

STEPHANE CASTRY

STEPHANE CASTRY WAS BORN IN COLOMBES, FRANCE, ON NOVEMBER 14TH 1973. THIS BASSIST, COMPOSER, ARRANGER AND MUSICAL DIRECTOR IS FROM GUADELOUPE. PROLIFIC, HIS EXPERIENCE IS MADE OF MANY COLLABORATIONS IN THE WEST INDIES AS WELL AS ON INTERNATIONAL STAGES. ALONG WITH HIS « COLORATURA » TOUCH, HIS HIGHLY TECHNICAL BASS PLAYING AND HIS UNIQUE GROOVE, HE MANAGED TO GAIN RECOGNITION OF HIS PEERS AND HIS AUDIENCE.

Even if he was born near Paris, France, Stephane Castry **grew up in Guadeloupe**, his parents' native country.

From 6 to 19, he lived in Basse-Terre, among double basses, pianos and guitars, played by his **family of amateur musicians**. This is where and when he sharpened his **natural sense for musicality**.

He was very young when he started to play the violin. Doing so, he **learned qualities that revealed to be precious for his career** : a precise touch, an accurate ear and musical sensibility. But when at 13, his mother offered him a Yamaha Max 300, at last, Stephane could turn to **the instrument of his heart** : the bass. And he could lean on his uncle Lucien Castry, bass player too and founder of Poker JBZ.

FROM THE WEST INDIES TO PARIS

Musically self-educated, Stephane learned **jazz and funk** by listening to the radio. This is how he discovered **Sixun** and had been amazed by **Michel Alibo's touch**, who soon became one of **his major influences**.

During high school time, he played with a lot of bands and met **the Charbonnier brothers** (Zouk Look famous duet), the talented **Jean-Louis Merault**, then he took part in J-Sound with **the Ovas brothers, Jacky Misat and Joel Netry**. Later on, he played with the great pianist **Roland Louis**, his sons Cedric and Gregory, **Felix Saint-Cirel** or **Anick Noël**.

In 1992, he settled in Paris but not to become a star. He thought his future was on the tarmac, as an air traffic controller, more than on stages. So he studied computing. But music was definitely what made him fly.

He started to study at **the American School of Modern Music** in 1994. He could have chosen to teach harmony or musical writing but he would rather open up to the world and very soon, he got several opportunities to work as a professional musician.

In 1997, he played with **Jean-Michel Rotin** on his Solo Tour. During military leaves, he would replace Guy N'Sangue with **Kassav'** until 2004. The singers **Jocelyne Beroard and Joelle Ursull** made no mistake about it and asked him to compose songs for them.

WORLD TOURS AND TV SHOWS

In 1998, he met **the Nubians** and went on tour with them to promote their **first album "Makeda"**. The following year, he went on tour again, with **Faudel**, and met **David Fall** he collaborated with for many years.

At the same time, he entered several groups like **"Absolutely Funk"**, with Herve Rakoto, Stefan Filey, Sandra Nkake and Mathieu Thave. The band played for **"les Robin des Bois"**, a TV show by **Canal +** and also hosted **many groove parties at the Coulisses in Montmartre**.

From that moment, things went fast : Stephane took part in the recording of many studio albums. **Jazz, soul, afro funk, pop, raï, zouk, R&B...** have no secrets for the dynamic bassist he is, **mixing styles and variations** following his inspiration.

The list of those who called on Stephane's talent is pretty long. He accompanied **Cunnie Williams** then **Sinclair** on tour. After a **concert given for the Peace Nobel Prize** in Oslo in 2002, **the most beautiful voice of Benin Angélique Kidjo** asked for him again. This time he signed for an **international tour which lasted five years** and that led them to the **biggest American TV live shows** such as Late Letterman, Jay Leno and CBS Early Show, in addition to **many international music festivals**.

From 2006, he has accompanied a **talented up-coming Algerian singer, Souad Massi**. In 2008, he went on tour with **the charismatic Keziah Jones**, then with **Mayra Andrade** in 2010 (he was playing the double bass).

He also worked with Chris Combette, Catherine Lara, Philippe Laval, Ayo, Beethova Obas, Jacques Schwartz-Bart, Asa, Tony Chasseur, Daby Toure, Cheick TidianeSeck, Irma, Franck McComb, Ludovic Louis, Frantz Laurac, Gny, Victor O and many others. He's **often on stage for TV shows** like **"Taratata"** or **"*Les Victoires de la Musique"**.

Stephane Castry **worked for the cinema too**. You can hear him in **French movies** like "La vérité si je mens 2", "Taxi 3", "Gamer", "Funky Cops (cartoon)", "Mais qui a tué Pamela Rose ?", "La personne aux deux personnes"... He also **arranged the strings** for N'Dea Davenport, DJ Abdel, Cut Killer, Stomy Bugsy, Doc Gyneco, Corneille, Sophia Mestary...

RETURN TO BASICS

But **Stephane Castry has not forgotten where he is from** ! From 2002 to 2008, he composed and played for **Moun Karayib**, with his brother **Jerome Castry, Olivier Jean-Alphonse and Willy Salzedo**. This project is **synonym of a return to the roots**, to the soul of a living acoustic Caribbean music, of the sound of **gwoka, of biguin, of jazz...**

Later on, and because he has intuition, he chose to direct **the first album** of a young, original, promising Guadeloupean singer, **Florence Naprix**.

Through all these melodic adventures, Stephane Castry became a **respected musician**, recognized by his peers, **able to fit every kind of voices** while offering his multiple influences and his musical maturity. His **so special groove, fluid phrasing, rich impros, technical "coloratura" touch** allow him to do subtle acrobatic variations, revealing who he is.

He has a natural ability for listening, is always ready to share with others and is **attached to great human values**. For him, "*music is like a dictionary: it makes you richer and better every day*". And you can feel this **mix between simplicity, requirement and positive energy** in his open and electrifying touch, supplying emotions.

SIDEMAN BUT NOT ONLY

From 2011, Stephane **has directed the band of Imany**, a hitting female artist.

Now, he is getting involved in **his first solo project**. Something important he wanted to add to his uplifting career. It will be done soon thanks to his **first album : Basstry Therapy**.

An **opus of 15 tracks**, full of surprises and looking like him: true, generous and passionate. A call to travel and share through the roots of groove, between **assumed styles like jazz, fusion, funky accents and sweet melodies** coming from Guadeloupe, Stephane's native island.

Carine CORVO - Translated by Florence Naprix.

Special thanks to Karine Lagrenade, Florence Cassange and Caroline Douteau.

Learn more : www.stephanecastry.com

