THE COMPOSER TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT FORUM STUDIOS TONIGHT

Film Music with Mainetti “The Triumph of Humanity over AI”

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THE INTERVIEW

He has just celebrated his forty-year career—it was 1985 when he composed his first film score, for Joe D’Amato’s Voglia di guardare—with an album, Along Time, in which two outstanding performers reinterpret some of his compositions as chamber music. One is pianist Gilda Buttà, a longtime collaborator of Ennio Morricone (with whom she recorded iconic soundtracks such as Giuseppe Tornatore’s The Legend of 1900); the other is cellist Luca Pincini, also highly regarded in pop music, as his collaborations with Mina, Renato Zero, Jovanotti and Patty Pravo attest. But Stefano Mainetti, the award-winning composer of scores for films and television series—from Shooter: Attack on Prague to Talos: The Shadow of the Pharaoh and Orgoglio—is not only one of the industry’s most respected and sought-after composers. He is also a music theorist who has long followed and studied developments in the relationship between music and artificial intelligence.

THE FESTIVAL

This afternoon he will devote a discussion to the subject as part of the Rome Film Music Festival, an event dedicated to film soundtracks. At the legendary Forum Studios, founded in 1970 by Ennio Morricone, Armando Trovajoli, Luis Bacalov and Piero Piccioni beneath the Basilica of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Piazza Euclide, Mainetti—67, and uncle of director Gabriele, whose latest film La città proibita is a box-office hit—will examine the many darker sides of AI applied to musical composition. “In Italy there is still little literature on the subject and not much debate. I have been studying it for years, and it is an extremely urgent issue. Just think that last year in the United States the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America), which represents record companies, decided to sue two of the leading companies producing AI-based music for alleged copyright infringement. These are just two of the many examples of AI systems capable of creating new songs from a user’s written prompt by combining musical elements drawn from original catalogues,” Mainetti says.

The musician taught Applied Composition for years at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory and, in 2017, helped found ACMF, the Association of Film Music Composers, alongside colleagues including Stefano Caprioli, Francesco Cerasi, Riccardo Giagni, Andrea Guerra and Pivio. “Together with the other members, we had to amend the association’s statutes to introduce a rule restricting the use of generative artificial intelligence in music, with expulsion as the penalty. It is an ethical issue: we cannot pass off as our own ideas that were actually generated by software.”

THE INSPIRATION

The pieces on Along Time represent “the triumph of human intelligence.” They range from gems such as Frida Kahlo, composed in 2026 for a stage production featuring Alessia Navarro about the great Mexican painter, to personal works such as Tango per Maria, dedicated to his daughter Maria, born in 2004 from his relationship with actress Elena Sofia Ricci. “Gilda and Luca are my musical family; they have been by my side for thirty years. Together we pay tribute to melody, which is disappearing more and more from contemporary music.”

Forum Studios, Piazza Euclide 34. Today, 4:30 p.m.

Mattia Marzi

Typographic transcription translated from the reproduction of the original article.