

GIANNI MIMMO

Improviser and composer in the fields of jazz and experimentation on his own original projects, mainly focused on relationship among distant artistic declinations, Gianni Mimmo (1957) has built an international reputation for his unique treatment of musical timbre and his exploration of advanced techniques on the soprano saxophone.

His style has developed a unique blend of abstract lyricism and contemporary flavours and his works have been excellently reviewed by international magazines and webzines.

Based in the Milano area, Italy, Gianni started his research at the end of the '70s playing as saxophone player (mostly alto and baritone saxes) with several Italian experimental bands and investigating the relationship between music and spoken word in countless performances in theatres, communities, houses, streets, political sit-ins, auditoriums and small houses.

In 1994 Gianni Mimmo switches to soprano sax after some lessons/conversations with Steve Lacy who opens him the door to a different attitude and perspective in music.

Since then Gianni dedicated himself to soprano sax only.

The music-text formula drove him to work with poets, writers and singers.

His collaboration with the Montale Prize Italian-Russian poet Chandra Livia Candiani in late 90's has been very prolific: the two works "Io con Vestito Leggero" and "Lettere Mai Scritte" have been performed in Italy and Switzerland more than 40 times among theatres, town libraries and house concerts.

In 1997 Gianni created Stanze, an ensemble with a very unusual line-up (soprano saxophone, double bass, two speaking voices, and a classical soprano singer), to work with original writings, poetry, simultaneous and overlapped texts coming from classical and contemporary authors.

His text works for Stanze has been edited as a book for Amirani Writings Enterprise in 1999 with the title "Testi per Stanze" completed with photos by Elda Papa.

His idea to detach texts, mix them with music, and deliver a completely new cultural object led him to expand the collaboration with photographers in order to realize an interactive installation where images, texts and music could be matched in different ways from the visitors.

"Obliqui Viali" the work he realized together with photographer Elda Papa, became an interactive installation, a visual sound track suitable for public and private places of many types: railway stations, undergrounds, buses, courtyards, hospitals, waiting rooms, art galleries, etc... with music by Bespoken, the reading voice of Aldo Cassano, and the visual elaboration of Acmevideo. It finally became a book published in Italy by Cooperativa Libreria Universitaria.

The audio part of the project has been released in Italy by Setola di Maiale records.

The long time collaboration with poet, writer, translator and Germanist Anna Ruchat is still active with works like "Una Fossa Nell'Aria" based on texts of Paul Celan, Primo Levi, Heiner Müller, Hannah Arendt and from the diaries of Victor Klemperer and with other monographic investigations as the one on Jewish/Swiss poet Mariella Mehr.

In 2002 his collaboration with Lorenzo Dal Ri (sampling, sound treatments) with whom he founded Bespoken, focuses on the relationship between acoustic and electronic instruments. It leads to stimulating sound-tales, sound tracks (the latest is "Luce bagna i binari" for a video by Alessandro Nassiri Tabibzadeh, published by Icona Contemporanea), and mood settings for art exhibitions and events (Venice Architecture Biennial 2002, Conference on "Reverie", Modena 2003).

"Tight Corners" came about to study the creative connections between the music and photography of Stefano Galvani (live music and projection performance). In 2004 a collaboration with the trombonist Angelo Contini, a stimulating duo called "Two's days/Tuesdays" in which improvisation and the score are nimbly integrated and the fragmentation/formation of sound is examined with curiosity, produced a very intense recording and several live performances in Italy, Germany and Belgium. A naked form, based on a very varied expressiveness without rhythmic harmonic support, a tight knit and refined dialogue, open to improvisations that take their form from an open and sincere interaction.

In the same year, ITA2, a school for foreign learner's of Italian, commissioned the first volume of a work entitled "Etica Fonetica": "La Lettera S", which, in collaboration with the lyric soprano Susie Georgiadis, examines phonetic cells of the language from the musical point of view.

In 2005 he deepened his relationship with sound treatments, this resulted in the environmental recording of a live concept about the tragic epic of the Russian submarine Kursk in collaboration with Angelo Contini, Lorenzo dal Ri and Xabier Iriondo. It becomes a celebrated DVD with help of images by Elda Papa and filming by Agua Mimmo.

In the same year Gianni founded the independent label Amirani Records which is still run solely by him. Since then Amirani Records released about 50 albums building an excellent reputation for its productions, getting reviews from all over the world and issuing albums from international artists and hidden treasures.

