



Isabel Restrepo. Photo by Mariya Frantseva 2014

WHAT'S THE NAME OF YOUR BAND?

Fabulae Dramatis

WHAT MADE YOU CALL THE BAND "FABULAE DRAMATIS"?

I liked the idea of bringing stories into music in a literary way to recreate a theatrical environment. Legends of different cultures as text material and stories told in several languages reflect the concept of the project. Fabulae Dramatis is an appropriate name for this point of view and goal.

HOW WAS THE BAND FORMED?

I wanted to record three songs from some preview music projects just as a personal goal to complete. I met Hamlet from Transport Aerean in 2011 who agreed to help me produce those three songs. Daniel Díaz, a guitarist whom I met in 2010 also wanted to participate in this project. The recording process went very well, though slow. In that period of time we had the opportunity to share musical interests and know each others' talents. When the goal was

accomplished, we decided to make our own compositions and start to record ideas. Fabulae Dramatis was then born and consolidated in an Avant/Progressive Metal band. In 2012 we released our first album named "Om".

CAN YOU TELL ABOUT YOUR BAND?

Fabulae Dramatis pretends to make an ode to different human cultures and artistic expressions through music, poetry and visual arts. Those aspects have always been interesting to me and that's why I try to reflect them on this project. Experimenting with different music styles, instruments, voices and mythological stories for our texts were the main "ingredients" to develop the concept. I wanted to give Fabulae Dramatis a wide perspective. So I invited some musician friends of different nationalities to participate.



Current Fabulae Dramatis line up (2014): Isabel Restrepo, Daniel Diaz, Hamlet, Thomas Hubert and (Isadora Cortina)

At the end of the process we had 15 musicians featuring on the album. This may sound superfluous, but it felt so good that we had a lot of fun. So copious collaborations enriched the project musically and gave it a special multi-cultural aspect.



Fabulae Dramatis 2012. Photo by Mariya Frantseva

WHAT WAS THE AMBITION OF THE BAND WHEN YOU STARTED?

Our specific goal was to start a studio project. This one started as an opportunity to create and re-create emotions and thoughts through music. Now that the first album was released two years ago, we look to the future with hope and expectations. The composition and recording process took two years because of personal issues, but it helped to condense the concept of the project. We don't have plans to play live for now, unless the project consolidates enough to do it.

COULD YOU EXPLAIN YOUR MUSIC TO SOMEONE THAT HASN'T HEARD YOU?

To describe music is one of the most difficult things to do. I think that's why a lot of people calling themselves music experts write critic reviews making comparison between bands to give an idea of "How does an album sound like". I disagree with that. I'd rather recall a music genre to give a hint. I guess the best way to describe the album "Om" is to talk about the idea of

its content. Fabulae Dramatis was formed almost unexpected and so went on. The pieces that you will listen to will probably surprise you because they don't follow any rules but just our mood at the moment of inspiration. You can find neo-classical operatic music pieces, death metal, trip-hop to folk (Indian and Mongolic music and texts). We decided to name this transition Avant-Garde/Progressive because that's we think we did. I personally got sick of metal albums that are like a "one-long-song" because the next track sounds exactly the same as the previous one. I just can't stand it. Experimentation is the key to creativity, I would say.

WHO WRITES YOUR SONGS? / WHO WRITES THE MUSIC WHO WRITES LYRICS?

Daniel and Hamlet wrote the music of several songs. I wrote the vocal notes for some of them. Every one of us did arrangements for the whole album. Hamlet wrote the lyrics for two of his songs. Some of the songs and some fragments are legendary texts taken from antique literature from India, Mongolia and Central America. I wrote the rest of the lyrics.



Actual Fabulae Dramatis composition team: Daniel Díaz, Isadora Cortina and Isabel Restrepo). Antwerp 2014



Billy Mickelson, cellist one-man band in Third Seven and Isabel Restrepo. Brussels 2013. Photo by Joan Vanden Bossche.

In April this year we began again the composition process. Isadora Cortina, our dear guest musician, singer song-writer from Ancestral Legacy, makes part of our songwriting team this time. As the first guest musician we have Billy Mickelson, a cellist one-man-band in Third Seven from the United States. He already recorded his first track for one of our actual compositions. I met him first through internet when I discovered his music project and then personally in Brussels in 2013 when he came for his European tour. He also liked Fabulae Dramatis and then we

agreed to invite him as guest musician for our next album. Until now, we have three demo songs as result of an intensive weekend. It's a pity we can't advance faster, but I believe good things take time to mature.

Hamlet is now busy with his personal music project named Transport Aerean. So he's going to be part of Fabulae Dramatis only as musician and singer, but he does not take part in our composition team and he's not going to co-produce our songs this time.

Steve Vanderperren was a guest musician from the beginning of the project and he also put some of his personal touch in his interpretation of the drums for "Om", but he's no longer a guest musician for this new upcoming album.



Composition process 2014

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS WITH YOUR MUSIC?

