

Corrado Rustici

Biography

The Early Years

I was born in Naples (Italy) into a musical and artistic family (my father was a struggling artist, my mother a gifted poet with a love for music). At age five I start playing the mandolin, learning from my grandmother, who introduces me to the great Neapolitan musical tradition.

At age eight I hear the Beatles for the first time. I'm totally blown away by their songs. Suddenly music has a different meaning/collocation in my life. I start playing the guitar, by secretly practicing on the instrument that belonged to my older brother Danilo (who later became a member of Osanna , one of Italy's most influential progressive rock bands of the seventies).

At age 12 I hear Jimi Hendrix. I can't believe my ears. Such passion, creativity and innovation exploding from within this great musician. Through the music of "Cream" I had already discovered the blues, but it's by studying Jimi's guitar work and sound (definitely not as "safe" sounding as Eric Clapton's) that I take my first steps into a different guitar landscape.

At age 14 while attending Art School in Naples, I join a band called "I Satiri" and begin playing in the clubs around town.

I'm mesmerized by the movie "Woodstock" ...while watching it, I make myself a solemn promise...A promise which I will see fulfilled many years later..

The world is changing!

The 70's

1970 I'm greatly influenced by the progressive-rock movement.

I attend every possible performance by any of the british bands that tour Italy.

Bands like King Crimson, Van Der Graaf Generator, Jethro Tull, Emerson Lake and Palmer are constantly on my "turntable". But it's by listening to Gentle Giant and Genesis that I start taking an interest in composition and arrangement.

I discover "Siddhartha" the book by Herman Hesse. Together with Antonio Spagnolo, Gianluigi Di Franco, Giulio D'Ambrosio (later joined by drummer Remigio Esposito) I form the band "Cervello". Influenced by Greek mythology and Science-Fiction books we start writing/rehearsing material for an album.

I'm introduced to the West-Coast sound (Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young - Joni Mitchell) by Gianluigi.

In my search for a new sound/identity I discover that by playing a bass pedals set through the Binson Echorec you get a strange cello-like sound. This would become the basis for the Cervello keyboardless sound.

1971 I hear for the first time the Mahavishnu Orchestra. This becomes a very important experience for me, in that it focuses my musical and spiritual aspirations into one burning desire to explore myself as a musician and a human being to the fullest.

John Mc Laughlin's music and guitar playing are nothing short of amazing. Rarely before have I felt so much passion and innovation in modern musical compositions. Mc Laughlin's work becomes one of the major influences that shape Cervello's musical direction.

1973 After a rewarding series of Rock-Festival performances, and thanks in great part to my brother Danilo's efforts, Cervello lands a recording deal with Ricordi. We record the first and only studio album titled "Melos". It's a great experience for me, as circumstances throw me into the "studio fire" and I become the album producer by default.

The album didn't do very well at the time and after a few live performances (one of which, containing a couple of unreleased pieces, was luckily recorded) I leave Cervello to join my brother's newly formed band "Uno" for a live tour.

1974 This collaboration evolves into a mutual desire to pursue a more "rock-fusion" sound. Thusly my brother

Danilo on guitar, Elio D'Anna on saxophone, Luciano Milanese on bass, Franco LoPrevite on drums and myself on guitar and vocals form a new band called " Nova ".

I continue to explore the jazz idiom and discover Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Charlie Parker.

I'm very influenced by the books "Autobiography of a yogi" by Paramahansa Yogananda and "Be here now" by Richard Alpert.

1975 After graduating from Art school, I move to London where with Nova I begin to tour the U.K. extensively.

Here I start my long friendship with Pier Forlani, who goes on to manage Nova and my solo career for many years.

After a very difficult time, we get signed to the newly formed label "Arista Records" and we record our first album "Blink" in Pete Townsend's private studio.

I have the opportunity to work with Rupert Hine . It's my first experience working with a real producer.

My brother Danilo leaves the band.

While mixing the album at "Air Studios" in London, I meet Mahavishnu Orchestra's drummer Narada Michael Walden , who is in the studio recording the album "Wired" with Jeff Beck. Narada introduces me to the famous guitarist and to my producer-hero George Martin.

This marks the beginning of my long friendship with Narada, who suggests to me that I move to the States.

Keyboardist Renato Rossett joins the band.

