

Biographies Ensemble Polysono

Christine Simolka, soprano

Born in Lörrach, she completed an eight-year course of vocal training in Basel with Nicole Andrich and Raymond Henn. During this time she also attended numerous courses with Kurt Widmer, Andreas Scholl, Hanno Müller-Brachmann and Bobby McFerrin, as well as opera classes at the Music Academy Basel. Further studies with Marianne Schuppe and Robert Koller. Regular international concert performance. Christine Simolka's repertoire includes a wide range of musical styles. Besides Lieder of the baroque, classical and romantic periods, she is mainly specialised in contemporary music (e. g. Berio, Holliger, Henze, Rihm, Ferneyhough, Wohlhauser). In addition, she improvises in diverse styles (jazz, klezmer, blues, free improvisation). She is a member of the Lied duo „Christine Simolka, soprano, and René Wohlhauser, piano“ and of the ensemble Polysono.

Ursula Seiler Kombaratov, flute

The flutist, composer, conductor and music teacher Ursula Seiler Kombaratov grew up in Burgdorf and began to take lessons for flute at the music school of Burgdorf at the age of 11. She studied at the colleges of music in Basel and La Chaux-de-Fonds and completed her education with master classes in Switzerland as well as in England.

She gives concerts several times a year, mostly in the duo „duo verlenti“, sometimes by herself, several times as a member of the contemporary ensemble „Polysono“, and finally in diverse chamber-musical ensembles.

Together with Igor Kombaratov she founded the publishing company „verlenti“, where own compositions and art cards, as well as creations of other composers are edited, especially notes for transverse flute and clarinet.

So far, compositions of Ursula Seiler Kombaratov have been performed in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and England.

Her music resembles musical pictures, which always carries a title that mostly refers to the content, the idea or possibly to the structure of her creation.

Igor Kombaratov, clarinet

Born in Nischni Novgorod, Russia. Clarinet lessons from age 9, also at the music school for gifted children in Nischni Novgorod with Prof. Mark Rovner. Début at age 10 as soloist with the Academic Philharmonic Orchestra M. Rostropovich, Nischni Novgorod. Prize winner at various Youth Music Competitions and in the national promotion program „New Names“. He began his studies in 2000 at the Musik-Akademie Basel under Prof. François Benda and graduated in 2006 with the comprehensive grade "very good". Currently studying with Ernesto Molinari at the Hochschule der Künste in Bern, he has received scholarships from the Regio Basel, the Kiwanis Clubs Basel and the Georg Wagner Foundation. In 2002 he was awarded Second Prize at the International Clarinet Competition in Turin.

He performed in the Russian National Orchestra. Along with activities in various chamber music formations, he performs regularly in concerts with the flutist Ursula Seiler Kombaratov and the clarinetist and pianist Raof Mamedov. He is a member as well as a soloist in various ensembles, including the Youth Symphony Orchestra of the Regio Basiliensis and the Ensemble Polysono. He teaches in Germany and in Basel.

Markus Stolz, violoncello

Born 1958 in Gelterkinden (Baselland), he studied cello at the Conservatory in Basel with Reine Flachot and barock violoncello at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis with Hannelore Müller. Further training as a "Musik-Mentaltrainer" with Tatjana Orloff. At present, he combines multifaceted music-pedagogical activities with diverse concert performances. As a soloist, chamber- and orchestra musician, (e.g. Linde Consort and Ensemble Polysono), choir director, "Musik-Mentaltrainer" and bass player in the „Les Asonors,, band, he covers the whole musical spectrum. His repertoire reflects an interest in little-known works from the barock to the romantic periods and historical performance practice. Through personal contact with composers, he aims to bring the current trends in new music closer to the public. His training in Franklin movement pedagogy provided the inspiration for improvisatory experiments.

René Wohlhauser, piano, baritone, conductor

Born in 1954, he grew up in Brienz. Many years' experience as a rock- and jazz musician, improviser, Lied accompanist, founder and artistic director of the ensemble Polysono have accompanied his main profession as composer of contemporary music.

He studied at the Basle Conservatory (with Robert Suter, Jacques Wildberger and Thomas Kessler). Composition courses with Kazimierz Serocki, Mauricio Kagel, Herbert Brün and Heinz Holliger. Composition studies with Klaus Huber and Brian Ferneyhough. Further studies in piano with Stéphane Reymond. Voice studies with David Wohnlich and Robert Koller.

Many performances in Switzerland and abroad, e.g. Schauspielhaus Berlin, Nôtre-Dame-de-Paris, Tokyo, Rome, St. Petersburg, and also often at festivals such as Darmstadt, Odessa, Zürich, Sofia, Cardiff.

May composition prizes, e.g. Valentino Bucchi in Rome in 1978, the prize of the Domkapitel Salzburg in 1987, the Kranichsteiner Stipendienpreis at the Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik Darmstadt in 1988, the 1st prize of the Eastern Swiss Foundation for Music and Theatre in 1990, the Lucerne Furtherance Prize in 1991, the prize of the Society for Music-Pedagogical Research in Zurich in 1992, the prize of Swiss Radio International in 1996 and the Furtherance Prize of the Canton of Basel-Landschaft in 1998. In 2004, his opera *Gantenbein* was given its world premiere at the Lucerne Theatre. Since 2008 he tours Europe as a pianist and conductor with his own ensemble Polysono. He has been a guest lecturer in composition at the Internationale Darmstädter Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (1988-94), at the Odessa Festival (1996-98) and at the International Composer's Course in Lugano (2000). He has published on compositional, aesthetic and philosophical aspects of new music, in among others „MusikTexte“ Cologne, „Neue Zürcher Zeitung“, „Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik“ and in „New Music and Aesthetics in the 21st Century“. He has been active in musico-political matters (with the Basle Composer's Forum, the Schweizerisches Komponisten-Kollegium, and in the worldwide score distribution system 'Adesso'). He teaches composition, music theory and improvisation at the Basle Music Academy (and 1979-91 at the Lucerne Academy) and at the SAMP/Kalaidos Musikhochschule Zürich.