

## Han Bennink



*"Fish and bicycles are the third and fourth things that come to mind when I think of Holland. The first and second are pianist Misha Mengelberg and drummer Han Bennink."*  
(Steve Beresford)

[www.icporchestra.com](http://www.icporchestra.com)

### Han Bennink

Born in 1942 in Zaandam, Holland. Lives in Amsterdam. Drummer & multi-instrumentalist, graphic designer, artist. Co-founder of the ICP, a long-time associate of Misha Mengelberg, and one of the most in-demand drummers in Europe.

He trained as a graphic artist and has exhibited work in several media, including sculptures from found objects and designs of his own LP and CD sleeves.

In his teenage years he accompanied his father, a percussionist in a symphony orchestra (who also played clarinet and tenor saxophone) and then played in his dance bands. He became enthused with jazz listening to records and watching visiting US musicians in Europe. In 1960 he went to the US playing on a boat of the Holland-America line, just to spend time in New York and take in as much as possible: Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Aretha Franklin, Sonny Clark, Steve Lacy.

Between 1962 and 1969, Bennink backed local American jazz greats like Dexter Gordon, Sonny Rollins, and Eric Dolphy on their visits to Holland (he was the drummer on Dolphy's Last Date album in 1964). In 1963, he formed a quartet that included pianist Misha Mengelberg, which played the 1966 Newport Jazz Festival. In the mid '60s, Bennink began to play free jazz with the likes of Mengelberg and Willem Breuker. In 1967, those three founded the Instant Composer's Pool, a non-profit organization designed to promote the Dutch jazz avant-garde. Around that same period, Bennink began continuing associations with saxophonist Peter Brötzmann, guitarist Derek Bailey, trumpeter Don Cherry, and pianist Alex Schlippenbach and the Globe Unity Orchestra. In the '70s and '80s, Bennink led and played as sideman on a number of sessions recorded on various labels. In the late '80s, Bennink started, with cellist Ernst Reijseger and saxophonist Michael Moore, the fabulous Clusone Trio, which at times included a variety of special guests, but eventually dissolved around 1998. His serio-comic longstanding association with late Derek Bailey has also become legendary for its wide range of musical interests, including a surrealistic, far out sense of (Dutch?) humour expressed in his performances.

Bennink is well known for an unconventional approach to his kit - feet on the drums, playing his mouth, setting fire to the high hat - but also for using anything that comes to hand as a sound- or rhythm-generating source, for example a pizza box in his duo with Eugene Chadbourne.



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His longest association is inside and outside the ICP Orchestra with Misha Mengelberg - 42 years in 2009. Han Bennink continues to work with an enormous range musicians from around the world, younger pianists from The Netherlands such as Cor Fuhler and Michiel Sheen, and in the trio BBG with Michiel Borstlap and bass player Ernst Glerum. Since 2004, he also plays regularly with the Ethiopian trio of Mohammed 'Jimmy' Mohammed, Mesele Asmamaw and Asnake Gebreyes.

Bennink is one of the rare musicians whose abilities and interests span the music's entire spectrum, from Dixieland to free, improvised music, punk and beyond. He has also collaborated frequently with dancers, actors, poets and film directors.

What ultimately makes Bennink special is his manifest love for music and the arts, a love that inclines him to tear down the cardboard walls that too often separate the creative pool of artists.

Han Bennink has been the winner of the European Jazz Award in 2008.

Extensive discography/filmography/bibliography.

<http://www.hanbennink.com>  
<http://www.icporchestra.com>  
<http://www.drummerworld.com>  
<http://www.efi.group.shef.ac.uk>

## Recommended:



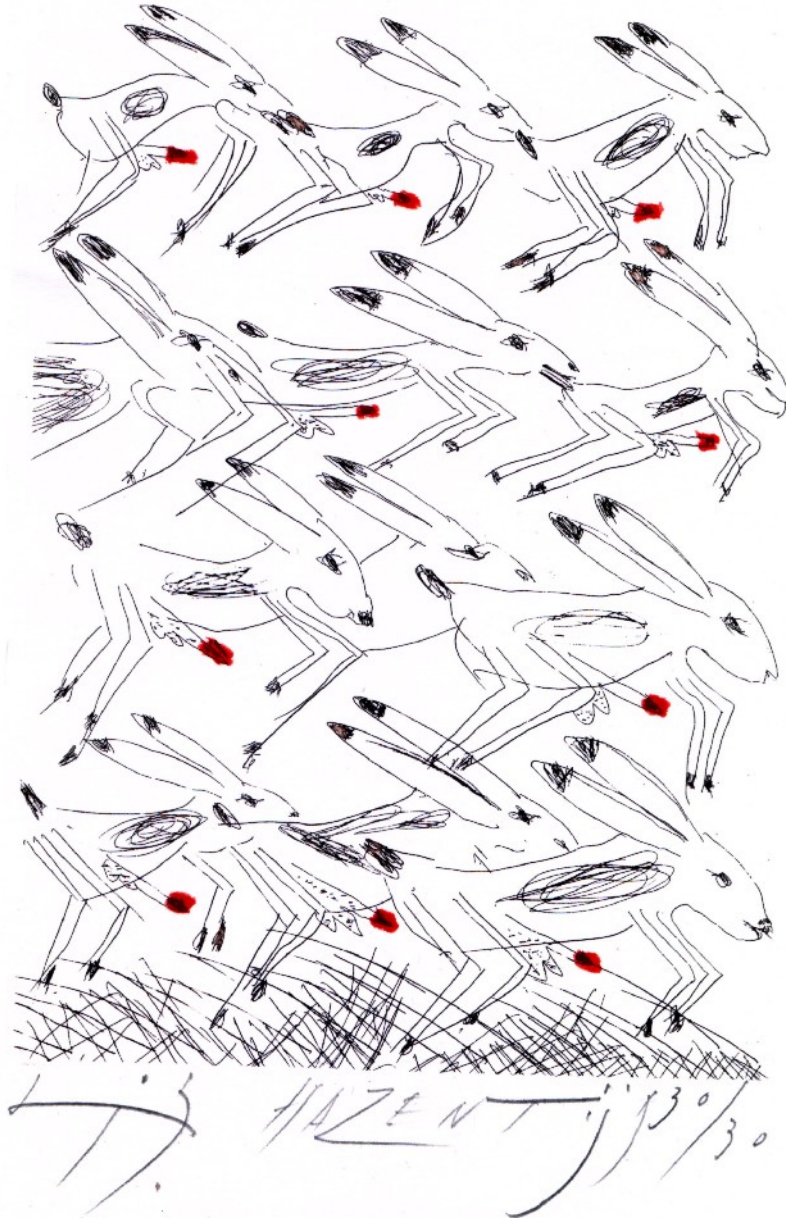
Kevin Whitehead: *New Dutch Swing*, New York 1998  
Ben van Mekick: *Han Bennink Cover art*, Huis Clos 2008  
Erik van den Berg: *Han Bennink. De wereld als trommel*, 2009

The trio concert Bennink/Oliver/Delius is sponsored by the Berlin Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



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Etching by Han Bennink for TOTAL MUSIC MEETING 2004 (Art Edition)  
[www.free-music-production.de](http://www.free-music-production.de) (TMM Art Edition)



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