

Stefano Sabatini

Rome-born pianist Stefano Sabatini has been on the Italian jazz scene for a long time! Back in 1973 at barely 19, he was fostered by Tony Scott, musician/talent-scout extraordinaire, and was soon playing with other stars of the growing Italian jazz Olympus, like saxophonists Maurizio Giammarco and Massimo Urbani.

But Stefano was soon craving musical excitement that only the homeland of jazz could provide. In 1978 he moved to L.A. to study composing and arranging at the "Dick Grove School of Music". This gave him the opportunity to play with many of the local musicians, which led to the recording of his first LP as a leader. Notably, the session's drummer was Chester Thompson (ex-Weather Report and Frank Zappa). By 1982, Stefano was back in Italy playing with famed Italian modern jazz group "Lingomania", with former colleague Maurizio Giammarco (tenor sax), Flavio Boltro (trumpet), Furio Di Castri (bass) and Roberto Gatto (drums). The band was voted "Best Group of the Year" by Italian National Radio, and performed in prestigious Festivals like the Paris International Jazz Festival and Italy's famous Umbria Jazz Festival.

By then Stefano Sabatini was fully launched as a free-lance jazz pianist who's elegant style, natural swing feel and marked melodic sense made him sought after by Italian and American musicians alike. To name some: Massimo Urbani, Giovanni Tommaso, Nunzio Rotondo, Gianni Basso, Tullio De Piscopo and American stars like: Chet Baker, Johnny Griffin, Lee Konitz, Sal Nistico, Steve Grossman, Charles Tolliver, Gary Bartz, Billy Cobham, Sonny Fortune, George Garzone, Rick Margitza, Ronnie Cuber and Elliot Zigmund.

Besides being a fine improviser, Stefano is also a prolific composer and arranger, who's work, as a leader, has been released on six albums:

Heart & Soul (Alfa Music - 2012) con Luca Pirozzi (bass), Pietro Iodice (drums);

Melodies (Saint Louis Jazz Collection - 2004) with Furio Di Castri (bass), Roberto Gatto (drums);

Dreams (YVP Music - 2000) with Stefano Di Battista (Alto & soprano sax), Danielo Scannapieco (Tenor & Alto sax), Dario Rosciglione (bass), André "Dédé" Ceccarelli (drums);

Waiting (Splas(h) Records - 1995) with Stefano D'Anna (tenor & soprano sax), Francesco Puglisi and Dario Deidda (bass), Amedeo Ariano and Pietro Iodice (drums);

Wonderland (Splas(h) Records - 1991) with Flavio Boltro (trumpet), Maurizio Giammarco (tenor sax), Stefano Di Battista (alto & soprano sax), Furio Di Castri and Francesco Puglisi (bass), Roberto Gatto and Maurizio Dei Lazzaretti (drums);

Memories (Fly by Night - 1988) with Dario La Penna (guitar), Francesco Puglisi (bass), Roberto Gatto and Maurizio Dei Lazzaretti (drums);

Sabatini (Forever Records - 1982) with Rick Hannah (guitar), Eric Ajaye (bass), Mike Turner (percussion), Chester Thompson (drums).

---Bob Nissim