Amirani productions are treated with due and utmost attention to detail: sound quality, graphics, conceptual truth. The production is a concept of the artist's journey, a document of his time.

The new catalogue line "Amirani Contemporary" started its adventure in 2012 and already released some great albums featuring music by John Cage, Sylvano Bussotti, Morton Feldman, Aldo Clementi, Dario Palermo.

From 2005 Gianni starts an intense activity as international free lance performing musician bringing his projects in all Europe and USA in festivals and venues. He started long-term collaborations with international musicians from UK, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Spain, Japan, USA.

In 2006 Gianni starts a brilliant collaboration with the Basque musician Xabier Iriondo. Both interested in a sort of meta-language resulting from their very different derivations and styles, the duo investigates the relationship with the space and brings the music in very different situations. Their record "Your Very Eyes" released in 2007 co-production with four international indie-labels has been extremely well

received and has been performed in international festivals as Jazz X Due and Clusone Jazz Festival. The recording, that took place in an ancient cave church in the stone town Matera, South of Italy, has been nominated as one of the best album of the year by AAJ Italy... The peculiar reverb of the church, together with the timbral implications of the nature sounds, set this album among the best numbers in Gianni's discography.

In 2008 Gianni put together Forgiving July, a trio with a very unusual line-up including Gianni on soprano sax, Angelo Contini on trombone and Stefano Pastor on violin. The trio plays some concerts in Europe: Germany Belgium, Uk. Their performance at Novara Jazz festival in 2008 has been produced by the festival itself and gathered excellent reviews from all over the world. In the same year the trio has been invited by the International Society of Improvised Music to play at their annual conference at the Colorado University in Denver, Co.

This successful concert opens the door to the American scene for Gianni who starts to plan a future tour in the country.

In '08 Gianni meets and plays with UK improv legend John Russell. Together with the London guitarist he records a quintet "No Rooms For Doubt". The line up includes Angelo Contini on trombone, Andrea Serrapiglio on cello and vocalist Jean Michel Van Schouwburg. This magic quintet released in 2009 delivers fresh, fragrant, mysterious and warm instant compositions pushing the listening in unexpected sound realms.

Conceived as "different rooms of the same building", each musician is like a door opened to a possibility. Oblique narrations with a great dramatic flavor, the tracks are a space walk meeting sudden windows, flight of stairs, shades and scents of a terrific sound house.

From the end of 2009 Gianni focuses on some projects still active today: According with his definition, all these projects are "CREATIVE PROPELLER KNOTS":

I. RECIPROCAL UNCLES

An absolutely successful duo with the extraordinaire pianist and composer Gianni Lenoci. The duo has delighted audiences in Italy, Germany, Uk, Belgium and in the USA in two different tours.

Their first album released in 2009 for Amirani Records and LongSong Records is sold out and has been widely recognized by reviewers all over the planet and has been invited to perform at The International Society of Improvised Music 4th Festival/Conference in Santa Cruz, Ca in 2009.

Contemporary flavoured, their improvisations have been defined by Freejazz blogger Stef Gjissels "Perfect match for each other: sensitive, lyrical and abstract, a rare combination", and by AAJ-USA reviewer Gordon Marshall:

"The dynamics throughout are fun and swinging. Their music offers resolutions - and revolutions - turning the tensions into forays of breath-taking complexity".

Reciprocal Uncles has been nominated among the Records of the Year by the Italian Magazine Jazz-it.

On the 2013 tour the duo open the circle to magic percussionist Cristiano Calcagnile, brilliant and remarkable musician with a lot of excellent collaborations in

his already dense career, notably with Anthony Braxton, Rova Saxophone quartet, Daniele D'Agaro, Tristan Honsinger among the others and multiple original works with musicians coming from the experimental areas and jazz as well. During that tour several guest musicians have been involved in performances and the meeting with the great Ove Volquartz (with Cecil Taylor, Günther Hampel, etc.) here on bass & contrabass clarinet, has been recorded live at The Apex in Göttingen and just released by Amirani Records. Defined as "Real gem of top-class improvisation flavoured by contemporary shades and bluesy light in an outstanding live concert" the album, titled, "Glance and Many Avenues", (2014) is already gathering enthusiastic reviews.

