

# PHILIP CATHERINE - biography

Philip Catherine has been on the forefront of the European jazz scene since the sixties. His work great artists like Chet Baker, NHOP, Stéphane Grappelli, Charles Mingus, Dexter Gordon, Larry Coryell, Tom Harrell, his unique approach and sound, his dedication to music have been important and influential.

Philip Catherine was born in London in 1942. Being from a musical family (his grandfather was first violin with the London Symphony Orchestra), he developed a musical ear from an early age. He took up the guitar after having discovered Brassens and Django Reinhardt, and started listening to all the great jazzmen of the period. Very soon he had the opportunity to meet some of them, and often accompanied them when they played in Belgium where his family had moved to by then.

At the age of 18 he toured Europe with Lou Bennett and in 1971 Jean-Luc Ponty asked him to join his quintet.

In 1971 he made his first record under his name, **"Stream"**, followed in 1974-75 by **"September Man"** and **"Guitars"**. Jazz amateurs all over the world discovered not only a brilliant guitarist, but also a talented composer : themes like "Homecomings" and "Nairam" have become famous.

Philip Catherine has played in the most prestigious concert halls, from the Berlin Philharmonic to the Carnegie Hall, from the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam to the Olympia and Salle Pleyel in Paris and the Palais des Beaux-Arts of Brussels. But he still loves to play in jazz clubs occasionally because of the proximity with the audience.

Philip Catherine has received many awards, among others the "BIRD" Prize (1990), together with Stan Getz, at the North Sea Festival, the "Django D'Or" (1998) in Paris for 'Best European Jazz Artist', the ZAMU 'Lifetime Achievement Award' (2001) and 'Best Musician' (2002). In 2002 he received the title "Maestro Honoris Causa" from the Antwerp Conservatory (title which has been given previous years to reputed artists like Jos van Immerseel, Sigiswald Kuijken and Toots Thielemans). In May 2016 he received the award 'Best International Guitarist' at the 'ECHO JAZZ AWARDS 2016' in Hamburg/Germany.

In 1997 Philip Catherine signed with Dreyfus Records. His first album on this label - simply called **"Live"** (being the very first live recording of his career) has been highly acclaimed by the international press (4½-star in DownBeat, "best album of the year" in Jazz Nu).

It was followed in '98 by **"Guitar Groove"** (with Jim Beard on piano and keyboards, Alphonso Johnson on bass and Rodney Holmes on drums), which features twelve superb compositions by Philip and a beautiful rendering of 'Stardust'. The album got impressive radio airplay in the US and - very exceptional for a European jazz cd - it broke the top 20 of the Gavin Jazz Chart where it stayed for several months.

The Cd **"Blue Prince"** (nov 2000) received very enthusiastic acclaim from the press: "Record of the Year", in 'JazzMan' and was selected among best album of the year in many magazines and newspapers.

**"Summer Night"** (Dreyfus, 2002) - with Philippe Aerts on bass, Joost van Schaik on drums, and Bert Joris on trumpet - contains six new compositions, a beautiful re-take of 'Janet' and six standards.

Le Monde writes *"It's jazz, real, solid, an exceptional taste, velvet touch, a great personality which we sense through each chord, each note."*

The success of his appearances with some leading European big bands, and more frequently with chamber orchestra's, have revealed that his lyrical compositions are particularly appropriate for arrangements for larger ensembles. This led to the collaboration with the Brussels Jazz Orchestra (BJO, who were the first European big band to be elected in the 2004 Downbeat Critics Poll), and in April 2005 the album **"Meeting Colours"** (Dreyfus) was released, with superb arrangements of his music for guitar and big band by trumpetplayer/arranger Bert Joris.

. **"Guitars Two"** (2008, Dreyfus Jazz), the first solo album of his career, was hailed in the international press as one of his best albums. The beauty of his compositions really stands out in these arrangements. Philip, surrounded by his guitars and his pedal-rack, fascinates his audience.

The album **“Live at Cap Breton”** (Dreyfus, 4/2010) with an all-star line-up: Enrico Pieranunzi (p), Hein Van de Geyn (b), Joe LaBarbera (dr) received great reviews and the quartet played some amazing concerts at summer festivals in 2010.

In 2011 The album **“Philip Catherine plays Cole Porter”** was released on Challenge Records, in quartet with pianist Karel Boehlee, Martijn Vink on drums and Philippe Aerts on double bass. In the words of Hein Van de Geyn : *“Philip’s unique sound is always recognizable, deeply expressive and so very personal. By surrendering to the tune, by simply trying to give the honest rendition of these timeless songs, Philip proved himself to be a great singer.”* It received among others the CHOC of the magazine JazzMan.

Philip Catherine celebrated his 70th birthday in October 2012 with a memorable concert at the Brussels Palais des Beaux-Arts receiving a standing ovation from a full house, and with the release of a new CD. **‘Coté Jardin’** (11/2012, Challenge Records) was recorded with his new Quartet : Italian pianist Nicola Andrioli, fabulous young drummer Antoine Pierre, and longstanding companion Philippe Aerts on bass, plus additional keyboards on some tracks by Philippe Decock, and - a première - daughter Isabelle Catherine on vocals in a version of Philip’s composition ‘Coté Jardin’ with lyrics by Jacques Duvall. The repertoire consists of own compositions, some by Andrioli as well as a great cover of Georges Brassens, and enchants both the jazz fans and the classical music lover. Newspaper 'De Standaard' : *“On ‘Misty Cliffs’ his guitar sings, murmurs, but also bites and searches ecstasy ... Catherine is lyrical, virtoso and by whiles exuberant on this sublime album.”*

In January 2014 the album **‘New Folks - Duo Art’** was released on ACT Music, a duo recording with US based German bassplayer Martin Wind. Complicity, mutual respect and great playing have seduced the audiences during the succesful tours throughout Europe and the US.

