

MICHELE CAMPANELLA





I am Neapolitan in spirit, by family and of schooling. I tend towards pessimism, but am saved by self-irony.

Already at 5 I was searching for music, I improvised and taught myself, then I had the extraordinary luck to encounter a great teacher; once I finished high school, I began to get serious. I participated in only one international piano competition and I won it. For fifty years I've been looking for "the sound" and still am I. I have many favorite composers and yet I am defined as a Franz Liszt specialist. Of course I don't love this label, but I have the highest regard for the man. Here is one of his quotes that I would like to borrow: «All that one can do, is walk straight in all simplicity with little explanation to others of the how and why...».

In my life I've met wonderful people and not necessarily musicians. I live in Italy, despite many contraindications that would advise me against it. I have taught music at the piano since the age of 37, as I believe it is something possible to do seriously. Do not call me a pianist, I prefer the word "musician": with the first word we think of the hands, with the second one we think of the heart and the brain. For me, the nicest thing that can happen is meeting someone who remembers one of my concerts from 40 years ago: it means that something has remained. I have no intention to consider my career finished, instead I believe the best is yet to come and I will work until that happens.

Other than music, I need few things: my family, books, fine arts, walks in the woods. I am a fairly decent mycologist and I have never poisoned anyone with mushrooms. I had to get used to the computer, but I don't own a tablet.

Michele Campanella

Internationally acclaimed as one of the major virtuoso interpreters of Liszt, three-time winner of the Grand Prix du Disque awarded by the prestigious Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest (1976, 1977 and 1998), the latter for his recording "Franz Liszt-The Great Transcriptions, I-II" (Philips), Michele Campanella has interpreted in 55 years of career most of the major piano repertoire. He has been awarded the "Liszt high merit" medal by the Hungarian government in 1986 and the American Liszt Society Medal in 2002. Trained at the Vincenzo Vitale School in Naples, Michele Campanella is a very versatile artist. This has enabled him to face composers like Clementi, Weber, Poulenc, Busoni (1980 "Italian Discographic Critic Award" for his Fonit Cetra recordings), Rossini, Brahms, Ravel and Liszt. He has recently recorded an anthology of Liszt paraphrases, the 12 Transcendental Studies, and a selection of works from the late period played on Liszt's own original Bechstein piano. This is the first chapter of an important 12 CDs series dedicated to Liszt released later on the "Brilliant Classics" label. Campanella's discography includes recordings for Emi (Ravel), Philips (Liszt, Saint-Saëns), Foné (Chopin), PYE (Liszt, Tchaikovsky), Fonit Cetra (Busoni), Nuova Era (Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Mussorgsky, Balakirev), Musikstrasse (Rossini), P&P (Brahms, Liszt, Scarlatti) and Niccolò (Schumann). In 2005, the Rossini Opera Festival published a recording of the Petite Messe Solennelle in Pesaro, also conducted by Michele Campanella.

Mr. Campanella has performed with the principal European and American orchestras (Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony) and collaborated with conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Eliahu Inbal, Charles Mackerras, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Georges Prêtre, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Thomas Schippers, Hubert Soudant, Pinchas Steinberg and Christian Thielemann. He is frequently invited to Australia, Russia, the United Kingdom, Argentina, China, and he is a regular guest at international festivals such as Lucerne, Vienna, Berlin, Prague and Pesaro (Rossini Opera Festival).

Recent performance highlights include all Beethoven and Mozart concertos as well as the complete piano works by Brahms. Together with Salvatore Accardo and Rocco Filippini he established an ideal musical partnership during the 1990's for the chamber music repertoire. In the last years, Campanella's career as conductor/soloist has been further developed performing with several prestigious Italian orchestras, such as the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, the ORT-Orchestra della Toscana, the Orchestra da Camera di Padova e del Veneto, I Filarmonici di Verona, the Haydn Orchestra of Bolzano and Trento.

His repertoire includes works by Ravel, Fauré, Poulenc, Franck, Saint-Saëns, Schumann, Weber, Liszt, alongside Mozart and Beethoven. His most recent international engagements include concerts in Buenos Aires, Tokyo (Tokyo Suntory Hall) and Chicago, where Campanella gave three performances of the Liszt Concerto No.1 for piano and orchestra together with Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as part of the Liszt bicentenary celebrations. In collaboration with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana, Campanella conceived and directed a series of Liszt marathons, where the composer's complete piano works were performed in Rome's Auditorium Parco Della Musica. A project of this magnitude, that involved seventy five Italian pianists, generated a great interest as nothing similar had ever before been attempted.

