



BIOGRAPHY

JAN MENU

Saxophonist Jan Menu (1962) won the prestigious Dutch Loosdrecht Jazzconcours in 1989 and consequently, received the Wessel Ilcken Award. He was praised for his melodic approach, original phrasing and use of harmony and his strong musical personality. These aspects still are characteristic for his playing.

Though Menu stepped in the scene as a tenor- and baritone saxophonist, since a few years he concentrates on the latter, and is considered a leading player on the big horn. In his hands, the baritone, mostly a somewhat awkward instrument, sounds light and melodic.

With guitarist Maarten van der Grinten and bass player Jan Voogd, Jan Menu co-leads the chamber jazz trio DIG d'DIZ, for almost 20 years. DIG d'DIZ is considered one of Holland's most interesting groups, combining traditional and avant-garde jazz with a wide range of musical influences in a chamber music-like setting. Compositions originate from almost anything, and take shape by improvising. The trio played and recorded with the Mondriaan String Quartet, a combination underlining the unique style of DIG d'DIZ: contemporary chamber music with jazz roots.

In 1999 the trio recorded with the Metropole Orchestra, conducted by Vince Mendoza. 2007-2008 DIG d'DIZ toured The Netherlands with singer-actor Frank Groothof in an opera for children and adults, based on Gershwin's Porgy & Bess.

DIG d'DIZ recorded three highly acclaimed cd's.: ONE (1991), DIG d'DIZ meets the Mondriaan String Quartet (1997) and DIG d'DIZ ONE TOO (2009, with live DVD).

As a member of Dutch leading singer Greetje Kauffeld's trio, Jan Menu toured Europe and the United States, and recorded three CD's.

For 11 years Menu was a member of the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw.

He worked with a.o. Jesse van Ruller, Pierre Courbois, Willem Breuker, Loek Dikker, en Gary Smulyan. Other notable performances include the Mingus Big Band European tour 1994.

He has been a member of Laura Fygi's band for the past 18 years, and has intensively toured and recorded with this internationally acclaimed vocalist.

In 2005 Jan participated in Fay Claassen's successful project Two Portraits of Chet Baker, as baritone saxophonist, as well as co-producer and arranger. The double CD as well as the concerts have been very well received internationally, especially in the U.S. and Japan.

In December 2008 his first cd as a leader, titled Mulligan Moods with a.o. Jesse van Ruller, was released in Japan and The Netherlands. On this cd Menu renders his vision of known and less well-known compositions by Gerry Mulligan. In November 2010 Menu released his second solo album, titled Dutch Songbook. Inspired by the American popular songs, better known as 'The Great American Songbook', which have played a crucial role in the evolution of jazz music, this cd is the result of his quest together with pianist Jasper Soffers to find Dutch songs that have the ingredients to become a jazz standard: a personal 'Dutch Songbook'.

DIG d'DIZ	ONE	1992
DIG d'DIZ	Meets the Mondriaan Kwartet	1997
DIG d'DIZ	ONE TOO	2009
Jan Menu	: Mulligan Moods	2008
Greetje Kauffeld	: On My Way To You	1989
	: European Windows	1992
	: The Real Thing	1994
Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw	: 30 jaar Sesjun ( with the Four Freshmen)	2003
	: Tribute to Ray Charles	2005
	: Riffs 'n Rhythms	2007
Jesse van Ruller	: Herbs, Balms and Spices	1998
The Winners	: Tribute to Wessel Ilcken	1990
Laura Fygi	: At Ronnie Scott's	2003
	: Live at North Sea Jazz (DVD)	2003
	: Rendez-Vous	2007
Herman Brood	: Back on the Corner	1999
Fay Claassen	: Two Portraits of Chet Baker	2006
Rembrandt Frerichs	: Selfportait	2007
	: Ordem e Progresso	2009
Pierre Courbois	: Unsquare Roots	2000
Zijlstra	: Samen in Zee	2011
Gerrie van der Klei	: Lovers & Friends	2012

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With guitarist Maarten van der Grinten and bass player Jan Voogd, Jan Menu co-leads the chamber jazz trio DIG d'DIZ, for almost 20 years. DIG d'DIZ is commonly seen as one of the most interesting Dutch groups, combining traditional and avant-garde jazz with a wide range of musical influences in a chamber music-like setting. Compositions originate from almost anything, and find their final form by improvising. Original compositions, known material, jazz, classical as well as pop music (like a movement from the 4th part of Mahler's First Symphony, or Strange Effect by sixties pop idol Dave Berry) are used as starting point. This approach brought the trio to venues of diverse signature; from the Bimhuis, Amsterdam to the Musee d'Art Moderne, Paris. And from the North Sea Jazz Festival to the prestigious Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. The trio played and recorded with the Mondriaan String Quartet, a combination underlining the unique style of DIG d'DIZ: contemporary chamber music with jazz roots.

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Jan Menu played and recorded with a.o. Jesse van Ruller, Pierre Courbois, Willem Breuker, Loek Dikker, Rein de Graaff, Gary Smulyan, Dutch pop band De Dijk, as soloist with the Metropole Orchestra, Rembrandt Frerichs and Lew Tabackin. Other notable performances include the Mingus Big Band European tour 1994.

For 11 years (1996-2007) Jan Menu was a member and producer/manager of the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, Holland's foremost big band and as such worked with a variety of musicians, ranging from Elvin Jones to Jessye Norman, to name a few.

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As a producer he participated in numerous projects with Dutch and international artists. For Laura Fygi Menu produced her latest cd 'The Best Is Yet To Come' (2011).

He initiated the revival of the famous Night Jazz Concerts at the Concertgebouw in 2007 en 2008.

Also, Menu was (2001-2010) co-founder and member of the jury of one of Holland's most important jazz awards, the Deloitte Jazz Award.

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DIG DIZ MUSIC