

Christoph Irniger, born 1979, is a Swiss saxophonist, composer and bandleader. According to the Sunday edition of the Neue Zürcher Zeitung he is “undoubtedly one of the greatest talents of his generation.” In recent years, Irniger has made a name for himself in a range of line-ups, playing jazz, rock and related musical styles. Irniger is leader of the band Pilgrim and the Christoph Irniger Trio which between them have released several albums (mostly on Intakt Records) so far. From 2000 to 2006 Irniger studied music education at the Zurich Jazz School, and performance at the Lucerne School of Music with Christoph Grab and Nat Su. In the following years he took lessons from Dave Liebman, Mark Turner and Ari Hoenig. He won the Friedel Wald Foundation development award in 2004, received the Borsa di Studio for Siena Jazz University in 2006 and achieved third place in the 2010 ZKB Jazz Prize with the Cowboys from Hell. Between 2015 and 2017 his band Pilgrim were awarded high priority act from Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council. His work has been documented on twenty albums to date. He has played concerts and tours throughout Europe, Asia and the USA. His regular visits to Berlin and New York have led to a number of diverse collaborations, including: Nasheet Waits (*No Reduce Jaywalkin'* (nWog, 2013)), Michael Bates, Kris Davis, Don Philippe, and the band Counterpoints with Ohad Talmor. He has also played with Dave Douglas, Dan Weiss, Nils Wogram, Claudio Puntin, Max Frankl, Stefan Rusconi, Mats Spillmann, Christian Weber, Chris Wiesendanger and Vera Kappeler. He was a member of the Lucerne Jazz Orchestra for seven years and can be heard on four of their recordings. He is also co-leader of the prog-rock band Cowboys from Hell. Irniger teaches at Zurich University of the Arts and the Musikschule Konservatorium in Zurich.

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