



GWILYM SIMCOCK QUINTET

Gwilym Simcock, piano, Stan Sulzmann, saxophone,
John Parricelli, guitar, Martin France, drums, Phil
Donkin, bass

THE GWILYM SIMCOCK QUINTET IS ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING NEW BANDS TO HIT THE UK SCENE IN A LONG WHILE. This band has been critically and widely acclaimed as 'engaging, exciting, often unexpected, melodically enthralling, complex and wonderfully optimistic'.

"the wunderkind of the piano in Britain". *Irish Times, 2nd May 2006*



"As a pianist alone, Gwilym Simcock would have deserved all the hype, but this performance confirms that he doesn't see his composer's identity as his second string". *John Fordham, The Guardian 4 stars****1st March 2006*

"Saturday night's performers drew a rapturous response. Opening was pianist Gwilym Simcock's superb quintet with Stan Sulzmann (tenor/soprano), John Parricelli (guitar), Phil Donkin (bass) and Martin France (drums), for whom Simcock provided a harmonically rich, rhythmically flexible environment full of surprise and diversity. Solos which became joint improvisations, free playing, tempo and metre changes managed with magisterial aplomb and some inspired rubato playing were typical of their approach. There were no weak links; Simcock showed why he is regarded as the wunderkind of the piano in Britain, Sulzmann and Parricelli are simply outstanding soloists, and France and Donkin offered a superbly pliant rhythm section". *Irish Times 2nd May 2006*

Biographies

Still just 26 years of age, Gwilym Simcock is one of the most gifted pianists and imaginative composers working on British scene. Able to move effortlessly between jazz and classical music, he can, at times, inhabit both worlds and has been described as being stylistically reminiscent of Keith Jarrett, complete with 'harmonic sophistication and subtle dovetailing of musical traditions' as well as being a pianist of 'exceptional', 'brilliant' and 'dazzling' ability.

Gwilym's influences include jazz legends Jarrett, Chick Corea and John Taylor and much inspiration is taken from the classical world, especially the work of Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky as well as contemporary composers such as Mark-Anthony Turnage who fuse together written and improvised music. Although principally a jazz artist, Gwilym is breaking new ground between genres and often uses classical reference points in his composed work - he recently devised a solo piano project using the piano works of Shostakovich as a starting point and in 2005 premiered a piano concerto especially written for him by Tim Garland.

Aside from his renowned solo piano work, Gwilym has worked extensively throughout Europe playing with the cream of British and international jazz artists including **Dave Holland, Kenny Wheeler, Lee Konitz, Bill Bruford's Earthworks** and **Bob Mintzer** among others. His own groups as a leader range from trio to big band to a 40-piece ensemble featuring a gospel choir and strings. His composing and playing strengths in are evidence in every dimension of the music for his

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quintet which features Stan Sulzmann (saxophones), John Parricelli (guitar), Phil Donkin (bass) and Martin France (drums).

A previous winner of **the Perrier Award, BBC Jazz Awards** and **British Jazz Rising Star Awards 2005** and participant in Take Five – the UK's unique artist development initiative, Gwilym is currently a **BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist** – the first jazz artist to be selected. He was voted "**Jazz Musician of the Year**" at the **2007 Parliamentary Jazz Awards** and is again nominated for the **2007 BBC Jazz Awards as Best Instrumentalist**. He has an impressive formal education which includes stints at the Trinity College of Music (London), Chetham's School of Music (Manchester) – where he studied classical piano, French horn and composition and the Royal Academy of Music (London) where he graduated from the jazz course with first class honours and the coveted 'Principal's Prize' for outstanding achievement.



STAN SULZMANN is without question one of the most highly respected musicians in the UK today, admired by musicians and audiences for his instantly recognisable sound, and boundless creative imagination, and is a source of inspiration to many of Britain's emerging young musicians.

Stan's career stretches back to the 60's, when as part of a uniquely talented crop of British musicians, he played with Graham Collier, John Taylor, Kenny Wheeler, Gordon Beck, as well as leading many groups of his own. Since that time Stan has been at the forefront of European contemporary jazz, and his talents have been sought by a host of discerning musicians, including Gil Evans, Mike Gibbs, Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland and Michael Brecker. Constantly in demand as a guest soloist, he has appeared with bands across Europe, including the Hilversum Radio Orchestra, NDR Big Band (alongside Chet Baker), Hanover Radio Symphony Orchestra and the New York Composers Orchestra.

Further intimate and refreshingly innovative musical partnerships have developed with acclaimed British pianist Nikki Iles, American keyboard player Marc Copland and the trio Ordesa - a drumless, bassless combination with Kenny Wheeler and John Parricelli. Stan's 2004 album *The Jigsaw* (Basho Records) features Americans Marc Copland, Larry Grenadier and Bill Stewart.

