



## Francis Vidil, « a formidable musician, » Le Monde

*Lives in Versailles, France*

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### ***Versailles Conservatory of Music, France***

(Conservatoire de Musique, de Danse et d'Art Dramatique)

#### **Education:**

Complete curriculum from 1971 to 1982

Music Baccalauréat Cum Laude in 1978, Versailles Conservatory/Lycée Hoche, Versailles

- **Piano:** in 1977, at the age of 16, **First Prize**, and in 1980, at the age of 19, **Cum Laude Prize** in Désiré N'Kaoua's piano class, whom he replaces for three months at the age of 21.
- **Organ:** *Has been accompanying at masses since the age of eight. Francis' father, at the time, chair organist of Saint Paul and Louis Church in Paris, brought him to a four-summer training in Saint Maximin, Provence, the cradle of baroque music. This is there, that, as a child, Francis got to try France's most famous baroque organ. This experience profoundly impressed Francis and determined his career. However, his conservatory teachers wanted him to complete his piano studies before allowing him to officially learn the organ and, by the same token, forbid him to practice improvisation -- which he both continued to do anyway...*

*The Saint Maximin professors who decisively influenced his style were: André Stricker, Michel Chapuis, Huguette Dreyfus, and Xavier Darasse.*

Later studied 1 year with Georges Robert, of the Versailles Conservatory where he won a **First Medal** in 1980. Also studied repertory music and improvisation with **André Isoir**, of the Orsay Conservatory, in 1982-1984. Became his first assistant at the great organ at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris.

- **Trumpet:** studied from 1975 to 1980 with Roger Delmotte (First Trumpet solo of the Paris Opera). Then, from 2002 to 2004 with Christian Pollin and won **Third Prize** in 2004. *Francis studied this instrument in order to play it simultaneously with the organ. He invented his own version of a water key to be able to continuously play with the right hand.*

*Complementary study of other instruments:*

- Orchestra Conducting: one year in 12<sup>th</sup> arrondissement Conservatory, Paris with an assistant of Seiji Ozawa, 1982
- Violin: 2 years with Antoine Goulard, Versailles Conservatory

Also, studied piano with France Clidat and Aldo Ciccolini, 1981-1982, André Gorog, 1983-1984; Harpsichord with Laure Morabito, 1984; Accompaniment at the Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris) with Jean Koerner, 1984-1988; Complementary training with pianist Walter Moore of Vienna University at Royaumont Abbey, Training Center of Professional Singers and Pianist Singing Masters.

## *Experience at the Versailles Conservatory*

- **Dean of Polyphonic Department including piano, organ, harp, guitar and percussions, from September 2010 to Present.**
- **Tenure Piano professor from 1996 to Present.**
- **Tenure Improvisation professor from 1996 to Present.** Creates the class that has become a curriculum requirement for advanced levels since 2007.
- 1981-2009 Accompanist of the Versailles Conservatory percussion class of Sylvio Gualda, First Solo Timpanist of the Paris Opéra.
- 1982-1996 teaching substituting for: Junior Orchestra Directing Class; Piano Sight Reading Class, All Levels; Piano accompaniment of conservatory's dance and singing classes as well as final graduation examinations of all instruments.

## *International Competitions*

**Francis Vidil, the first and only contestant to have ever won both prizes at the WFIMC (World Federation of International Music Competition)**

- First prize improvisation, Lyon Piano Festival, given by Pierre Cochereau, 1983
- First Prize with the jury's unanimity and congratulations, Montbrison Piano Improvisation Contest, given by André Isoir, 1995

## *Post Baccalauréat Studies*

1. **Post Graduate Teaching Degree, piano (CA), 1987**
2. **Diplôme d'Etat, (French Government Degree), Organ and Baroque Musique Professor, 1989**
3. **Diplôme d'Etat, Instruments' Accompanist, 1989**
4. **Diplôme d'Etat, Singers' Accompanist, 1990**

## *Jazz Training*

5 years of workshops with Roger Guérin, former partner of Dizzy Gillespie, Paris.

## *Jury Member*

Diplôme d'Etat, piano; Diplôme d'Etat, horn; Baccalauréat F11 piano; National and Regional Conservatories of Versailles and Rouen, piano; Organ competition, Ecole Nationale d'Orsay. Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris), piano and organ improvisation entrance examination.

## *Additional Experience*

**2007 to Present** Year-round Guest Professor, all instruments and voice improvisation Master's classes for professionals. Guest performer. **Lausanne and Freiburg Superior Conservatories of Music, Switzerland.**

**January 2007 and 2008** Organ professor and performer selected by the French Embassy in Cuba where churches had reopened and the use of organ was rediscovered after John Paul II's trip. Initiated the new organ school; organ improvisation classes, **Superior School of Music in Havana, Cuba.**

**Spring 2003, 2004, 2006** **Pennsylvania State University**, Piano Improvisation Master's classes for instrumentalist and composers, **State College, PA**

**1987-1994** Pianist and actor in the role of Mozart in “**Mozart au Chocolat,**” a play of Jacques Livchine, Théâtre de L’Unité. 210 performances: France, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Greece, England, Russia, Estonia, Iceland, and Israel. This play was one of the seven events selected by the USSR to celebrate the bicentennial of the 1789 French Revolution.

