

MEET THE TRAILBLAZER

Alessandro Martire

THE ITALIAN PIANIST CELEBRATES TRAVEL THROUGH MUSIC, COMPOSING WORKS BASED ON INSPIRING DESTINATIONS AND PERFORMING IN THE WILD

Picture this: limestone spires rising to 10ft, the sun setting on the surrounding desert and a piano sonata soundtrack floating through the undulating golden dunes. It's a scene from Alessandro Martire's performance in Australia's Pinnacles Desert, one of the latest in his series of open-air concerts around the world. Over the past five years, the 32-year-old Italian pianist and composer has been travelling for inspiration and performing in the destinations that move him most. The wild landscapes are reflected in his compositions, which he plays on a custom-built pianoforte.

Where does your passion for music, composing and travel come from?

I've been playing since I was very young. At 15, I started composing, too. It was spontaneous; creating melodies came naturally to me and gave me an *emozione* (a feeling of sudden, intense excitement). I was born by Lake Como, and the water and mountains were my first muse. They sparked a love of places and nature, which I wanted to translate into a universal language: music.

Why did you start performing in unusual locations?

After studying composition at Berklee College in Boston, I began playing theatres and composing for brands and films. But I felt inspired to do something different. In 2019, I founded Lake Endless Joy, a music festival that takes place every July/August in various locations around Lake Como. For the headline event, I performed on a moving platform on the water, towed by an electric motorboat. It was the start of what's become my brand of music, which is an exchange of sorts; I receive inspiration from a place, then give back to the landscape through open-air concerts.

Do you invite audiences to your performances?

At first, the choice of destination is purely creative — it's about where I feel compelled to play. Only then do I start considering whether it's going to be just me, or whether it might be feasible to have an audience along. When possible, it's wonderful — an experience more than a concert. For example, I often hold performances on Alpine mountains, which people hike to. I see them get lost between the notes and the landscape, which merge into one.

Where else have you performed?

I've performed all over Italy, from the Frasassi Caves in the central Marche region to the rooftop of Milan Cathedral, as well as other



places in Europe, such as by La Mola Lighthouse on the Balearic island of Formentera. I've gone as far as the AIUla Oasis in Saudi Arabia, Charyn Canyon National Park in Kazakhstan and the North Pole. Even if you don't come to my concerts or visit the places I've been to, you can hear these destinations in my pieces.

Which destinations do you hold especially dear?

There isn't a ranking, but St Mortiz in Switzerland was the first place I performed an outdoor concert outside of Lake Como. It was winter and I played on the frozen lake by the ski resort, with an ice skater gliding around me. It was extraordinary; I sensed a strength in the landscape, which I tried to externalise through my music. Last December, I was also invited to Expo City Dubai for COP28, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, as an 'artist of nature'. The team I worked with projected my outdoor concerts onto the walls and I performed an original song called *The Future of Nature*. Music was seen as a means of dialogue, which I thought was beautiful.

Alessandro Martire is the creative director of Lake Endless Joy, which now runs a winter edition in February as well as the summer session in July/August, both around Lake Como. lakendlessjoyfestival.com INTERVIEW: ANGELA LOCATELLI

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