

Sylvie Courvoisier

Composer/pianist, Sylvie Courvoisier was born and raised in Lausanne, Switzerland. She started to play piano at age of six initiated by her father, an amateur jazz pianist. She moved to Brooklyn, New York in 1998, where she currently resides.

She has played and recorded with John Zorn, Mark Feldman, Ikue Mori, Tim Berne, Joey Baron, Tony Oxley, Yusef Lateef, Dave Douglas, Joëlle Léandre, Herb Robertson, Butch Morris, Tom Rainey, Mark Dresser, Ellery Eskelin, Lotte Anker, Fred Frith, Michel Godard, Mark Nauseef among others.

She has been commissioned to write music for concerts, radio, dance and theater. Her works include: "Concerto for electric guitar and chamber orchestra"; "Balbutiements" for vocal quartet and soprano; "Ocre de Barbarie", a musical performance for metronomes, automatons, barrel organ, piano, tuba, saxophone, violin and percussion. Commissions include the Vidy Theater of Lausanne, Pro Helvetia and Germany's Donaueschingen Musiktage Festival.

Her debut recording "Sauvagerie Courtoise" on Unit Records was released in 1994. Her second recording "Ocre" on Enja Records (Music for barrel organ, piano, tuba, bass and percussion) led to appearances on concert stages all over Europe. In the following years, Courvoisier released 8 CDs as a leader, and 15 CDs as a Co-leader, and more than 20 recordings as a side person or as a guest.

Her latest releases as a leader are:

"ABATON" with Mark Feldman and Erik Friedlander on ECM Records (2004), "LONELYVILLE" with her quintet on Intakt Records (2007), a solo piano album, SIGNS AND EPIGRAMS, on Tzadik Records (2007), "TO FLY TO STEAL" a new band: Sylvie Courvoisier Mark Feldman Quartet with Thomas Morgan and Gerry Hemingway on Intakt Records (2010),

Since 1995, she has been touring widely with her own groups and as a side person in USA, Canada, Japan and Europe including Jazz and New Music Festivals such as Berlin, Willisau, Donaueschingen, Banlieue Bleue, Saalfelden, Groningen, Visions NY, Nürnberg, Taktlos, London LMC, Bath Festival, Muenster and Victoriaville Festival, among others

She performs regularly in Duo with violinist Mark Feldman, and just recorded a new CD "OBLIVIA" on Tzadik Records (2009) and have together a new band: the Sylvie Courvoisier Mark Feldman QUARTET with Thomas Morgan and Gerry Hemingway.

Sylvie is currently the leader of her own quintet "Lonelyville", the Trio Abaton and performs regularly in solo.

She is a member of "Mephista", an improvising trio with Ikue Mori and Susie Ibarra; in Trio along with Ellery Eskelin and Vincent Courtois, in Trio with Lotte Anker and Ikue Mori, and with "Agra Dharma" a Trio with the Japanese singer Makigami Koichi and Ikue Mori; the "Herb Robertson Quintet" with Tim Berne, Tom Rainey and Mark Dresser; in John Zorn's Cobra and Femina.

Awards include Switzerland's 1996 Prix des jeunes créateurs, Zonta Club's 2000 Prix de la Création, and was nominated for "European Jazzprice 2008"

| Selected Discography:

TO FLY TO STEAL- Sylvie Courvoisier Mark Feldman Quartet (Intakt Records, 2010)

OBLIVIA - Mark Feldman & Sylvie Courvoisier- (Tzadik Records, 2009)

FEMINA- JOHN ZORN (Tzadik Records, 2009)

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE- Courtois, Courvoisier & Eskelin (Cam Jazz, 2008)
EVERY SO OFTEN - Ellery Eskelin & Sylvie Courvoisier (Prime Source, 2008)
ALIEN HUDDLE _ Lotte Anker, Sylvie Courvoisier, Ikuo Mori (Intakt Records ,2008)
SIGNS AND EPIGRAMS-Sylvie Courvoisier SOLO (Tzadik 2007)
REAL ABERATION-Herb Robertson -NY Downtown Allstars-(clean Feed 2007)
LONELYVILLE- Sylvie Courvoisier QUINTET with Mori, Feldman, Courtois, Cleaver (Intakt 2007)
MALPHAS - Mark Feldman Sylvie Courvoisier, music of John Zorn-Book of Angels-(Tzadik 2006)
MASADA RECITAL -Sylvie Courvoisier & Mark Feldman , music of John Zorn (Tzadik 2004)
ABATON – Sylvie Courvoisier TRIO feat. Feldman, Friedlander (ECM Records, 2cd 2004)
ENTOMOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS - Mephista (Courvoisier, Mori, Ibarra) (Tzadik 2004)
BLACK NARCISSUS- Mephista (Courvoisier, Mori, Ibarra) (Tzadik 2002)
COBRA- John Zorn (Tzadik, 2002)
DEUX PIANOS- Sylvie Courvoisier , Jacques Demierre (Intakt, 2000)
Y2K - Sylvie Courvoisier Ocre (Enja Records, 2000)
MUSIC FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO - Sylvie Courvoisier, Mark Feldman (Avan Records, 1999)
MUSIC FOR BARREL ORGAN, PIANO, TUBA, BASS AND PERCUSSION - Sylvie Courvoisier Ocre (Enja, 1997)

« ...That her music is as aesthetically beautiful as it is strange and mysterious is only further testament to her prowess as a composer. That this trio plays her music as if it has been creating it from the air is nothing short of remarkable. Abaton is Courvoisier's crowning achievement thus far, and this group points her firmly forward in a direction where everything is still possible, demonstrating that there is something new under the sun in classical music and improvisation. Perhaps Abaton is the great moment of 2003 for new classical music. »
Thom Jurek, All Music Guide

« Courvoisier's playing is jaw-dropping at times, and there's an extended passage that features her working both inside and on the keyboard of the piano interacting with Rainey and the others in subtle combinations, and working up to a terrifying free jazz piano freak-out that could make a person faint!»
Michael Anton Parker, 2005

« This highly original and new music has it all: razor-sharp edges, sounds of a thousand dancing needles, thundering power arising from deeply yawning chasms, mystic fluorescence throughout, calmness combined with a mysterious kind of moving»
Henning Bolte, 5/2007

« ...Dans un autre pays que la Suisse, elle serait adulée comme une des plus importantes plumes musicales de son temps. Elle recevrait tous les prix envisageables, n'aurait plus à se faire du souci pour les trente années à venir. Mais elle a décidé de vivre outre-Atlantique. Elle est notre ambassade, mieux que quiconque.... »
Arnaud Robert, Le Temps, 2005