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Music by ENNIO MORRICONE

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MUSICHE DI
ENNIO MORRICONE
DALLA COLONNA SONORA
ORIGINALE DEL FILM

Rosario Giuliani

The Other Sax Player

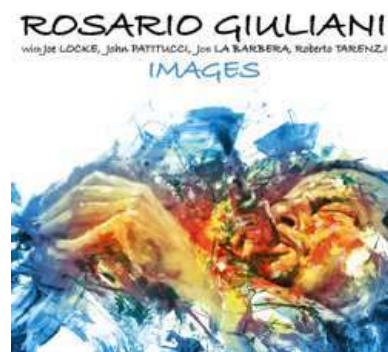
by Patrick Bouster



The saxophone, in Morricone's music, is often embodied by another, famous name: Gianni Oddi, for numerous scores such as **La leggenda del pianista sull'Oceano**, **Malèna**, **Ripley's Game** and many others. But in the Nineties, in which he used the instrument a lot, there was another soloist, unknown to us so far: Rosario Giuliani. His name was given to us by Enrico Pieranunzi, with whom he performed music for some CDs. Much younger than the other maestros we have interviewed, born in 1967, he began his career with the Corpo Bandistico Città di Terracina and went on, after completing his musical studies, to perform film scores. During the decade 2000, he collaborated with Pieranunzi, Martial Solal, Joe Locke, Philip Catherine, Marc Johnson, Joey Baron, Richard Galliano and many others. He recorded CDs such as "Luggage", "More than Ever", "Anything Else", "The Hidden Side", "Cinema Italia", and "Duke's Dream", among others. An all-round jazzman, involved in many events. So the performances for the cinema, even of high quality, seem to be a parenthesis or somehow exceptions.

His website <https://rosariogiuliani.com> summaries his history, presents records and pictures. One page attracted our attention: "L'Arte e la Musica, Armonia dell'Anima: a Pompei omaggio a Ennio Morricone" (the same goes for Nino Rota). The video shows a performance of **Nuovo Cinema Paradiso**, for sax (Giuliani) and accordion (Luciano Biondini), in a nice rendition, soft and supple⁴⁴.

He accepted the interview, it was just a question of time, and he agreed to listen to and identify some tracks, a difficult task due to the lack of information and the time that has passed, but fortunately limited to a narrow period.



⁴⁴ <https://rosariogiuliani.com/media/video/#/lightbox&slide=1>

Interview (from 1st to 5th of March 2021) [All rights reserved]

Original text in Italian: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Bb9fHzedWJtxhsNnLdsa_UgYpD9sfqtI/view?usp=sharing

What is your history, professional and as a studio artist, before performing for the cinema? And how did you embark in film music ?

I studied sax at the Conservatorio di Musica L. Refice in Frosinone, and my teacher was Baldo Maestri, he was the Ennio Morricone's preferred saxophonist and clarinetist. He was the one who made me learn the profession and who introduced me to the world of the soundtracks.

It takes personality to be able to perform a certain type of music, this is what composers often look for when they ask a soloist to perform some melody, make it unique and make it become an integral part of the film. Probably my teacher, when he decided to introduce me to the world of soundtracks, had the certainty that I had such requirements. Everything else comes by itself, it becomes a word of mouth. There existed two associations (societies) which managed this kind of work that I was part of: Unione Musicisti di Roma and AMIT.

What were your very first film music recording? And the first one with Ennio Morricone? Was it within the orchestra without particular role or as a soloist?

I don't remember exactly the first time, certainly in the orchestra (a big band to be precise) and I was doing the second alto sax, the first one being my teacher Baldo Maestri. **Bugsy** was very probably my very first time with the Maestro, but I don't remember many details. An incredible thing, however, struck me during the recording of **Bugsy**: the director asked him to change a song and he made changes without needing a piano. He made all the saxophonists hand him their parts and with the pencil he made some corrections. And everything worked perfectly.

In order to locate your involvement, and to search out, to identify as many films as possible, what is the period in which you

performed sax, for Morricone? And for what categories of sax?

The period of my collaboration with Maestro Ennio Morricone dates back to the beginning of 1991 until the end of the Nineties. I can give you some other titles: **La scorta**, **Il quarto re**, **Lolita**, **What Dreams May Come**, the music which wasn't used in the film. **L'uomo delle stelle**, you suggested, and that I didn't remember, after having listened to the tracks⁴⁵, I am sure that I played them. And probably there are other ones, but I find it very difficult to go back to that period. In Maestro Morricone's music, I always played only the sax alto.



So, as a soloist, you begin with Bugsy, a serious and obscure music, but which makes some allusion to the jazz, especially in the track you performed: *On a Street, at Night*. What was the state of mind to develop for the sax: going naturally towards the jazz spirit or simply using the timbre and the abilities of the instrument?

