



## FABIO MELIS

### Biography

Fabio Melis, born in Rome in 1979, approaches music at a very young age, listening with interest to the records of his father and uncle, vinyl collectors and admirers of the great international rock music of the '70s and '80s. The passion for the guitar was born after the discovery of the unmistakable sound with which Mark Knopfler, together with his trusty Schecter Stratocaster, characterized the path of Dire Straits between 1978 and 1985.

In June 1988, Fabio was only nine years old when he discovered the artist who, more than others, would push his artistic formation: Bruce Springsteen (when he discovered that Springsteen was more or less that age when he was struck by Elvis Presley while watching the Ed Sullivan Show in 1957, he would have a big laugh). When Springsteen's "Tunnel Of Love Express Tour" stops in Italy, Fabio stays at home: his father and uncle go to the Flaminio in Rome, he don't: too young. At home they will not listen to other music for months and Fabio will have to wait until May 25, 1993 to see for the first time live what has become his hero.

In the years between 1988 and 1993, many artists played a crucial role in the boy's musical formation: they are names that belong to the musical history of the East Coast and the West Coast of America, but also to the more mainstream pop and soul music such as the Eagles, Jackson Browne, Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, Ike and Tina Turner, Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes, Little Steven & The Disciples Of Soul, ZZ Top. Fabio listens to everything from the great classics like Eric Clapton and Rod Stewart, to - recently - Joe Bonamassa, Blackberry Smoke and country music.

After middle school he enrolled at the Cinematography and TV Institute "Roberto Rossellini" (sound engineer branch) and the artistic environment in which he works allows him to further deepen his passion for music. At Cine Tv there is a music laboratory whose teachers are Pietro Tirabassi and Enzo Civitareale. The two encourage Fabio to explore his vocals and invite him to perform with them with the Riding Sixties, a historic Roman band that pays homage to the Beat of the sixties (the first Rolling Stones, the Rokes, but also the first electric Bob Dylan). At Cine Tv it is a tradition that in may the end of year concert is held in the school yard, so in 1997 together with other bands Riding Sixties perform three Creedence Clearwater classics: Have You Ever Seen The Rain, Who'll Stop The Rain and Proud Mary. In the following years they performed at Fonclea and Big Mama, historic rock and blues venues in Rome.

At the beginning of 1998, at nineteen, Fabio forms The Skies, his first band, and begins to perform wherever he can, offering a repertoire consisting mainly of songs by Creedence Clearwater Revival, America, Eagles and Dire Straits. The band includes his professor of film language Enzo Civitareale (drums) and friends Luca Galloni (bass) and Andrea Illuminati (guitar and backing vocals). The latter is a guitarist gifted with great technique and musical ear and will be a source of great inspiration for Fabio.

In 1998, the death of his beloved maternal grandmother pushed Fabio to write his first original song entitled Sweet Caroline and to realize that he could express his emotions through writing, not only by singing other people's repertoire. At that moment he began his journey as a songwriter. In 2001 an embryonic version of that first song became the opening theme song of the radio show "Demo l'acchiappatalenti", conducted by Michael Pergolani and Renato Marengo and broadcast on Radio 1. From that moment on, Fabio begins to write original songs destined to remain closed in a drawer for many years.

In 2004, together with Fabio Brencio, he puts together E Streets Of Fire, a Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band tribute band which Fabio's brother Marco Melis (guitar and backing vocals). Over the years the band created a local and national following and was invited to be part of rock festivals in Switzerland, Belgium and Romania.

"Playing Bruce Springsteen's songs with E Streets Of Fire - says Fabio - has helped me over the years to grow as a musician and performer, giving me the opportunity to get in touch with many people with whom I share the love for this extraordinary artist. I love the fun that comes from that music but I didn't want to stop there."

At the end of 2018 begin the recording sessions for the first album of unreleased songs *Runaway Train*. There is Beppe Basile, one of the best Italian drummers (that Fabio knows in Rai through Luca Barbarossa's Social Band that every day is on air on Radio 2), and there is the colleague and friend Daniele Di Noia. On piano and organ Domenico Langella, a long-time friend with a great technique. Fabio composes, naturally sings his songs and records all the guitar parts.

One song in particular needs something special. Lovin' Eyes is strongly inspired by those typical Jersey Shore sounds that Fabio loves so much. The sound of Asbury Park requires rock guitars, piano and Hammond organ: it's all there. But to reach the rhythm'n'blues soul of so many beloved records (the song takes its cue from works such as *Better Days* by Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes and *Men Without Women* by Little Steven & Disciples Of Soul) a wind section is needed. So why not "that" wind section? The only viable way seems to be the one that leads to the Jukes of Southside Johnny!

Contact is made with John Isley, saxophonist of the Jukes, and everything happens wonderfully: this is what rock'n'roll is all about, "smell each other", as Italian songwriter Eugenio Finardi would say. It's a deal, the impossible happens: John not only accepts to be part of the album, but he also proposes to personally arrange the wind line of "Lovin' Eyes" and to write the parts that will be recorded by Jukes or played by him with his sax for other tracks.

"Follow that dream, wherever it may leads..." Elvis and (later) Bruce sang, and they were damn right! It all happens in the days when the interest of Ermanno Labianca's Route 61 Music for the material was growing. Labianca's had been following the evolution of Fabio's music for months and had promised to produce the album. Which is now a reality: 14 unreleased tracks to discover a young artist in love with the history of rock.

The band that will accompany Fabio live, Steel Dreams, is composed as follows: Fabio Brencio (drums), Marco Melis (guitar and vocals), Daniele Di Noia (bass), Domenico Langella (piano and organ) and Lorenzo Zega (saxophone and percussion).

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