Being asked by the legendary Brussels Flagey concert hall to set up a special project for their festival, Philip Catherine decided it was the right time to present a selection of his compositions in arrangements with string orchestra. The première was performed on in January 2015 at Flagey in Brussels. Philip’s quintet together with the Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie conducted by the great Frank Braley, gave a sublime concert greeted with several standing ovations. The concert was filmed by national TV 'VRT-Canvas'. The audio recordings resulted to be so good and record label ACT-Music being very enthusiastic, that a selection was released on CD :

The album **‘The String Project - live in Brussels’** was released on ACT Music in September 2015, and has been highly acclaimed in the international press. Rafał Garszczyński wrote in JazzPress: *"This is one of the best jazz recordings with strings of all times."* And in May 2016 in Hamburg (Germany), Philip received the prestigious "ECHO JAZZ AWARD 2016' in the category 'best international guitarist' with this album.

In the autumn of 2017 Philip Catherine will celebrate his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. For this occasion Warner prepares a special 5-CD Box : the long awaited re-release of his early vinyl records *'September Man'* and *'Guitars'*, the albums *'Babel'* and *'End of August'*, completed with unedited solo recordings by Radio Bremen of 1979 & 1982.

Philip Catherine continues relentlessly and open-minded his search for renewal and perfection. The formulas with which he performs give him the rhythmic support and freedom to unfold his wide palette of musical styles, from that irresistible groovy rock sound to the broad lyrical phrases of which he is a master.

**‘Downbeat’** : *« He is one of the most accomplished and rewarding guitarists now playing jazz. »*

**‘Le Monde’** : *« Philip Catherine is one of the last ‘romantics’ in jazz. Philip Catherine doesn’t play music: he is music. A lyricism that hits the unconscious. Music, music, sometimes with an air of simplicity that makes you believe nothing is easier than observe a photon in it’s course. Great art. »*  
(Francis Marmande)

## PHILIP CATHERINE – Selected Discography

### *as a leader :*

* <b>STREAM</b> ('70)	Warner 46049
* <b>SEPTEMBER MAN</b> ('75)	Atlantic 40 562
* <b>GUITARS</b> ('75)	Atlantic 50 193
* <b>BABEL</b> (80)	Electra 52 244
* <b>END OF AUGUST</b> ('82)	WeA K 58 450
* <b>TRANSPARENCE</b> ('86)	Inak 8701CD
* <b>SEPTEMBER SKY</b> ('88)	September 5106CD
* <b>OSCAR</b> ('88)	Igloo 060CD
* <b>I REMEMBER YOU</b> ('90)	Criss Cross
* <b>MOODS, vol.I</b> ('92)	Criss Cross 1060
* <b>MOODS, vol.II</b>	Criss Cross 1061CD
* <b>Philip Catherine "LIVE"</b> (97)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 36587
* <b>GUITAR GROOVE</b> (98)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 36599
* <b>BLUE PRINCE</b> (2000)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM36614
* <b>SUMMER NIGHT</b> (2002)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 36637
* <b>MEETING COLOURS</b> (4/2005)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 36675
* <b>GUITARS TWO</b> (1/2008)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 46050
* <b>CONCERT in CAPBRETON</b> (4/2010)	Dreyfus Jazz FDM 369412
* <b>PHILIP CATHERINE plays COLE PORTER</b> (5/2011)	Challenge Records CHR 70166
* <b>COTE JARDIN</b> (11/2012)	Challenge Records CHR70178
* <b>NEW FOLKS - Duo Art</b> (1/2014)	ACT Music
* <b>THE STRING PROJECT-Live in Brussels</b> (9/2015)	ACT Music

### *and with :*

<b>Chet BAKER :</b>	"Baker/Catherine/ Rassinfosse" "Chet's Choice" "Strollin" "In Bologna, Live"	Igloo 034CD Criss Cross 1016 CD Enja 5005CD Dreyfus 191 133-2
<b>Stéphane GRAPPELLI:"</b>	Young Django" "Live 1992" "Grappelli/Ponty/Catherine"	MPS 15510 Birdology 517392-2 America 6139
<b>Larry CORYELL :</b>	"Twin House" "Splendid"	Atlantic 50 342 Electra 52 986
<b>N.H.O. PEDERSEN :</b>	"The Viking" "Art of the Duo"	Pablo 2310 894 Enja8016-2
<b>Dexter GORDON:</b>	"Something Different"	Steeple Chase Scs 1136
<b>Charlie MINGUS :</b>	"Three or Four Shades of Blue"	Atlantic SD 1700
<b>Charlie MARIANO/Jasper Van 't Hof :</b>	"Sleep my Love"	Contemp LC 6055CD
<b>MARIANO/Van 't Hof /Don ALIAS :</b>	"Operanoia" ('96)	Intuition 3158 2
<b>Didier LOCKWOOD/Chr. ESCOUDE :</b>	"Trio"	JMS 031
<b>Carla BLEY/Mike MANTLER :</b>	More Movies"	Watt 10A/1A
<b>Michaël GIBBS</b>	"The Only Chrome Waterfall Orch"	Bronze BR 2012
<b>Barney WILEN/Palle DANIELSSON :</b>	"Sanctuary"	IDA 029CD
<b>Jacques PELZER</b>	"Tribute to the Band Box"	Igloo 106
<b>Emmanuel BEX/Aldo ROMANO :</b>	"Trios"	
<b>SOLEIDAD</b>	"Passage – the music of F. Devreese"	EMI/Virgin Classics

*and many others ....*