**1988-2010** Improvisation Master’s classes, **Moulin d’Andé**, Normandy and **Lyon** with Arcad, a body and art development association.

**1986-1988** Pianist of **Maitrise de Radio-France** (France’s boys and girls national choir), **Paris**

**1983-1987** Directed “Ensemble Instrumental du Mesnil-Saint-Denis,” a 30-musician orchestra, mostly students and professors of the Versailles Conservatory.

**1982-1983** First Organ Assistant to André Isoir, great organ of **Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris** (interrupted by motorcycle accident)

## ***Music Festival of the Upper Chevreuse Valley***

### *Festival de la Haute Vallée de Chevreuse*

**Founder and President of EOL Association** (Eclats d’Orgue à Lévis-Saint-Nom) in 1993. See: [www.orgueol.org](http://www.orgueol.org) 220 concerts to date.

The EOL Organ has benefited from a wide array of improvements for the past 10 years such as adding about 200 bells and percussions. The association greatly appreciates the guidance of Jean Guillou, Honorary President of EOL and Chair Organist of Saint Eustache Church in Paris.

## ***National Award***

- **Academic Society for the Promotion of the Arts, Sciences and Letters**, patronized by **L’Académie Française**, Silver Medal for career achievement, May 14, 2000
- **Outstanding Arts Professor National Award (Professeur “Hors Classe”)**, by Versailles’ Mayor’s decree, July 10, 2009

## ***Performances***

About twelve hundred concerts to date in France and abroad. Francis performs nearly every week because he just loves to. Both performer and improviser. Paris, London, Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Geneva, Athens, Luxor, Jerusalem, Rome, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Brussels, Antwerp, Reykjavik, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Saratov, Havana, New York, NY, Newark, NJ, State College, PA, San Antonio, TX.

Francis is probably the only performer in the world able to play the organ and the trumpet simultaneously.

## Highlights

- **Freeburg Conservatory of Music, Switzerland**, concluding concert, Sacred Music Colloquium, organ improvisation, September 2008
- **France Musique**, one hour show with Anne Montaron, 2005
- **Chopin Festival of New York**, commemorative concert to the victims of the World Trade Center, November 2001
- **Europa Club, Brooklyn, NY, Jazz performance** 2001
- **"Accord et Graphie,"** Paris and Munich, piano recital on paintings, 1991-1995
- Inauguration and production of the **Theatre of Trappes, Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines**, (30 musicians and actors, 20 cooks). Piano recital on contemporary literature, 1992
- **Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris**, produced and performed the officially "first and last" dance and organ performance inside cathedral to commemorate the bicentennial of Mozart's death, 1991
- **"Improvidence," Avignon Festival**, dance and organ improvisation, with **Catherine Golovine**, 1991
- Sacred dance and organ performance for Templars Commandery "La Pierre de Lumière, » **Cathédrale de Maguelone**, 1990
- Improvisation recital, 3 concerts for **launch of the "1881" Cerruti perfume** in collaboration with dancer **Carolyn Carlson**, 1990
- Inauguration of a Compagnon building through complete production of a musical performance: **Hôtel des Musiciens Italiens** in Versailles (50 musicians and dancers), 1987

## Recordings

All of Francis' recordings are unadulterated improvisation recordings taken during live concerts and are one-of-a-kind. (Limited editions of « Témoins de l'Ephémère »)

Available to date upon request:

- "Cathédrale d'Auxerre," 1995, **Organ**
- "Mois Molière," 1996, **Piano**
- "Nuit de la Musique," 1997, 2 CD, **Piano, Organ** (*Cathédrale de Nîmes*)
- "Penn State, the Concert," 2003, **Organ, Celesta, Bells and 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet**  
*in association with Dr Langston Fitzgerald, 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet*

- “Bleu Clair,” 2006, **Piano**
- “Mozart l’Improvisateur,” 2006, **Piano**
- “Autour des Chorals de Bach,” 2007, **Piano**
- “Vitrail et Lumière,” 2007, **Pianoforte** (*Erard, 1846*)
- “En Hommage à Bach,” 2007, **Piano**
- “Tonnerre de Brest,” 2007, **Piano, Celesta, Gong and Chimes**
- “Le Son des Ténèbres,” *30 themes given by the public*, 2008, **Piano**

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“Dear Francis, you are an astonishing artist and friend.”  
Nino Cerruti, Fashion Designer

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