

Wire Magazine

Maurizio Giammarco with his quintet *Lingomania* has succeeded in creating in Italy the same jazz miracle that Miles Davis did in the 80s, by making people accept the idea of compatibility of acoustic and electric instruments, jazz and funk and swing and rock rhythms. Thanks to the jazz side of his discourse, *Lingomania* has been elected "Best Italian Group" two years running by the Italian jazz critics, who are among the most conservative in Europe, in the *Musica Jazz Magazine* poll. Not Surprisingly, in the last years Giammarco, who in the 70s studied in the USA with the legendary Joe Allard and at Karl Berger's Music Studio has made a name for himself as the best Italian saxophonist, tenor and soprano.

Giammarco has waited three years to release the first *Lingomania* record, *Riverberi* (Gala Records), "to give time for its sound to ripen" (Wasn't sound a techno-pop term?). "I like electronic instruments for their tones. Electronic timbres inspire me with an atmosphere different to that of acoustic instruments".

With the synth guitar playing of Umberto Fiorentino, one of the top men in Europe, as well as the electronic keyboard playing of Danilo Rea, Giammarco pursues a tonal post-avantgarde. "Every musician should go through the historical avantgarde and experimental languages. But nowadays, I think that tonality still offers marvellous opportunities to create deep musical textures. For example, Wynton Marsalis is only just starting to expand upon the territory already discovered by the historical Miles Davis quintet with Hancock and Shorter".

Roberto Gatto on drums and Furio Di Castri on Bass (now replaced by Enzo Pietropaoli) are the only Italian rhythm section completely at ease with any form of rhythmic stylisation. "We owe one of the most important musical inventions in the past few years to the Miles Davis of *Decoy*, which is the application of the be bop phrasing to rock rhythms. A jazz player used to think in terms of triplets, a funky player in sixteenth notes. Nowadays thinking in sextuplets brings together two expressive worlds, and is a step forward in musical sensitivity". But why the interest for rock rhythms?

"Because of the poetry that the rock movement created, just like Louis Armstrong, the Swing Era, or Be Bop had their poetry. If a sudden cluster of guitar playing recalls Jimi Hendrix, it's due to a cultural reference rather than musical trickery. I hate anything that doesn't have". Roots and poetry: this is possibly why Giammarco has also got another band, a modern jazz quartet, writes symphonic charts (recently for Enrico Rava), soundtracks for films and music for theatre.

Gianfranco Salvatore 1987

After three years of previous work and a very good reputation already established all over the country, *Lingomania* went finally in the studio to record his first album, *Riverberi*, during August 1986.

This recording, documenting the first *Lingomania* team with a two horns front line, signed a true milestone in the Italian jazz history of the 80s, presenting a real up-to-

date group project (a kind of electric jazz but more jazz oriented and more harmonically sophisticated than most of the American fusion music production of that time), being accurately self-produced (as far as studio sound quality is concerned) and, because of the audience expectations, selling around 5.000 copies in a few weeks: an unbelievable outcome for the average jazz sells of that time (considering also that nowadays general jazz sells are even much worse!). To underline is the use of the sequencer and of a synth-guitar by Umberto Fiorentino, in spite of an otherwise general jazz oriented atmosphere, due also to the emerging talent of trumpet player Flavio Boltro and Furio Di Castri's dexterity on double bass (both musicians left the group after a while).

Selections:

1. Riverberi (Giammarco)
2. Morning Mood (Giammarco)
3. Assegn-azione (Giammarco)
4. Esosfera (Giammarco)
5. Monomania (Fiorentino)
6. Lingo's Fanfare (Giammarco)
7. Rassegn-azione (Giammarco)

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The second *Lingomania* recording, dated April 1987, shows a little modified front line with the arrival of Danilo Rea on keyboards (instead of Flavio Boltro on trumpet) and Enzo Pietropaoli on electric bass (instead of Furio Di Castri). This has been the most well-known and successful version of the band, thanks also to the long time relationship and friendship among the musicians, comrades in many other musical adventures. This album shows also a more focused global sound in the quality and the form (often much articulated) of the compositions by the leader, but also by Fiorentino and Pietropaoli, who shared at that time a very close view of identity about the general musical direction of the group.

Selections:

1. The Groove After (Giammarco)
2. Mokambo (Giammarco)
3. Amore a Prima Vista (Giammarco)
4. Rising Wings (Fiorentino)
5. Shops (Giammarco)
6. First Take (Pietropaoli)
7. Flags (Giammarco)

8. Overtalk (Giammarco)