

Claudio Ferrara

Artist's Curriculum Vitae (*last update: 15/05/18*)

Composer, Conductor, Tenor, Pianist

Personal Details

Italian Nationality. Born on the 6th of April 1990 in Santiago (Chile). Currently reside in Formello (Rome) after having lived in Athens, Rome, Brussels and Washington, D.C. Bilingual fluency in Italian and English, well-versed in French.

Contact Details

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Professional Summary

Highly qualified and flexible musician with a bachelor's degree as accompanist and a master's degree in composition, with instrumental experience as solo and opera pianist, vocal experience as tenor especially in the field of choral music, extended knowledge of classical harmony, orchestration, counterpoint, early music practice as well as jazz harmony, all paired with experience in conducting. Passionate about musical education, field in which I already have work experience, and actively creating musical opportunities, as is the case with the successful growth of Prima Prattica Ensemble, conductor-less vocal ensemble of which I am proud founder, organizer, and first tenor.

Academic Background (Chronological Order)

2002: First piano lessons, strong interest in musical composition and theory.

2002 – 2005: Attended “Music Theory and Composition” three-year course at Middle School and Walt Whitman High School, in Bethesda (Maryland, USA)

2006 – 2008: Earned my IB Diploma, completing Advanced IB Music taught by Mr. Robert William Hix and Darren Everhart.

2006 – 2012: Studied Classical Piano, Jazz Piano, and Jazz Arrangement with Maestro Francesco Carlesi.

2008 – 2017: Admitted to Rome's Conservatory Santa Cecilia's 10-year master's program in Composition. Maestri: Francesco Carotenuto, Ferdinando Nazzaro. Graduated in October of 2017, one year early.

2011-2013: – Studied Classical Piano with Maestro Raffaella Perrotta.

2013-2014: – Attended Rome's Jazz School "Saint Louis College of Music" as Jazz Pianist. Maestro: Claudio Colasazza.

2013: – Admitted as three-year bachelor accompanist at “Santa Cecilia”. Maestri: Rita Lo Giudice, Tiziana Carlini, Domenica Poccia. Graduated in March of 2017 “Cum Laude”.

2014: – **Today:** Study of belcanto singing technique as Tenor. Maestro: Mario Bassani.

2017: – **2019:** Admitted and attended two-year master’s degree in “Conducting of vocal and sacred repertoire” at the Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, Rome. Graduated in 2019 “Cum Laude”.

Also studied with Maestri: Riccardo Belpassi (Score-Reading), Tiziana Carlini (Orchestral Conducting) Antonietta Cerocchi (History of Music), Luana Palladino (Literature and Dramatic Poetry), Claudio Dall’Albero (Choral Music and Choral Conducting), Barbara Vignanelli (Harpsichord and Basso Continuo), Paola Serafino and Claudio Ricci (Solfege and Ear Training), Antonio Solimene (Jazz Arrangement), and furthermore, in jazz studies: Nicola di Tommaso, Simone Maggio, Lorenzo Feliciati, Dario Zeno, Diego Caravano.

Musical Qualifications

- ABRSM "Grade 5 Theory" exam (Associated Board of the Royal School of Music) exam with a grade of 95% (Distinction).
- 5th-year exam as solo pianist (Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, Rome)
- 3-year Bachelor's Degree as Accompanist (Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, Rome)
- 10-year Master's Degree in Composition (Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, Rome)
- 2-year Master’s Degree in Conduction of the Vocal and Sacred Repertoire (Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, Rome)

Seminars, Masterclasses, Competitions

August 2011 – Semifinalist in the Classical Piano competition "Talenti Nel Basso Lazio" in Fiuggi.

August 2013 – Attended a Masterclass in Baroque singing held by Maestro Mario Bassani within the hotel "La Villa del Cardinale" in Norma, both as Tenor student and Accompanist.

May 2015 – Selected, with my “Salve Regina” for choir and string orchestra, for performance and recording during the 2015 edition of the international composer’s forum “Sacrarium – Sacred Music in Our Time” held by KLK New Music in Leopoldis, Ukraine with the participation of the “Lviv Chamber Orchestra” and the “Galican Academic Chamber Choir”.

November 2017 – Winner of the third and only awarded prize in the International Choral Composition Competition “Guido d’Arezzo” with his “Kyrie”.

November 2017 – Winner of the National Choral Composition Competition “Canta Petrarca” with his “Amor Piangeva”

August 2019 – Winner of the second prize ex-aequo in the International Choral Composition Competition “Guido d’Arezzo” with his “Gloria”. First prize not awarded.

September 2019 – His “Benedictus” for three-part female choral ensemble is awarded an honorable mention in the International Choral Composition Competition “Opus Ignatum” held in Prague.

Recordings

April 2013 – Commercial recording, as Tenor chorister, for Brilliant Classics, of G. Rossini’s “Petite Messe Solennelle” with Rome-based English choir “The New Chamber Singers”. The recording took place within the Confraternita of S. Vitale, Assisi. Conductor: Andrea Cappelleri.

