

Who are Rotary Finger?

The duo formed after a chance encounter in Italy between Paolo La Ganga (Bologna, Italy), guitar-strummer extraordinaire and Sonia Ter Hovanessian (French-Armenian originally from Brighton, UK), and her “chocolate-velvet” voice, all wrapped up with a silver lining of flute...

Two very different musicians in many ways, together their union produces a strong, eclectic mix, where you can feel their love for Blues and Jazz, and their passion for the power of words in Folk and poetry. Their music now tells the story of the coming together of their different cultures and experiences, and how they found a common home and understanding in the universality of music.

Rotary Finger started off as an acoustic blend spanning different influences, ages, cultures and languages; a reworking of great classics and undiscovered contemporaries; a musical self-discovery.

That self-discovery soon had them getting out old recordings of melodies, chords, words, a myriad of ideas waiting to be given a form, a sense, and most importantly, a life. When they brought their ideas together the project took on a new lease of life as they started to work on their own original music, gathered in their debut album: “Neverland Beach”.

Sonia Ter Hovanessian

Sonia, of a French mother and Armenian father, born in Teheran (Iran), brought up in Brighton (UK), even before the age of two she had already absorbed a fair amount cultural diversity. And it was only to continue when at the age of twenty she first gained the taste for life abroad in her soon-to-be adoptive city, Bologna (Italy), where she was to become ever-more a “citizen of the world”.

Eclectic, versatile, contaminated. Three adjectives which could nicely sum up Sonia’s artistic make up. She finds inspiration through using different disciplines:

Singer. Flautist. Photographer. Actress. Teacher. Composer - The Art of Communication.

That’s at the heart of everything she tries to do: to reach another person’s soul in some way and touch their lives.

She leaves the UK in 2003 with a degree in French and Italian Studies from the University of Sussex (UK) and for over ten years now she has lived between her native city, Brighton, and her adopted city, Bologna, working in music and education. She begins her studies on the traverse flute at the age of ten, and over the years has studied with teachers including Rachel Smith, Liz Goodwin, obtaining the Advanced Professional Certificate from the Royal College of Music, London in 1998. She has worked as both a classical solo flautist, and also in orchestras, including the Brighton Philharmonic and Sussex Symphony Orchestra.

Mainly classically trained on flute she feels something was missing and after some soul searching and experimenting she finds that in her heart lay two other desires. The first, long dormant: **the voice**. Awakening this part of her was a life-turning moment as, after having had several vocal issues as a child, she had mainly been discouraged to sing. No one had actually thought that perhaps learning to use the voice correctly not just to speak but as an instrument, might be beneficial. In fact it is one of the best things that ever happened to her. She discovers the wonders of the voice in 2005, and has studied with various teachers including lyrical singing with Gloria Giovannini, jazz with Rita Cervellati, and the intricacies of the voice in its entirety with the multifaceted singer, Silvia Testoni. The second desire is a yearning to embrace the world of jazz and the adrenalin rush of improvisation. She starts

experimenting and learning from professionals such as the British flautist, Geoff Warren, and the Italian saxophonist, Andrea Ferrario, and, though grateful to her classical background, she has never looked back.

Over the years her studies have included:

- Contemporary classical minimalism, Steve Reich, London
- Classical Harmony workshop, Trinity College, London
- Jazz Improvisation Course, London College of Contemporary Music, London
- Voicecraft, Alejandro Saorin Martinez, Conservatorio di Padova
- Jazz singing and improvisation, Rachel Gould, Bologna
- International Jazz Flute Workshop, Geoff Warren, Borrello (Abruzzo)
- Gospel choir singing, Cedric Shannon & High Praise Gospel Singers, Bologna
- Whistle register in singing, Erika Biavati at EVOC, Padova
- Improvisational acting, Compagnia del Teatro dell'Argine, Bologna
- Photography technique, Fulvio Bugani, Bologna
- From Passion to Profession, Toscana Photographic Workshop, Milan

She has worked both as a main singer and backing singer in various jazz and modern musical formations, and has performed all over Europe, from the UK and France, to Germany and Italy. Among her many experiences, in 2010 she collaborates as backing singer and flautist for the singer-songwriter Gian Luca Fantelli at the **Europauditorium** (Bologna). She has also worked as an actress and musician for the theatrical show “The Vagina Monologues” in 2008 and 2011, and in 2012 becomes one of the lead singers in the show “Note Americane” which led her to perform on the big stage in theatres such as **Teatro Manzoni** (Bologna), **Teatro Comunale** (Vicenza), **Teatro del Verme** (Milano), and **Teatro delle Celebrazioni** (Bologna).