2. SOPRANO SAX, CELLO, PIANO trios

Gianni considers this lined-up combination as one of the most interesting to work on his "Instant Compositions" strategies because of the chamberish halo he feels when playing with the right musicians. In 2009 he founds The Shoreditch Trio together with brilliant piano player Nicola Guazzaloca and UK cellist/improviser Hannah Marshall. The trio is amazingly productive and releases two albums, both live recorded: in UK "The Shoreditch Concert" and in Belgium "Again - The Shoreditch Trio live at Air-Odeon studio in Bruxelles".

The trio toured in Uk and Belgium giving really awesome performances, got great reviews and audience response.

About the Shoreditch concert, the contemporary composer Dario Palermo wrote: "[...] Strong personalities, extremely talented, have played in an unusual place, an old church in the busy Shoreditch central London area, that for the characteristic of its own acoustic has engaged the trio in a highly demanding level of concentration, and resulting in an extraordinary performance [...]"

In the liner he wrote for the album "Again" the legendary guitarist John Russell wrote: "Generous with ideas, open minded and spirited, and with a genuine musical curiosity [...] Intimately aware of the space occupied by the others [...] this group has legs!"

Continuing his research on this line up, Gianni met the talented pianist and composer Elisabeth Harnik from Graz, Austria. Together they involved the Swiss powerful cellist Clementine Gasser and created the Wild Chamber Trio. Their album "10.000 Leaves" has been recorded in Vienna and released by the Polish label Not Two Records thanks to the support of the Styrian Kultur Steiermark, Austria. The trio played in Italy, Austria, Romania in three different tours. Invited at Sibiu Jazz in 2013 and the important Taktlos festival in Zürich, Switzerland in 2014, Wild Chamber Trio is a contemporary combo that really delivers elegant, intense, perfectly balanced music.

3. COLLABORATION WITH SOPRANO SAXOPHONIST HARRI SJÖSTRÖM

Gianni and Harri (active member of the European Improvised music scene and member of the Cecil Taylor quintet) met in the late winter of 2009 in Bologna, Italy, both involved in workshop/concert organized by the Scuola Popolare di Musica Ivan Illich. Both devoted to the soprano saxophone and both pupils of the great Steve Lacy, they plan to start what Mimmo calls "mirroring duo" recording. In the June of the next year they record "Live at Bauchhund, Berlin 2010" a successful cd out for Amirani Records in 2010 that has been nominated a "Must have album" by AAJ-Italy.

Since then the duo has performed more than 35 concerts in Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Finland and UK. The “Mirroring” formula (Sjöström and Mimmo are both soprano sax players) is really intriguing for the expert listener and for the newcomer as well. It makes possible a continuous shifting of the attention areas, with intervallic/oblique narrative lines and corrosive contrappunto strategies. While moving in the same range of sound, the two different styles of the musicians suggest a double-faced way to proceed in their playing:

sometimes we have parallel lines, sometimes contrasts between a melodic and a textural attitude, sometimes terrific unison, chamber warmth and childish lullabies.

The collaboration between Gianni and Harri evolves too in conceiving larger ensembles with very unusual line-up in order to develop a more complex multi-perspective music, non-linear systems and a multi-level generated events.

Their first ensemble is Quartetto Internazionale involving UK violinist Alison Blunt and German turn-tablist Ignaz Schick. The quartet plays in Germany and in a tour in Finland giving concerts in Helsinki and Turku in 2014.

In 2015 Gianni and Harri lead Sestetto Internazionale in an intense tour in Finland and Germany with concerts in Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Lovisa, Berlin, Jena, Nordhausen, Bremen etc.

They play at the JAZZanti Festival Helsinki, Free Okapi ry Festival Lovisa, Zaum-fest Turku, Sound Scapes in Tampere.

The line-up is absolutely intriguing: Gianni Mimmo (I) on soprano sax, Harri Sjöström (SU) on soprano & sopranino saxes, Alison Blunt (UK) on violin, Achim Kaufmann(DE) on piano, Ignaz Schick on turntables, Veli Kujala on micro-tonal accordion. During the successful tour Gianni and Harri gave workshops and master-classes that explore action and re-action strategies, generative collisions, dissonance and turbulence of musical elements, timbre explorations, extended techniques, graphic scoring and conduction.

Sestetto Internazionale approaches the very core of the dialogic perspective, looking at the sound as a morphing matter, driving the listener in a journey through explorations in textures, melodies and dangerous flights of idiosyncratic improvised chamber music, lyrical spots and dramatically intriguing changes.

