

Thelema Trio...



...Press kit

"Their orchestral style incorporates energetic sounds of rock and jazz, making them one of the most original modern ensembles in the world."

Chris Bills
(press review of the 27th New Music and Art Festival, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA)

... Coming from three very different backgrounds – a dream childhood in Peru, an existential journey through the landscape of Flanders and countless voyages to breathtaking wonders of nature – Marco Antonio Mazzini, Peter Verdonck and Ward De Vleeschhouwer met in the heart of Ghent, at the Conservatoire of Music. This was not only the moment when they discovered each other's fascination for experimenting and storytelling with an enormous range of sound colors. It was also a meeting of three minds intrigued by the many diverse ways in which people give their lives color, sound, meaning and emotion in a specific part of the world.

From these shared passions, a musical trio was born: the Thelema Trio. Follow the trio on a journey through different worlds, times, scents and emotions with music that is intimate and understated one minute and wildly extrovert the next. The sounds of the piano, clarinets and saxophone will be your guides, weaving themselves into exciting carpets of sound and whisking you off on voyages of discovery. And it is worth remembering that these are voyages the Thelema Trio have made literally, as well.

Quite simply, the trio's first recording has been brought together from all over the world. After long evenings of composing, listening, playing and arguing, the first concert was held in De Link in Tilburg (Netherlands). It was followed by concerts and guest appearances in Belgium and abroad, for all kinds of events from traditional festivals to avant-garde theatre productions. With each concert, the Thelema Trio tries to extend its repertoire even further, to find new interpretations and to communicate with the location. This means that each Thelema Trio concert is an exciting, challenging, broadening and innovating musical and visual experience for the three musicians as well as the audience.

Innovation aside...

Thelema too feel the need to bring out a 'traditional' album. After years of intercontinental wanderings, they have decided to capture the fleeting moments of their concerts on a disc with their first full CD. And it's more than just a 'best of,' more than a collection of older pieces, more than the fruit of several years' hard labor in studios, cellars and other improvised rehearsal areas. The full T H E L E M A CD is the result of a three musicians growing towards mastery together. The past years of concert performances were a time of feeling our way, searching for and trying out each other's language and timbre; years of interpreting and composing. The result of this shared journey – or voyage of musical discovery – has been an exquisite musical dialogue of three souls with a passion for music. Three souls who have made music the language of their heart, being, deeds and dreams. A unique language whose unique and original sounds will surprise you, move you, challenge you and inspire you. The language of the Thelema Trio.

The Thelema Trio is ...

... an unusual ensemble that believes in music without boundaries. They want to promote and perform new music from the 21st century and use their unique instrumentation beyond the borders of their classical training, which has made them a voice for many contemporary composers.

Their program offers a wide range of styles, new performance techniques, and a chance for each performer to really shine and strut performance chops that seem endless and yet continued to grow with each new piece you hear. Within diverse contemporary composition styles going from a filmic blaze of colors, and an orchestral lushness to the energy and power of avant-garde, in which emotion and story are primary and thoughts can roam free.

The Thelema Trio are three graduates of the Ghent Conservatoire, where they studied chamber music with Marcel Lequeux, Filip Rathé and John Whitelaw. They have been performing together as Thelema since March 2003. In that very month, they won third prize in the Ghent Rotary Club's Biannual Chamber Music Contest. In their first year, they toured all over Belgium and the Netherlands, then performed in Città Della Pieve in Italy in August 2004 at the invitation of composer Luca Vanneschi, to perform a work he had composed especially for them. In October and November 2004, they toured the west coast of Peru. The Universidad San Marcos in Lima had invited the ensemble for concerts, master classes and lectures in Lima, Trujillo, Arequipa and Chiclaajo. They performed a number of concerts in these cities and worked with local musicians and composers.

In July 2005 they gave a concert at the International Clarinet Festival 2005 in Tama, Tokyo. They followed this with an extensive tour of the USA in October, where they were invited by the American Society Of Composers to perform American and Belgian work.