1976 After a year of touring Britain with bands like Ian Carr's "Nucleus", "Hawkwind" and even "Judas Priest", Luciano Milanese and Franco LoPrevite leave the band to return to Italy, Nova records their second album "Vimana" with myself on guitar and vocals, Elio D'Anna on sax and flute, Renato Rossett on keyboards, Narada Michael Walden on drums, Brand X's Percy Jones on bass, Phil Collins on percussions and the great Zakir Hussein on congas.

The album, recorded and mixed at the legendary "Trident Studios" in London, is produced by Robin Lumley, from whom I learn new production techniques.

During the recording of the album I meet John McLaughlin for the first time. I feel, more than ever, the desire to play/learn from the great American jazz players whose music I listen to constantly. I play on John Perry's albums "Sunset Wading" and "Uncle sea bird".

Narada introduces me to the teachings of Sri Chinmoy. I become a vegetarian.

The album "Vimana" enters the American charts.

With Ric Parnell (Atomic Rooster, Spinal Tap) on drums and Doni Harvey (Automatic Man) on bass, Nova goes on a long british tour opening for acts like Steve Hillage (Gong) and Caravan.

1977 Barry Johnson replaces Doni Harvey and Nova record their third album "Wings of love" produced by first time producer Narada Michael Walden.

I'm very influenced by the E.C.M sound. Artists like Eberhard Weber, Ralph Towner and Oregon are a constant source of inspiration.

Nova's acceptance by the American audience and the birth of punk-rock in England create the necessary conditions for the biggest change of my life and also the fulfillment of my dream: To live/breathe/learn from the great American musical traditions.

I move to Boulder, Colorado.

1978 I enter a period of very intense spiritual practice. I start running daily and I find that physical exercise helps me with my guitar practices. I begin to feel an underlining link between my physical well-being and my musical clarity.

I move to New York, where I live for two months. During this time I get to experience the great local jazz musical scene.

Nova tours California for the first time and I immediately fall in love with this part of the world.

I start writing material for the new Nova album which we record in Los Angeles at Sound City Studios. Produced by John Ryan the album called "Sun City" marks the end of the Nova period for me. I hear the great guitarist Allan Holdsworth and his guitar playing totally revolutionizes my vision of the guitar. I begin exploring Holdsworth's 4 notes per string scales and sound.

1979 I accept Narada's invitation to join him in San Francisco. This is the beginning of an incredible period of personal musical growth during which I study/learn from the great afro-american musical tradition.

We record "The dance of life" with T.M Stevens on bass. The song "I shoulda loved ya" becomes a top ten worldwide hit.

The album is produced by Narada and Bob Clearmountain from whom I learn a lot about mixing techniques.

We tour extensively the USA playing with artists like: Rufus and Chaka Khan, The Brother Johnson, Rick James, Diana Ross, Grover Washington and others.

The touring band is comprised of Narada on drums, myself on guitar, Randy Jackson (of American Idol fame) on bass, Frank Martin on keys, Marc Russo (Yellow Jackets) on sax, Wayne Wallace on trombone and Vicky Randle (of the Tonight Show) on percussions and vocals.

In San Francisco, I meet Carlos Santana.

I read and love the books by Jack Kerouac who becomes a great influence on me.

The 80's

1980 I start my "studio-sessions" period during which I begin to expand and hone production skills. It is during this time that I get to work with some great artists.

I eventually end up playing on more than 40 albums in a 7 year period.(for a complete list of recordings please see discography). The basic Narada band expands to accommodate periodically David Sancious (from Bruce

Springsteen/Sting/Peter Gabriel) on keys and a young keyboardist from Redwood city called Walter Afanasieff.

1981 I put together a band called "Aqua" I'm influenced by the new sounds coming out of England and by new artists like the Police whose songs resonate strongly within me. After a long period of learning what had once been an alien form of music (soul and R&B based music) I'm now ready to incorporate and transcend it.

Although I don't associate myself with Sri Chinmoy anymore I continue my regular daily meditation practices.

I read many books about the life and sayings of Sri Ramakrishna whom I begin to love deeply.

1982 I play on "Light me up" the album by one of the great keyboardists of our time "Herbie Hancock".

I'm asked to write some music for hypnotherapy work. In order to contextualize the role of music within the experience, I volunteer to undergo a series of hypnosis sessions. During some of these sessions I experience spontaneous life-regression.

I begin to study audio frequencies and their effect on the human psyche. This study culminates with the recording of several musical experiments/landscapes. This experience creates the basis for what will later become my "Push and Pull" production techniques.