Sestetto Internazionale live concerts at Kanneltalo Theatre in Helsinki and at the Sibelius Museum in Turku have been recorded and will be released in 2017.

Gianni Mimmo has been supported by the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Helsinki for his cultural activity in Finland in 2015.

4. CONCEPTUAL WORKS

During his musical career Gianni Mimmo has unfolded his considerations between the problematic relationship between composition and performance, partaking and fruition, social role of the artist in the society, through a body of work including: productions, writings, interviews, liners about works of other artists and original projects based on natural phenomena and their sublimation in music.

Here following some examples:

Recorded in 2005 the music of “Kursk_Truth In The End” becomes a DVD produced for Amirani Records. The work is a dreamlike interpretation/re-consideration of the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk tragedy occurred in 2000 in the cold waters of the Barents Sea. Starting from an extremely accurate recording of a performance by Gianni Mimmo, Angelo Contini and Xabier Iriondo in an italian

ancient church and then working on the music as on a real storyboard, this is a thrilling, touching work about the tragically epic death of 118 sailors, a modern enigma between the truth and the powerful political arrogance.

Drama is explored in an imaginative creative way.

From launch to point of no return, Elda Papa's photos and Agua Mimmo's movie along with Xabier Iriondo's sound treatments keep each tragedy step in its epic-metaphorical aspect.

In 2008 Mimmo produces an album titled "On War" on his Amirani Records asking many musicians, each one with their own project, to operate a conceptual investigation of the conflicted relationship among human beings.

All tracks have been originally composed for this album/goal.

Amirani's intent is to move or provoke artists to compose and perform around social issues.

Each artist/composer/performer has been requested to describe his way to approach to concept "War".

In the booklet one can find an explanation for each piece directly from the musician/composer/performer. To extend the communication, to enhance the perspective, brilliant photographer Elda Papa completed the booklet dedicating a photo to each composition.

"Turbulent Flow" has been released in 2012 by a co-production of Amirani records and Teriyaki Records. It's a recording of the duo with the brilliant NY cellist Daniel Levin. The idea of a collaboration between Daniel Levin and Gianni Mimmo came from AAJ reviewer Vittorio Lo Conte, who simply sent Gianni's music to Daniel and Daniel's music to Gianni and warmly suggested: "You guys, have to play together". A successful input, indeed.

After this recording session the duo has performed some successful concerts in Northern Italy, at Vision Festival (Art for Art/Evolving Music Serie 2012) in New York and at Douglas Street Music Collective in Brooklyn.

The concept of turbulence is really close to this music: elements, added or subtracted or transformed, are flowing in constant re-combining possibility and delivering new perspectives and developments.

There are different threads one can follow, but there's also the nice thrill to go through them, to be "in" the Turbulent Flow.

One would describe turbulence as an elegant disorder, a place where is possible to deal with unstable particles determining new heroic forms and, simultaneously, to take care of the whole generating process.

The album, completed by a fantastic liner by Gilles Laheurte, received many extremely positive reviews.

Here the musical elements deal with expansion and compression of their dynamic weights in relation with the time, the texture and the melodic lines.

A deep complexity is crossed here with great concentration, and surrender at the same time, a surprising labyrinth of unlikely symmetries and poetics.

In the first part 2012 Gianni Mimmo presents a project based on a study of the sea tides systems: TIDAL-Amphidromic Cotidal.

Supported by Fondazione Pierluigi e Natalina Remotti whose Contemporary Museum in the beautiful Italian seaside town Camogli is also used as recording location and concert hall, the work has been released with the collaboration among

Amirani Records, GRIM (Gruppo di Ricerca Improvvisazione Musicale), Teriyaki Records.

For this purpose Mimmo puts together a very peculiar wind quartet named “A Windy Season” featuring a chamber oriented instrumentation line-up:

Gianni Mimmo on soprano sax, Mirio Cosottini on trumpet and flugelhorn, Angelo Contini on trombone, didjeridoo, thunder drum, jew’s harp, seashell, Alessio Pisani on bassoon and contra-bassoon.

The elaborated concept focuses on transitions, stillness, recombination, collisions generation of the musical elements deriving from the observation of the tides cycles. The concept of the whole work is illustrated in the liner Mimmo wrote for Tidal: “An amphidromic point is a point of zero amplitude of one harmonic constituent of the tide.

