



Appendix Swiss Music Prize 2014

Brief biographies of the nominees

Reverend Beat-Man

Born Beat Zeller in 1967 near Berne, Reverend Beat-Man has become a firm fixture on the music scene. He first tried his hand as a singer and musician at the age of 13 before forming his band The Monsters in 1986 and setting up his own record label Voodoo Rhythm Records in 1992. With The Monsters, Zeller created an entirely new genre that fuses psychobilly with garage punk and went on to showcase it with more than a thousand concerts in South America, Japan, Australia, the US and the rest of the world. His stage presence as frontman of The Monsters has captivated audiences in smaller clubs and large venues alike. Zeller attained cult status thanks in no small part to this work with Voodoo Rhythm Records, which has gained him a reputation as a resolute champion of innovative and experimental artists. In Switzerland, his achievements were honoured with the Canton of Berne Special Recognition Award in 2007.

www.voodooorhythm.com/reverend.html

Ensemble Phoenix Basel

The Ensemble Phoenix Basel has taken an exciting approach to new music ever since it was formed in 1998 by Jürg Henneberger, Christoph Bösch and Daniel Buess. It specialises in electronic music, crossover projects, musical theatre and original performances that continually redefine and push the boundaries of "new music". The Ensemble has worked with composers and authors such as Zbigniew Karkowski, Helmut Oehring, Alex Buess and Dror Feiler, to name but a few. Based at Basel's Gare du Nord since its inception, the ensemble has made a name for itself by touring China, South America, the US and the whole of Europe. It has created the Phoenix-Trabant competition to give young composers an opportunity to express themselves in response to a historically important piece of music.

www.ensemble-phoenix.ch

Hans Kennel

Hans Kennel was born in Schwyz in 1939 and trained as a classical trumpet player at the conservatoires of Fribourg and Zurich. A celebrated jazz pioneer in the 1960s who appeared with greats like Kenny Clarke, George Gruntz and Irène Schweizer, he led his own internationally renowned jazz band called Habarigani Brass. Two decades later, Kennel, the scion of a family of famous Schwyz folk musicians, started to delve into his home region's heritage. He formed the alphorn quartet Mytha and the band Alpine Jazz Herd (later renamed Alpine Experience), both of which became trailblazers of the new folk movement in the 1990s with their mix of traditional sounds and jazz virtuosity. In addition to the trumpet, Kennel also plays the alphorn and sings. His work was honoured with the Central Switzerland Culture Award in 1998.

www.hanskennel.com

Norbert Möslang

Norbert Möslang was born in St. Gallen in 1952 and works as a violin maker. He established himself as a musician, composer and sound inventor at an early age. He became known for his "noise music", which he performed for no less than 30 years, beginning in 1972, as one half of the duo Voice Crack with Andy Guhl. He would take cheap consumer electronics – torches, telephones, simple switches – and use them to conjure up astounding and sometimes highly poetic sounds. This "hardware hacking" concept has become more widely known in the past decade, and Möslang is viewed internationally as one of its pioneers. As well as performing in Japan and the US, he staged a sound installation at the Santa Stae church as part of the Venice Biennale in 2011. He has won several awards for his work as a film composer, including a Swiss Film Award for Best Film Score in 2010 and a Cinema Eye Honors award in New York in 2011, both for the soundtrack to Peter Liechti's documentary "The Sound of Insects".

www.moeslang.com

Julian Sartorius

Julian Sartorius, born in 1981, is a drummer and sound artist. After playing on Zurich-based singer-songwriter Sophie Hunger's second album in 2010, he started a blog for which he recorded a new rhythm every day for a year using a variety of objects. He created amazing sounds with props including an electric toothbrush, and even made a toilet flush "sing". He has a knack for constantly reinterpreting the sound of everyday items. This creativity is brought to bear in the 140 or so concerts he plays each year. As a solo performer, he can keep audiences transfixed all evening long with his sound rhythms. In groups such as the Colin Vallon Trio and with the British musician Merz, he playfully straddles the line between integrating into a larger whole and asserting his individuality. Sartorius has won the City of Thun Culture Award (2007) and the Canton of Berne "Coup de Coeur" award (2009), among others.