Sonia has taught for over ten years and is an active member of the Musicians’ Association of Bologna.

Sonia also has a passion for photography and is currently preparing her second solo exhibition entitled “Kromatis”.

The moment has come now to give life to the original compositions, which Sonia has created along with co-writer and guitarist, Paolo La Ganga. Together as a duo they form **Rotary Finger** and in February 2016 released their first album of original music, “Neverland Beach”. The album launch was at the theatre Spazio Binario (Bologna) and was sold out. They are now working on their first European tour.

www.sterhovanessian.com

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Paolo La Ganga

Training: Paolo starts playing the guitar at the young age of 11, at first self-taught but soon enough sees he has a real passion for music and for his chosen instrument. He starts taking private lessons with **FRANCO GNASSI**, and as well as strengthening his theory and technique he concentrates his studies on the idea of “musical thought”. He continues his development at the “Music Academy 2000” in Bologna, under the guidance of several teachers, including **MASSIMILIANO RUGGERI**, and **GIACOMO CASTELLANO** (Raf, Irene Grandi, Gianni Nannini, etc). In 2003 he starts studying at the CPM institute in Milan with **LUCA COLOMBO** (Adriano Celentano, Anna Oxa, the RAI and Mediaset orchestras, etc), with whom he discovers the world of fusion and jazz/rock, obtaining his diploma in 2005 with full marks. During this period of study he encounters **LUCA ZAMPONI** (Pat Metheny, Sly & the Family Stone, Giorgia, etc) working on styles including jazz, fusion and blues. In 2006 Paolo spends three months studying at the **MUSICIANS INSTITUTE** in Hollywood, California, an intense period which allows him to fully immerse himself in music, under the supervision of teachers such as **BRAD RABUCHIN** (Ray Charles, Bonnie Raitt), **RICK ZUNIGAR** (Jimmy Smith, Steve Wonder), **GREG POORE** (Marvin Gaye, Motown) and **SCOTT HENDERSON**. In 2014 he graduates in Jazz Guitar at the Conservatoire G.Frescobaldi in Ferrara (Italy).

Work Experience: In 1997 he begins playing live with various young bands and has never stopped. For some time now he has specialized himself in various musical styles: **POST ROCK, JAZZ, POP, BLUES, SOUL** and **FUSION**, working both in the studio and live: live music venues, theatres, festivals, TV and radio performances, mainly in Italy but also abroad: the **USA**, England, Scotland, France, Germany and Sweden. Paolo has accompanied the American singer **JENNI ALPERT** on two Italian tours and also in the USA. While still in the States, he worked on the recording and arranging of the album "**LOVERS AND LEADERS**" of the Californian artist **SACHA SACKET**. He has collaborated with many artists and musicians within Europe, to name a few: **FRANCESCO MONETI** (Modena City Ramblers), **SARA 6** (San Remo 1998 and 2000) **ANTONINO SPADACCINO** (winner of the TV programme **AMICI 4** by Maria De Filippi), **TONINO CAROTONE**, **BARBARA COLA**, **FIORDALISO**. In 2011 he becomes the guitarist of the band "Gardenhouse", a band which has made a name for itself in the music scene all over Italy, releasing numerous albums and recently collaborating with **MARCELO COLEMAN** (Almamegretta). Currently Paolo is also the guitarist for **ALAN SORRENTI** and **ANNA OXA**. Over the years Paolo has played with and opened for artists such as **AFTERHOURS**, **MARLENE KUNZ**, **BAUSTELLE**, **NOMADI**, **ELIO E LE STORIE TESE**, etc. Some of the festivals he has taken part in include: Buskers festival (Ferrara), Live Across festival (Milan), Lustando festival (Alessandria), Argo jazz festival (Mantova), Porretta Soul festival (Bologna), Fringe festival (Edinburgh, Scotland), among many others... He has recently launched an album with the Franco-Armenian singer from the UK, **Sonia Ter Hovanessian**, embarking on a new path of writing original music. The name of their project to look out for: **ROTARY FINGER**. In February 2016 they launched the album at the theatre Spazio Binario (Bologna) and they are now working on their first European tour.

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