

BIOGRAPHY

Born near Paris in 1974, Baptiste Trotignon grew up in the Loire region, outside Saumur. He started playing the piano when he was 8, and a few years later he joined the Nantes Conservatory, where he won prizes for piano and harmony. In his teenage years, he discovered and taught himself jazz and improvisation, performing his first concerts at the age of sixteen.

In 1994 he appeared as actor and musician in Alain Corneau's film *Le Nouveau Monde*, deciding to move to Paris the following year. In 1998 he formed his trio with Clovis Nicolas (double bass) and Tony Rabeson (drums), a development that provided invaluable experience as a bandleader. Released in June 2000, his debut album *FLUIDE* revealed him as one of the most spectacular, broad-ranging and fascinating pianists of his generation. The album won a Django d'Or for Best First Record in March 2001. Still with the same musicians, he released his second album *SIGHTSEEING* later that same year: *Jazzman* declared it «the shock of the year» and in December 2001 the Jazz Academy awarded Baptiste the Prix Django Reinhardt, an annual award given to the jazz musician of the year.

He began to make fewer and fewer appearances as a sideman, performing instead with increasing frequency both with his trio and as a solo artist at international jazz festivals, including: Jazz in Marciac, Montréal, La Villette Jazz Festival, Jazz a Vienne, Nice, Montreux, Vancouver, Toronto, Ramatuelle, Parc Floral de Paris, Nancy Jazz Pulsations...

In October 2002 he won the “Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris” at the Martial Solal International Jazz Competition, and a few months later he also received the French Newcomer of the Year award at the Victoires du Jazz 2003. Spring 2003 saw Baptiste Trotignon release a new recording, this time as a solo pianist performing his original compositions; it was a disc widely praised by the press («ffff» in *Télérama*, «shock of the year» in *Jazzman*, «top choice» in *Jazz Magazine*), by the buying public (over 15,000 copies sold) and concert-goers (La Roque d'Anthéron Festival, Piano aux Jacobins in Toulouse, Salle Pleyel in Paris, and many others).

In early 2005 he released an excellent recording of a four-piece co-led by David El-Malek; the eponymous *TROTIGNON – EL-MALEK* was widely praised by press and public alike.

October 25, 2005 witnessed the release of *SOLO II*, a new studio album backed by a live DVD recorded at Piano aux Jacobins and an interview with Michel Contat, released

as a digipack and limited edition longbox. Beyond simple genres, this latest solo album was a return to the spirit of his debut that confirmed Baptiste's uncontested originality, as if such a thing had ever been in doubt.

It was around this time that he first met Aldo Romano, and a true musical affinity developed between them as they gave concerts together, most often as a trio with Rémi Vignolo. In autumn 2006, this combo released the remarkable album FLOWER POWER, a musical homage to the period between the late sixties and early seventies. Without ever disguising their particular musical language, the three of them offered their take on a repertoire of pop songs and tracks written by Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd or Bob Dylan, as well as Gainsbourg and Polnareff.

Whilst simultaneously working on an extremely broad range of projects (concerts as a duo with top-flight improvisers such as Tom Harrell and Brad Mehldau, as well as with the classical pianist Nicholas Angelich; artistic direction of musical tribute evenings at Montreux in memory of Edith Piaf and Claude Nougaro with guests like Catherine Ringer, Bernard Lavilliers or Ute Lemper; "classical" experiences playing the "Rhapsody in Blue" and the Concerto in F from George Gershwin; music for Claude Goretta's film Sartre, and so on...), he continues to develop a musical style that is resolutely open-minded and richly fertile, in collaboration with the quartet he co-leads with David El-Malek; their musical journey has now produced a second album, FOOL TIME, released in September 2007. It's a double CD live recording, again in the company of Darryl Hall and Dré Pallemmaerts.

Fall 2008, his label Naive re-releases for its 10 years anniversary his first solo album brought together with a piano solo recital recorded Salle Pleyel in May 2008. For this occasion, he takes part in Naive night at Theatre des Bouffes du Nord where he plays with Anne Gastinel notably.

During that period he returned to one of his first loves, the Hammond B3 organ, when he took part in the recording of Stefano Di Battista's album 'Trouble Shootin'', with Eric Harland, Fabrizio Bosso and Russell Malone, followed by a tour-over 60 concerts at Europe's major festivals.

Early in 2009 Baptiste's first "American" album, Share, was released. Recorded in New York in June 2008, again with Eric Harland, it brought together two fine musicians he particularly admires: that inimitable living legend of jazz, Tom Harrell, and Mark Turner – two soloists he describes as "warriors of beauty". Following that very successful album he gave some twenty concerts with this dream quintet, including a summer tour in 2009 (with Jeremy Pelt replacing Tom Harrell), during which all the concerts were recorded, resulting in the album "Suite...", mixed in London and released in May 2010.

In that highly charged live album - the stage equivalent of the Share adventure - Baptiste further asserted his qualities as a composer. In the following months he wrote a version with string orchestra and winds of the Suite for quintet that was presented at the Jazz in Marciac Festival in August 2010.

In 2011, as well as further original stage performances (duos with classical pianist Alexandre Tharaud, saxophonist Mark Turner, and singer-songwriter Christophe Miossec, whom he invited to take part in a carte blanche at the Printemps de Bourges with songs they had written together), he started work on a Piano Concerto for Nicholas Angelich and the Orchestra of Bordeaux Opera.

In September a compilation entitled For a while was released, presenting a selection of pieces from his past ten years with the record label Naïve (plus a bonus DVD of the concert given in Marciac in August 2010), and also Aldo Romano's album Inner Smile, on which he appears as sideman, along with Enrico Rava.

In November 2011 he receives the Grand Prix du Jazz awarded by the SACEM.

He has played with:

(alphabetical order)

Ambrose Akinmusire, Nicholas Angelich, Stephane Belmondo, Lionel Belmondo, Fabrizio Bosso, Sylvain Beuf, André Ceccarelli, Alban Darche, Riccardo Del Fra, Stefano Di Battista, David El-Malek, Christian Escoudé, Laika Fatien, Jean Fauque, Glenn Ferris, Anne Gastinel, Eric Harland, Tom Harrell, Donald Harrison, Gregory Hutchinson, Ari Hoenig, Bob Hurst, Manu Katché, Angelique Kidjo, Elisabeth Kontomanou, Bireli Lagrène, Eric Le Lann, Eric Le Sage, Didier Lockwood, Jeanette Lindstrom, Jean-Loup Longnon, Russell Malone, Albert Mangelsdorff, Rick Margitza, Brad Mehldau, Malik Mezzadri, Christophe Miossec, Bill Mobley, Francois et Louis Moutin, David Murray, Milton Nascimento, Claude Nougaro, Dré Pallemarts, Leon Parker, Jeremy Pelt, Michel Portal, Enrico Rava, Aldo Romano, Jacques Schwarz-Bart, Archie Shepp, Geoffroy Tamisier, Alexandre Tassel, Mark Turner, Alexandre Tharaud, Jean Toussaint, Reggie Washington, Jeff «Tain» Watts, Kenny Wheeler, Bojan Z... and many others...