www.juliansartorius.ch

Andreas Schaerer

Andreas Schaerer was born in Visp in 1976 and lives in Berne. A beatboxer and vocalist, he is one of the most talented sound artists in Europe. As well as being able to imitate perfectly a whole range of percussion instruments, he also displays unparalleled versatility as a singer, be it as a classical tenor or in the realms of death metal and traditional pop. He showcases his talents in more than 120 concerts a year in various guises and is currently involved in five projects: Hildegard Lernt Fliegen, Rom/Schaerer/Eberle, Andreas Schaerer & Lucas Niggli, Das Beet and Schaerer/Oester. Alongside these, he frequently collaborates with the greats of jazz and improvisation, including Bobby McFerrin and the ARTE Quartett. Schaerer won the ZKB Jazz Prize in 2008 with the group Hildegard Lernt Fliegen, which translates as "Hildegard learns to fly".

www.andreasschaerer.ch

Steamboat Switzerland

Steamboat Switzerland is an ensemble formed in 1995 by Lucas Niggli, Dominik Blum and Marino Pliakas. It is at home in a wide range of contemporary music settings, shifting between all kinds of styles and interpreting others' compositions in novel ways. The trio's skill is not limited to interpretation, however, as improvisation, rhythmic interludes and technically challenging passages also play a part. Steamboat Switzerland has been touring Europe and the US with the same line-up since it was formed, playing at various international festivals as well as clubs on the underground rock scene. The trio has been awarded with the annual promotion grant of the city of Zurich.

www.dominikblum.ch

www.lucasniggli.ch

www.marinopliakas.com

Marcel Oetiker

Marcel Oetiker was born in Altendorf (canton of Schwyz) in 1979 and studied at the Bern University of the Arts. He was the first Swiss person to graduate in the Schwyzerörgeli, a type of accordion peculiar to Switzerland, and has focused his work on this instrument ever since. However, he also carries its repertoire over to a range of other musical instruments and transfers its traditional types of arrangement to other styles and compositions. Oetiker works as a composer, freelance musician and music teacher and plays both solo and with the Marcel Oetiker Trio. He was presented with the Canton of Schwyz Culture Award in 2013 in recognition of his musical achievements.

www.marceloetiker.com

Irène Schweizer

Irène Schweizer was born in Schaffhausen in 1941 and is regarded as a founder of the European free jazz movement. Largely self-taught, she has worked as a pianist since the 1960s, collaborating with numerous international musicians such as Louis Moholo, Pierre Favre and Han Bennik. Her unique musical oeuvre is documented on more than 30 CDs released by her own label, Intakt Records. Schweizer has played at all the leading jazz and music festivals and established herself as a musical force to be reckoned with in the male-dominated world of jazz. Her internationally lauded career and importance to jazz were highlighted in a 2005 documentary by Gitta Gsell. Schweizer's musical achievements earned her the Canton of Schaffhausen Culture Award in 1990.

www.intaktrec.ch/schweizer-a.htm

Franco Cesarini

Franco Cesarini was born in Bellinzona in 1961 and began his studies in the flute and piano at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, later completing them at the University of Music in Basel. He then trained in composition, theory and brass orchestra conducting with Hauswirth, Suter and Wildberger. From 1989 to 2006, he lectured at the School of Music in Zurich. He was a visiting lecturer at the Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau (US) in 2001. He has lectured at the conservatoire in Lugano since 2001, and is conductor of the Civica Filarmonica di Lugano brass orchestra and the Orchestra di Fiati della Svizzera Italiana, the brass orchestra of Italian-speaking Switzerland. As a composer, Cesarini has worked for a number of international orchestras, including the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba and the Nantes Philharmonic. He has won several awards, notably from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Stephan Jäggi Foundation.

