

off&out story

In Bern, the pianist Urs Carl Eigenmann founded the Urs Carl Eigenmann Trio. It was a real blues band. With this band they found concerts are held regularly in Bern and the surrounding area. Sometime later, the guitarist Virginio Zambelli comes to the group. Soon the bassist Riccardo Aebi and the drummer Roland Carnal joined them and they founded the band off&out in 1968. In 1969, Zambelli and Eigenmann lived in Lugano. There they played with the local musicians, some of whom were He has also performed with the drummer Cosimo Lampis and the guitarist Vittorio of the famous group "Toad" (today at "Gotthard"). In the year 1970 they returned again to Bern and founded the group off&out. With this group they have many concerts, among others repeatedly at the then Zurich Jazz Festival, the under the direction of André Berner. In 1972 they were awarded two prizes at the festival: the Prize and the Special Prize of the Zurich International Festival.

There was a change in 1971. The drummer Marc Hellman joined the band, bassist Karl Theodor Geier (Zurich Radio Orchestra) and percussionist Herbie George. In 1973 Florian Neuenschwander joined the band as a new bass player.

Also Stani Elmer (trumpet) and Peter Wildbolz (saxophone) joined the band.. Aschi Frei later replaced drummer Marc Hellman, who joined the "Dave Pike-Set". In 1974 the group disbanded. Virginio Zambelli travelled to Brazil, where he now lives and has founded a salsa band. In 1977, Bruno Brandenberger (bass), François Mosimann (guitar), Roger Zimmermann (saxophone, flute) and again Stani Elmer (trumpet) comes to Urs Carl Eigenmann and revived the group off&out. So they toured again for a few years. There were then still changes, of which two were especially worth mentioning: The first with Daniel Schnyder s, Claudio Rudolf tp, François Mosimann g, Urs C. Eigenmann p, Bruno Brandenberger b, Robi Mark dr and the next one with Ekkehard Sassenhausen s, Stani Elmer tp, Urs C. Eigenmann p, Peter Keiser b, Walter Keiser dr and Eduardo Nascimento perc. With the latter In May 2003 a live CD was recorded for the cast in the Habsburg-Bar in Widnau: "A Habsburg Night For Eddie Harris".

In 2015 the band will be revived for the festival "jazzin", with the cast Sarah Abridada voc, Arno Haas s, Berti Lampert s, Erwin Pfeifer g, Urs C. Eigenmann p, e-p, hammond xk-1c), Marc Ray Oxendine e-b, Beat Fraefel Haering d.

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In 2016 off&out played at the festival jazzin St. Gallen with Melanie Russo PT voc, Berti Lampert s, Erwin Pfeifer guit, Urs C. Eigenmann keys, Marc Ray Oxendine bass and Beat Fraefel-Haering. In the same year, after the festival, they played in the formation with Berti Lampert s, Georgios Kotsaridis g, voc, Urs C. Eigenmann keys, Marc Ray Oxendine b, Beat Fraefel-Haering d.

2017 with Melanie Russo PT) voc, Edith Chischè "Keeshea" sax, Alex Steiner guit, Urs C. Eigenmann keys, Marc Ray Oxendine b, Beat Fraefel-Haering d.

In 2020 off & out should have played at "Jazz uf em Platz" in Muttenz, which was postponed to July 17, 2021 due to Corona. The new line-up includes the singer Thomas „Tomtom“ Straumann, Michael Neff (trumpet), flugelhorn), Benjamin Engel (sax), Uli Binetsch (trombone), Alex Steiner (guitar), Urs C. Eigenmann (keys), Marc Ray Oxendine (bass) and Andy Leumann (drums).

Urs C. Eigenmann celebrates 68 years of pressing piano keys

Richard Butz, journalist:

"A jazz musician must be a healthy and strong guy, New Orleans says. Jazz pioneer Johnny St. Cyr once said. And: "When his audience is enthusiastic, he plays he's so happy again."

Urs C. Eigenmann is exactly this type of musician. Since he was 5 years old, since over 50 years, he hurts - if he has to - and caresses keys; first and to this day the piano's, later the e-piano's.

His music, mostly composed by himself, is based on several pillars, but they are all connected to each other: Ability, acquired largely autodidactically, wealth of ideas, joy of playing, wit and blues, which he plays with so much feeling as hardly anyone else in his country.

off&out; behind it stands a lot: a band, which since 1968 in different line-ups (the list of musicians is long and impressive), but then there is also a Philosophy: to walk away (off) and to walk out of oneself (out). This is exactly how Urs C. Eigenmann thinks: He leads the listeners on surprising musical journeys and returns his inside out.

And by the way, but not to forget: With this band Urs C. Eigenmann has created a piece of original Swiss jazz history. Another 50 years can make it but as long as there is this "guy", we can still off&out expect something - and look forward to it!"

The following musicians have played with **off&out** in recent years:

Drums: Aschi Frei, Marc Hellman, Stefan Engler, Cosimo Lampis (Toad), Roland Carnal †, Alex Bally, Roger Maurer, Andy Leumann, Heinz Lieb, Thomas Hiestand, Jürg Lehmann, Robert Mark, Orlando Ribar, Maurizio Grillo, Walter Keiser, Nicole Aravena, Beat Fraefel-Haering

Percussion: Daoud Amin, Herbie George, Jonas Haefelin, Hugo Trüssel †, Eduardo Nascimento

Bass: Karl Theodor Geier, Christian Geiser, Florian Neuenschwander, Riccardo Aebi †, Mack Wilhelm, Jürg Wildberger, Hämi Hämmerli, Christoph "Tüdl" Huber †, Bruno Brandenberger, Rätus Flisch, Stephan Schertler, Roland Christen, Pino Buoro, David Mäder, Peter Keiser, John Bösch, Marc Ray Oxendyne

Guitar: Virginio Zambelli, Jeannot Césard, François Mosimann †, Laszlo Spiro, Urs Guidolin, Gunther Schreiber, Erwin Pfeifer, Georgios Kotsaridis „Gee-K“

Trumpet: Stani Elmer, Claudio Rudolf, Jürg Grau †, Michael Neff

Saxophone: Peter Wildbolz, Erwin Huber, Urs Leimgruber, Daniel Guggenheim, Jürg Burkhart, Christian Ostermeier, Daniel Schnyder, Albert Landolt, Carlo Schöb, Roger Zimmermann, Ekkehard Sassenhausen, Berti Lampert, Arno Haas, Edith Chischè „Keeshea“

Trombone: Uli Binetsch, John Service

Flute: Thomas Fehr

Vocal: Malcolm Green, Amelia Bruderer, Laura Boldo, Sarah Abridada, Georgios Kotsaridis „GK“, Melanie Russo