'Sulzmann - the classy composer'. **John Fordham, The Guardian**

www.stansulzmann.co.uk

JOHN PARRICELLI Began his professional guitar playing career in 1982, and has since worked in various areas of music. He was one of the founder members of Loose Tubes in the 80's, touring and recording three albums. Since then he has pursued a varied career, working with Kenny Wheeler, Andy Sheppard, Iain Ballamy, Norma Winstone, Lee Konitz, Paul Motian, Julian Arguelles, Tim Whitehead, Eddie Parker, WDR Band with Peter Erskine and Vince Mendoza, Mark Lockheart, Martin Speake, Annie Whitehead and Gerard Presencer amongst others.

John is currently working with Andy Sheppard, Mark Lockheart's Scratch Band, Norma Winstone/Iain Ballamy Trio, Stan Sulzmann/Kenny Wheeler Trio, Gerard Presencer, Colin Towns Quintet and Mask Orchestra, Martin Speake Quartet and The Eddie Parker Group.



Alongside this, John also works in other areas of music, having recorded with M People, Judy Tzuke, Shara Nelson, Mike Oldfield and has played on numerous T.V and feature films for Mike Figgis, George Fenton, Stephen Warbeck, Colin Towns, Trevor Jones, Adrian Johnstone, Gabriel Yared, Dbigniev Preisner, Deborah Mollison, Patrick Doyle , Paul Grabowsky and Rachel Portman.

"The resourceful John Parricelli has the right mix of lightness, rhythm and lyricism" **THE TIMES**

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MARTIN FRANCE has played with many of the world's finest musicians. He has performed in all five continents including concerts and tours in over forty countries worldwide.

Martin began performing at the age of twelve backing singers in Working Men's clubs with Organ trios in and around Manchester, and in 1983 he began his recording career performing on several records for ECM.

A turning point in his early career was his role within the Eighties big band LOOSE TUBES where he began long standing partnerships with many of its members. His association with Django Bates has led to many diverse projects away from the "Jazz" environment they normally occupy with HUMAN CHAIN and DELIGHTFUL PRECIPICE. These include film soundtracks, Jazz theatre, cross cultural collaborations and recording projects involving orchestras such as The London Sinfonietta, BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra and ASKO Ensemble in Amsterdam.

He is also active as a studio musician working on TV and Film soundtracks and is involved in programming and composing for many projects and artists, including his own band, SPIN MARVEL.

Along the way Martin has performed and recorded with some of the world's best musicians including David Gilmour, John Taylor, Kenny Wheeler, Ralph Towner, Lee Konitz, Dave Holland, Arild Anderson, Mark Johnson, Steve Swallow, Bob Mintzer and The Yellowjackets, Nils-Petter Molvaer, Bugge Wesseltoft, Mike Gibbs, Maria Schneider, Sidsel Endresen and Maria Joao. He is also a regular performer with NDR Radio Orchestra in Hamburg. In England he has performed and recorded with the very best of his generation and is currently preparing to tour his band SPIN MARVEL in which he plays mostly electronic and sequenced drums.

www.martinfrance.com



PHIL DONKIN was born in Sunderland in November 1980. He took up the electric bass at 12, playing in loud Rock bands until moving to London in 1998, having previously developed an interest in jazz. He studied at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama from '99 - '03, taking up the double bass at the beginning of this course in '99, studying under classical bassist, LSO principal Colin Paris. At the same time, Phil was playing a lot of jazz and developing a great interest in bassists such as Charles Mingus, Dave Holland and Larry Gales to name but a few. He became very interested in the rhythmic concepts introduced by the Miles Davis Quintet from '63-'69 and later developed by the bands of Dave Holland, Branford Marsalis, Steve Coleman etc. He has also been influenced by freer concepts such as that of Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor.

Since 2002, Phil has been very busy on the London and UK scene, working with British jazz legends Stan Sulzmann, Bobby Wellins, Jim Mullen, Martin Drew, Phil Lee, Julian Arguelles, Martin France, Julian Joseph, Mark Mondesir, Steve Williamson, Tim Garland, Nikki Illes, Tina May, Phil Robson, Julian Siegel, Paul Clarvis, Hans Koller, amongst others. He has also worked with internationally known artists such as Mike Gibbs, Kirk Lightsey, and Jeff Williams. Phil has studied privately, and institutionally with Dave Liebman, Barry Harris, Rufus Ried, Billy Cobham, John Pattitucci, Dave Friesen, Geoff Keezer, Drew Gress, Ari Hoenig, Christian McBride.



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