In November 2003, they also introduced a program consisting of traditional Peruvian and South American music, arranged by clarinetist Marco Antonio Mazzini. This music was also recorded as a demo CD in February 2004 with the title "Peruvian Music".

In March 2008 they had an extensive tour in the USA, playing in universities and festivals of Missouri, Wisconsin and Ohio. Beside those concerts they recorded in the University of Missouri a second full CD with only New American music.

These performances in Belgium and abroad include prestigious festivals such as November Music (Belgium - the Netherlands) , International Clarinet Festival in Tama, Tokyo (Japan), Artuatuca Festival (Belgium), National SCI Conference Greensboro, North-Carolina (USA), Annual New Music & Art Festival Bowling Green (USA) and International Festival of Contemporary Music in Lima (Peru).



Peter Verdonck was born in Herentals, Belgium on 1 September 1979. He started the study of the saxophone at the Music Academy of Turnhout with Mark Verdonck, which he continued at the Music department of the Heilig Graf Institute in Turnhout. After finishing his high school in 1998, he moved to Ghent to study with Willy Demey at the Royal Conservatory. There he took courses in composition with Lucien Posman as well and he graduated in June 2003 with highest honours for saxophone, chamber music and improvisation. In June 2007 Peter obtained the diploma for Postgraduate Concert Soloist at the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp with Hans De Jong. Furthermore he followed masterclasses with Hans De Jong, Rasscher Saxophone Quartet and Claude Delangle. Beside Thelema Trio, Peter plays with The Rhythm Junks, Desperate for sax and many other groups and ensembles. This brought him to halls all over Belgium, but also the Netherlands, Slovakia, Poland, Italy, France, Germany, Peru, the USA, China and Japan. In 2005 he performed as a soloist with the Belgian chamber orchestra Prima La Musica in the Concerto for Alto Saxophone, String Orchestra, Accordion and Percussion by Belgian composer Raoul De Smet. As a guest musician he worked with Spectra Ensemble and Champ d'Action. He composes chamber music for many different line-ups and he's a saxophone teacher. A number of his works have been recorded by Thelema Trio and Aranis. His compositions including the saxophone have been published by NacNacStudio.



As a recital soloist, concerto soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, clarinetist Marco Mazzini has performed internationally in such prestigious places as Carnegie Hall (New York), Tama Center (Tokyo), Paleis voor Schone Kunsten (Brussels), Bijloke Concert Hall (Belgium) and the Paris Conservatory (Paris). Marco Mazzini made his debut as a soloist with the Lima Philharmonic Orchestra, as a winner of the "Concurso Nacional de Conciertos" in Peru, under the baton of Miguel Harth-Bedoya. He has participated in many music festivals such as the International Clarinet Festivals (Arizona, Oklahoma, Utah), November Music Festival (Belgium, Netherlands), Festival internacional de Música Contemporánea (Lima), New Art Festival (Ohio), Ostrava Days (Czech Republic). In 2005, he represented Peru for the first time in the World Clarinet Festival in Tokyo. In Europe, he has collaborated with composers and musicians like Frederic Rzewski (USA), Dirk

Brossé (Belgium), Martin Smolka (Czech Republic), Lubica Salamon-Cekovská (Slovakia), SEM Ensemble (New York), Spiegel String Quartet (Belgium), Yuri Serov (Russia), Carlos Tarcha (Brazil), Viviane Spanoghe (Belgium) and the Ciurlionis String Quartet (Lithuania). Marco Mazzini is particularly interested in supporting the performance of contemporary music. As principal clarinetist of the Ostrava International Orchestra (Czech Republic), he performs works by composers such as Stockhausen, Xenakis, Ligeti, Nono and Cage. In 2006 Marco Mazzini founded Duo Dicto - a clarinet - piano duet - where he gets the opportunity to perform the most contrasting pieces by living Latin American composers, from tonal pieces for clarinet and piano, to solo works for contrabass clarinet and electronics. Recent musical project includes his new Kinsa Trio, a young ensemble dedicated to perform music written in Peru in the early XX century, and the international Rok Clarinet Quartet.

Since 2005 he is a BG France and Gonzalez reeds artist.



