

Elisa Tomellini

Biography



Elisa Tomellini was one of the artists mentioned by The Guardian newspaper as belonging to ‘...the brightest talents among today’s exceptional generation of young pianists...’.

Elisa is an Italian concert pianist, born in the city of Genoa, Italy. She has played the piano since the age of five, being taught at this very young age by Lidia Baldecchi-Arcuri. Elisa has since traveled to Milan and Verona to continue her musical studies. In Milan she studied with Ilonka Deckers-Kuszler, who herself was a student of Istaván Thomán – one of the favorite students of Franz Liszt – and in Verona, she studied with Laura Palmieri.

At the age of sixteen, Elisa was admitted to the prestigious Music Academy ‘Incontri Col Maestro’ in Imola. Here, she was taught by several established musicians, including Alexander Lonquich, Riccardo Risaliti, Franco Scala, Joaquin Achucarro and Piero Rattalino.

Following this, Elisa attended numerous master-classes with such illustrious pianists as Maurizio Pollini, Sviatoslav Richter, and Lazar Berman. In 1997, Elisa gained a diploma with the highest scores at the Conservatoire ‘G. Verdi’ of Milan.

Elisa won several prizes at international competitions such as the ‘Viotti Valsesia’, the ‘Concorso di Cantù’, and the ‘Concorso Città di Pavia’. The magazine ‘Piano Time’ refers to Elisa as ‘a prominent pianist in Italy’.

In Italy, Elisa has performed in recitals and with orchestras at important music festivals, including the Società dei Concerti di Milano, Le Serate Musicali a Milano, Il Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova, L’Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana di Palermo, L’Orchestra del Teatro Filarmonico di Verona, Gog Genova, The Glenn Gould Foundation (a live-streaming concert), Sagra Malatestiana in Rimini and for the Quirinale Palace Live Radio Concerts in Rome.

Elisa has also toured in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, the UK, and the USA. At some of these events, the Italian Public RAI RADIO 1, RAI RADIO 2, RAI RADIO 3 and RSI Rete Swiss, broadcast Elisa’s performances live on air.

For a few years, Elisa took a sabbatical period from her musical career and lived in the Alps, where she developed a passion for trekking and climbing mountains. Subsequently, she pursued such activities in the distant corners of the world. Later, Elisa made her return with debuts at the Kennedy Center in Washington and the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany.

An album, released under the Vermeer label, features pieces from Sergei Rachmaninov and her own unique arrangements of Astor Piazzolla's operas. Her second album, under the Piano Classics label, presents works from Rachmaninov, including the unknown Suite in D minor and other early works and this is included in a complete Rachmaninov collection with the Russian pianists Zlata Chochieva, Alexander Gavrylyuk, Lukas Geniušas, Alexander Ghindin and Nikolai Lugansky.

Her last album for the Dynamic label, distributed by Naxos, and recorded at RSI of Lugano, has been available since October, 2018. Here, Elisa is the first woman in the world to play the Transcendental Studies of Liszt from Paganini in the 1st 1838 original version, of which, Schumann commented that there might be only four or five pianists in the world who could play them. This album gained five stars in Roger Nichol's review in BBC Music Magazine of February, 2019 (p98).

"... It is a rare delight these days to hear a pianist who dares to play pianissimo... There is charm here in abundance, together with staggering virtuosity.... Finally, not the least of Tomellini's abilities is her grasp of form.... here everything unfolds naturally and meaningfully. And the piano sound is superb...."

The repertoire of Elisa is based mostly in the Romantic era and in Russian composers which she often performs in entire recitals. Furthermore, her music repertoire also encompasses other genres such as the Nuevo Tango of Astor Piazzolla.

She also likes music worlds apparently very far from classical, like pop and electronic and she explores it in her project with Eklectric Duo.

The Eklectric, formed by Elisa and the Italian cellist Alberto Casadei uses electric cello, piano, pedal board and electronics and performs in many countries and prestigious festivals.

In order to close the circle of her two lives, that of a pianist and the life in which she had a sabbatical to discover the beauty of the world, she performed what is called the world's highest piano concerto after scaling a 14,700 feet peak in the Alps, Monte Rosa, on July 8, 2017.

The concert was more than just personal. The film rights are donated to the Sanonani Association, an organization which runs a children's foster home in Kathmandu.

In 2018, Elisa founded, and was the President of the Association ['Genova Musica'](#), of which Elisa and Luca Franzetti were the artistic directors. In the same year, she also became an ambassador of Genoa in the culture of the world. On the 23rd January, 2020 in Italy, Elisa was given the Amelia Earhart Award for achievement.

In recent years, true to her nature as a curious explorer, Elisa has devoted herself to a highly original project: Eklectric Duo, formed together with cellist Alberto Casadei. The duo brings to the stage electric cello with multi-effects pedals, piano, and electronics, blending influences from film music, tango, pop, rock, well-known classical works, and electronic music. The result is a powerful musical experience that moves seamlessly across different eras and musical languages.

Eklectric Duo has performed in major concert halls and international festivals, including Milton Court Concert Hall in London (Paganini Festival), the Istrian National Theatre in Pula, Maximum Uniq Hall in Istanbul, Teatro A. Galli in Rimini for the Sagra Musicale Malatestiana, Auditorium Gazzoli in Terni for Visioninmusica, the Archiginnasio in Bologna for the Bologna Festival, and the Aula Magna of the Polytechnic University of Turin for the Polincontri concert series, consistently receiving broad and enthusiastic audience acclaim.

In 2022, Eklectric Duo represented Italy in Miami (USA) during the official celebrations of the Italian Republic Day, taking on the role of cultural ambassadors.