



Laurent de WILDE

Jazz pianist, composer and writer, Laurent de Wilde was born in Washington in 1960. Raised in France from 1964, he joined the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1981, philosophy section. In 1983, during a music scholarship, he lived in New York at the Brooklyn campus of Long Island University. At the expiration of his scholarship six months later, he decided to settle permanently in New York. With the encouragement and advice of his elders, he started to perform in town and joined the trumpeter Eddie Henderson's regular band.

In 1987, he recorded the first of a series of four albums for Ida Records “**Off The Boat**” with soloists Eddie Henderson and Ralph Moore, accompanied by Ira Coleman on bass and Billy Hart on drums. In 1989, “**Odd And Blue**” is released with Coleman and Jack DeJohnette followed in 1990 by “**Colors of Manhattan**”, with Coleman, Henderson and Lewis Nash. Laurent then returned to Paris to settle but came back to New York in 1992 to record a trio album, “**Open Changes**”, with Coleman and Billy Drummond. The success of this record in 1993 earned him the Django Reinhardt prize, awarded in France to the best musician of the year. He then shared his time in Paris between his career as a leader that of a sideman with Barney Wilen, Aldo Romano or Andre Ceccarelli.

In 1995, Laurent de Wilde signed with Sony Jazz and recorded “**The Back Burner**”. In 1996, he published the book **Monk** (L'Arpenteur / Gallimard) on which he had worked for a long time, a biography of one of the most famous pianists and controversial figures in jazz history. The book was an immediate success, and joined in October 1997 the permanent Folio catalogue. He was also awarded the Charles Delaunay prize in 1996 as “best book about jazz” as well as the Pelleas Award. “Monk” has been translated and published in New York, London, Tokyo, Barcelona and Milan.

In 1997, Laurent de Wilde released his album in trio-quartet for Sony. “**Spoon-a-Rhythm**” earned him an award at the Victoires de la Musique in 1998 as “jazz artist of the year”. His trio toured intensively in Europe, United States and Japan for over two years. Laurent decided then to focus on the electronic revolution that radically redefines contemporary jazz. Meanwhile, he had joined the group of Ernest Ranglin, true founding father of Jamaican reggae and met with different music actors such as Samia, Cosmik Connection or Roudoudou.

The result is an album that claims for a mutation in jazz: “**Time For Change**” was released for Warner Jazz in 2000. The band (Flavio Boltro, Gael Horellou, Minino Garay, Jules Bikoko and Stephane Huchard) gave more than a hundred concerts in France and abroad. Enriched by this experience, Wilde went to studio again. In 2002 he recorded and released in spring 2003 “**Stories**” for Warner. His new group with DJ Ben on turntables and Julien Charlet on drums toured throughout 2003-2004. During the same period, Laurent wrote music for children programs on France 3 TV and has composed scores for several feature films for television on TF1 and France 2.

In fall 2004 de Wilde composed and recorded with his new band, **Organics**. The eponymous album was released by Nocturne. This group featured Gael Horellou on saxophone and computer, Philippe Bussonnet on bass and Yoann Serra on drums. That same year Laurent pursued his collaborations with André Ceccarelli (Dreyfus), Eddie Henderson (Marge) and Rick Margitza (Nocturne).

In February 2006, Laurent decided to turn back to the acoustic trio, and invited Laurent Robin (drums) and Darryl Hall (bass) to take a break from the electronics years. The result is an album rich in rhythms, “**The Present**” (Nocturne). The same year, Laurent met a slam artist whose album had just been out and was looking for a jazz pianist to take the band on the road. Impressed by the quality of the project, Laurent agreed and it was the beginning of the magnificent ascension of Abd Al Malik who would soon

be recognized as the new figure of slam. The band toured for two and a half years and has performed in more than 160 major halls around the world.

Between tours, de Wilde took the time to compare the two worlds he lived in for twenty years, and recorded the encounter of an acoustic piano and a computer: as a duet with the participation of Otisto 23, Laurent produces sounds from his piano (with or without the keyboard) that Otisto records in real time before looping and processing them, building the musical form as it unfolds. The album, released in September 2007 (Nocturne), called "**PC Pieces**", takes the form of a small book in which Laurent describes the long road leading to this object. Inside the CD, a dual disc offers the music on one side and video on the other: videos synchronized to the music and a filmed concert.

In 2010, the project extended into a second volume, entitled "**FLY!**" enriched by the experience of touring and playing with this group for two years. The relationship between the computer and the piano is purified; the music is more instinctive, more emotional and more rhythmic. Added to the group is videographer Nico Ticot (XLR Project), a true magician of colours and volumes, matching the music with dreamlike precision.

Meanwhile, Laurent has produced and toured with the Diane Tell Boris Vian Project ("Dr. Boris and Mr. Jazz", Celluloid, 2009) and has produced four volumes of Tales from Africa with Souleymane Mbodj for Milan editions. He has also published short stories (Jazz Me Blue, 2009, Au Duc des Lombards, 2010) and participated in the making of two broadcasting programs for Arte TV around Thelonious Monk and Charles Mingus.

Laurent de Wilde is presently working with French actor Jacques Gamblin on a show mixing literature read by Jacques and music written and led by Laurent, and the project is currently touring in France. Laurent has also been the host and narrator of the 2012 Victoires du Jazz Ceremony (the French Grammy Awards). He collaborates with France Musique and TSF Jazz radio channels, he is a regular contributor to Jazz Magazine.

The same year, he released a new acoustic trio album "**Over the Clouds**" which features Ira Coleman on bass and Clarence Penn on drums in April 2012. Available through Gazebo/ l'Autre Distribution, the record achieved great success and appreciation among the audience and the press: Over The Clouds is awarded Choc de Jazz Magazine, 4 clés Télérama, best french jazz album TSF jazz radio, Choc of the year 2012 Jazz Magazine, FIP radio jazz selection, Telerama selection of the Year...

In 2014, Laurent recorded the third volume of his experience with Otisto 23, "**Fly Superfly!**", inviting guests for the occasion (Guillaume Perret, Bijane Chemirani, Nico Giemza Tico). At the same time, Gazebo label opened its doors to another artist, saxophonist Géraldine Laurent, whose multi-awarded album "**At Work**" was one of the best sales in instrumental jazz of the year.

In March 2016, Laurent published a book on which he had been working for the past four years: **Les Fous du Son**. Immediately recognized as a reference on the subject, this saga of keyboard inventors of the twentieth century, full of information and easy to read, has been picked by a wide variety of readers.

In May 2016, Laurent de Wilde has just completed a new recording, produced by Gazebo label and One Drop: a two-pianos album with African legend Ray Lema, for which the two men wrote an original repertoire. "**Riddles**" will be out in October 2016.

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