

Tommaso Starace



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The Tommaso Starace Italian quartet records in August 2011 his newest and fifth CD ‘Celebrating the Music of Michel Petrucciani’. The quartet performed ten of the most loved and well known compositions written by the great french pianist who thanks to his positive and exuberant character and virtuoso piano playing made his fame in America and around the world.

Two fantastic guests are featured on the CD: Italian trumpet star Fabrizio Bosso, and Uk vibraphone virtuoso Roger Beaujolais. The CD is on the Universal/EmArcy Label.

In May 2010 Tommaso released his fourth album ‘Blood & Champagne’.

The CD was recorded with a new all star UK quartet comprising: Frank Harrison on piano; Laurence Cottle on electric bass and Chris Nickolls on drums. The band recorded music by Michel Petrucciani, Billy Strayhorn, Ennio Morricone, Henry Mancini plus some new exciting original material by the band leader.

‘Tommaso Starace Quartet - Don’t Forget’ his third CD recorded in the year 2009, also marked the beginning of an exciting musical collaboration with his Italian Quartet comprising Michele Di Toro on piano, Attilio Zanchi on bass (Paolo Fresu’s collaborator for many years) and the hard swinging drumming of Tommy Bradascio.

Renowned jazz author and critic **Vittorio Franchini** says of Tommaso’s new recording :

“The sax is filled with voices, it sings gaiety.....I like the way he follows joyful paths, I imagine him playing around with rhythms, playing with the other instruments, opening up to new feelings and inventing new ways...”

The launch of the CD successfully took place at the Blue Note in Milano in front of a full house. The Italian quartet undertook a UK tour in April and an Italian Tour in May 2010.

His previous album and second as a band leader, ‘Tommaso Starace plays the photos of Elliott Erwitt’, allowed the young saxophonist to tour twice round the United Kingdom performing with his quintet in some of the most prestigious jazz clubs, festivals and concert halls including:

The Purcell Room - Queens Elizabeth Hall, Pizza Express - Dean Street, Drill Hall - Lincoln, Swanage Jazz Festival, Jazz at the Fleece, St Davids Hall - Cardiff, Royal Festival Hall Foyer, Oxford Jazz Festival, Lichfield Jazz Festival. This recording also gave him the possibility to visit jazz clubs and festivals in Italy including The Blue Note- Milan, Le Scimmie - Milan, Time in Jazz Festival and Nuoro Jazz Festival - Sardenia, Borgo jazz Club - Genova, Brianza Open Jazz festival, Biella Jazz Festival. Favourable reviews followed his performances and CD releases:

“...The promising Starace seems to be revealing his most personal voice in the full-on music.” - John

Fordham, The Guardian

“Starace’s melodious originals offer good blowing potential for alto and soprano solos delivered in a cleanly articulate post-bop style reminiscent of Phill Woods.” - Jack Massarik, Jazzwise

“The rhythm section is dynamic and Starace is star material” - Ian Carr, jazz author/educator/musician

Tommaso has recorded five CD’s as a band leader. His repertoire ranges from his own compositions to modern interpretations of standards. His aim through composition is to write tunes with a strong melodic component exploring traditional and more contemporary harmony and always maintaining the sense of swing and groove. Not surprisingly some of Tommaso’s influences are Cannonball Adderley, Clifford Brown, Joshua Redman, Brandford Marsalis, Ennio Morricone, Stevie Wonder, Maurice Ravel. But his passion for black and white photography, painting and cinema are also a continuous inspiration to his writing and music.

Born in 1975 in Milano, Italy Tommaso started playing the saxophone and studying music at the age of 18. He moved to the United Kingdom in 1994 where he graduated at Birmingham Conservatoire with a Bmus first class honors and later at the Guildhall School Of Music and Drama with a Postgraduate Degree in jazz studies in the year 2000.

He has performed with some of the most respected jazz musicians including Billy Cobham, David Liebman, Kenny Wheeler, Stan Sulzmann, Jim Mullen, Jonathan Gee, Paolo Pellegatti, Gianni Giudici. In the year 2004 he collaborated with award winning oscar film composer Dario Marianelli (‘Pride and Prejudice’ and ‘ The Atonement’) recording music for ‘This Little Life’, a BBC drama for Channel Four.

In 2008 Tommaso was awarded with an Honorary Membership by Birmingham Conservatoire given to him for his significant contributions made across the years within the various branches of the music profession.

Tommaso is currently busy performing concerts between the United Kingdom, Italy and Switzerland.

He’s also busy collaborating with other projects and has recorded two Cd’s as a side man.