I begin reading books by Robert Monroe which lead me to experiment with O.B.E. (out of body experiences).

1983 I meet a couple of Berkeley audio engineers who had just built one of the first Pitch to Voltage guitar synthesizer. I'm so intrigued by the prospect of being sonically free from the "guitar sound", that I form a new band called "Holiday of Hands" based on the technology based on the technology .

The band is comprised of myself on guitar-synthesizer, George Perry (later known as Giorgio Francis) on drums, Polo Jones on bass and Miro Berglund on vocals.

I'm increasingly fascinated by the sound and rhythms from the Middle-East. I study the maqsum, balady and

saidii rhythms which along with the Makam scales greatly inspire me to incorporate them into western music.

I find a mirroring of these feelings in the album "My life in the bush of ghosts" by Brian Eno and David Byrne. I'm also very inspired by the works of artists like Peter Gabriel who by integrating the audio-visual mediums are creating a new art form.

1984 I meet and become friends with the great world class sprinter Carl Lewis. The incredible athlete inspires me to try harder in my musical endeavors.

I'm introduced to the Apple Macintosh and to the ground breaking program "Sound Designer" created by a budding new company called DigiDesign.

Suddenly I see incredible ways for new musical expressions through the use of the computer.

1985 I return to visit Italy for the first time in many years.

During my Italian trip I am contacted by Elio D'Anna, who has returned to Italy after the Nova American experience and is trying his hand at music production.

Elio D'Anna asks me to help him with the musical arrangements for an album by a new artist.

I quickly put a band together comprised of myself on guitar, Randy Jackson on bass, Giorgio Francis on drums and Walter Afanasieff on keys. The album titled "Zuccherro and the Randy Jackson band" marks the beginning of my long musical relationship with Zuccherro.

Back in the States I play on several albums -including: Whitney Houston's debut album "Whitney Houston", on Clarence Clemmons' "Hero", Aretha Franklin's "Whos zooming who", Narada's solo album "The nature of things" and on great jazz guitarist George Benson's "While the city sleeps".

At Tarpan studios in San Francisco I arrange and record Zuccherro's new song "Rispetto" which features Narada Michael Walden on drums and Randy Jackson on bass. The

rest of the songs are recorded in Milan and the album becomes my first big Italian hit.

1987 I begin spending a lot of time between Italy and California.

In America I work - among many others-, on Whitney Houston's "Whitney" and on Jefferson Starship's "No protection".

I become one of Opcode's beta-testers for their groundbreaking program "Vision".

I read about the work of Stephen La Berge and become interested in Lucid dreams.

I fully produce and arrange Zucchero's next album, experimenting with soul and R&B sounds mixed in with Italian pop melodies.

The final result "Blue's" becomes one of Italy's biggest selling albums at the time, with almost two million copies sold.

1988 I play on drummer Steve Smith's "Fiafiaga" I also produce and co-write the solo album by Cervello's singer Gianluigi Di Franco.

It's a great opportunity to work again with my great friend after so many years.

1989 I play with keyboardist Tom Coster (Santana) on his solo album "From me to you".

In Italy I'm back in the studio with Zucchero.

Recorded at Peter Gabriel's Real World Studios in England, Sun Studios in Memphis and Umbi's studios in Italy the album "Oro, Incenso e Birra" becomes one of the biggest selling albums in Italian history with over two million copies sold

I experiment a lot with computer based sound designing and with the implementation of push and pull. During the recording sessions in Memphis I meet and jam with the late guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan. The album features Eric Clapton, Clarence Clemmons (Bruce Springsteen), Rufus Thomas and the legendary organist Jimmy Smith. The album also features a song written by the great composer Ennio Morricone whose melodic/harmonic sense of writing I greatly admire.

Besides playing guitar I now become Zucchero's musical director for the "Oro, incenso e birra" european tour.

The 90's

1990 I decide to fully concentrate on helping other artists in achieving their musical vision, by devoting a lot of my time to production (for a complete list, please check the Discography section). While always busy writing, new material, I choose to put my solo work on a temporary hold.

I produce a duet version of Zucchero's "Senza una donna" featuring Paul Young. The song reaches number 3 on the UK charts and the album called simply "Zucchero" goes on to sell over 3 million copies. I continue to be the M.D. for Zucchero's live band.

The european tour starts with a week's worth of live performances at London's Royal Albert Hall with Eric Clapton. I'm honored and excited to share the same stage with one of my childhood guitar heroes.

