

Gabriele di Franco

composer · writer · guitarist



Photo: Federico Fiordigiglio

BIOGRAPHY

Gabriele di Franco is a Belgian-Italian composer, writer and guitarist based in Brussels. His music is rooted in jazz and driven by storytelling: his pieces unfold like stories, with their characters, their turns and their silences. His writing draws equally on classical orchestration, contemporary grooves and folk-inspired melody, for formations that range from a duo to a symphony orchestra.

As composer and conductor he has worked with jazz orchestras across Europe: the **Bud Powell Jazz Orchestra** and the **Castro Jazz Orchestra** in Italy, **Q-Some Big Band** in Belgium, the **Subway Jazz Orchestra Cologne** and the **FETE Big Band** in Germany, and **Big Ideas** in the United Kingdom. In 2026 he wrote *Drops and Sand* for the **Orchestre National de Jazz**, within its Académie de Composition. His album **The Value of Choices** (Challenge Records, 2026), eight original compositions for his own jazz orchestra with four guest artists, grew out of a series of international composition prizes reinvested in the orchestra, and has been widely reviewed in Europe and the United States.

The same love for stories took him to music theatre and film. **LULELA** (LOD muziektheater), which he wrote, composed, directed and performed, is a jazz concert with narration in which the audience decides the fate of the protagonist; its text was published as an interactive book by Albatros il Filo and received four literary awards. After a postgraduate in film and animation music at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, mentored by Michel Bisceglia, with a new score for Lotte Reiniger's *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926), he has scored short films, animation and the video game *Star Gazer*.

As a guitarist he is active both as a leader and as a sideman. He plays in duo with pianist **Francesco Negro**, with whom he recorded *Synolon* and *Cantabile*, and leads the quintet **Beautiful Useless Songs**. His studies for classical guitar, *Deep*, were recorded by Jasper Iturrospe for Etcetera Records.

He graduated in jazz guitar from the Nino Rota Conservatory in Italy, studied at the Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität der Stadt Wien, and holds a Master's degree in Composition and Arrangement from the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, where he studied with **Kris Defoort**, Lode Mertens and Peter Swinnen. He has continued to study privately with Ed Partyka and John Hollenbeck. He teaches composition, guitar and theory at the Academie Wilrijk in Antwerp.

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Gabriele di Franco

awards, recordings, press



COMPOSITION AWARDS

Académie de Composition, Orchestre National de Jazz
France, 2026: *Drops and Sand*

3rd Prize, Spheres of a Genius
Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and JamMusicLab,
Austria, 2023: *5.8.15 for Carla*

Special Prize, Ise-Shima International Composition Competition
Japan, 2023: *Nguè*

1st Prize, Scrivere in Jazz
Italy, 2022: *Betsabea*

Special Prize and Mention, Ise-Shima
Japan, 2022: *Berlin*; Special Prize: *Acqua*

European Composers, Subway Jazz Orchestra Cologne
Germany, 2021: *Inspira (Inhale)*

3rd Prize, Helsinki International Big Band Composing Contest
Finland, 2021: *Berlin*

Winner, Elevator Jazz Pitch, inJazz and Berthold Records
Netherlands, 2019: *LULELA*

2nd Prize, Jazz Comp Graz
Austria, 2017: *Aspetta*

LITERARY AWARDS FOR LULELA

Critics' Award, Nero su Bianco
Mino De Blasio Literary Prize, 2022

2nd Prize, Canti... di versi
published books, 2022

High Mention for Cultural Merit
Mr. Hyde Awards, 2021

2nd Prize, Europa in versi e in prosa
Como, 2021



Photo: Dejaview

SELECTED RECORDINGS

The Value of Choices
Gabriele di Franco Jazz Orchestra, Challenge Records,
2026

Cantabile
Gabriele di Franco // Francesco Negro, Da Vinci Jazz,
2024

Deep
studies for guitar, Jasper Iturrospe, Etcetera Records,
2023

Synolon
Gabriele di Franco // Francesco Negro, Workin' Label,
2022

ON THE VALUE OF CHOICES

"A sonic narrative, a true cinematography of sound."
[JAZZ THING \(DE\)](#)

"Ambitious in scope and realised with precision."
[ALL ABOUT JAZZ \(US\)](#)

"Narration, song and music become one."
[JAZZMANIA \(BE\)](#)

"Incredibly exciting, and sonically outstanding!"
[HÖREN UND FÜHLEN \(DE\)](#)