

## MARCO ZANOTTI

### short bio

Marco Zanotti is a visionary cultural agitator, director of the Classica Orchestra Afrobeat and member of Cucoma Combo, Lolo, Del Barrio. He has released more than forty albums, always bridging popular traditions, research and experimentation, practice and ethnomusicology.

He has collaborated with numerous Italian and international artists (recently Rokia Traore, Lenna Bahule, Elisa Ridolfi, Yuck Miranda, Fatoumata Dembele, Pavel Urkiza, the baroque choir Voz Latina) and he is the Italian translator of Fela Kuti's biography.

For more than fifteen years, he has led a multifaceted and curious workshop called Officina del ritmo and is works regularly with theater companies (Le belle bandiere, Fantateatro, Magnifico teatrino errante) and contemporary dance companies (2022 Ubu Prize with Roberto Castello/ALDES).



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# MARCO ZANOTTI

## complete bio

A visionary and unconventional musician and composer, cultural agitator and artistic director. His trajectory of studies and research began on the drums and then moved toward new sonic territories, bridging popular traditions (especially non-European) and experimentation, between practice and ethnomusicology.

### STUDIES

He immediately preferred popular maestros to academic study, and so, after the first years of private studies with Enzo Vallicelli and other local teachers in his region in Italy called Romagna, he studied and specialized abroad with masters in **Cuba** (Alexis Arce, Ruy Lopez-Nussa, Changuito), **Brazil** (Nene, Giba Conceição), **Colombia** (Afroneto), **Senegal** (Mamadou Diagne), **Zimbabwe** (Salani Wamkanganise, Kudzai Kazai), Belize, Guadeloupe, Mozambique, Andalusia, Argentina, and Cape Verde.

In 2004, he graduated in Foreign Languages and Literatures with a thesis on the *son* of Nicolás Guillén, a Cuban mulatto poet.

### ACTIVITIES

He is the founder and director of the **Classica Afrobeat Orchestra**, with which he has released four albums with guests **Rokia Traoré**, **Seun Kuti**, Sekouba Bambino, Baba Sissoko and Njamy Sitson, performing at numerous theaters and festivals, including the **Glastonbury** Festival in UK.

He currently carries out various original projects, such as the band **Cucoma Combo**, the duo with Gambian griot and kora virtuoso Jabel Kanuteh, and **LOLO** quartet.

The journey, whether internal or external, is a constant in his diverse discography of over 40 albums, whether avant-garde and improvisational (Mothra, Red Planet, Kagnara, and the long-running duo with Fabio Mina), or languages that draw on folk and popular traditions, as in the ensembles **Del Barrio** (Arg), **Cumbia Poder** (Col), **Regional Matuto** (Br) and **Jacaré**.

He has collaborated with Antonella Ruggero, Patrizia Laquidara (Critics' Award at Sanremo in 2003), Elisa Ridolfi (Tenco Award in 2024), Fatoumata Dembele, Mozambican dancer Yuck Miranda, Lenna Bahule (Moz), Elio Camalle (Bra), Pavel Urkiza (Cub), Patrick Ruffino (Ben), and various choral ensembles such as the **Coro Voz Latina** (Arg) and the **Coro Farthan**.

His first **solo work** (*Re-Flexio*, 2021), is a concept album that, through field recordings and unusual instruments, expresses the importance of looking at the complexity of reality from different angles.

### OTHER LANGUAGES

He translated and edited the Italian edition of **Fela Kuti's** biography by Carlos Moore (Arcana 2012), which gave rise to the play *Gentleman* together with Federico Faggioni and directed by reknown choreographer **Roberto Castello**. For this latter, he composed and performed the music for the contemporary dance performances *Mbira* (2018) and *Inferno* (UBU Award for Best Dance Performance 2022), also publishing his soundtrack (*Inferno Tapes*, 2022).

He also collaborates with actress **Elena Bucci** and the company *Le Belle Bandiere*. He has composed and performed in numerous plays including *Lettere a Nour* (ERT, 2018), *Dance on the Tree* (Magnifico Teatrino Errante, 2017), *The Jungle Book*, *The Aeneid*, *Zorro* (Fantateatro), for the soundtrack of the film *Gauguin in Tahiti* (Nexo, 2019), and as part of the musical research and co-creation project *Pamoja Odyssey* in the Indian Ocean in 2019.

### TEACHING

For years, he has run the creative laboratory **Officina del ritmo** and held masterclasses and workshops related to rhythm in Italy and abroad, collaborating with various masters and teachers, such as Alejandro Oliva, Indio Atucà Olegui, Stella Chiweshe, Masa Daiko, Charles Raszl.

## REVIEWS

*We are as far away as possible from common listening references.* [Exibart]

*A human gaze meets a nature inhabited by music whose origins are impossible to pinpoint, capable of creating new geographies.* [Rumore - IT]

*An original and pleasantly organic sound that creates an interesting primitive/futuristic fusion with curious traces of minimalism. Rhythm is the undeniable protagonist, but it represents only part of a much more complex and nuanced microcosm.* [Blogfoolk - IT]

*Marco Zanotti recounts a personal sonic world made of curiosity (a lot of it), travel, research, study, experimentation, adventures, faces, and stories. The most emotional aspect is the ongoing dialogue between personal roots and the places and traditions encountered along the way.* [The New Noise]

*A small masterpiece, of the exciting kind.* [Moore Magazine – NL]

*A wonderful and joyful album, breaking boundaries* [Keysandchords – BE]

*A true stroke of genius. A miraculous fusion that, for once, drew rapt gazes within the confines of our home.* [Blow up - IT]

*A marvelous and surprising manifesto of true, living, and pulsating music. A multicolored rhapsody of brotherhood.* [Rockerilla - IT]

*Timeless, cosmopolitan, and multicultural music in the broadest and most profound sense.* [Buscadero]

*Yet another masterpiece, a musical enchantment with few equals.* [Raro! - IT]

*I think I'll choose this album as humanity's banner of peace.* [Noirete - IT]

*A broad album for a stateless and multicultural experience, a collector of other cultures that have no time or univocal geographies.* [Indie-Roccia - IT]



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