1992 Back in California I continue my spiritual practice. I start having "lucid dreams" which inspire me to continue with the experiments.

I read the book "Talks with Ramana Maharshi" who becomes a very important point of reference for my inner work.

1993 I begin production on a more ambitious Zucchero album, titled "Miserere". The title song is a duet with the famous opera singer Luciano Pavarotti featuring a 50-piece orchestra directed by Michael Kamen. The band is joined on tour by a young unknown singer "Andrea Bocelli" who was introduced to us by studio owner Umbi Maggi.

The musical experiment will spawn a new genre, later made popular worldwide by Andrea.

1994 I perform live at Woodstock 94's with Zucchero. On stage, observing Michael Shrieve play drums with us, ignites in me an interesting inner experience.

I suddenly travel back in time...to the day when in a small, obscure Italian cinema as a young aspiring musician watching Michael Shrieve play with Santana at Woodstock, I promise myself that one day I too will be playing on that stage!

I'm reminded of Ramana Maharshi's words:
"There's neither creation nor destruction,
Neither destiny nor free-will;
Neither path nor achievement;
This is the final truth."

1995 I produce my first solo work. Titled "The Heartist" the album features Michael Manring on bass and Steve Smith on drums.

In the studio again to produce Zucchero's " Spirito Di Vino". The album is recorded between New Orleans and Italy. Mixed in London, it features Jeff Beck on one of the songs.

1996 I produce Francesco De Gregori's album titled "Prendere e lasciare". The album goes on to become one of De Gregori's best selling album reaching triple platinum.

1997 I meet Caterina Caselli who shows me the video of a live performance by a 17 year old singer.

I really like her naïve and sweet singing style and I decide to work on the project. I invite Elisa to California, where we work together for months, writing and demoing songs which eventually become "Pipes and Flowers" her debut album. The album sells over 300,000 copies and it garners several awards for the young singer, including: " Il Premio Italiano della Musica (P.I.M.)" for " Best new artist of the year" and the prestigious " Premio Tenco" for "Best debut album of the year".

1998 I discover Ken Wilber. His book " A brief history of everything" has a profound impact on me. I begin to study Wilber's integral philosophy. I'm very inspired by it. It fills me with a great desire to apply his philosophy to Art and Music in particular, but especially to my life.

Many old questions answered create a number of new ones... One in particular floats up to my attention

almost constantly: What shape should a musician's work take to be truly trans-modern, given Music's fast changing role/collocation in our postmodern society... I begin to realize that it can't be just an audio CD.

1999 I continue to dedicate myself to production, working first on "Blue Sugar" by Zucchero, another million seller that charts all over Europe, followed by 4 songs on the album "Leia" by the Corsican band "I Muvrini" for EMI France.

I finish the decade with the production of six songs on Claudio Baglioni's "Viaggiatore sulla coda del tempo".

The 00's

2000 I start the new millennium with two very interesting projects: The international release by the famous Israeli singer "Rita". The album titled "Time for peace" is recorded between Tel-Aviv and San Francisco. I enjoy delving deeper into the Persian melodies that make up a big part of Rita's great vocal talent, I collaborate for the first time with Eumir Deodato with whom I write and arrange the string sessions.

I then enjoy a great musical friendship while producing the famous Italian band: PFM. The album titled "Serendipity" allows me to bring the progressive music vocabulary into a postmodern era of surface and pseudo-legitimacy created by musical "hear-say".

Great fun. Great guys.

2001 I meet Elisa for the first time since the completion of "Pipes and flowers". We decide to work together again. I produce the song "Luce" which enables Elisa to win the 2001 edition of the "SanRemo Music Festival" the most significant network TV/music annual event in Italy. "Luce" propels Elisa to the top of the Italian charts and earns her the MTV Europe Award for "Best Italian Artist," plus the "Premio Italiano della Musica (P.I.M.)" award for "Female Artist of the year" and for "Best song of the year."

As I deepen my search into Integral studies, I'm more and more convinced that a new musical paradigm is

desperately needed. I begin to create the basis for a new venture, one that involves discovering young artists, helping them develop and visualize a new way to crystallize their work.

Together with my old time manager/friend Pier Forlani and with Arne Frager (owner of the legendary Plant Studios in Sausalito and co-founder of Liquid Audio) I form a new company "Integral Pear". The company has a bold business plan which includes a Label, a management company and the development of a web musical community integrated into one flowing manifestation.

