*JazzNights (59)*

In the old days, working trios and quartets were common, as were long gigs at various clubs. Monk could work for months at the Five Spot, for example, and several week runs were common. That produced bands that knew each other well, and which had both worked out kinks and developed mature styles that made them easily recognizable. These days, groups form and dissolve at high speed and one rarely has the pleasure of watching a group develop and of coming to know a them intimately over time. But, happily, there are exceptions, and Pilc-Moutin-Hoenig, “PMH,” is one.

“As one listens to each selection [by Pilc], be they [sic] vintage or newborn, one is taken into his world of improvisation where the unexpected is constant. What makes the journey even more stimulating is the indelible contribution made by the astounding bassist, François Moutin, and a phenomenal drummer, Ari Hoenig. The swift current of improvisation that passes through each frame of music is beautifully evoked by the three artists so well suited for each other.”

I have heard them play many times and at the end of each visit, I find myself with awakened expectations for my next encounter with the unpredictable."

Harry Belafonte

Jean-Michel Pilc was born in Paris, and moved to New York in 1995. Since then he has been a regular on the New York and world jazz scenes, playing with both legends and newcomers. The PMH trio emerged early on and were regulars for many years at Smalls. Mr. Pilc has just received a Guggenheim Fellowship to create a work for octet.

François Moutin, another Parisian, came to New York in 1997, having played, among others, with Martial Solal and having formed the Quintet Moutin with his twin brother Louis. He appeared once before at *JazzNights* with Joe Locke and Lew Soloff.

Ari Hoenig comes not from Paris, but Philadelphia - perhaps “the Paris of Pennsylvania?” At an early age he was active on the Philly jazz scene, and then headed for the renowned jazz programs at North Texas State and William Paterson Universities. He, too, has played with the best, and has had a residency at Smalls since 2003, where the self-described “three-headed monster,” the PMH trio, so often performed.

Moutin summarizes the 'PMH effect' this way:

“Each time Ari, Jean-Michel, and I play together, I experience the feeling of being one cell of some utterly unpredictable, although beautifully coherent, living musical creature. This beast' s psyche escapes any of our individual control. It boosts our group's creativity by immersing all of us into a common landscape of emotions.”

You’ll be able to see what all that playing together has built, and all of that creativity in January. In the meantime, you can hear them in several clips on YouTube or on their very nice 2011 CD:

Threedom, Motema Music, 2011 – Pilc, Moutin, Hoenig