

POING

This unusual Norwegian trio is doing interesting work off the beaten track. The unusual begins with the instrumentation ...and display considerable technical depth and breadth, as well as strong ensemble identity (Julian Cowley, The Wire).

POING is Rolf-Erik Nystrøm on saxophones, Frode Haltli on accordion and Håkon Thelin on double bass. They started playing together in 1999, and have since been one of the leading ensembles for contemporary music in Scandinavia. They have played in clubs and concert halls in most European countries, the US as well as in China and Japan, with more than 100 first performances.

The three musicians are among the world's top performers on their instruments, both as interpreters of notated music and improvisation. Their unique flexibility results in many untraditional commissions by composers and festivals that go beyond the usual interpretation, interaction and dissemination of contemporary music. For their work with contemporary music, POING were in 2009 awarded "Performer of the Year" by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

In 2003 POING released their first CD "Giants of Jazz". On this recording POING perform pieces by Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje, Eivind Buene, Øyvind Torvund and Knut-Olaf Sunde, in addition to an improvised section. The CD also contains a bonus video track with film and music by Nora Wjeck aka Lars Petter Hagen. "Planet POING" was released on Jazzaway Records in 2006 and the CD contains works by Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje, Sachiyo Tsurami, Lars Petter Hagen, Aki Asgeirsson and Jexper Holmen. In 2011 they released "Wach auf!" on Øra Fonogram, featuring Maja S. K. Ratkje on vocals.

The trio collaborates regularly with musicians from around the world, with backgrounds in different styles – from folk and traditional, via popular music to experimental expressions. Among others, POING have collaborated with Swedish, Swiss, Nepali, Brazilian, American, Azerbaijani, Mongolian, Egyptian, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Iranian, Mauritanian, Ivorian, Tanzanian, Irish, Faroese, Icelandic, Finnish, Peruvian, Brazilian, Baltic, Sami, Russian and Spanish musicians.

In 2011, POING were artistic directors of the Ultima Festival in Oslo, Scandinavia's largest festival for contemporary music.