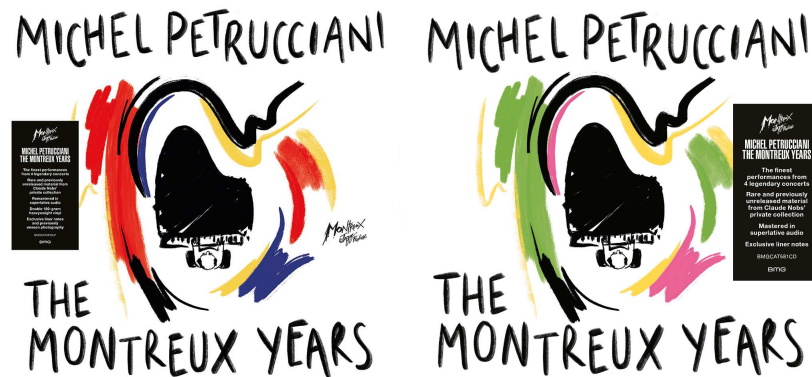


## MICHEL PETRUCCIANI: THE MONTREUX YEARS



### EINE SAMMLUNG DER BESTEN AUFTRITTE VON MICHEL PETRUCCIANI BEIM MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL IN DEN JAHREN 1990 - 1998

In 1933, John Lomax, helped by his son Alan, loaded one of the first portable tape recorders into a small van and set off to the southern United States to record convicts who had been locked up for so long they were still singing the blues of the previous century. That's how the Lomax's etched the memory of the blues and jazz for posterity. Half a century later, Claude Nobs, a young Swiss guy who was crazy about music, founded the Montreux Festival. Though he avowed an unalloyed passion for jazz, by opening the programme – in the face of protests from the purists – to The Stones, to Led Zeppelin or Frank Zappa, he ended up making the conditions those artists enjoyed available to the jazz men: huge stages, the opulence of exceptional sound and spectacular lights and all the advantages that had, until that moment, been the sole preserve of rock stars. By treating jazz like pop, Nobs served it up to the public in a setting that was worthy of its name.

And that's exactly how the like-minded producer Francis Dreyfus, decided to treat the discs of Michel Petrucciani: like pop records! By putting the necessary funds at the disposal of the prodigy, he gave him access to the global audience he so deserved and to conditions in which his talent could bloom.

So each in their own way, all three of these three harmonious compatriots, Lomax, Nobs and Dreyfus, have contributed to the magic of these four sides of vinyl by one of the most essential pianists of the 20th century. And in effect, Petrucciani's genius is presented here in the best possible setting, superbly recorded on stage in front of a huge live audience who help to unleash the pianist's solos. Michel exults in those solos, just as he does when he's dialoguing with the double bass of Miroslav Vitous and the Hammond organ of Eddie Luis. His unique phrasing happily merges a lyricism that's sustained by an implacable rhythmic drive with accents so precise that each of his phrases makes you yearn to reveal, study, dissect. Yet the dexterity of his motifs never ruins that sense of melody that charms us so.

That's what makes him a man of the South: Michel, storyteller, who captivates us without overwhelming us, who bewitches us but leaves us still conscious, and who, with joy and humour, rolls out his arabesques in which you wrap yourself with pleasure.

Long live the Montreux Festival and thank you, dear Michel, for sending us joy from your place of eternity.

By André Manoukian (with English literary translation by Andy Morgan)

I was contacted by the Montreux Festival a few months ago. They wanted the music of my father, Michel Petrucciani, to be represented in a large collection in homage to the creator of the Montreux Festival, Claude Nobs. Of course, I was honoured that my father was part of this project.

I had been asked to help select the titles that are on the album you have in your hands; so I called my friend Franck Avitabile to discuss it and for a few weeks Franck, Fraser Kennedy and myself carefully chose the titles here. Thanks to Fraser, Franck Avitabile and I had the opportunity to listen to all of Michel's concerts recorded in Montreux.

The compilation format allowed us to use two incredible tracks which unfortunately could not have been used if we had to release the entire Sextet 1998 concert.

Indeed, during the concert, the piano went slightly out of tune, making the sequel less good. On the other hand "35 Seconds Of Music And More" as well as "Little Peace In C For U" were not affected by this technical defect and we have used them in this compilation.

We have also taken care to diversify the compositions as well as the ensembles (solo, trio sextet...) there is everything! Franck had the excellent idea of ensuring that the different sides of the vinyl had meaning, continuity in the mood of the moment.

In short, we had a lot of fun working on this compilation and it is largely thanks to Fraser Kennedy who trusted us.

I would like to thank Danièle Feuillerat who assists me on a daily basis in everything related to Michel Petrucciani.

A big thank you also to Montreux Festival as well as to BMG for allowing us to release this superb compilation and finally, thank you to you who, 20 years after Michel's death, are still present.  
Thank you so much!

Happy listening,

Alexander Petrucciani

## **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI: THE MONTREUX YEARS**

1CD, 2LP, Digitale Formate

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