

INTERVIEW WITH ÈLIA BASTIDA BY ALBERTO BATISTA.



Photo de Lili Bonmatí

I had the great joy and privilege of being able to interview Èlia Bastida on a Sunday in March. Despite being positive for Covid, she accepted this appointment. I discovered a wonderful, sensitive young girl who spoke to me very frankly, very sincerely and very simply.

She was born in Barcelona in July 1995, and still resides in Barcelona. Her mother being a piano teacher, she was immersed in music very early on. She explains to me that at home, everyone sang, it was like an additional language. She immediately liked to sing from the age of three.

Her mother then enrolled him in a choir. At the age of four Èlia already knew what she wanted: to play the violin. She demanded to play it with such insistence that her parents began looking for a violin teacher who would work well with young children. It was Pablo Cortes who was found. She worked with him for 14 years: from 4 years old to 18 years old, but she specifies that after so many years spent studying with him, he remains for her her "Master". At the age of 12 she joined the IEA Oriol Martorell in Barcelona, which is a music and dance conservatory, until she was 18.



Joan Chamorro, who heads the SAJB, and Elia's mother had the opportunity to work together in Medellin, Colombia. Thus, Joan knew that Elia played the violin. He told her that he would like a violinist to join the SAJB. He presented her with pieces to play, but Èlia still had her head in classical music. It was then that she met at the Oriol Martorell, Andrea Motis and Iscla Datzira, who were already playing in the SAJB, and it

was while discussing with them, listening to more jazz, that she decided after a while. a year trying the SAJB experience.

Without any rehearsal, she found herself embarked with the orchestra at the Canfranc jazz festival in July 2012. It was during the sound tests that she played for the first time with the SAJB "Pretty Trix". Of course, she played this title again during the concert.



Four days later she took part in the concert which took place at the "Greek", emblematic Theater of Barcelona. She interpreted "Pretty Trix" as in Canfranc.

To the question: "When you joined the SAJB, did you give up studying classical music? Her answer was very clear. "Classical music and jazz, although different, complement each other. From that moment I gave more scenic importance to jazz, but for the violinist that I am, the classical is very important for the technique it brings". When I ask her what are his favorite violinists, her references? She tells me that when she arrived at the SAJB she listened a lot to Stéphane Grappelli but also Stuff Smith who are her references in violin. She also specifies that she first transcribed other trumpeter or saxophonist instrumentalists such as Chet Baker, Lester Young, Ben Webster, Clifford Brown, etc. It was only a little later that she picked up themes from violinists.



Then we tackled the singing and sax part.

Regarding singing, she explains to me that she has always sung since she was born: a lot of classical songs. As a child, she took part in various choirs, including the Orfeó Català, a choir created in 1891. In Joan Chamorro's methodology, singing plays a major role. Everyone must sing and play at the same time. So the opportunity for her to sing was pretty quick. At 18, 19 she started to sing "Bei mir bist du schön" which was her first performance. In 2015 she sang in duet with Andrea "Dat dere".

She then joined the 2nd version of the vocal group "Magia de la Veu & Jazz ensemble" with Andrea Motis, Rita Payès, and Alba Armengou in 2016. Currently she participates in "La Magia de la Veu 3" with Alba Esteban, Alba Armengou, Joan Martí and Koldo Munné.

But I wanted to know more about the amount of Brazilian songs she sings on SAJB, but also on her more personal CDs. In fact, as soon as she started singing jazz, she had Clara Luna, a Catalan singer from Barcelona, as a teacher. This one, after being highly qualified in classical piano, chose to evolve in vocal jazz, and more particularly in Brazilian music. This is how Èlia began to sing bossas-novas, then more broadly Brazilian songs under the impetus of her teacher. In the SAJB, several members had practically at the same time, this same taste for Brazilian music, and we can see that in the repertoire of the SAJB, many Brazilian themes are integrated.



Photo de Àngel Tejo

About the sax, she says she first learned the clarinet with a teacher, shortly after her arrival at SAJB. Then Joan was his alto sax teacher. About a year later, a tenor sax position became available in the SAJB, and Joan offered him to work on the tenor. This is how she joined the sax section of the SAJB.

After all these topics, I absolutely had to talk to her about Scott Hamilton. Indeed Èlia has just released a new CD "Èlia Bastida meets Scott Hamilton". Èlia explains to me that when she recorded Minor Swing when she arrived at the SAJB on the CD Jazzing 4 Volume 1, Scott Hamilton had just recorded for the first time on this CD as well. It was in fact their first musical encounter, and we can say that Elia and Scott arrived at the SAJB at the same time. Scott absolutely adores the sound of the violin. He likes Stuff Smith who was a great jazz violinist, who died in 1967, but he also recorded with Joe Venuti, another great jazz violinist who died in 1978. The years passed. Èlia and Scott often played together during the recordings of the various Jazzing CDs, but also in various SAJB concerts.

In 2019, Èlia recorded "The Magic Sound of violin" a CD in which Scott played on several themes. Next, there was the CD "Joan Chamorro New Quartet & Scott Hamilton". These recordings were made live with the participation of Joan Chamorro, Èlia Bastida, Alba Armengou, Carla Motis and Scott Hamilton. It was

then that Joan Chamorro, seeing that Scott took great pleasure in playing with Èlia, especially since Scott kept saying that he loved the sound of the violin, suggested that they make a CD violin, sax. This instrumental association is not common, indicated Joan, and the project would be all the more exceptional. As previously mentioned, the CD was titled “Èlia Bastida meets Scott Hamilton”. Of course they accepted and Elia specifies that: “to play with Scott is simply exceptional. It's an incredible musical and personal learning experience. Scott is a great in the world of jazz, and to make a record with him sharing these musical moments is really a great gift”.

We also talked about the Jazz House. This room, located at Joan Chamorro's, is the headquarters of the SAJB. This is where the orchestra rehearses, but it is also an audio and video recording studio. All CDs are stored here. In this regard, Èlia has participated in the recording of around 35 CDs, including around thirty with the SAJB. That being said, it has now been more than three years since she was part of the SAJB. She returns there as a guest for more special concerts.



Photo de Lili Bonmatí
Conception Comunicom



Photo de Sílvia Poch
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Regarding her projects: by the end of 2022, she currently has 45 concerts to perform with different formations. Èlia Bastida Quartet with Joan Chamorro on double bass, Josep Traver on guitar, Arnau Julià on drums, which can also be a trio without drums. Èlia Bastida meets Scott Hamilton, will also perform. There is also her duet with Carolina Alabau, with whom she released her CD MERAKI in September 2021. Other concerts with HalliGalli Quartet, a string ensemble, Joan Chamorro Big Four, with Èlia Bastida, Alba Armengou and Josep Traver.

Among her future projects, a little scoop: she will soon release a book on the jazz violin, but also future CDs to record, on which she is thinking. Business to follow. Do not miss to consult its web page:

<https://eliabastida.com>

Well, the interview is coming to an end. Thank you again Èlia, for the time you devoted to me with so much kindness and naturalness. Goodbye!!!