

Blaise Ubaldini - long biography (500 words)

Blaise Ubaldini is a composer and a performer whose music seeks freedom and connection, bridging cultures and emotions. He is also a researcher, currently pursuing a doctorate at the University of Southern California (USC), where he examines the intertwined nature of emotion and culture. This research is not separate from his music but a deepening of it—an effort to understand how emotion shapes collective identity and how culture, in turn, influences our perception of emotion.

Ubaldini's artistic journey has been one of constant exploration and collaboration. His composition *Bérénice*, premiered at IRCAM in Paris in 2014, marked a significant milestone in his career. The work, which blends theater and music, was dedicated to Swiss actress Caroline Imhof and the soloists of the ensemble Intercontemporain. *Bérénice* sought to establish a natural unity between sound and expression, using music as a tool to create a space where artistic boundaries are transcended, allowing for a more fluid exchange between the realms of music and theater.

In 2016, Ubaldini collaborated with Israeli trombonist Alon Stoler and the Chémirani Trio, a renowned Iranian percussion ensemble, to compose *Love Song for a Long-term Hatred*. This piece was designed to create a space where cultures, often divided by political and ideological differences, could engage in dialogue, share emotions, and create a common expression. It reflected Ubaldini's belief that art has the power to preserve and strengthen the connections that unite us, revealing the shared existential foundation that underlies our diverse cultures.

Throughout his career, Ubaldini has worked with musicians from a wide range of genres, including jazz, contemporary music, classical, world music, drone, and electronic. These collaborations have shaped his artistic vision, pushing the boundaries of what music can achieve. His work continues to transcend genres and backgrounds, inviting listeners to engage with music in a way that is open to interpretation and introspection. Ubaldini's ongoing exploration of different musical forms allows him to continuously challenge traditional composition, creating works that expand the possibilities of musical expression.

In 2022, Ubaldini released his debut album, "Sunbathing", a collection of five pieces for solo instruments and electronics. The album serves as a reflection of his compositional journey over the past decade. It explores contemporary musical styles while addressing broader questions such as memory and the relationship between music and the Western artistic tradition. The album marked a significant moment in his development as a composer, bridging past influences with new artistic directions.

In 2023, Ubaldini's composition *Rusty Song* for Patricia Kopatchinskaja and the ensemble Intercontemporain represented a further evolution in his approach to music. Designed as a platform with multiple entry points, *Rusty Song* allowed listeners from diverse backgrounds to experience the music in their own ways. This work deepened his vision of music as a space of freedom, where each listener can interpret and engage with the music individually while still sharing a collective emotional experience.

Currently, Ubaldini is working on his next album, "In Between", a project that reflects his passion for exploring the spaces between thought and feeling, sound and noise, and identity and culture.

Influenced by Sufi mysticism, *In Between* seeks to delve into the ambiguities of existence, with art viewed as an existential journey toward freedom—an inward journey that uncovers what is deeply felt and hidden.

Ubalдини's research at USC continues to inform his music, enriching each composition with a deeper understanding of how emotion and culture intersect. His music is not merely an intellectual pursuit but a dialogue between sound and meaning, echoing both individual and collective experiences. Through his work, Ubalдини aims to create moments for listeners to connect, reflect, feel deeply, and gain a fuller understanding of themselves and others. For him, art is a journey toward freedom, where each composition offers a space for listeners to step into the unknown, find themselves within the sound, and emerge with a new understanding of what it means to be human.