

## **Biographies Ensemble Polysono**

### **Christine Simolka, soprano**

Born in Basel, 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 and Hanno Müller-Brachmann, as well as opera classes at the Music Academy Basel. Further studies with Marianne Schuppe and Robert Koller. Regular concert performance. Christine Simolka's repertoire includes a wide range of musical styles. Besides Lieder of the baroque and classical periods, one of her specialities is Schubert. In addition, she improvises in diverse styles (jazz, klezmer, blues, free improvisation). She has recently begun to devote herself more and more to contemporary music (e. g. Berio, Holliger, Henze, Rihm, Ferneyhough, Wohlhauser). 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 (CH) studied at the college 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.

### **Marzena Toczko, Violin**

Born in Basel into a family of musicians, she was given her first violin lessons at the age of 6 by Françoise Zöldy, and her first piano lessons at age 14. After completion of secondary school (Matura), she earned a teaching diploma at the Musikakademie

Basel under Thomas Füre, followed by a graduate diploma at the "Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst" in Vienna under Edward Zienkowski and Hubert Kroisamer. Master classes with Franco Gulli, Lorand Fenyves, and Jean-Jacques Kantorow, chamber music with teachers such as Walter Levin and Hatto Beyerle in Basel.

Regular orchestral activity, especially in contemporary music, in the basel sinfonietta and the ENSEMBLE MODERN ORCHESTRA in Frankfurt.

Open to various styles in music with a special interest in their intermixture, she took lessons at the Jazzschule Basel in jazz violin and improvisation, realizes her own projects with texts and music in various formations, and has performed as violinist in diverse musicals.

Since 2006 she has a teaching assignment at the Conservatory of Fribourg for violin and string orchestra, and is at present completing a course of further training in culture management.

### **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 Asonsörs,, 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**

Born in 1954 and raised in Brienz, René Wohlhauser is a very versatile musician with a broad stylistic spectrum, who has created a voluminous compositional oeuvre that includes over 1500 works (a. o. chamber, orchestral and stage works). Long 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. Since finishing his studies at the Music Academy Basel and with Klaus Huber and Brian Ferneyhough in Freiburg, he has been teaching composition, music theory and improvisation at the Music Academy Basel. Main lecturer and tutor for composition at the International Darmstädter Ferienkurse. Further piano studies with Stéphane Reymond and vocal studies with Robert Koller. Several international prizes for composition. Numerous international performances and radio broadcasts. Lectures, publications, culture-political commitment.

The **Ensemble "Polysono"** is a variable chamber music ensemble, performing mainly contemporary music, also in combination with other artforms such as literature and painting. Of particular importance is the performance of music for smaller and less common ensembles, exploring their subtle possibilities. The variety in combinations - from solos to duos up to full ensemble - correlates to the structural contrasts and stilistic openness of the programs, which draws its tension from a dialectical dispute between different aesthetic positions.

The programs include world premieres as well as repeat performances of seldom-performed works. Composers of different origins are presented in comparison, showing the different structural aspects of each chosen individual scoring.

R. W.

(Translations: Gail Makar)