Amphidromes are convergent areas in the oceans, places where there is little or no apparent tide. This is not to say that the surface of the ocean in these places doesn't move, doesn't rise and fall with wind, momentum, inertia, and other forces acting on it, but in the purpose of studying the tides from space, these areas are mathematically still.

Radiating from the very center of this stillness to the antinodes, Cotidal Lines experiencing same phase of the tide, connect all points. Because tidal waves do not travel with constant speed, but instead respond to changing depth, Cotidal Lines will not be evenly spaced or consistently shaped.

Repeated cycles of ebb and flood, current changes, rise and fall, directions, speed, level increasing, dramatic depths and wave patterns can be observed along the coastlines of this music too, that proceeds through shared textures and simultaneous peripheral fires, still densities, path diversions and converging edges.

But those nodes, those amphidromes, those dense silences with all those sounds moving around and expanding to increase their presence and to come back re-generated, mixed up with rip current sediments...

Well, that’s “Tidal”.

A dance of elements, a fluid structure, solidly multi-centered, with live nerve-endings. A pulsing network responsive to environments, and to lateral inputs as well, but at the same time, conscious of the whole creative ongoing process”.

5. FILM LIVE SOUND-TRACKING, HERACLITUS-Luminosi Frammenti, WORKS FOR DANCE

Beyond many works with video-makers two main live sound-tracking projects deserve to be mentioned:

“Mistaking Monks play on Sayat Nova”

Mistaking Monks is a trio with Xabier Iriondo on table guitars and Cristiano Calcagnile on percussions. The project is born to perform a live soundtrack on the visionary film Sayat Nova, by Georgian/Armenian director Serghei Paradjanov. It has been performed in many situations: concert halls, cinemas, house concerts, social centres, film festival and venues.

The music recorded has been released in 2012 by PhonoMetak Labs on a cd titled “Mantic”.

Described by Federico Fellini “ One of the greatest cinema magicians ever”, by Michelangelo Antonioni “Among the best directors of the contemporary cinema,

master of beauty and perfection”, by Tarkowsky “The man with a paradoxal poetic and freedom”, Serghei Paradjanov really embodies one of the highest results of poetic expression in filming.

Guilty of so strong beauty and freedom to be haunted and imprisoned by Soviet Government for his homosexuality, he is a classical victim of dullness and conventionality.

Paradjanov has a extremely original intellectual angularity, a refined artistic skill, able of a perfect synthesis between theatre and mythology, image and narrative force, dream and premonition. His famous “Tableaux Vivants” with their formal perfection and pulsing symbolism make his filming incomparable and unmistakable.

Framing, evocative shots on the dream threshold, rural theatre, mythical tragedy, symbolic dance and gestures, perfection on detail, deep tradition and mystery enchantment: these are the flawless features of a transcendental cinema.

“Sayat Nova”, also known as “Colour of the Pomegranate” is considered his highest masterpiece. Surprising in its symbolic modernity, this relationship between music and image can't be didactic. The involvement is deeper and dramatic.

We're dealing here with a contemporary key re-reading of the film, a reciprocal and re-morphing relationship between the image and sound.

Strong, imaginative ,spiritual images find in music a sort of translation, conduction, explication an another level.

Like a Mythology seen backward instead of a post-modern perspective, like a pervasive push and a total, tender embrace.

“Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed” by Lotte Reiniger (1926) live soundtrack. Commissioned by the international film festival “Bergamo Film-Meeting” 2016 in collaboration with Bergamo Jazz 2016, this live soundtrack is completely built on a time score realized on the extraordinary film by the seminal director Lotte Reiniger. The live soundtrack is played by Mimmo on soprano sax and electronics and has been acclaimed as a visionary re-reading of this pioneering film.

The composition investigates different narratives aspects: linearity and subliminal suggestions.

“Heraclitus-Luminosi Frammenti” is one of the main works on text scores Gianni Mimmo wrote. The initial idea dates back in 1986, after the reading of two different critical analysis about the remaining fragments of the greek philosopher Heraclitus. After few partial performances of the work in the past years, it finally has been entirely played in the church of Santa Maria degli Amalfitani in Monopoli in 2013 thanks to the support by the Cultural Association Talking Lands in its trio version with Gianni Mimmo on sax soprano, Gianni Lenoci on piano and electronics and Nicholas Isherwood bass-baritone singer.

The score includes some theatrical gestures including fire-eating/spitting, ritual movements and collective lament.