I think I share in some way the same goal as my co-musicians: "To fulfill a personal artistic need". Music for me is a way of self-expression. Even if nobody is listening. But music becomes more interesting if you have friends or listeners to enjoy with. So I'd personally say that I want to share the result of my musical feelings, those that I had the opportunity to create with other musicians. I like this social factor of a music project, 'cause it opens another perspective of possibilities.

Though there's always an obstacle: time. This is still an issue for us, or I should say, for me. Because I combine a full-time job with studies of social-cultural work, plus the third year at the music academy. I also make time for my husband, family and friends of course.

But music is about enjoying. I like to make music to share with my loved ones and it does not have to be composed under stress or hold a deadline.

WHO HAS THE BEST SENSE OF HUMOR IN THE BAND?

Isadora Cortina, definitely. She is a library of funny jokes! She makes every session an unforgettable moment. She is friendly, intelligent and creative. We can really laugh for hours when she is with us. She comes all the way from Norway to Belgium for the composition/recording process. It is for both of us the first time that we work with a female musician in a project. We are very pleased that this process helped out to build a very special friendship between us.



Isadora Cortina and Isabel Restrepo, Bruges 2012. Photo by Mariya Frantseva.

DO YOU WRITE YOUR OWN MATERIAL OR MAINLY COVERS?

We only have own music material. Three of the songs from the album "Om" were re-makes of my old music projects. Horus and VenenuM from Honduras.

HAVE YOU MADE ANY ALBUMS?/IF YES WHAT ARE THEY?

I wrote the lyrics and sang the whole album "Ashes Along The Way". An experimental metal project from Madrid, Spain, named "Spiritual Ashes". This album was recorded in V.R.S Studio in 2009.

Besides that I have featured on several music projects.



Spiritual Ashes album "Ashes Along The Way" recorded in V.R.S Studio, Madrid, Spain.

DO YOU HAVE ANY CLIPS ON YOUTUBE?

We have some promotional videos on Youtube, but nothing substantial. One our plans is to make our first video clip for the upcoming album.

HOW OLD ARE YOU?/WHAT GOT YOU STARTED IN MUSIC?

I'm 32 years old. Music has been present in my life since my childhood. My first music project was Horus from Honduras, Central America. The first metal band with a singer front woman in that country. In 2002 I co-founded that project with Marvin Callejas. It was a Dark/Gothic metal band. I left the band some months later after being founded but the band stills continues with other members and released its first full album after twelve years of existence. I still have contact with the founder and some of the members. I will also sing in one of the songs of their upcoming album.

HOW OLD WERE YOU GUYS WHEN YOU FIRST STOOD ON STAGE?

I was 20 or 21 years old when I first stood on stage.

IN WHICH YEAR WAS THE BAND STARTED?

Fabulae Dramatis started in 2011.



WHICH BAND IS THE BEST YOU´VE SEEN?

Lacrimosa is one of my favorite bands. I still remember when I personally met Tilo Wolf and Anne Numi backstage after a concert in "Vooruit", Gent in 2009. It was an undescrivable moment for a fan to have a nice conversation with his/her idol. Especially when you discover that they are warmhearted people who really care about their fans.

I also remember an Arch Enemy concert in Graspop Metal Meeting in Dessel in 2011.

I was astonished by their impeccable sound quality on stage and artistic presence. They have an amazing live sound and transmit such a potent energy to the public that you get a shock even if you are not the biggest fan of them!

But if I go back in time, I can't forget the first time I attended Metallica's concert in Bogotá, Colombia in May 1999. They are really the fathers of metal. It was the first time that a big metal band came to Colombia. Most of the bands of that magnitude were afraid to come to my country. After this concert more bands dared to put Colombia on their tour dates. I enjoyed this concert with my friends and sang all the songs they played out loud!

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR?

To continue the composition/recording process.



IS IT EASIER TO GET YOUR INSPIRATION FROM OLDER BANDS OR FROM MORE MODERN BANDS?

BESIDES YOUR OWN MUSIC, WHAT GENRES AND BANDS DO YOU LISTEN TO?

Personality and music perspective changes through time and the life. At least for me. So I might have some influences from the past but definitely embraced in a new point of view.

I was in my teenage years an assiduous fan of Héroes del Silencio, a Spanish hard rock band. I liked them a lot because of the deep touching poetry in their lyrics, the sexy low pitch voice of Enrique Bunbury and the hard rock guitar riffs. I learned from them to give a relevant importance to philosophy in the music.

Some of my actual biggest inspirations is the musical work of Stefan Hertrich in different projects like SpiRitual, Betray My Secrets and Shiva in Exile. I can say that is everything I expect in music. It is perfection itself to me. The philosophy in the lyrics, the folk melodies and voices and the metal discharge. Those projects were formed between 1997 and 2003 but were a revelation to me. In huge part because I share all those special elements of his music perspective. They were released more than 10 years ago and they still sound actual. I like Hertrich's way to research the music field before bringing out a project.