Ward De Vleschhouwer began his piano training at the E. Hullebroeck Academy in his hometown of Ghent. After graduating from the Academy, he continued his studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Ghent, studying piano with Claude Coppens and Daan Vandewalle, composition with Luc Brewaeys and Frank Nuyts, and improvisation with Peter Vermeersch. Further he followed piano masterclasses with Jan Michiels, Daniel Blumenthal, Mariko Kaneda and Tae Yoshioka. As a composer, Ward wrote for piano, chamber music and works for different ethnic instruments. In 2003 he founded "A Tryst," an unusual project combining original compositions, traditional West African music and modern dance. In 2005 he received a commission from the theatre group NUNC to compose music for children for their new production 'Raisonnez', which won in 2008 a price for culture. Since 2005 he's NUNC's composer in residence. In 2006 he received a commission from the Fabuleus Youth Theatre to compose the music for their production "Forza". In 2008 Belgian scenarist and director Hugo Van Laere commissioned him to compose music for his successful production 'Voor Altijd!'. Ward also wrote for ensembles as Spectra Ensemble and Thelema Trio. Some of his work is published with HrdScr Editions. Ward is a member of COMAV. He is a member of ensembles such as Thelema Trio, Kinsa Trio and Duo Dicto. With these ensembles and as a soloist, Ward has played on prestigious festivals and renowned concert halls in Belgium (Flanders Festival, Bijloke concert hall and Ha' - Gent), the Netherlands (November Music), Italy, Japan (International Clarinet Festival in Tama Center), the USA (New Art and Music Festival Bowling Green - Ohio), Society of Composer Inc. National Conference, Greensboro-North Carolina), Peru (Festival internacional de Música Contemporánea - Lima), Switzerland (Paul Klee Museum - Bern), France (RIO festival) and Austria (Bösendorf Hall - Vienna).

Most important premieres and commissions for new pieces

- *Abbeye*, Peter Verdonck; first composition dedicated to the Thelema Trio.
- *Clarmaggeddon*, Peter Verdonck; one of the most successful works dedicated to the Thelema Trio, written specifically for these three individual musicians, with influences from rock and metal that constantly emphasizes the connection with the audience.
- *Graffiti*, Luca Vanneschi (Italy); premiere held in Italy (Citta della Piève) in the presence of the composer. This was the Thelema Trio's very first concert abroad.
- *Le retour du Golem*, Giorgio Colombo Taccani (Italy); the premiere was held at the Logos Tetraëder in Ghent, and this composition took us to the International Clarinet Festival 2005 in Tama, Tokyo.
- *Ghosts*, Burton Beerman (USA); premiered in Greensboro, North-Carolina in October 2005 and recorded on CD by the Thelema Trio in the USA in October 2006.
- *Peruvian Music*, Marco Antonio Mazzini arranged a complete concert program of Peruvian traditional music for the Thelema Trio.
- *Summer*, Dirk Brossé; as one of the most prominent contemporary Belgian composers, he gave Marco Antonio Mazzini permission to arrange this work for the Thelema Trio under his personal supervision.
- *Améleth*, Philémon Mukarno; probably the greatest challenge to date for the musicians of the Thelema Trio, which was written for the trio's entire collection of instruments at the time.
- *Refractions – Incantation*, Kevin Walczyk (USA); the two compositions by this composer have provided material for a triple concerto with a symphony orchestra that the Thelema Trio will premiere in 2008 during an American tour and possibly a European tour as well.
- *Nox*, Korneel Bernolet (Belgium); the Thelema Trio is also committed to Belgian composers, and this work written when the composer was only fifteen is living proof of our commitment.

- *Introverso*, Alvaro Zuñiga (Peru); after our first visit to Peru, this Peruvian composer was inspired to write for the Thelema Trio straight away. Contemporary Peruvian music is otherwise never played in Belgium, which makes the Thelema Trio pioneers.
- *Three Episcenic Dances*, Rafael Leonardo Junchaya (Peru); this composition was written for our second tour of Peru and was premiered in Lima, Peru in November 2005. It also features on the Thelema Trio CD.
- *Shadowing*, HyeKyung Lee (South-Korea); written for the special combination of alto saxophone and clarinet and premiered at the 27th New Art & Music Festival in Bowling Green, Ohio, USA. 19th-21st October 2006.
- *Neither from nor towards (ballade)*, Eric Honour (USA); this composition was written for our second tour of the USA and for the second full Cd.