Among the several dance works, the long-term collaboration with dancer Marcella Fanzaga deserves to be mentioned: with her Gianni performed in Italy and Switzerland in works like “MoooveMe” (2004-2009) and the Meeting Point experience involving dancers from all Europe.

The collaboration with Austrian dancer Sebastian Prantl has been performed in the famous Colourscape in UK and Finland (2012-13)

The work "Panji- Archaetypal Dance" has been performed in different groups thanks to the collaboration with Javanese Court Dancer Mr. Norontako Bagus Kentus. This last work has been performed in Switzerland and Italy also in May 2016 in a new version including Gianni Lenoci on piano/electronics and Los Angeles based wind player and composer Vinny Golia.

6. COLLABORATION WITH UK VIOLINIST/COMPOSER ALISON BLUNT

The collaboration with brilliant violinist Alison Blunt starts in 2013 in London, UK. Both interested in deepening the chamber attitude of their style and in a neo-formal approach to improvisation, they decide to record a live concert in the challenging acoustic of St. Leonard Church in Shoreditch.

The concert is successful and becomes a celebrated album titled "Lasting Ephemerals" released on vinyl LP thanks to a co-production among Amirani Records, LongSong Records and Teriyaki records.

The album is for sure one of the best in Gianni's discography and receives a huge amount of excellent reviews from magazines, being broadcasted in several avant-garde oriented radios in Europe and USA.

The duo has performed live more than 60 concerts together touring in UK, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Finland and in a three weeks tour in the United States, with concerts in Chicago (Create Festival), New Mexico (Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Taos), California (San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Los Angeles) and New York.

The duo played in theatres, churches, little venues, clubs, house concerts, festivals, boats, gardens, streets, galleries and so on.

The duo has been invited at the International Society of Improvised Music annual Conference on New York in 2015 at the New York School of Music and has been invited to perform and to lecture in schools as well.

Mimmo-Blunt acoustic duo features a contemporary wild chamber attitude, improvising instant compositions, sound texture explorations and sudden lyrical flights.

Their improvisation, that has been defined "A Gentle Vertigo", freely crosses boundaries and welcomes rich contradictions between melody and blessed chaos. Experimental flavors, multi-perspective intuitions and reciprocal listening are the extremely well balanced blend of this duo that strives for an improvisation where "things happen", able to face pulsing silences and airy architectures as elements of a sound sculpture.

Relationship among inner voices, live attention to detail, lyrical declinations and violent assertive moments are on display in their performances where openness and concentration take the risky route of sailing through dynamic contrasts, tackling episodes of turbulence and tranquility, passages of great delicacy and braves hazardous balances on a music that keeps alive the attention for an active listening.

"A great pairing, meshed like watch cogs, a face with 17 hours working to forgotten moons. a lesson in the creation of spontaneous sound; all you could ask for from an improvised performance.

Michael Holland, Nov 2013 Eyes4eyes.blogspot.it

"A wonderful collaboration. Both of them switching between lyricism and extended noise making fluidly, echoing each other and taking time out to listen. I spent half of their set in a semi conscious mystical state.

<http://thisplaceatthistime.blogspot.it/?view=sidebar>

The alert gracefulness and reciprocal regard through which Mimmo and Blunt explicit their intertwined instrumental togetherness convey the same sense of fulfillment that irradiates the most surprisingly revelatory instants of normality[...]

When the duty calls, the pair is willing and ready to show the listener how peace can be restored, nimbly sailing to calmer waters without apparent effort: a musician's thorough control of his/her means of expression is something that can be attained only by "living" the instrument day in, day out, a principle respected as The Word by authentic improvisers [...]

Massimo Ricci, www.TouchingExtremes.org

7. SOLO PROJECTS

Gianni Mimmo started his solo performances on soprano sax in 2003.

The solo concert is considered by Mimmo: "Something special: something beautiful (because the possibility to match one's sound with silence is a terrific opportunity to deal with chosen "areas to play on", tools to work with, horizontalities and verticalities, dynamics weight and empty-full objects...) and terribly challenging (because those same silences are going to unveil your licks, your sudden lack of concentration, leaving you naked out there...)

A solo is a mirror asking for special concentration, responsibility and openness [willingness] to get lost..."

He played solo concerts in UK, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium.

