

Setting sail with indie band RIVA | The Florentine



LIFESTYLE

Get to know them before their live debut on December 2nd.

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A new name is setting Florence's musical horizon ablaze, a pirate ship charged with groovalicious ammo just waiting to be unloaded on our unsuspecting shores (and hips!). **RIVA is a new brainchild** sprung from the artistic collaboration between Florence-based but Milan-bound visual artist Guglielmo Torelli and musician/event planner Dario Bracaloni. We decided to lure them out of their nautical hideout for an interview, just a few days before their **live debut hits Florence's Combo Club with a new wave of tidal energy on Friday December 2**. Hard a-starboard for stardom - let the journey begin!



From left to right: RIVA founding members Guglielmo Torelli and Dario Bracaloni

Michelle Davis: So, RIVA: can you draw a sort of timeline of this recently unveiled musical project?

Guglielmo Torelli: We had actually been playing together for quite a while before the possibility of RIVA even entered the picture - we were also more rock-oriented at the time. At one point we were preparing for a live concert and re-listening to our material we realised that it didn't represent us. So we just flushed those two years of work down the drain and decided to start anew, to create something we could consider ours. So in 2014 we began to carve out the identity of RIVA, really taking the necessary time to shape what we are today. So, yeah, going back to our timeline: in January 2016 we took a chance and submitted our tracks to Toscana100Band, a regional contest that offered 100 bands a sum of 5000 euro apiece in order to develop a personal project.

Dario Bracaloni: In april 2016 we found out that we had won and had the necessary funding to really reach our goals. It was a real surprise! The result is our debut self-titled album that we mostly wrote and composed on our own, with a final, fundamental push from Milan-based producer Marco Olivi that we had met thanks to Florence-based Brazilian musician and radio-speaker Tomaz "Toco" di Cunto. We recorded the album in his amazing Blue Spirit Recording Studio.

GT: We really clicked with Marco... It was a perfect match!

MD: What about your name, RIVA?

DB: We wanted something that sounded both Italian and international. We did not want to hide our origins but we wanted something easy for everyone to pronounce. It manages to embody both our personalities: sunlit and somber, joyous and wistful. We created the bulk of our songs during the Summer of 2015, when we were stranded in the city, saddened by the lack of any form of sun-soaked escapade. We owe our moniker to a good friend of mine, designer Luigi Minoliti, who suggested this incredibly evocative word.

GT: Yes, it musters up seaside visions, salt-tinged sunsets, tropical landscapes... this coastal theme is also made evident by the amazing artwork French illustrator Clémence Chatel created for us. And to think that this all started with us aimlessly jamming to the theme song of "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air"!



One of Clémence Chatel's artworks for RIVA

MD: When introducing the band, you make quite clear that there's something more to RIVA than the music. Guglielmo is a designer and Dario, you are a PR. Why is it so important for you to shine a light on these details that others would consider secondary?

DB: I think this stems from a desire to work differently, to see music as a whole that engages multiple senses and fields of action, that does not end in itself.

GT: You also have to consider the fact that we grew up in a world that actually could "see" music, not only hear it. As a kid, I was hooked on MTV, to the idea that music and image were somehow indelibly entwined. I think that our philosophy was profoundly influenced by bands like Pink Floyd, who deeply

valued the visual component in their artwork and live performances, and Gorillaz, who based their entire communication on original art. We wanted to create something able to whisk people away, an audiovisual journey.

MD: Having partaken in an interesting talent-scouting operation such as Toscana100Band, do you believe that this helped foster a local network of musicians? Do you think that Florence has its own scene?

DB: Toscana100band was essential and it helped empower bands that wouldn't have the means to otherwise do so. That said, Florence seems to have abandoned its potential in favour of big brands and big names instead of investing and showcasing its many talented independent musicians. We, for example, share a rehearsal space with two other Florentine bands, Go!Zilla and The Vickers. We support each other, show up at each other's gigs but if you ask me whether there is an actual scene, I must say that my answer is no. The city hasn't managed to establish a sustainable economy, a productive environment. It's stuck in its own provincial quicksands.

GT: Luckily, music is universal. Take Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" for example: aliens communicated with mankind by using notes!

MD: Is this why you are planning on moving to Milan?

GT: It's not like we're running away... we just believe that a change of scene could be positive for us, both as musicians and career-wise.

DB: We don't want to risk becoming self-referential. We want our album to "grow" away from its roots in order to find its true potential.

MD: What can we expect from your live debut on December 2nd?

GT: Ok, so you must know that we envision RIVA as a boat and us as its crew of scurvy scallywags. Dario is the whaler, armed with his 6-string harpoon, while I am the helmsman. Live, we will be joined by our "cabin boy" guitarist Giacomo Mottola (Le Furie), "Gunner" percussionist Theo Taddei (Le Furie) and "pantryman" bass player Alessandro Pezzano (Blue Popsicle). After our concert, legendary afro-beat duo In Flagranti will take to the decks... they actually remixed our song "Africa" and you'll be able to **download it for free** if you tag our band's facebook page with a pic, video or livestream posted during the event! We can't wait to dock into Combo's harbour!

For more information on their upcoming live debut click [HERE](#)

Watch their live performance at The Florentine's headquarters [HERE](#)

Click [HERE](#) to listen to their first single "Seaplanes".

Click [HERE](#) to watch the music video for "Seaplanes"