The Thelema Trio's most important concerts

- Winner of the biannual chamber music contest held by the Ghent Rotary Club in the Rode Pomp in Ghent on 23rd March 2003.
- Recitals for "Young East Flemish Soloists," at the Provinciehuis in Ghent, 25th, 26th and 28th March 2004.
- Concert in the Citta della Piève theatre auditorium in Italy. This was the first concert of contemporary music to be held in the town. 27th August 2004.
- Fringe festival Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen in Groede, the Netherlands, 26th September 2004.
- First tour of Peru (concerts in Lima, Arequipa, Trujillo and Chiclayo). October 2004.
- Participation in the Second International Festival of Contemporary Music, Lima, Peru. November 2004.
- Concert for Contemporary Music Week at the Ghent Conservatoire. The Thelema Trio played as a special guest and was interviewed by the AVS television station. 14th February 2005.
- Gala concert organized by the King Boudewijn Foundation at the Handelsbeurs in Ghent, in the presence of Prince Filip and Princess Mathilde. 29th June 2005.
- Concert at the International Clarinet Festival, Tokyo, Japan. 20th-24th July 2005.
- Concert at the Festival For Young Talent at the Bijloke, Ghent. 11th September 2005.
- First tour of the USA (Alabama, North Carolina, Oregon). In North Carolina, the Thelema Trio was the only foreign group to play at the SCI festival (Society of Composers). In Alabama Thelema also played for several outreach programs in local schools and in Oregon they taught a master class as well as giving a concert.
- Concert at the Third International Festival of Contemporary Music, Lima, Peru. Thelema Trio was the only Belgian group to be invited. 4th November 2005.
- Guest ensemble at the 27th New Art & Music Festival in Bowling Green, Ohio, USA. 19th-21st October 2006.
- Concert at November Music, a festival of contemporary classical music, in's Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands. 19th November 2006.
- CD release on April 25 2007 in the Royal Conservatory of Ghent.
- Second tour of the USA (Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio). March – April 2008.

Upcoming projects

- Commission for a concerto for piano, clarinets, saxophones and orchestra, written especially for the Thelema Trio by the composer Kevin Walczyk. This triple concerto will be presented during an extended tour of the USA and Europe in May and October 2010.
- USA tour 2010, promoting the full CD 'Neither From nor Towards...'

Recordings:

- Thelema Trio demo CD 2003.
- Peruvian Music demo CD 2004.
- Live Performance demo CD 2004.
- First full CD 'THELEMA' 2006, international release in January 2007.

Harry Sparnaay about 'THELEMA...'

A good book should grab your complete attention right from the very first sentence. And I believe the same should happen with a CD: as soon as I hear the first notes, I want to have the feeling that I can't tear my ears away until I have heard it all. Ideally you should be able to listen to a CD as if you were at a concert. And this is what happens to me when I listen to the Thelema Trio's CD. It means never being tempted to skip ahead to the next track. Juan María Solare has you on the edge of your seat right from the start, and his piece is followed by music so varied that your attention never wanes. From colourful madness to the most intense music. From Italian lyricism to rhythms reminiscent of Stravinsky, from impressionism to insanity and back to meditation. It's a treat for the ears. And it is not just the compositions by Juan María Solare, Giorgio Colombo Tacconi, Luca Vanneschi, Ward De Vleeschhouwer, Philemon Mukarno, Korneel Berolet, Hans-Henrik Nordstrøm and Peter Verdonck that make this CD a pleasure to listen to, but above all the superb playing by the trio. If all new CD's could reach this high level, there would be far more reason to listen to contemporary music.

- Second full CD 'Neither From nor Towards...' 2008 - 2009, released on Innova Recordings.

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