

A close-up photograph of pianist Jean-Michel Pilc. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt. His head is bowed, and his right hand is raised in the air, palm facing forward, with fingers slightly spread. The background is dark and out of focus. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face and hand. The text 'JEAN-MICHEL PILC' is overlaid in white serif font across the middle of the image.

JEAN-MICHEL PILC

Solo Piano

A portrait of Jean-Michel Pilc, a middle-aged man with grey hair and a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

JEAN-MICHEL PILC

Praised for his improvisations, pianist and composer Jean-Michel Pilc has performed with numerous jazz giants including Roy Haynes, Billy Hart, Michael Brecker, Dave Liebman, Jean Toussaint, Marcus Miller, John Abercrombie, and the Mingus Dynasty & Big Band, among others. He worked with Harry Belafonte as his musical director and pianist and performed a duet with the legendary opera singer Jessye Norman.

An active solo performer on the international scene, Jean-Michel has released four critically-acclaimed solo piano records: *Follow Me* (2004), *Essential* (2011), *What Is This Thing Called?* (2015), and his most recent solo double CD, *Parallel* (2018). He regularly performs in trio with both Montreal and NYC-based ensembles at top venues throughout both cities.

A dedicated pedagogue, Jean-Michel founded the Improvisation Workshop Project with Rémi Bolduc, Kevin Dean and Jean-Nicolas Trottier, an educational research project funded by the Fonds de Recherche du Québec - Société et Culture (FRQSC). In September 2015, he was named Associate Professor at The Schulich School of Music of McGill University in Montreal.



Press Reviews

"How everything organically develops out of itself and is carried on in the most amazing way, how Pilc lets a whole world of moods pass us by, how he holds out long arcs of tension and at the same time shows a wonderful sense for structure, that belongs to the great moments of jazz."
- Tom Fuchs

"This music was so intuitively crafted, it would have been virtually impossible to tell it was off-the-cuff, had Pilc not announced it from the stage." - Daniel J. Kushner

"Jean-Michel Pilc's musings in particular were chromatic and impressionistic, filled with fragmented tunes. Essential melodic motives and stylistic touchstones were intact, but he seemed more fixated on brief gestures than fully formed jazz exposition." - Daniel J. Kushner

"Avec ce double album, le pianiste démontre une nouvelle fois qu'il est un artiste accompli, possédant son instrument comme personne et développant un monde polychrome d'une formidable variété." -Ludovic Florin

Improv Worksho Project

Based in Montreal, Canada, the Improvisation Workshop Project (IWP) brings together musicians of all backgrounds and experience levels (students and professional musicians, jazz and classical) to explore the tradition of jazz as “improvised chamber music” based on collective improvisation. Weekly playing sessions assemble different casts of musicians to try new ideas and interpret new material brought by project lead Jean-Michel Pilc, team members Rémi Bolduc and Kevin Dean, and other participants. Using an “improvisation as instant composition” approach and the collective improvisational process, the IWP investigates how such diverse disciplines as composition, orchestration, musical interpretation and improvisation combine organically into a coherent whole in jazz music, and also how a diverse lineup of musicians can hold natural and meaningful musical conversations. The project's innovative research approach involves thorough documentation of the creative improvisation process, including post-playing session journals logged by all participants, allowing them to share their thoughts on the artistic process. By drawing from musicians' insider perspectives, this archive provides a unique research resource for the study of improvisation-composition within a variable medium-size jazz ensemble. The IWP is funded by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture (FRQSC)



Upcoming Performances

December 4, 2018: Improvisation Workshop project, Café Résonance,
Montréal, Canada

December 18, 2018: Improvisation Workshop project, Café Résonance,
Montréal, Canada

January 10, 2019: Improvisation Workshop project, Jazz Education Network's
Annual conference, Reno, NV

February 27, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc solo, PDX Jazz Fest, Portland, OR

February 28, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc solo, Blue Whale, Los Angeles, CA

March 13, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc trio, Tanna Schulich Music Hall, Montréal,
Canada

March 16, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc solo, Yardbird Suite, Edmonton, Canada

May 31, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc trio, Green Mill, Chicago, IL

June 2, 2019: Jean-Michel Pilc solo, PianoForte Chicago, Chicago, IL

Select Past Performances

August 29, 2018; Jean-Michel Pilc Solo piano, Dièse Onze, Montréal,
Canada

August 23, 2018: Dan Faulk, sax - Jean-Michel Pilc, piano - Mike De
Masi, bass - Andre White, drums, Dièse Onze, Montréal, Canada

June 27, 2018: Jean-Michel Pilc, piano - Rémi-Jean Leblanc, bass -
Jim Doxas, drums, TD Toronto Jazz Festival, Toronto, Canada