Maestro Morricone often chose the sax using the timbre and the skills of the instrument, trying to create tension with other wind instruments or a second piano out-of-tune for instance. It could also be, however, to play a melody. And as

⁴⁵ *L'Hollywood dei poveri* and *Stardust*.

previously said, it demanded great personality in performing it and therefore every musician interpreted it according to his own musical background.

I saw that you performed for numerous maestros. What were the the strongest, the nicest experiences, musically?

I don't think there is any strongest or nicest. Every experience left me something indelible that I later transferred into the relationship that I still live with music. Putting images in music means transferring visual emotions through notes. Working with all the greatest Italian composers taught me how to write music in a way that it becomes the soundtrack of my life. I remember with affection, naturally apart from the great Ennio Morricone, Gianni Ferrio with whom I had a big friendship, Armando Trovaioli, Nicola Piovani with whom I collaborated on Federico Fellini's last film **La Voce della luna** and Luis Bacalov only to cite a few of them.

Do you think that, for some scores like La scorta, Morricone called you because of your experience in jazz ?

I don't think so, also because in that period I didn't have a big experience in jazz. I read music very well, at first glance, I had a nice sound and a good (musical) personality.

La Scorta gives a big role to the sax (5 tracks). On one side there is the main theme (Solidarietà e addio), which uses it a little bit in «blues» style or in any case in a «warm» way. The other group is more unusual in that it gives urgency, danger, which was in the past assigned to other instruments. Did you get instructions from Morricone about this, and about how to approach the pieces?

Bugsy (1991), with only the track *On a Street, at Night*, is enough to make us happy and grateful, a jewel of the soundtrack. Giuliani, exceptionally, and for his very first recording with Morricone, is mentioned in the end credits. In contrast with the whole score, dark, the piece appears as magic and mesmerizing, thanks to its mix of jazz and a complex, special and refined atmosphere. The sax makes interventions faded in and out, partly emphasised and partly masked by the other part of the orchestra, each element seemingly fighting against each other. Each time the sax appears, it is magic, both jazzy and expressive.

A couple of years later, in 1993, **La scorta** has more to offer to Giuliani's sax, and again – but for the last time – he is credited at the end (“sax contralto”). The great and long *Solidarietà e*

He asked you to be yourself, performing a piece became your personal expression. The fact that he called me again was because an important alchemy had been created, so there often were no real indications about the performance, every musician who collaborated with him for a long time had perfectly understood what the Maestro wanted.



In 1997, with Lolita, you played one intense piece. What was the difficulty?

Too many years have passed since this recording. But I can give a more ample answer about my period for Ennio Morricone, a unique experience that enriched me every time I had the opportunity to record with him. I had the privilege and the luck to collaborate with one of the greatest and most brilliant composers of modern music.

The sax soloist parts, for all these films, were recorded with a part of the orchestra or as a solo and then mixed?

Both happened. Often it was played with the whole orchestra, other times I performed an overdub later.

addio, as a false static piece, installs a strong theme for the instrument. It allows it to be put in the forefront as never before, and at the same to tell a story and a climate, thanks to the space-time given. The other interventions are more incidental, made for the urban, suspenseful Mafia subject (*Autobomba*, *Breve ritorno a casa*, *Un collage di timori*). But *Una breve, strana gioia* makes exception, with its odd sounds of several saxophones apparently independent and improvised, mixed together, which was a new sound in a Morricone's oeuvre.

Jump ahead two more years, searching out for the saxophone, we get to **L'uomo delle stelle**, with two old-fashion-styled pieces. *L'Hollywood dei poveri* and its joyful and naive memory of the past, offers a big role to the sax, in two parts, with the accordion and with the strings. *Stardust*, a famous dance jazz standard, arranged many times by the composer in the past, gives a serene and simple role to the sax. Simple doesn't mean easy to make: Giuliani's major and general ability is the fluidity of the rendition, heard in many tracks. This second piece, in two parts too, is even longer, over 6 minutes, and let's bet it is built in 2 cues. We are dealing with two nice discoveries, and it appears normal to entrust both to a jazzman.

About **Il quarto re** cited by Maestro Giuliani, we have to confess that we didn't find any track with sax both on the CD and in the TV-movie. The music differs in some aspects between the two items, but the absence of sax doesn't prove that no piece was recorded for this instrument. Indeed, for many scores, there exists a lot of rejected, unused takes, try-outs and so on. For the same year 1997, besides the title of **U-Turn** which Giuliani spontaneously cited while not recognizing the tracks with the *Bobby* theme (the only ones featuring the sax), there is **Lolita**, as mentioned by him too. From the most complete edition (Music Box Records), we identified two tracks. *Love in the Morning #2* (track 15, a new one that appeared on that CD) is the major one with a leading sax carrying the sad and touching melody. The better known *Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury* (track 29), present on the first record, features the instrument only in the second half after Paolo Zampini's bass-flute, for a brief but brilliant performance as a guest.



