

CHRIS JARRETT

Chris Jarrett, son of a Slavic family, was born in 1956 in Allentown, PA and grew up in the woods of the Appalachians. He began to play the piano at the age of 13 and got lessons free of charge from the great Austrian pianist Vincent Ruzicka. After finishing school he studied piano and music history at the Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio. Unhappy with the elitist attitude there and penniless, he started his wandering years. He worked and lived as a shrimp fisherman on the Gulf of Mexico, factory worker in Texas, office clerk in New York City and kitchen help in London. These jobs provided his basic expenses and at the same time gave him insight into diverse ways of living. He ended up in Europe.

His career begins in 1985 in Oldenburg, Germany. There he dedicates himself again to music, converting his experiences of his youth and wandering years into music. During this time his first records ("Dance On The Volcano", "Outcry") as well as the ballet music "For Anne Frank" and his first symphonic work ("... Loves Me Not") appear.

From 1988 to 1989 he teaches at the Carl-Von-Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, gets involved into more live performing and composes film music, such as "Happy End" (Dir. W. Pfeiffer), and the choreodrama "Long Play" for the National Theatre Subotica under Nada Kokotovic.

From 1989 to 1994 Chris Jarrett performs in Poland, Italy, the USA, and the Soviet Union. His CD "Fire" is released and he writes the film music for "Faust" (Dir. W. Murnau).

From 1994 to 1996 he tours Europe with his film music to the silent movie "Battleship Potemkin" (Dir. Sergej Eisenstein). He works on his opera "Donne - A Poetic Opera" and his CD "Live in Tübingen" is released. On the occasion of an award to the German President Richard von Weizsäcker he performs his dance theater composition "Hands". The collaboration with D. Petzold, G. Pietsch and H. Naehring results into a composition for declaimer and ensemble called "Wege" ("Paths").

In summer 1996 he performs in Tunisia with the lute player Zin-El-Abidine in concerts and TV shows. These concerts result in the formation of the international group "Les Musiciens du Monde" with base in Tunis, Tunisia.

In 1997, aside from continuing concert appointments in Sweden, Denmark, Germany and France, Chris Jarrett receives a commission for a "Gesamtkunstwerk" together with the German artist Isabelle Federkeil. This piece utilizes sculptures and paintings of this artist within church walls together with Jarrett's oratorium for chorus, organ and 3 trombones: "Salvations 3?" (Original title: "Erlösungen 3").

In the Ukraine After several concerts in Texas, where he becomes acquainted with the Mexican guitarist Roberto Limon, he begins to write a guitar concerto.

He also finishes recording sessions with the famous Hungarian violinist Zoltan Lantos and completes an extremely successful solo-piano-tour of the concert halls of the Ukraine.

In 1998, besides his normal concert schedule, he finishes 2 larger compositions: "Spes Unica" (for 2 singers and chamber ensemble) and "The Ommmmm Cantata" (for women's choir and rock band).

In 1999, he continues touring as a soloist, but also concertizes with such musicians as Zoltan Lantos, Ramesh Shotham and Urna Chahar Tugchi. He also dedicates 1999/2000 to the completion of his opera "John Donne", which hinders more extensive concertizing.

Chris Jarrett tours in Poland, Germany, Yugoslavia and France in 2001/2002, but dedicates himself to the foundation of the Chris Jarrett Trio as well.

Along with such musicians as W. Dauner and D. R. Davies, the trio concertizes for the opening of the Theaterhaus Stuttgart in April, 2003. This year also sees the premiere of Shakespeare's Romeo and Julia in the Young Person's Theater, Düsseldorf (Germany) under Giudo Schumacher's direction and with new stage music by Chris Jarrett. During a solo-tour of Serbia in November, Chris Jarrett plays in the renowned Kolarac Hall, Belgrade ("Carnegie Hall of the Balkan") where he is rewarded by a thunderously thankful audience.

The commission of the Greek pianist Joula Zografou leads to the composition of "Suite Grecque". This Suite (scored for 2 pianos, clarinet und percussion) is based on the dance-rhythms of traditional Greek music, but leads them directly into the 21st century by means of new harmonisations and modern variation techniques. First performances take place in Athens, Thebes and Alexandroupolis. Solo and trio concerts take Chris Jarrett to Austria, Switzerland, Bavaria and Morocco in May of 2004. In September, the premiere of the artistic documentary-film "Geträumtes Leben - Gelebter Traum" ("Dreamed Life - Living Dream" - Karl-Heinz Heilig, director / Chris Jarrett, music) takes place. The end of the year takes him to Cairo, Egypt where "Suite Grecque" is performed in the Opera House.

The beginning of 2005 sees the founding of a new ensemble: **Four Free**. Three of France's most talented improvising musicians (Jean-Christophe Kaufmann, electric guitar; Gautier Laurent, double-bass; and Pascal Gully, drums) and Chris Jarrett make up this "chamber-hardcore" ensemble with it's own very special sound. The same year witnesses the creation of a piece written especially for performance during the soccer world championship in Germany in 2006. "Viertelfinale" (semifinale) for 11 strings and conductor/referee consists of motives translating a football game (and not without humor) into the language of contemporary music.

His music derives from an urge to communicate. The music is as diverse as his ideas, which he transforms into music. He ignores any dictates of style.

Chris Jarrett utilizes the structures of classical music and the freedom of jazz improvisation. He combines the love for forms of development with jazz energy.

The spectrum of his expression is wide: wild, rhythmical, ironic, epic, melancholic, bizarre, mystical and jazzy.

He has been inspired by diverse musical styles from different times and composers. Great influences to be heard in his music come from Johannes Ockeghem, Sergej Prokofiev, Charles Mingus and Frank Zappa.

Chris Jarrett's music does not specifically target either lovers of classical music or jazz.

His listeners are the center of his live performances and he wants to excite them, provoke thoughts in them and communicate with them.

RELEASES:

Solo-Piano:

Tanz auf dem Vulkan (1985)

Aufruf / Outcry (1987)

Fire (1991)

Live in Tübingen (1995)

Scenes & Preludes (1998) Short Stories for
Piano (2001)

Ensembles:

"Chris Jarrett Trio": New World Music (2002)

"Les musiciens du monde": Tajalliat Live in
Tunesien (1998)

Four Free Quartett: Free Jazz mit Dagobert
(2006)