



Sicilian-born vocalist and songwriter Laura Campisi has made New York City her home since 2011. Rooted in jazz but instinctively drawn to crossing musical and cultural borders, she has developed an eclectic repertoire that moves between jazz, Italian and Sicilian music, folk traditions, original songwriting and unexpected reinterpretations of familiar songs, drawing freely from genres including pop, rock and electronic music. She has performed throughout Europe, the United States and Canada, in settings ranging from intimate duos to larger ensembles, festivals and theatrical performance.

Language has always been central to Campisi's musical world — not simply as a means of communication, but as sound, rhythm, identity and cultural expression. A native Italian speaker, she writes songs in English, Italian and Sicilian and has performed in English, Italian, Sicilian, Neapolitan, Spanish, Portuguese, French and Punjabi. Her musical curiosity has also led her beyond Western traditions, including collaborations with Pakistani musicians and performances of Sufi and Punjabi repertoire. Throughout these encounters, jazz and improvisation have remained a common language: a place where different traditions can meet without losing their identity.

Campisi studied music in her native Palermo, graduating summa cum laude in Musical Arts. Her thesis explored the life and work of legendary Sicilian folk singer Rosa Balistreri and the relationship between music, land and social protest — themes that have continued to surface throughout her artistic life. Her musical education has included jazz, improvisation, songwriting and vocal studies with artists and educators in Italy and the United States.

After moving to New York, Campisi continued to develop a musical language shaped by both her Mediterranean roots and her adopted city's rich cultural diversity and longstanding traditions of musical creativity and experimentation. She has performed at

venues including Birdland, Lincoln Center, The Kitano and New York University, while continuing to work internationally. In 2017 she released her debut album, *Double Mirror*, recorded with an unconventional double-trio lineup featuring two bassists, two drummers and voice. The album received international critical attention for its distinctive instrumentation and personal approach to jazz and songwriting, including coverage in DownBeat and inclusion among the year's notable releases by Cadence and All About Jazz. In 2018 she appeared as one of the principal performers in Toronto's *The Ward Cabaret*, portraying an Italian immigrant in early twentieth-century Canada.

In 2021, Campisi released her personal interpretation of the iconic protest song Strange Fruit, followed in 2022 by *Shakin' It Up!*, a live-in-studio free jazz album of spontaneous compositions, co-produced with pianist Pat Battstone. The projects reflect two recurring sides of her musical personality: a deep engagement with the meaning and history carried by a song, and an equally strong attraction to spontaneity, improvisation and the unexpected. No stranger to free improvisation, Campisi had previously contributed to *Improvise Options*, a sound installation presented as part of the XIII International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

In the years following the pandemic, Campisi increasingly devoted herself to another way of telling stories: working as a New York City tour guide. What began as a parallel professional path gradually became another lens through which to experience the city she had called home for more than a decade. Walking its neighborhoods, tracing histories of migration and cultural exchange, and meeting people from around the world have in turn fed new musical ideas, bringing her back to songwriting and performance with a renewed curiosity about place, belonging, language and the many cultures that coexist in New York.

Today, Campisi's work continues to move between the places and languages that have shaped her: Sicily and New York, tradition and improvisation, memory and reinvention. Rather than treating those worlds as separate, she looks for the spaces where they overlap, and for the stories that can only emerge when they meet.

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