The label called "Flood Records" signs a young rock group from Vicenza "Mistonocivo" and I produce their album titled "Virus".

I read with great interest "Spiral Dynamics", the amazing book by Don Beck and Christopher Cowan. The book about the theory pioneered by the late Clare Graves has a profound impact on me. Very inspiring.

I embark on my latest musical collaboration with Zucchero. But whereas in the past the balance between Zucchero's pop tendencies and my desire to be more musically daring complemented each other, now it feels like two worlds heading in two different directions. Nevertheless the album titled "Shake" goes on to sell 2 million copies.

Following the success of "Luce" I produce Elisa's next studio album titled "Then comes the sun". The album recorded in Sausalito goes on to become a big success reaching triple platinum status. I produce 6 songs (including one of my compositions) for the Italian tenor "Alessandro Safina". The album is titled "Musica di te".

2003 I sign an exclusive production/consultant deal with Sugar records.

While producing 4 songs for the talented young rock band "Negramaro", I develop with the help of Mauro Meroni, the SynchroniCD, the first step towards what I consider a more integral musical paradigm.

The SynchroniCD is released as part of the band's two disc album titled "000577" and it is heralded as the infinite CD.

2004 I produce 3 songs which are part of Andrea Bocelli's album titled "Andrea".

The songs recorded between Milan, Tuscany, Sausalito and L.A. feature Steve Smith on Drums, Baron Browne on bass, my old friend Frank Martin on piano and myself on guitar/keys. I collaborate for the first time with talented cellist "Suzie Katayama".

The album is released in 46 countries and goes on to sell almost 2 million copies.

2005 I start 2005 by completing production on the new Negramaro's album titled "Mentre tutto scorre". The album is the starting point of a new important artistic phase for the band. It is also the soundtrack for the movie "La Febbre" by director Alessandro D'Alatri. and it produces two number 1 singles "Estate" and "Solo 3 min". As of Dec. 2005 the album is already Double Platinum.

I produce a song I cowrote with singer/songwriter Sarah Eden Davis for a new young singer "Giulia". The song "Permission" is released also in italian as "Spezzami il cuore" and features lyrics written by the talented artist "Moltheni".

I finish the year by producing the debut album of a new talented band "Ameba4".

2006 I start the year writing and recording my solo album "Deconstruction of a postmodern musician". The album features Allan Holdsworth, Elisa, Negramaro, Michael Manring, Paul McCandless, Steve Smith and others. It is also the soundtrack to Renato Pozzetto's movie "Un amore su misura" to be released in jan. 2007. During the month of september I produce three new tracks for Elisa, which are part of "Soundtrack 96 - 06" her first greatest hits. The album has gone to sell more than 600.000 copies - just in Italy - and become one of the most successful albums of the year. I finish the year producing Francesco Renga's album "Ferro e cartone". The album will be released in October 2007.

2007 I start the year producing Negramaro's album "La Finestra". The first single "Parlami d'amore" enters the charts at #1 and remains the number one song for 15 weeks. The album becomes multi platinum.

In the same year I produce Francesco Renga's album. Entitled "Ferro e cartone". The album enters the charts at #1 and the three singles - "Cambio direzione", "Ferro e cartone" and "Dimmi" - will remain in the top 5 songs of the Italian charts for more than 6 months

•
During the months of May - June I produce three songs for Elisa's international release "Caterpillar" - later named "Dancing" for the US market -

During the month of August, I produce two songs for Luciano Ligabue's first "Best of" called "Primo Tempo", which enters the charts at #1 and - within two months - becomes multiplatinum, thanks - in part - to the two singles "Niente paura" (number 1 for 14 consecutive weeks) and "Buonanotte all'Italia".

On November 9/2007, three songs that I produced occupy the first three spots of the Nielsen charts:

- #1) Niente paura (Ligabue)
- #2) L'immenso (Negramaro)
- #3) Ferro e cartone (Renga)

Towards the end of the year I embark upon a new, exciting musical adventure. I become Musical Director for the live shows of Francesco Renga and the European and Italian stadium tours of Luciano Ligabue.

2008 I begin the new year with the production of Ligabue's new single "Il centro del mondo".

The single - as of this writing - has been #1 for two consecutive weeks together with the album "Secondo Tempo" .

In this "Instant without Time" of my existence, I continue to learn, trying to plunge into the present moment, trying to access the world of the Unborn and of the Undying..

The story continues..