A dedicated and passionate teacher, Campanella was head of the piano department at the Accademia Chigiana (Siena) from 1986 to 2010, as well as conducting advanced training courses for eight years in Ravello. He is the director of the Vincenzo Vitale Center for Piano Studies at the University Suor Orsola Benincasa of Naples. He has been awarded by the prestigious "Premio Napoli" and "Guido e Roberto Cortese" foundations. He is also a member of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Accademia Filarmonica Romana and Accademia Cherubini di Firenze.

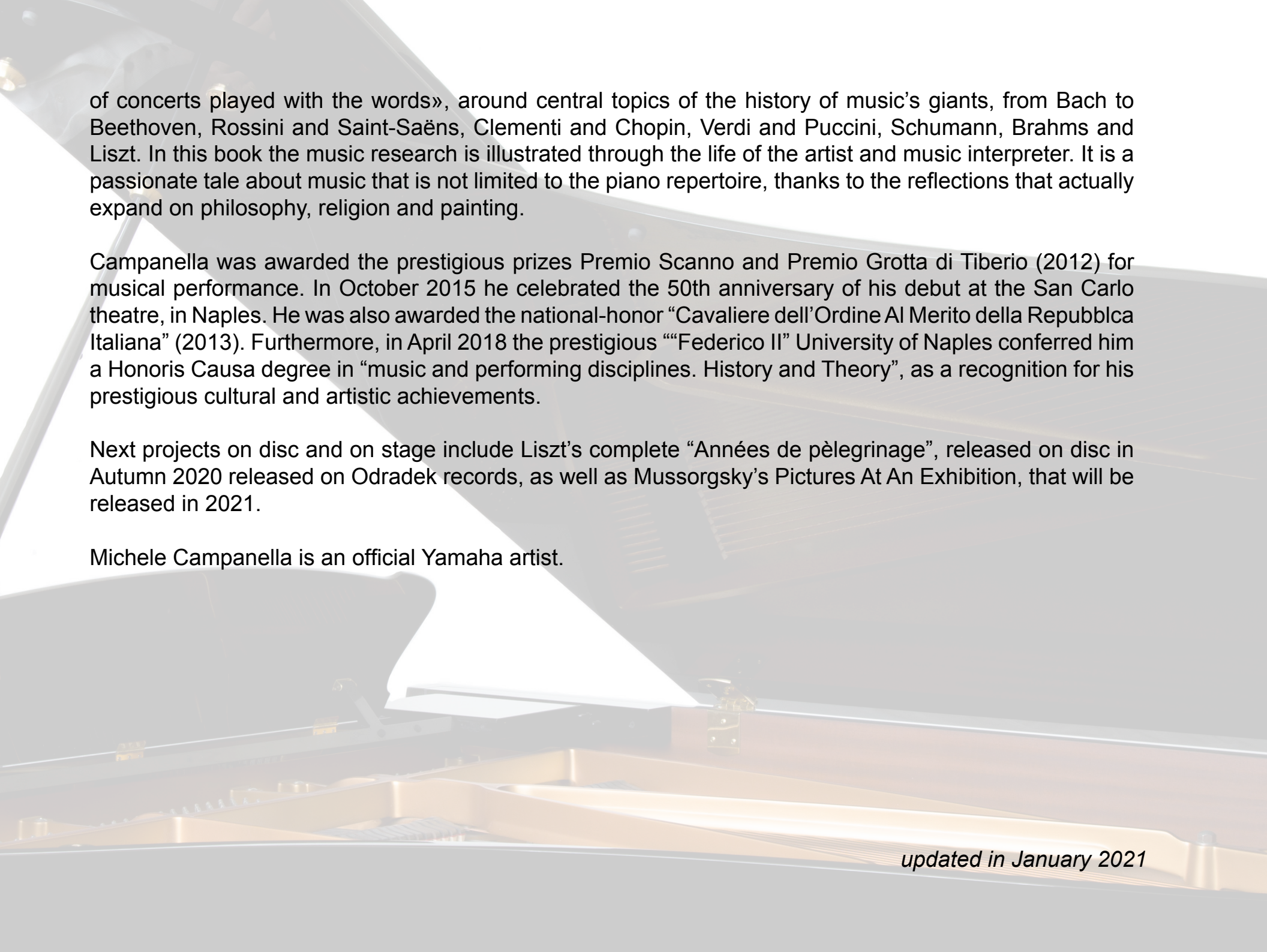
For many years he has been artistic director of three different concert seasons sponsored by the Naples, Benevento and Catanzaro Universities. He has recently been nominated artistic director of the "Maggio della Musica" festival in Naples. Since 2008 he has been President of the "Società Liszt", the Italian chapter of the American Liszt Society. In 2011, as the world celebrated the bicentenary of Franz Liszt's birth, Campanella dedicated his entire musical activity, both as pianist and conductor, to the Hungarian composer he has studied and loved from the age of fourteen, engaging himself in a long series of solo concerts in Italy and abroad: Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Unione Musicale (Turin), Cini Foundation (Venice) for the Wagner Society, Verdi Conservatoire (Milan), San Carlo Theatre (Naples), Accademia Musicale Chigiana (Siena), L'Aquila, Piacenza, Cremona, Udine and Parma. Moreover, he performed as conductor and soloist the complete Liszt piano and orchestra compositions together with the Luigi Cherubini Orchestra at the prestigious Ravenna Festival, in one single evening.

