



Mondo - From Italy to Thailand Always Traveling in Music: Bruno Brugnano

Dal nostro corrispondente a Bangkok - 15 giu 2022 (Prima Notizia 24) Interview with Bruno Brugnano, a creative and multifaceted musician with a long and luminous career, now among the most sought-after and famous arrangers as well as composers of music for films, documentaries and various film and visual

products.

His smile precedes him, the light shining in his face, hinting at a maturity achieved, an awareness attained through a great road of willfulness and sacrifice that no one sees, as one is easily mesmerized by aspects such as success and notoriety. But to achieve such great goals, there is often lonely and complex work behind it. We meet him in Bangkok and gather the tale of his human and professional story. What made you decide to move, live and work in Thailand? Following what paths from San Donato, you decided to live in one of the largest megacities in Southeast Asia and the entire Planet? Actually I didn't choose but it was completely random. I was living in Los Angeles and had the opportunity to tour, as a guitarist, with an American band here in Asia. After several tours including Hong Kong and Singapore we came to Bangkok and for various reasons I decided to stay. This was all towards the end of '92, so I have been living and working in Bangkok for 30 years. After a few years I started working as a producer for one of the biggest record companies in this part of Asia-GMM Grammy-and I stayed more than 15 years, producing, writing and arranging more than 100 albums for almost every Thai star. In the beginning it was not easy, even though in Italy I had started really young to write and record music, due to the fact that the Thai language and musical culture were completely different from mine, so after a year of trying one of my songs was chosen as a promotional track for a famous rock band here in Thailand and from that moment I did not stop anymore and I also had the luck to have -for many years- so many of my songs on the top of the charts, and also win many awards as a producer and author. You were born a musician and a guitarist, specifically, but today you compose music for soundtracks or produce arrangements for different types of products, which range from films, to documentaries, even arrangements of the Thai royal anthem, which is a very delicate aspect, for those who are not accustomed to the formalisms of the real context. What kind of evolution, then, has your profession undergone over Time? Yes my intention was to become a jazz guitarist, so I studied in Italy with the great Filippo Daccò and-after attending the Berkley Summer School in Perugia-I decided to go to America to study at the Musician Institute in Los Angeles with masters like Joe Diorio, Ron Echete, Norman Brown and Scott Henderson and many others including the great Joe Pass. I must say that Jazz helped me a lot, especially in the harmonic part, for what I would later become, a soundtrack composer, which for all intents and purposes is my profession for the last 18 years. I always tried to look ahead and understand when the time was right for a change, and I had sensed that working in pop

music, for me, was not going to have much of a future, given the big changes that have taken place in the last few years, so -given the passion I've always had for soundtracks- I decided that's what I was going to do. I believe deeply that we become what we think. For example, every time I went to the movies and they played the Royal Anthem before the movie, I knew that someday I would arrange it, and that was the case with so many other things as well, such as having the opportunity to work with so many international stars such as Steven Seagal, Kelsey Grammer, Elizabeth Hurley, John Cleese, Kris Marshall, Jeff Fahey, Nathalie Cox and many others. I also had the opportunity to write the music for the animated film "Nezha" which is the third most successful film achieved in the history of Chinese cinema and many other films and projects for Nations such as Malaysia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, India etc. My collaboration with the Royal Family began more than twenty-five years ago, when I was commissioned by the then Thai Prime Minister to produce and arrange a TV show and also an album containing all the compositions of King Rama IX, who was an excellent Jazz musician, sung by Thailand's greatest stars, on the occasion of his fiftieth anniversary of ascending the throne. After more than a decade, I had the honor of becoming the private composer of Princess Ubolratana, the first daughter of King Rama IX, and I worked with her for four years, writing the music for two of her films, various TV shows and also 2 music albums, however never released until now. Over the years I have also received other awards directly from another of the King's daughters, and I am currently involved in many musical projects with the current King Rama X. I am currently making music for new an animated film for Hollywood and three new Thai films. You turned Art, your musical passion, into your work. A happy meeting, when passions and work meet. What do you feel you can recommend to those who -young or not so young as they may be- want to embark on a life abroad and professional choice as particular as yours? It is a bit difficult for me to answer this question because I don't think there is a formula for success. In my case it has always been hard work, even today I work from 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. every day. I never take vacations, and unfortunately the last time I went back to Italy was five years ago, and this I regret very much because I am deeply attached to my family and Italy. I can say that I recommend never giving up in the face of difficulties and this is something I learned from a young age when I did a lot of volunteer work in India and Africa, or even during my two years of community service at a geriatric center in San Donato Milanese. Without music I think I would never have been able to overcome so many difficult situations and above all it has given me the opportunity to learn and travel, especially in my imagination, and make in my own small way, some people's lives better. There is no excuse if our life is not the way we like it, we all have a chance to change it, we just need to have some courage and believe in it: we become what we think.

di Francesco Tortora Mercoledì 15 Giugno 2022