

D'HARMIO



ARTISTIC PROCESS

We strongly believe that research, experimentation and practice all make it possible to create a new, original repertoire dedicated to our harmonica ensemble. Our goal is to go beyond the musical stereotypes typically associated with this instrument, such as the blues or the “Quebec rigadoon”. In other words, musically speaking, this harmonica ensemble is the fruit of our pooling together our knowledge of traditional Jewish and Quebecer music, jazz arrangement, composing and improvising. We aspire to create original music with an authentic artistic signature that is rooted in yet draws from the culture of each of the group’s players, so that we may give rise to a current and intercultural sound born from our common place of residence – Montréal.

WHO IS D’HARMO?

D’Harmo is strictly composed of harmonica players. This type of band rarely seen and heard in Quebec – or globally, for that matter – truly offers a one-of-a-kind show. **D’Harmo** performs an original roster of songs composed by its members and played using various types of harmonicas, for instance the bass, chromatic, diatonic and chord harmonicas, as well as the harmonetta. Our music inspired from Klezmer, Quebec folklore, jazz and classical music combines modernity and tradition, eclecticism and pop.

D’Harmo’s Cédric Houdayer, Pascal “Per” Veillette, Samuël Caron and Lévy Bourbonnais are undeniably among the best harmonica players in Canada. They all share solid professional experience as performers, teachers and composers. They studied music with the harmonica as their focus, and are actively involved in promoting the completeness of this instrument in the community. They have gathered around this ever-popular instrument, whose possibilities yet remain largely unknown, to fuse their talent and professionalism, giving birth to a united harmonica ensemble that creates and plays innovative and original music.

OUR STORY IN A NUTSHELL

The inception of **D'Harmo** was back in the summer of 2010. The founding members Lévy Bourbonnais, Pascal “Per” Veillette, Samuel Caron and Jason Rosenblatt, who has since been replaced by Cedric Houdayer, came together to create original music for a harmonica ensemble. As early as September 2010, the group performed at the Toronto Ashkenaz Festival and enjoyed great success under the name “Bâtards de Bouche” – which loosely translates into Mouth Bastards (also close to musique à bouche, the colloquial name for the harmonica). But in order to better appeal to the French-speaking audience – or was it to sound more like good guys? – they ultimately changed the name to **D'Harmo**. One year later, the group produced their first album, **D'Harmo**. They were awarded the Prix de la Diversité 2011 by Conseil des arts de Montréal for a special project titled **D'Harmo Monde** and the Prix ROSEQ/RIDEAU 2012.

THE SHOW

The **D'Harmo** show is much more than a simple concert – it's a performance. The authenticity of this ensemble leaves no one unmoved, as the four players breathe out-and-in in their instrument with a passion that generates a physical, dynamic and energetic aura on stage. With its original repertoire, **D'Harmo** proposes a spellbinding concert flavoured with humour and virtuosity that genuinely compel ear and fibre to rediscover the harmonica.

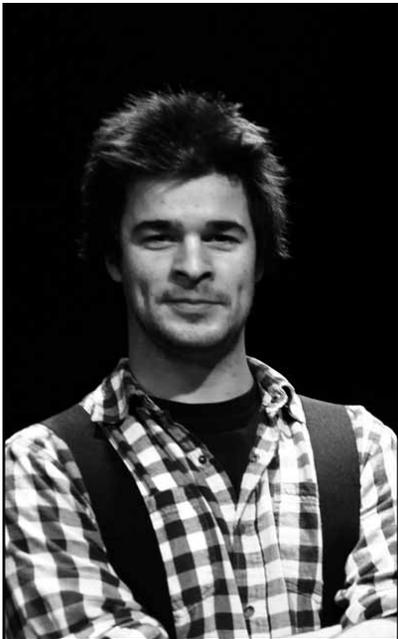


PASCAL PER



He has been a part of every moment enhanced with the harmonica in the performing arts in Quebec and in France, but also teaches, sharing his passion with new generations. After studies in popular music and university training in jazz interpretation, he carved his place on the traditional and actual music scenes, marking them with his rhythms and talent alongside Les Tireux de Roches, among others, in Fred Pellerin's tales and movies, and with Kamendja, Les Roturiers, Michel Comeau Jazz and Ganesh Anandan, to name only a few.

CÉDRIC



Cédric Houdayer is five when he is first introduced to music through the traverse flute. For nearly twelve years, he studies and plays classical repertoire. As a teenager, he discovers blues, jazz and mostly, improvisation. Through blues, he comes in contact with the harmonica. He casts his flute aside and develops a passion for the small instrument. In 2008, he graduates from Cégep de Drummondville with a degree in interpretation. Since that day, he has been exploring traditional music from here and abroad, manouche swing and music from Eastern Europe, trying to integrate harmonica into them efficiently. He splits his time between teaching and participating in various musical projects

SAMUËL



Whether as a freelancer, as a dance company back-up musician, as a coach on a movie set or as the head of Horloge Grand-Père, Samuël always has his harmonica in hand. Actively involved in the musical community, this harmonica player and founding member of the Montréal Harmonica Institute was the instigator of the “Harmonica a cappella” nights, in addition to having hosted the Jazz Festival’s Salon des instruments de musique de Montréal many times over. Ever since his harmonica pop-jazz studies, Samuël has stood out as a multi-instrumentalist specialized in the various flavours of harmonica – diatonic, chromatic or orchestral, like the bass or chord harmonica, even the harmonetta... No variation escapes his attention.