In 2013, the bicentenary of both Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi, Campanella engaged in a long series of concerts dedicated to Franz Liszt's Paraphrases, intended as a musical meeting place for both composers' lives and work. Brilliant Classics dedicated and published a Paraphrases Special Edition 3CDs box. During that year, Campanella toured Italy, Hungary, Spain, Russia, Germany, Croatia and China confirming his important role of Music Ambassador in the world. In 2014, Campanella was a protagonist both as soloist and orchestra leader in the performance of "Mozart's last concerto K 595 and Brahms' concerto n.2". Furthermore, he recently performed a recital entitled "Chopin vs Liszt: La Battaglia" - a peaceful match between two of piano literature's best composers. He toured the United States with the "Fine Arts Quartet" and South America with violinist Boris Belkin.

Michele Campanella's polyhedral activity led him to start an artistic collaboration with saxophonist Javier Girotto. Together, they recorded two discs based on jazz improvisation, produced and released by the label CAM Jazz. The first one "Musique sans Frontières" (2014) features music by Ravel and Debussy and brought the two artists on an intensive concert tour. The second disc, released in 2018, is entitled "Vers la grande porte de Kiev" and includes music by Stravinsky, Rachmaninov and Musorgskij "played with affection and high regard and improvised staying within the original score, not merely improvising on the changes" (Brian Morton). Both CDs have been acclaimed by the most important national newspapers in Italy (Il Corriere della sera, La Stampa, Il Manifesto) as well as by the specialized press in Italy and abroad (Musica, Jazzit, culturejazz.fr, Jazz News).

In 2017 he released Liszt's piano sonata on CD and vinyl (Vdm records) and founded in Naples the successful "Spinacorona, Neapolitan music walks" festival, an innovative music event that combines concerts with the (re) discovery of the Parthenopean historical treasures by walking in the magnificent heart of the city.

In addition to his work as a musician, Campanella is also a writer. Among his books it is worth to mention "Il mio Liszt. Considerazioni di un interprete" (My Liszt. Thoughts of an interpreter), a literary homage dedicated to Campanella's beloved composer published in 2011 by Bompiani, one of the major Italian publishing houses and the new book, "Suono. Pensieri e divagazioni di un musicista fuori dal coro" (Sound. Thoughts and digressions of a musician outside of the box), published in 2019 by Castelvechi publishing house. It includes «a series



of concerts played with the words», around central topics of the history of music's giants, from Bach to Beethoven, Rossini and Saint-Saëns, Clementi and Chopin, Verdi and Puccini, Schumann, Brahms and Liszt. In this book the music research is illustrated through the life of the artist and music interpreter. It is a passionate tale about music that is not limited to the piano repertoire, thanks to the reflections that actually expand on philosophy, religion and painting.

Campanella was awarded the prestigious prizes Premio Scanno and Premio Grotta di Tiberio (2012) for musical performance. In October 2015 he celebrated the 50th anniversary of his debut at the San Carlo theatre, in Naples. He was also awarded the national-honor "Cavaliere dell'Ordine Al Merito della Repubblica Italiana" (2013). Furthermore, in April 2018 the prestigious "Federico II" University of Naples conferred him a Honoris Causa degree in "music and performing disciplines. History and Theory", as a recognition for his prestigious cultural and artistic achievements.

Next projects on disc and on stage include Liszt's complete "Années de pèlerinage", released on disc in Autumn 2020 released on Odradek records, as well as Mussorgsky's Pictures At An Exhibition, that will be released in 2021.

Michele Campanella is an official Yamaha artist.

updated in January 2021

The background of the image is a dark, almost black, space. Two spotlights are positioned at the top, one on the left and one on the right, casting a bright, circular beam of light downwards. The beams are slightly hazy, suggesting a misty or smoky atmosphere. At the bottom of the image, a wooden floor is visible, illuminated by the light from the spotlights, creating a warm, brown glow. The floorboards are arranged in a horizontal pattern, and the lighting creates a sense of depth and perspective.

vist.co

Hamburg

Luca Di Bernardo

www.vist.co

luca@vist.co

+49 (0) 151 28955500