February 2016: Commercial recording of “Classici Mariani, vol. I” with Prima Prattina Ensemble, collection of traditional Marian chants arranged by Andrea Montepaone.

Experience in Composition and Conducting

- Have had several live performances of my works for solo piano, instrumental chamber ensemble, solo voice and ensemble, orchestra, a-cappella choir and accompanied choir.
- Have several live recordings of my works.
- Conducted my own works in various occasions.
- Strong preference for and inclination towards choral composition and choral music in general.

Experience in the Field of Education

2014-2017: As a member of the Musical Association “Eximia Forma”, I have worked as piano, harmony and ear-training teacher at Convitto Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele II, mostly among primary and middle school students.

2014 – 2018: Free-lance domestic piano instructor.

2017-2018: Teacher and accompanist in violin lab at nursery school “Umberto” I in Rome. The lab, conducted with the assistance of a violin teacher, consists in teaching rotating groups of 8-12 children singing, playing posture and open chord performance on the violin.

2018: Substitute classroom music teacher within elementary grades at “Convitto Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele II” and “I.C. Dante Alighieri” in Rome.

Teaching statement: Studying music means enlightening one's intellect, soul, and sensibility. Upon teaching an instrument, conducting a vocal ensemble or a group of instrumentalists, or simply teaching harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, or music theory in general, I believe it is fundamental not only to have complete control over the technical difficulties involved, but to approach the phraseological, theoretical and emotional content of music directly

with students and performers, so as to convey a clearer sense of how a composition was conceived and favour a more complete involvement upon performance.

More advanced students are invited to follow a thorough ear-training program regardless of instrumental specialization, with emphasis on recognizing and understanding intervals, chords, cadences, and developing independence in singing and sight-reading music. In fact, I believe choral singing is the most direct and effective way to understand, learn, and appreciate music, as well as being one of the best ways of experiencing collaboration and improving one's ability to collaborate with others in a socially united environment. As such, polyphony is a central and important element in my idea of musical education.

In general, students are encouraged to find their own way of appreciating and exploring their musical identity, and to take part in musically creative activities. I strive to give my students the tools to express themselves through the art of performance, composition, or simply analyzing and listening to new music. Personally, I believe teaching music has the important ultimate goal of improving overall perception and understanding of music, giving students a more accurate sense of hearing and capabilities of deciphering organized sound, as well as the cultural and theoretical tools to be better musicians, singers, performers, composers, and listeners.

Summary of Musical Practice and Live Concert Experience.

2006 – 2008 – Played in St. George's British International School of Rome' Orchestra as Pianist and Continuo player at the Harpsichord, also singing in the Choir and madrigal ensemble as Tenor and participating in various Tours and concerts within Rome, Ancona, Athens, and Budapest, under the guidance of Mr. Robert William Hix.

2008 – 2013 – Participated in the Conservatory of S. Cecilia's choral laboratory, singing in the vocal ensemble and focusing exclusively on early music under the guidance of Maestro Claudio Dall'Albero, practice aimed at the understanding stylistic elements, and sight-reading the musical notation of the XVI century.

2012 – 2013: Sung as Tenor in the newly formed vocal ensemble "I Borghesi Gentiluomini", performing in various concerts within Rome.

2012 – 2013: Sung as Tenor in the chamber choir "New Chamber Singers", performing in numerous concerts throughout Rome (including S. Pietro, S. Maria Maggiore, S. Paolo Dentro le Mura) and province under the guidance of various Maestri, including Stefano Vassalli, Andrea Cappelleri, Darren Everhart, and Tom Hammond-Davies, also participating in a commercial recording, for Brilliant Classics, of G. Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle".

2013 – Sung, as Tenor, in the Musical Chapel Choir of the Basilica of S. Clemente, under the guidance of Maestro Mario Bassani.

2014 – 2018 First Tenor in the newly formed vocal ensemble "Prima Pratica Ensemble", vocal octet specialized in the performance of early music, and with no conductor. Participated with Prima Pratica in a commercial recording for Edizioni Paoline, "Classici Mariani, vol. I", first of three volumes of traditional Marian chants arranged for string orchestra and choir by Andrea Montepaone.

Live Concert Experience in Pop Music and Jazz:

2011 - Played in the newly formed Jazz Quintet “Black Roses” as pianist and vocalist, with which I participated in numerous jazz themed concerts within various Roman Jazz Clubs.

2012 - Professionally collaborated with Italian singer Walter Farina, as accompanying pianist, playing in this duo a repertoire of Italian pop music.

2014 – Played as pianist for Italian singer Giuseppe “Joe” Balluzzo, sponsored by independent record label "Ultratempo" and "Warner Chappell" publisher.

2015 – Played as pianist for Italian singer Alessandra Lembo, playing in various concerts in the theatre of “S. Giuliano” in Rome.