



Mondo - A stargate between Renaissance Man and the contemporary transferred to Bangkok: Jacopo Gianninoto

Dal nostro corrispondente a Bangkok - 23 giu 2022 (Prima Notizia 24) An interview with a musician, university lecturer, artist and creative with a thousand faces always all interesting and

engaging. An Italian who moved to Bangkok and is a boast of Italy and its artistic and cultural values.

Jacopo Gianninoto is a precious treasure chest, full of light and many surprises, an endless well of Culture that has its roots in the world of Music, studies on Buddhism, in the realization of shows and cultural events of international caliber. A true gift from Heaven, benefiting the Italian image and Culture in Thailand. We meet him in Bangkok and interview him about his views on the current state of affairs in the scenarios where he has been acting and working daily for years. Yours is a vast and multifaceted experience, capturing different fields of Art and visual forms. Can you describe its genesis and nature? I was born as a musician, with a traditional conservatory background in guitar, lute, and composition, but at the same time I have always been interested in all art forms in general. Academically, I am a lecturer in Guitar, Lute, and Music History at Assumption University in Bangkok, of which I was also the director of the music department for two terms, and I have published many academic researches presented at various universities around the world, about twenty guitar books, and as many musical works of various genres. I divide my artistic work between making my own music composed in both traditional and electronic forms, and performance projects that are almost always in collaboration with other arts. In both cases when working on an idea or project I am interested in going beyond structure and tend to create only when I have something specific in mind to say. By my nature I always have a thousand interests and I always need new stimuli so I can easily go from electronic music in a "classical" vein so to speak, to composing music for Baroque lute, but then maybe do a dance music or post-rock project. Many of my works are related to literary works, esoteric philosophies or historical figures: for example, I have done a number of works inspired by the books of J.G. Ballard and William Burroughs, or the life of Caravaggio and Giordano Bruno, and works inspired by some aspects of Vajrayana Buddhism. And among other things, to differentiate I use different "characters" created specifically to propose the various works: apart from my main identity as a musician and composer for which I use my own name, there are my secondary identities such as Anatole Trans who has been composing electronic and techno/trance music since 1997, or such as Johnny Pattern thought of as a virtual existence living in the codes of the various music software I use and producing "Digital Dust from Virtual Suburbias," or even The Björn Bong Project which is thought of as an old-fashioned producer who records rock/post-rock music using vintage equipment...and others I leave secret in the spirit of the Luther Blisset movement of the 1990s. In Bangkok I collaborated with the Siam Philharmonic Orchestra as

a performer and also as an advisor, participating among other things in the production of Verdi's Otello; With my colleague, friend and great harpsichordist Alberto Firrincieli we created the first early music ensemble on original instruments in Thailand, Baroque Musike Bangkok, and also the Baroque improvisation project Baroque Me Baby, as well as opening under my direction the first university courses on early instruments in Southeast Asia. Then I worked with various theater groups also bringing Thai artists to Italy and various Italian artists here in Thailand to do workshops, performances and cultural exchanges. In short, during these years I was never bored. How long have you lived in Thailand and why did you choose to live in this Nation specifically? I arrived in Thailand in 2003, initially in a very isolated part of the northeast and then from 2005 in Bangkok. Thailand was a choice related partly to the Buddhism I had been practicing for many years, partly to the place itself, which I had visited as a tourist and liked very much, but in general mostly to the desire to confront a different reality. What are your plans in your near future? In recent years always because of my constant search for new things, but also for various personal reasons, I divide my time between university teaching, my art and the fashion business in Paris together with my wife who is a Fashion designer (in Italy we would say stylist), but that is another story... Between covid and other things the last 2 to 3 years I haven't done many performances but I have been concentrating on writing music and doing research, and now as for art projects, I am preparing a work between music, theater and visual arts about the life of Galileo Galilei and his father Vincenzo and brother Michelangelo who were both great lutenists and musicians, which will be presented with performances in Italy and Thailand by the end of 2022. And then I am recording a new work of my own compositions, and there are two books on the music of S.L. Weiss coming out within the year. Based on your human and cultural experience, what do you feel you can recommend to those who, in various forms, decide to emulate a choice like yours, that is, to leave their Nation of origin and decide to live abroad, in Thailand, specifically? In general, I would recommend an experience abroad to everyone, and especially to younger people. It means enriching one's cultural background, improving one's language skills, and above all, getting out of one's comfort-zone. It is never easy, it takes a lot of open-mindedness and adaptability but it can be very rewarding. As for Thailand specifically, like all places in the world there are good things and not so good things and many contradictions, one should never expect to find paradise, and certainly the image that a tourist may see is very different from the real Thailand: I have seen two coups, in 2006 and 2014, experienced the political repressions of 2010 and the various political protests that are little talked about in the West. If I could give one piece of advice I would definitely say first of all not to come with a colonialist approach, whether missionary or exploitative, and then not to lock yourself in the circles of Italians abroad or expats in general but to make local friends and connect with the real society...there is a lot to learn in all cultures of the world. Then of course from a practical point of view, for those who want to make investments or businesses I would advise doing them carefully and minimizing the risks, and maybe living in Thailand for a while first to understand the society with its rules well, so you can make a reasoned choice. And get good international health insurance: in Italy we have the privilege of public health care that we take for granted.

di Francesco Tortora Giovedì 23 Giugno 2022

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