Corin Curschellas

Corin Curschellas was born in Chur in 1956 and trained as a primary school teacher before studying drama and musical theory in Zurich. Following a number years spent abroad in Berlin, Paris and elsewhere, she returned to Rueun in the canton of Graubünden. Since then, she has immersed herself in the tradition of Romansh-language folk songs. She arranges and interprets old Romansh songs, giving them a fresh, contemporary feel. In her songbook "La Grischa" (2013), Curschellas offers reworked versions of popular folk songs in the Rhaeto-Romanic language together with background information on the canton's folk music heritage. As well as producing her own stage, theatre and festival performances, she also works with a wide range of different musical styles, instruments and languages. Corin Curschellas has received the recognition award of the city of Chur as well as of the canton of Graubünden.

www.corin.ch

Erika Stucky

Erika Stucky was born in San Francisco in 1962 and grew up in the eastern part of the canton of Valais. After training as a jazz musician and singer in Paris and studying drama at the State College in San Francisco, Stucky sang in various bands, including the a cappella and bass group The Sophisticrats, with which she toured Europe and Africa. She formed the band Mrs. Bubbles & Bones in 1997 and still performs with it both in Switzerland and abroad. Stucky draws from an eclectic range of musical influences in her performance, blending elements of folk music with jazz, blues and rock in a novel, experimental way. She has received accolades including the Swiss Cabaret Award, the City of Zurich Culture Award and the Canton of Valais Culture Award in recognition of her work.

www.erikastucky.com

Franz Treichler

Franz Treichler was born in Fribourg in 1961. Having trained in classical guitar at the Lausanne conservatoire, he began in 1983 to focus on electrified music. He was behind the opening of the Fri-Son concert hall and an active member of the rock and alternative scene at the start of the 1980s. Around the same time, in 1985, he formed The Young Gods, a band since cited as an influence by such well-known acts as Nine Inch Nails, U2 and David Bowie. The band's career took off far beyond the Swiss border, especially after they signed to the legendary US label Interscope. They have been touring all over the world for more than 25 years. Treichler has worked on a plethora of projects besides The Young Gods, driven by his constant desire to evolve and his unstinting will to push himself further. He is the musical director of the Gilles Jobin contemporary dance company and producer of numerous albums, sets silent films from the Dada movement to music, is a member of an electronic music collective, provides audio materials for a variety of exhibitions, and has travelled to the Amazonian rainforest to record the traditional music of indigenous peoples.

www.younggods.com

Mama Rosin

Mama Rosin first came to the attention of French-speaking Switzerland in 2007. Geneva-born Robin Girod, Cyril Yeterian and Xavier Bray did not take the “classic” path. They started out by exploring the roots of their music in the Louisiana bayou. Signed to the Voodoo Rhythm label, they went on to conquer Europe, then South America, then North America.

In 2009 they launched their own label, Moi J’Connais Records, which now has a roster of 19 acts that includes a number of up-and-coming groups from the region.

While still part of the young generation of artists, they already have a number of strings to their bow, including a US distribution deal, and they are heavily involved in promoting the local scene. They won the Independent Music Award for Best Alt. Country Album in 2013 with “Bye Bye Bayou”.

www.mamarosin.com

www.pfl-mgmt.com/

Dragos Tara

Dragos Tara studied the double bass at the Montreux and Lausanne conservatoires, followed by instrumental and electronic composition at the Geneva and Paris conservatoires.

His work derives from popular music in general (rock, folk, pop, Eastern Europe, West Africa, various forms of Asian music), experimental music in the wider sense (improvisation, alternative scenes, noise), as well as more highbrow contemporary production (György Ligeti, Helmut Lachenmann, Iannis Xenakis etc.). Tara sees sound as a means of forging social bonds and the composer as a person who reinvents the way these bonds function in each situation. This often involves going beyond the bounds of the traditional concert and into the realms of physical performance, sound installation and sonic documentary – be it with professional musicians, amateurs, or those from outside the confines of his own discipline.

The collaborative process is clearly vital to his work and is maintained over long periods wherever possible.

<http://dragostara.blogspot.ch>