

A Late Bloomer Finds Himself on *Time Is Color*

Cédric Hanriot B.M. '08, a self-taught pianist who entered Berklee at 31, released a jazz album that's impressed the critics—and mentor Herbie Hancock.

By Kimberly Ashton

December 19, 2022



Cédric Hanriot B.M. '08

Image courtesy of the artist

Technically, *Time Is Color*, the new jazz album from [Cédric Hanriot](#) B.M. '08, isn't his first record, as *BBC Magazine* wrote when giving the release a [rare five-star review](#): it's the second or seventh album, depending on how you count them. But in a sense, Hanriot, a self-taught pianist who attended Berklee on a Fulbright scholarship, says, *Time Is Color* is his debut, because it's the first album that sounds fully and unselfconsciously like him.

Cookies Policy

We use cookies to improve your experience on our sites. By continuing to use this site, you agree to our [use of cookies](#).

OK



it wasn't really a thread," Hanriot says.

This experimental phase of his career came about in part, because he came to music relatively late, at least for someone who would become a high-level professional musician. He was 16 when he first started playing keys for a local band in northeastern France. His bandmates were his age, but, unlike him, they knew how to play their instruments. Though Hanriot didn't exactly know how to play the keyboard, he would make up sounds that went along with the band's songs.

"I guess I had good ears, probably. And hopefully good taste," he says. The band was popular, playing more than 200 gigs around France over the course of three years. During that time, Hanriot got better at his instrument, and got serious about teaching himself how to play. Eventually, he wanted to learn to play "more with my five fingers, and maybe be better at solos." He left the band and started his own musical journey, collaborating with salsa artists and other musicians. At the same time, he earned a master's degree in electrical engineering.

"I didn't feel legit. You know, [I] started late, the Paris Conservatory just said 'no.' You say, 'Okay, maybe I'm not a real musician.'"

CÉDRIC HANRIOT B.M. '08

After graduating, he decided to pursue music full-time and applied to the prestigious Paris Conservatory. He was refused. At 31, he was considered "too old," he says. The rejection was an uppercut to his confidence, and Hanriot questioned his validity as a musician.

"I didn't feel legit. You know, [I] started late, the Paris Conservatory just said 'no.' You say, 'Okay, maybe I'm not a real musician,'" he says. But around this time, he got a bona fide seal of legitimacy: a Fulbright scholarship to go to Berklee. "It was like, 'Wow, at least these people can understand my case,'" Hanriot remembers.

"To me it was an [opportunity], not to be accepted in Paris and to go to the States, for the people, for the musicians, for the language, for everything. And for the network, obviously. It's just magical. I'm very grateful for this experience," he says.

It was at Berklee that he was able to study with [Hal Crook](#), an experience he calls "the best thing that ever happened to me" in terms of pedagogy and education. It was also at Berklee that he met [Terri Lyne Carrington](#), who gave him invaluable help in the business. It was through her and her network that he ended up with an almost unheard-of opportunity to work with Herbie Hancock.

"My dream was to be able to spend time with him," Hanriot says, describing himself as being "at the top of the list of [Hancock's] fans." Hanriot had recorded an album with Carrington and [John Patitucci](#) with the Hancock's engineer, Bill Winn, and these connections led to an introduction during a concert in Europe. Hanriot and Hancock stayed in touch and after a while Hancock invited Hanriot to Los Angeles for a month to help with a piano tour.

Cookies Policy

We use cookies to improve your experience on our sites. By continuing to use this site, you agree to our [use of cookies](#).

OK



any more, he says, laughing. I feel more legit.

Project/Album "TIME IS COLOR" - TEASER 2022 (Cédric Hanriot)



Related Categories: Berklee Today News

MOST POPULAR



[Cookies Policy](#)

We use cookies to improve your experience on our sites. By continuing to use this site, you agree to our [use of cookies](#).

OK



LATEST



[A Late Bloomer Finds Himself on *Time Is Color*](#)



[Announcing the 2022–2023 Issue of STAGES Magazine: Teaching Excellence](#)



[Student Spotlight: Caio Miguel Jacomini](#)

[READ ALL](#)

SUBSCRIBE

The latest sounds, stories, and ideas, sent to your inbox weekly.

Cookies Policy

We use cookies to improve your experience on our sites. By continuing to use this site, you agree to our [use of cookies](#).

OK



BERKLEENOW

The latest sounds, stories, ideas, and events.

SUBSCRIBE

[Libraries](#)

[Berklee Press](#)

[Hire Berklee Talent](#)

[Jobs at Berklee](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Boston Campus Map](#)



[POLICIES](#)

[ACCREDITATION](#)

[NOTICES AND DISCLOSURES](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

Copyright © 2022 Berklee College of Music

Cookies Policy

We use cookies to improve your experience on our sites. By continuing to use this site, you agree to our [use of cookies](#).

OK