LÉVY



Someone who is obsessed and bewitched, a mad lover, crazy over the harmonica – these are ways of describing Lévy Bourbonnais. But this much is clear: we are talking about more than a passion for the harmonica. For years, he has devoted his life, his professional career and his time to this mythical blues instrument, which has since entered the musical world as a whole. Lévy, who studied at McGill University in Montreal, became the first harmonica player to earn a bachelor’s degree in jazz. He left for the United States to perfect his skills alongside renowned artists such as Howard Levy, Mike Turk and Grégoire Maret. For a year, he lived in Argentina to conduct a multimedia project based on the harmonica. His professional career has taken him to various countries, including Canada, the United States and Argentina, accompanying many artists. He also founded Onica.org, a non-profit organization devoted to initiation to music through the teaching of the harmonica to children from underprivileged backgrounds. Lévy Bourbonnais’s music, peaceful and soothing, consists of gentle melodies that encourage meditation and attentive listening.

CRITICS

Quebecers are viewed as pioneers when it comes to freestyle skiing and synchronized swimming... And now they lead the way for harmonica ensembles?! Indeed, these types of bands are rare on the planet, but we can now count on our group to save the day : an awesome foursome of guys, passionate for the warbles of the chord harmonica, bass harmonica, diatonic and chromatic harmonicas and even the harmonetta, an unusual harmonica that resembles parts of an accordion because of its extra buttons. D’Harmo can evoke a distant cousin of jazz. We prefer this semantic shift to better explain; more like a type of *passé composé* applied to our musical approach that consists of taking the already existing forms of old folk songs, a supply of French-Canadian Celtic and Ashkenazy Jewish (Eastern European) inspiration, and dashes of classical music and contemporary jazz. Literally, it’s a goldmine of harmonizing harmonicists..

- *Alain Brunet, Lapresse*

Four harmonica players harmonize and improvise brilliantly across Jewish traditions, jazz, rag, minimalist music, minuet, waltz, tango, reel and beyond. But this foursome always expands on the original form of the genres it leverages. Then there is blowing, breathing, the exchange of roles and the instruments . . . The music swings and wails, ultimately influenced by dance tunes of the 2010s for big finishers. The combination is lush.

— *Yves Bernard, Le Devoir*

“Oh, forebears of mine,” as mushy-jazz-destroyer Boris Vian would have said, “how beautiful an album this is.” While the harmonica is barely heard in the world of jazz – maybe except for the works of tutelary figure Toots Thielemans, Howard Levy, Stevie Wonder from time to time, and the youngest of them all, Grégoire Maret – blues and traditional music are reaping their part of the lion’s share. In a certain way, D’Harmo creates a bridge between all of these styles with the small free-reed instrument . . . An ever-beautiful trek. A bit of jazz, but mostly evocative poetry. Exhilarating!

— *Christophe Rodriguez, Sortie Jazz Night*

SHOWS

2013

- 12/01 - Official showcase APAP 2013
- 27/12 - Opening Yves Lambert Trio, Montreal
- 20/12 - Théâtre de la Ville, Longueuil
- 08/12 - Maison de la Culture Villeray, Montréal
- 01/12 - Église St. James The Apostle, Salle Shatford Hall, Montréal
- 17/11 - L'Anglicane, Lévis
- 09/11 - Official showcase FrancoFête Acadie, Moncton
- 06/11 - Opening for Bratsch, Coup de Coeur Francophone ,Club Soda, Montréal
- 13/13 - Official showcase OCFF, Mississauga
- 10/10 - Official showcase ROSEQ, Rimouski
- 25/10- 26/10 - Opening for Bratsch, Québec et Sherbrooke
- 29/08 - Upstairs Jazz Club, Montréal
- 04/07- 05/07 - Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, Savoy du Metropolis
- 08/05 - Official showcase - La Grande Rencontre, Montréal
- 29/02 - Opening de Genticorum , Scène Sun Life, Monument National
- 15/02 - Vitrine officielle Bourse Rideau, Palais Montcalm, Québec

2011

- 15/11 - M pour mondial, l'Astral, montréal
- 11/10 - L'Off festival de jazz de montréal
- 13/06 - Toronto jazz festival
- 12/03 - Maison de la culture ahuntsic, montréal

2010

- 05/09 - Ashkenaz festival, toronto
- 01/09 - Montréal Jewish Festival

AWARD

- 2012 - Roseq/Rideau award
- 2011 - Prix de la diversité - Art Council of Montreal

DISCOGRAPHY

- 2011 - *D'HARMO*, PRODUCED BY D'HARMO

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