Other inspirational bands from the past are: Opeth, uneXpect and Devil Doll. My actual likes in music are bands like Myrath, CocoRosie and Third Seven. I'm open for new music, but I don't get amazed by bands lately. I got bored of the same riffs and nothing different in the actual metal scene. I enjoyed a lot trash, black, gothic and death metal bands in my adolescence. But now I'm looking forward to find other influences in music. Classical music is the only music genre I can't get enough of. Mozart, Bellini, Donizetti, Schubert, Beethoven and Astor Piazzola are on my list of favorite composers ever!



But further I listen to Gotan Project, Portishead, Massive Attack, Elisabeth Fraser and Björk. Mostly because those are pioneers in their music style. They dared to embrace the change and the experimentation and it was so successful that they created a new music genre. I never can't get bored of listening to Gotan Project either. Who thought tango and electronic music like trip-hop could make such an awesome combination! They are geniuses!

WHAT ARE YOUR SOURCES OF INSPIRATION?

Literature, philosophy, mythology, personal experiences and poetry. Great musicians and poets inspire me also.



Public examen third year music school. Antwerp, 2014. Photo by Mariya Frantseva.

WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP WHEN MAKING A NEW SONG?

To get inspiration and time. Not being physically exhausted in order to leave the thoughts and feelings to come out. I need to have at least a global concept of what I want to do with that final result and

then direct that idea. I want to give more direction to the next album; something that we didn't do for "Om". But not because we didn't want to, it was just because that was the character of that album and it felt good to do it that way. "Om" was the first syllable ever pronounced (Vedic philosophy). So in a certain way I let that sound find its own path. We just followed. It represents our first step in this project and the next one needs to be more channeled.



Fabulae Dramatis' first album "Om" in the music store. Photo by Mariya Frantseva.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE DOWNLOADING OF MUSIC INSTEAD OF BUYING ALBUMS?

In some way a catastrophe for the music industry. But everything has a development, even if we don't like it. I prefer to make music as a personal goal and even if I sell it physically or online I really don't expect to sell so much. Call me a pessimist! I'm just realistic! The music that really sells has more to do with marketing and image than with music talent self. In other way, piracy has opened a huge opportunity to the listener to discover and enjoy new bands. When you see it from the point of view of

a listener or "client" it brings just benefits, but now that I'm active in the music industry independently, then piracy sounds not so romantic to my ears. It is a mixed feeling to discover that if you type Fabulae Dramatis on a search machine you can find a long list of websites to download our album illegally. Blogs of music communities from all over the world, where listeners comment and share about their favorite bands. From one side I feel "happy" our first album was shared in so many countries in several languages, but from another perspective we didn't get that financial support from fans. For a band that tours and has gigs constantly is that a positive thing, the more people who listen to your music, the better for the ticket sales. But we are just a studio project and piracy does not help.

Music channels like Spotify, for example, are the best way to share and listen to your favorite artist, because it's legal and you are really helping the music industry getting better if you go to the concerts of the bands you listened for "free". That is a win-win situation and I think is the future of the music industry.

Fabulae Dramatis received an offer of a producer who promised to give an outstanding music contract with a big music label. But the terms and conditions were so ridiculous that we interpreted it as forgetting about our project like we conceived it. You just sell your bands's name, lyrics, personal image, music and they swear they get you "up there". Nowadays the listeners are not the clients anymore for the labels, but the bands and the musicians who try to get to the public. I prefer to earn my money doing something that I like and if music does not provide that, then I'd better go to work for a decent commercial company or a social institution and then invest my money in making music just for fun.



Daniel Díaz, Isabel Restrepo, Mariya Frantseva, Isadora Cortina and Hamlet in our birthday party. Antwerp 2012.

Music does not have to suffer that huge sacrifice to sell your soul. Labels would respect bands for what they are. That's why "distribution labels" are better at doing their job because they don't bother you about the content of your music. They just sell it. I think actual bands can earn their honorarium by touring and selling their own material. And that seems fair to me. At the end, music is a kind of luxury "item" if you use it to commercialize. Like in every sector, the best in his business wins but the best not always has the opportunity to offer their product either. We have to adapt to this challenging actual scene or just keep on making music for a few listeners. Mostly friends and family members. I don't have any problem with that, actually. I have had the best years of my life with this project beside my friends. Mariya Frantseva, for example, my best friend here in Belgium. She has followed us as our official photographer the whole process. She brings us ideas to incorporate in the music or visuals. We love her! She can also party hard with us!

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAMS FOR THE BAND?

My actual dream for Fabulae Dramatis is to release the next album. That's a challenge itself! I would love to find members who want to stay long with us (Daniel, Isadora and me) and have enough patience for our slow working process. (We don't make a living with music! That's the reason) We are looking for a drummer, for example. Somebody with a wide open perspective in music who is not afraid for experimentation. And I definitely want to discover new interesting guest musicians to invite to record with us!



Photo by Mariya Frantseva. 2012