Two albums are been released featuring Gianni in solo:

The first is "One Way Ticket" (Amirani Records 2005) with pieces coming from composers like Lacy, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Anton Webern, Roscoe Mitchell and other original compositions by himself.

"One Way Ticket" is far from being a collection of tracks, it is a concept of transit, of movement, of the nomadism of thoughts, of the impossibility of settling, and of our belonging to a journey.

The music and words of this work are photograms of different weaves, angles and colors, drawn from a journey taken with a One Way Ticket (direction unknown).

Stylistically it is contemporary, but indirectly it relates to chamber music both in its quotations and in its tonal color.

However, acquaintance with certain composers will reveal a love for certain forefathers, whose styles free-wheel through the present work.

The pieces are like places to visit, to recognize and to lose oneself in.

The work opens and closes with two short readings from T.S.Eliot and T. Scialoja.

"One Way Ticket" is a compendium of Gianni's quest on the soprano sax.

The use of extended techniques, the result of intense hard work on the instrument, is never "encyclopaedic", but a function of an aesthetics that looks carefully at the relationship between monodic sound and silence.

"One Way Ticket" has been excellently reviewed and is the first number on Amirani Records catalogue.

The second solo album is “Further Consideration” (Tarzan Records 2015) on a limited edition vinyl LP produced by Andrea Dolcino and Fabrizio Testa.

The work is entirely inspired and dedicated to painters Piet Mondrian, Mario Sironi and to the late Gilles Laheurte (author, soprano sax player, architect, producer, inspirational figure and friend).

The extended suite “A Number of Floating Sections for Piet Mondrian” is a composition on graphic score that dates back to 1986-89 (for the first time on record) and conceived, as often in Gianni’s solo performances, like a sublimation of the suggestions coming from some Mondrian’s paintings: the pureness of the forms, the few elements and the subtle depths of perfectly balanced squares and rectangles like suspended empty colored rooms...

The piece “Square as a Theatre” is dedicated to Mario Sironi, fantastic modernist painter and sculptor: in his paintings there’s always an intriguing calmness, a strange solitude and a sort of solemnity achieved without any explicit abstraction.

His empty towns, his peripheral factories are primitive and classical at the same time and his light is always amazingly modern.

Those empty spaces, those deserted avenues and squares look like a theatrical set and the strewn human figures appear like actors crossing the stage...

8. PROSSIME TRASCENDENZE for Quintet and Sextet

The project consists of a body of graphic scores compositions prepared for unusual lined up chamber quintet (soprano sax, French horn, English horn, percussion and violin) and sextet (trombone, C trumpet, soprano sax, basset horn, viola, double-bass). The idea is based on multi perspective interpretations of a given form, asking the involved musician to move along a sort of “constellation of possibilities”.

A multi-level event that is different every time, referring to an initial complex given composition, asking the musician to be open to sudden variations and permutations. The first version of “Prossime Trascendenze” composition for sextet includes two compositions, “Daphne” and “The Nestled Thought”, inspired by two paintings of Felice Casorati (1883-1963).

Other compositions have been written for quintet and include three pieces and two interludes.

Prossime Trascendenze will be released for Amirani Records in the end of 2016 and will premiered in Spring 2017.

As musician Gianni Mimmo’s current projects include collaborations with musicians as John Russell, Harry Sjöström, Alison Blunt, Lisa Mezzacappa, Vinny Golia, Ove Volquartz, Renee’ Baker, Elisabeth Harnik, Clementine Gasser, Daniel Levin, Benedict Taylor, Jean-Michel van Schouwburg, Hannah Marshall, Lawrence Casserley, Martin Mayes, Teppo Hauta-hao, Achim Kaufmann, Matthias Bauer, Garrison Fewell, Nicholas Isherwood, Gianni Lenoci, Xabier Iriondo, Cristiano Calcagnile, Nicola Guazzaloca, Peter Brötzmann, Enzo Rocco, Angelo Contini, Stefano Pastor, Stefano Giust, Alessio Pisani, Michele Marelli, Fabio Sacconi, video artists, and poets as well. He extensively tours in Europe and USA invited by international festivals and venues and runs the indie label Amirani records.

As producer Gianni works for the independent label Amirani Records. In 2012 Gianni started a new line dedicated to contemporary music called Amirani Contemporary. The line includes works by Cage, Bussotti, Clementi, Palermo, Feldman. A new volume dedicated to Earle Brown is on preparation.

www.giannimimmo.com

www.amiranirecords.com