

# FONDATION SUISA

## 2016 JAZZ PRIZE

### Heiri Känzig

#### Media release



Heiri Känzig (Photo: Pablo Faccinnetto)

He is regarded as one of Europe's best double bass players.  
A world-class composer and performer:

#### HEIRI KÄNZIG

He is the most striking of a conspicuously large number of very good Swiss double bass players, wrote the jazz journalist Peter Rüedi in 2006 about Heiri Känzig. Today, ten years later, this exceptional artist from Zurich has lost none of his salience.

**FONDATION SUISA honours Heiri Känzig with its Jazz Prize.**

His work is described as “carefully drafted music that consistently puts the melody centre stage and is bent on poetic, low-key moods” in the booklet to the album “Five Stories” (MGB, 1994).

“What I love is a melody. Something of the essential. A good bass line is always a good melody,” says Känzig himself. His variety and dexterity make him a virtuoso on his instrument. But he doesn't appear to seek the limelight. Instead, he places his music at the service of something bigger and better, the interaction with his fellow musicians. In the course of Känzig's impressive career, these have included such musical greats as George Gruntz, Pierre Favre, Lauren Newton and Andreas Vollenweider, John Scofield or Kenny Wheeler, to name but a few.

Heiri Känzig was born in 1957 and grew up in Zurich and Weiningen. His musical training took him to Graz, Vienna and Zurich. He began his international career at the age of 21 as a bass player for the trumpet player Art Farmer. From 1978 onwards he was part of the Vienna Art Orchestra for a period of 15 years. In 1991, he became the first non-Frenchman in the famous French Orchestre National de Jazz. Today, he appears regularly with the Thierry Lang Trio, as a duo with Chico Freeman, or together with Harry Sokal and Jojo Mayer in his group DEPART, amongst others.

Heiri Känzig has been a Professor for Double Bass at the Lucerne School of Music since 2002. He lives with his family in Meilen in the canton of Zurich.

#### **Award ceremony on Sunday, 4 December 2016, 11 AM**

The award ceremony will be accompanied by a special matinée concert in the Zurich jazz club Moods: on Sunday, 4 December 2016, Heiri Känzig will play together with Chico Freeman and Thierry Lang, first as a duo, then a trio. A line-up that could hardly be a more fitting way to describe the prize winner's musical career: Känzig has shared the stage with Lang for the past 20 years, whereas Freeman is one of his most recent musical companions.

Tickets for the matinée concert entitled “Two Duos and a Trio” incl. the award of the 2016 Jazz Prize will be available on [www.moods.ch](http://www.moods.ch).

[www.heirikaenzig.com](http://www.heirikaenzig.com)

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## The jury for the FONDATION SUISA jazz prize

- Susanne Abbuehl (Lucerne) – Member of FONDATION SUISA's board, singer, composer
- Lionel Friedli (Biel) – 2015 Jazz Prize recipient, drummer
- Jean-Pierre Schaller (Bretonnières) – Bassist, composer, lecturer at the Haute École de Musique of Lausanne

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More information and pictures are available at  
[www.fondation-suisa.ch/jazz-prize](http://www.fondation-suisa.ch/jazz-prize)

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## About the FONDATION SUISA Jazz Prize

In Switzerland, there is a lively jazz scene on a high artistic level and with an international impact.

By this prize, carrying a value of CHF 15'000.-, FONDATION SUISA honours innovative and creative work in the field of Swiss jazz and emphasises its recognition and respect for these achievements.

The previous winners are: Andy Scherrer (2008), Colin Vallon (2009), Danilo Moccia (2010), Vera Kappeler (2011), Ohad Talmor (2012), Stephan Kurmann (2013), Hilaria Kramer (2014), Lionel Friedli (2015).

## About FONDATION SUISA

FONDATION SUISA is SUISA's charitable foundation for music promotion. SUISA is the Cooperative Society of Music Authors and Publishers. It receives its financial means from an annual allocation of 2.5% of SUISA's income from performance and broadcasting revenues in Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Since 1989, FONDATION SUISA has been supporting projects of composers and music publishers that are related to today's Swiss music making in all genres. It awards prizes and scholarships. Its work also includes advertising campaigns for Swiss music at home and abroad, e.g. through the organisation of appearances at trade fairs.