt CD 168



Sylvie Courvoisier Mark Feldman Quartet

HÔTEL DU NORD

Sylvie Courvoisier, Mark Feldman,
Thomas Morgan, Gerry Hemingway

Intakt CD 192



Lotte Anker - Sylvie Courvoisier - Ikue Mori

ALIEN HUDDLE

Lotte Anker: Saxophone
Sylvie Courvoisier: Piano
Ikue Mori: Electronics

Intakt CD 144



Sylvie Courvoisier - Joëlle Léandre - Susie Ibarra

PASSAGGIO

Sylvie Courvoisier: Piano / Joëlle
Léandre: Bass / Susie Ibarra: Drums

Intakt CD 075

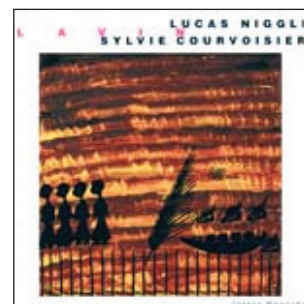


Sylvie Courvoisier Jacques Demierre

DEUX PIANOS

Sylvie Courvoisier: Piano
Jacques Demierre: Piano

Intakt CD 064



Lucas Niggli Sylvie Courvoisier

LAVIN

Sylvie Courvoisier: Piano
Lucas Niggli: Drums

Intakt CD 058