



*True Story*  
**Jean-Michel Pilc (Dreyfus Jazz)**  
by Joel Roberts

Paris-born pianist Jean-Michel Pilc continues his impressive series of Dreyfus Jazz releases with *True Story*, his first album since 2006's *New Dreams* and the debut effort for his exciting new trio featuring the respected veteran drummer Billy Hart and the talented Russian-born bassist Boris Kozlov. The 49-year-old Pilc, a resident of New York for the past 15 years, is a self-taught musician whose varied experience includes playing with masters like Roy Haynes, Michael Brecker and Dave Liebman, among many others, as well as a stint as musical director and pianist for Harry Belafonte. He is a cerebral, yet deeply passionate artist, whose adventurous postbop style recalls Bill Evans and Keith Jarrett both for his expertly crafted, impressionistic soloing and dynamic interplay with his trio mates.

12 of the 15 tracks on *True Story* are Pilc originals, several of which, like "A Brief History of Time" and the five-part title suite, start off with simple, repeated melodies that evolve into swirling, harmonically dense improvisations. "B.B.B." is a heavily Monk-flavored piece with dramatic staccato rhythms while "Mornings with Franz", along with a gorgeous reworking of Schubert's "Relic", pay tribute to the renowned Romantic composer. Pilc and group also shine on two unlikely and completely reinvented covers: a revved-up rendition of Cole Porter's "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" and an exquisite, emotionally wrenching reading of the bittersweet show tune, "Try to Remember".

Jean-Michel Pilc makes music that's challenging, yet unabashedly beautiful. Along with his masterful keyboard technique, there's an intensity and seriousness to his music that rewards careful listening. It's a combination that should continue to earn this highly inventive artist critical plaudits, as well as, hopefully, a broad base of thoughtful fans.

*For more information, visit [dreyfusrecords.com](http://dreyfusrecords.com). This trio is at Iridium May 26th. See Calendar.*