

CARLO AONZO



worldwide known Italian mandolin performer, teacher at the Conservatories of music “N. Piccinni” in Bari (Italy), was born and grew up in Savona where he started playing under his father’s guidance in the “Circolo Mandolinistico G. Verdi”.

Graduated with honors from Padua Conservatory (1993), he has played for several prestigious institutions like the Philharmonic Orchestra of La Scala in Milan (Italy), The Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the Nashville Chamber Orchestra (USA), the McGill Chamber Orchestra in Montreal (Canada), the Philharmonia of San Petersburg (Russia), the Minsk Chamber Soloist (Belarus), Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival (Germany).

Among his several awards are the first prize at the Concorso Internazionale “Pitzianti” in Venice (1993) including the “Vivaldi” special mention, and first prize at the Walnut Valley National Mandolin Contest in Winfield Kansas (1997).

Carlo’s deep interest in outreach activities focused on his instrument is witnessed by his countless collaborations with mandolin orchestras around the world, namely New York, Seattle, Portland, Providence, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Denver, Milwaukee, Atlanta, Montreal, Milan, Genoa, Lugano, Kochi, Nagoya, Osaka, Sendai, Wuppertal, Berlin, London, San Petersburg, Saigon.

He is often invited as musical director and visiting faculty by the most important international mandolin institutions namely CMSA (Classical Mandolin Society of America), FAME (Federation of Australasian Mandolin Ensemble), EGMA (European Guitar and Mandolin Association) and called to judge in international music contests: Saigon Guitar Festival (Vietnam), Osaka Mandolin Competition (Japan), Yasuo-Kuwahara Competition Schweinfurt (Germany), Concorso Internazionale per Mandolino Solo in Modena (Italy).

He teaches seminars and workshops worldwide; since 2000 he has been leading the annual Manhattan Mandolin Workshop in New York (since 2017 in Milwaukee) and in 2006 he founded the International Italian Mandolin Accademia that he is still successfully directing and constantly expanding with new activities and camps (www.accademiamandolino.com). Since 2019 he is also



artistic director of “Cremona Mandolini in Mostra” at Cremona Musica Exhibitions & Festival.

In 2001 with his “Orchestra a Pizzico Ligure” he performed in Vatican city for the Pope Johannes Paul II. He later formed the International Accademia’s plucked string instrument Orchestra with which he toured USA for the releasing of the album “Mandolin Images” in 2011.

His recordings reflect his interests and skills relating to all different aspects of the mandolin repertoire: from the Paganini’s original works for mandolin (“Integrale per Amandorlino e Chitarra Francese”), to the Italian strings virtuosos of the turn of the century (“Serenata” with Beppe Gambetta and “Traversata” with the American Mandolin guru David Grisman).

In duo with classical guitar, Carlo produced the albums “Paganini” (René Izquierdo) and “Kaze” (Katsumi Nagaoka).

In 2016 with the Carlo Aonzo Trio he released the album “A Mandolin Journey” on the international mandolin repertoire. With the baroque Ensemble “Il Falcone”, he recorded the complete Vivaldi’s 4 Seasons concertos for the first time ever performed on the mandolin.

For Mel Bay he has published the concert video “Carlo Aonzo: Classical Mandolin Virtuoso” and the book & cd collection “Northern Italian & Ticino Region Folk Songs for Mandolin”; while for Hal Leonard he has released the “Bach Two-Parts Inventions” and the “Classical Mandolin Solos”.

As a researcher, he has been working on the history of his instrument and collaborated with the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Furthermore he has given presentations on the iconography of the mandolin, in renowned institutions, including Dartmouth College, St. John’s University in New York, Boston University, New England Conservatory, Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, Vanderbilt College of Nashville, Vancouver Italian Cultural Centre, Berio Library in Genoa and National Instrument Museum in Rome.

He often appears in national Radio and TV programs in Italy and abroad, in December 2018 he performs for the first time at Carnegie Hall in New York and in the last few years he has toured Japan, USA, Panama, Australia, India, Switzerland, France, Norway and Germany collaborating on several occasions with the local Italian Consular Offices and Cultural Institutes.

In 2020 he creates and produces the series “L’Italia dei 1000 Mandolini” (the 1000 mandolins of Italy), short documentaries on the mandolin and its fascinating world, a project which attracts great interest from different parts of the world, from Australia to USA, from Japan to Ireland.

In 2021 with the Sicilian Symphony Orchestra he opens the 63rd Sacred Music Week of Monreale (Palermo) performing as soloist conducted by Maestro Federico Maria Sardelli and in February 2023 he is the protagonist of the musical event “Il Mandolino Virtuoso” at the Teatro Massimo V. Bellini of Catania. Among his latest projects, the outstanding collaboration with the legendary Italian pianist Bruno Canino.