

Welcome to the homepage of the Allotria Jazz Band.

What have you found? The site of one of the most successful traditional jazz bands of Central Europe. The Allotria Jazz Band has been performing Classic Jazz for decades and in the jazz scene the band's name represents „The Fine Notes of Classic Jazz“. As to the name: We think of jazz as American music, yet „Allotria“ doesn't really sound Anglosaxon/American. So what is the connection between „Allotria“ and jazz?

For over a century there has been an artist association named „Allotria“. A jazz club named „Allotria“ existed from the nineteen-sixties to then nineteen-nineties, and the Allotria Jazz Band has been around for more than 40 years. All of these institutions using the term „Allotria“ as part of their name are from Munich, Germany. Translated from the Greek, „allotrios“ literally means „strange, foreign“. Today in the Bavarian/Bayuwarian sense it means: mischief, fooling around, kidding.

In the English sense it means: All that jazz! So you see, it all fits together.

In fact, the name of the band derives from the jazz club „The Allotria“ in Munich where the band played as the house band for many years. But if you know the history of the band and the character of its music, it's true: „Nomen est Omen“. „Allotria“ is not so much a name as a state of 7 musicians, who always enjoy playing music, are constantly up for a joke and ready for musical adventure.

Program and styles • The Allotria Jazz Band plays Dixieland and Swing.

The sound of the Allotria Jazz Band has always been something special. The front line with 4 horns clearly sets itself apart from most of today's traditional jazz bands. The current musical concept using 2 trumpets originated back in the early twenties with the Joe King Oliver Orchestra and his 2 cornets. This compact arrangement of a small big-band continued into the era of Benny Goodman through the end of the thirties. The musical interpretation of the tunes follows various influences. (is influenced by various role models) In compositions of a freer nature with head-arrangements Eddie Condon is clearly recognizable. Full-song arrangements adhere to the original compositions. But - never is lifeless adherence to tradition presented with a forced pseudo-authenticity, never is an original recording just copied and recited note for note. Every musician contributes his own style elements, those of New Orleans Kid Ory, through the Dixieland style of Peanuts Hucko (Rainer Sander), extending to the swing of Roy Eldridge (Colin Dawson), Oscar Peterson (Thilo Wagner), Gene Krupa and Sid Catlett (Gregor Beck). Andrey Lobanov und Thilo Wagner sometimes also like to swim in the mainstream stylistically. The mix of the different personalities is what makes it happen.!

The Arrangements, mostly written by Colin Dawson and Rainer Sander include compositions of Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman and many others. Both arrangers have their own style and interpret pieces from the Classic Jazz era between 1900 to 1940.

The musicians of the Allotria Jazz Band are all exceptional soloists, some with their own international careers. Their musical and instrumental capabilities and their unmistakably playful characteristics allow them to create a varied program of a rounded mix of well known standards and also lesser known titles. Compact full-arrangements, easy flowing and freely improvised tunes, different combo sizes, vocals and featured instrumental soloists make every performance a special experience both for the listener and the musicians themselves. The band can easily accommodate the specific needs of any event. This also applies to the styles - Dixieland or Swing.

Bandstory, How did it all start? There are many about it. it's been such a long time.

Fritz and Rainer, who have both been there from the start, have noticeably different memories of the beginning of the band. That's how long ago it was.

What is beyond dispute: in the autumn of 1969 drummer/cook Hermann Kügler, who ran the jazz club „Allotria“ in Munich's suburb of „Maxvorstadt“ (not: „Schwabing“!), brought trumpeter Gerhard Vohwinkel from the Spree City Stompers of Berlin into the Bavarian metropolis. His purpose was to create the musical program and assemble a house band for the club. But here it already is murky. Who was part of the original group? Somehow, out of the melting pot of Munich's jazz scene, a band crystallized, which was initially called „The Allotria Stompers“ and which in the course of the following year evolved into „The Allotria Jazz Band“. It was clear early on who made up the front line. Next to Gerhard Vohwinkel was trumpeter Claus Walter „Hepps“ Herbertz, trombonist Fritz Stewens, and clarinetist and alto-saxophonist Rainer Sander. Achim Scherz quickly became the obvious choice as pianist. The positions of banjo and bass didn't permanently go to Cornelius Griebel and Helmut „Heli“ Wörsching until the spring of 1970.

