



Presentation

By the age of 12, **Marc Touchette** already knew that music would play a primary role in his life. Despite his young age, he displayed a real talent for composition which led him, well before his admission at Cegep St-Laurent in classical guitar, to form different groups essentially performing his creations. At St-Laurent, he studied with Abel Nagytothy Toth and soon turned to jazz guitar under the tutelage of Sam Balderman, and continued his studies at McGill University in jazz performance.

Freelancer for various recording studios, private teacher since 1978, Marc Touchette continued to hone his craft. He participated in major events such as "Les FrancoFolies de Montréal" and Montreal's 350th Anniversary Celebrations and performed with renowned artists: Michel Dubeau, Mario Pelchat, Ima, Bob Harrisson Blues Band as well as Denise Rachel for the recording of an album produced by Kat Dyson.

Although this seasoned guitarist is known for his versatility, jazz is his passion. In 1995 he started **Prise 13**, a formation that performed every night, in an establishment on Ste-Catherine street, for eight consecutive years during the "Festival International de Jazz de Montréal".

Marc Touchette has always surrounded himself with talented professional musicians but in 2002, he gathered the explosive combo which would render all the spirit and worth of his works. Together, they also took part in the recordings for the new specialized radio station Couleur Jazz (CKLX-FM, 91.9 Montreal) in the fall of 2004.

His self titled debut album; **Prise 13**, offers vocal & instrumental jazz compositions with musical genres ranging from swing to latin, blues to funk, as well as jazz-rock, delivering themes of unparalleled originality. This album certainly brings together the styles of music which have influenced him throughout his career.

Blending with audacity an efficient accompaniment and a solid rhythmic section with unbridled improvisations, **Prise 13** features complex melodies that do not lend themselves to easy lyric writing. Such material posed a challenge that singer and lyricist **Nathalie Rochon** achieved with brilliance, juxtaposing to these melodies, some of them composed 20 years ago, modern and youthful texts.

About Nathalie Rochon:

While pursuing her studies in jazz voice at Concordia University with Jeri Brown and Madeleine Thériault, she teaches private study and participates in recording sessions for album productions as lead and backup singer. Quoting Jeri Brown: "Her voice possesses a warm and sensual quality with a surprising deep and present tone. Even though she was not featured as an improviser on the album she nevertheless masters the art of improvisation with an astonishing easiness. She can also count on her equally powerful voice when the occasion demands it, as is the case on the funkier songs of the album". She continues to write lyrics for **Prise 13** instrumental pieces as well as those found on the album for live performances.

About the other members of the group:

At their side is the highly skilled drummer **Gilbert Trahan**, member of **Prise 13** since 1995. His subtle and inventive playing, at times powerful and energetic, makes him one of the pillars of this group. Following his studies under the aegis of Lou Williamson, he honed his craft next to American drummers Robbie Gonzalez and Paul Motian. Since then, he has taken part in many recording sessions for the production of albums, signature themes, short and medium-length films, radio broadcasted performances, as well as plays and videos.

He has been active on the local and regional music scene at numerous events such as several editions of the "Festival International de Jazz de Montréal", the "FrancoFolies de Montréal", the "Rimouski Festi Jazz International", Montreal's 350th Anniversary Celebrations, the "Festival Franco-Ontarien" and the "Sommet des peuples", to name a few.

On tenor saxophone, **Yvan Belleau** takes place in the midst of the group. Multi-instrumentalist, he studied the clarinet with Gilles Moisan and later with Robert Crowley at "l'Université de Montréal". Afterwards, the saxophone (tenor, alto & soprano) became his main instrument from which many collaborations emerged. Since 1990, he participated in every edition of the "Festival International de Jazz de Montréal" as well as several other events in Canada. In the 2002 "FIJM" edition, he was classified as one of the finalists of the prestigious General Motors competition.

Amongst his most important achievements is his contribution to album recordings, videos, documentaries, radio and television shows, film scores (Laura Cadieux 2, L'Ange de Goudron, Undying Love), music for plays (The french version of A Streetcar Named Desire) as well as numerous collaborations with Daniel Vachon, jazz producer for Radio-Canada's radio station. In 2002, he paid tribute to Richard Rogers on Radio-Canada's radio program "Silence... on Jazz". He was heard again that following year, on that same program, representing Canada within the framework of "L'Union Européenne des radios et des télévisions", a major event in Budapest, Hungary, and on another well known Radio-Canada program "Un Air de Jazz" hosted by Gilles Archambault.

With his at times mellow and biting timbre, his grand mastery of the language, Yvan Belleau is unquestionably a major asset of **Prise 13**.

Benoit Dufresne completes this quintet. An outstanding bassist, he astonishes with his agility and know-how. Benoit Dufresne studied jazz and pop performance at "l'Université de Montréal". Later, as the leader of a funk-jazz group, he performed yearly at the "Festival International de Jazz de Montréal" from 1985 to 1992. He played, among others, with several renowned artists such as Garou, Robert Charlebois and Sylvain Cossette. Also a music teacher and double bass player, he actively performs on the Montreal music scene and takes part in recording sessions (Bémol 9, Kim Richardson).

Along with drummer Gilbert Trahan, they developed a remarkable complicity, thus rendering infallible interpretations of complex rhythms and accompaniments for this overall talented formation.

That's **Prise 13**!

Musically yours,

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