



## Profiles in Catholicism

### An Interview with Marco Lo Russo

by Gordon Nary

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**Marco:** I am very happy to be able to release this interview. I am very close to friends in the USA because some people have founded a fan club on Facebook dedicated to me on 2013 after my concert tour between [Canada](#), [USA](#), and [Mexico](#).

**Gordon:** The best way of introducing you to our readers is to link to your [website](#). When did you first realized that you had musical talents and where did you study?

**Marco:** The music has always accompanied my life. At the age of eight we moved from the city to the countryside. I was spending a lot of time alone, because my parents both worked. I was spending whole days surrounded by nature with my only friend: music. St. Augustine used to say who sings pray twice. I believe that anyone who expresses himself through art prays twice because as Pope Francis says, art expresses the beauty of divine creation.

**Gordon:** Please describe your affiliation with the [Valvisciolo Abbey](#)

**Marco:** I am deeply tied to the Abbey of Valvisciolo in the first place because my parents got married there, then because I went there to study organ many times. To obtain the Master degree in Musical Composition, you must study organ and Gregorian chant. Today as well as being place for my spiritual recollection, it remains a point of reference in my life. I often spend pleasant moments of confrontation and dialogue with my friends Cistercian friars.

**My favorite composition is your Ave Maria .**

**Gordon:**

## Marco Lo Russo - Ave Maria ft G. Vinci piano & M. Mannozi sopr...



### What inspired you to compose it?

Marco: After the opening of the World Youth 2016 in Błonia in [Poland](#). I strongly felt the need to compose a piece dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was presented at the world premiere at the Sacred **Sacred Harmony** concert held in Krakow, Poland, on the occasion of the [Night Sacred Kracow](#). The Ave Maria I was dedicated to Pope Francis.

This idea was born as a thank-you to the intention of last August's prayer of Pope Francis dedicated to artists

*[...] "th"... artists guardians of the beauty that heals the wounds of the soul all the artists of our time go to the prayer of August because through the works of their ingenuity they all help to discover the beauty of the Creation "*

**Gordon:** You are a prolific composer. Please list the titles of your compositions

Marco: It is true. I composed and produced a lot of music of various kinds: sacred music, like the Ave Maria, symphonic, contemporary, electronic, string quartets and a lot of music for Cinema, Theater and TV. In addition to having the satisfaction of classifying me as a finalist at the Eurovision Song Contest in Lithuania 2017 with the EP 7 Days, my compositions are published by prestigious labels such as Universal Music. Here is a link to my [discography](#).

**Gordon:** What was your response when you learned you had won the Orpheus Award 2016 Cinematic Piano Accordion GeM duo?

Marco: It is always very rewarding to receive prizes and awards and in these years they have been different. The Eurovision Song Contest 2017, the Nomination JPF Music Awards 2017 from USA for the album Modern Accordion and the Orpheus Awards from 2008 to 2016, are just a few examples. But the musical research, the composition and the silence remains my world. If you like, here are some prizes and letters of appreciation by famous artists such as Ennio Morricone, Leo Brouwer and Nicola Piovani.

**Gordon:** In your opinion, how does sacred music enhance one spirituality?

Marco: Music brings us closer to God. Sacred music invites us to a deep inner concentration and touches very deep emotional strings. Since ancient times, melismatic, Gregorian or polyphony singing was an instrument of invocation and prayer. Today, despite the profound socio-cultural changes, sacred music remains the main instrument for internalizing the faith.

**Gordon:** You also love jazz. Is there any connection between spiritual music and jazz?

The Jazz saxophonist John Coltrane said that you have to study a lot and then forget it all when you play. I feel very good when I play or make music. I feel a deep contact with my inner part in different ways when I play sacred music or jazz. The music becomes a multi-sensory experience for me. As well as there is no difference between human races, there is no distinction, especially today, between the various musical languages. They all become an expression of the human soul.

Marco:

Caravan - Marco Lo Russo Marco Lo Russo aka Rouge in Mediter...



Caravan - Marco Lo Russo Marco Lo Russo aka Rouge in Mediterranean accordion live jazz world music

**Gordon:** What are the titles of some of the films for which you composed?

**Marco:** I realized and collaborated on several film productions like composer of the soundtrack or like accordionist performer and also an actor musician. In addition to the various films and soap operas of which I composed the soundtrack, the major film experience, like accordionist, was with the composer Oscar Award Nicola Piovani, of the soundtrack of the film [Life is Beautiful](#)

Thank you for a great interview. In closing, here is one of your classic videos.

**Gordon:** Schindler' list - J. Williams, Marco Lo Russo accordion Guido Feliz..



Schindler's list - J. Williams, Marco Lo Russo accordion Guido Felizzi Violin on TV2000 Ichnos