A broken left foot put Hermann Kügler out of commission for a long time, so Jochen Mayer became the first permanent drummer of the band.

In this configuration the Allotria Jazz Band was the main headliner of the first jazz festival of Burghausen, won the first prize at the festival in Dinslaken and in December of 1970 recorded its first LP. For a while, having signed a record contract with the renowned record companies Ariola and Bellaphon, the band proceeded along commercial routes, giving hits of the 20s and of classical composers as well as original compositions a jazzy face. Jürgen Hinz replaced Heli Wörsching in 1972 and remained, interrupted by a short intermezzo of Jürgen Reinhard, the bassist of the Allotria Jazz Band until 1994, when he switched to guitar. Manfred „Arriva“ Zöbisch replaced Cornelius Griebel on banjo and Hans Rüdiger Richter replaced Jochen Mayeron on drums. For a while the band changed its horn section concept. For two years they had a three piece section with only one trumpet, but then they brought Jörn Pfennig into the band as second clarinetist and singer.

Everything progressed very quickly. The Allotria Jazz Band earned itself a distinguished and a national reputation and did its first concert tours abroad: to Poland, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. Through the Goethe-Institut they then went to Norway and in 1977 to Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

1981 started a new era: The Allotria Jazz Band was invited to play at the largest festival in the world for traditional jazz in Sacramento, California, USA. The American audience could hardly contain itself. The band performed traditional jazz with a German accent and some interpretations of German composers and immediately received invitations to over 30 concert and festival tours that spanned over the next 20 years. For a long time it was the most successful band on the festival circuit of the US West coast and filled concert halls of up to 5000 listeners. In 1982 Gerhard Vohwinkel left the band and Rainer Sander took over its leadership. Dieter Lauterbach replaced Gerhard for a few years, in 1988 Colin Thomas Dawson joined the band and is to this day first trumpeter. Pit Müller became second trumpeter until 1994.

In the rhythm section there were also some changes: Between 1982 and 1987 Charlie Antolini was the drummer of the band, followed in 1987 by Gregor Beck, who is to this day still a performing member of the band. The band gradually changed its musical orientation. The influence of the intensive contacts to the American jazz scene became noticeable.

The Allotria Jazz Band performed in the USA and Canada with a long array of guest soloists, some of whom in their own right important players in the jazz tradition, and many of whom were invited to Germany for guest performances and concert tours with the band (see under the heading : guest stars) The band took a turn away from the narrow concepts and guidelines of commercial producers and signed with a different record company. From 1983 on it recorded for the Swiss company Turicaphon under the label „Elite Special“. The program became uncompromisingly jazzier, swingier. These concepts were also affirmed by the audience. In 1989 The Allotria Jazz band received a golden record due to their high sales success. Finally the core of the band decided to take personal consequences from the new musical orientation. In 1994 Pit Mueller, Achim Scherz and Manfred Zöbisch left the orchestra. New members were: Stephan Zimmermann on trumpet, Thilo Wagner on piano (after 4 years intermezzo with Keith Little) and Peter Cischeck on bass. In 2007 in came Andrey Lobanov for Stephan Zimmermann and in 2012 our guitar player Juergen Hinz sadly passed away. In autumn 2013 our founder member Fritz Stewens left the Band, and since then we have Mathias Goetz on trombone.

The former student orchestra had developed into a band made up almost exclusively of accomplished, professional musicians, that has lost none of its joy of performing and because of this is in demand for private events, and performances in clubs, concerts and jazz festivals.

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