WORLD PREMIERE



HUNNIA RECORDS

Emanuele Stracchi

SHAKESPEARE'S MIRROR

I Musici Gemelli and Hanna Kelemen



I MUSICI GEMELLI

Violins

HANNA KELEMEN

Actress

EMANUELE STRACCHI

Composer



ABOUT THE ALBUM

The album began as an artistic project combining music and theater, bringing some of William Shakespeare's most important works to life in sound. Each track is inspired by one of the English playwright's masterpieces, reworking its themes, atmospheres, and emotions through contemporary musical language.

The music constantly dialogues with the theatrical word: the tracks are interwoven with recited passages, in which the actress interprets famous monologues and textual fragments taken from Shakespeare's works.

The aim of the album is to create a bridge between two timeless arts, offering an immersive experience in which Shakespeare's poetic power is renewed through sound. The result is a sonic and theatrical journey that brings the author's great universal themes: love, power, madness, and destiny.



THE ALBUM TOLD BY THE COMPOSER

Shakespeare's Mirror began as a “theatrical” journey in music, divided into an overture and eight scenes inspired by some of the most intense monologues and dialogues from William Shakespeare's plays: Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Tempest. The total duration of the work is approximately 40/45 minutes; each scene, lasting between 4 and 6 minutes, stands alone as an autonomous episode, but at the same time is part of a single dramaturgical structure. The order of the pieces can be changed by the performers: the structure is deliberately open, conceived as a collection of scenes that can be rearranged in different narrative perspectives.

The fundamental starting point is the Overture, conceived as a true introductory symphony to an opera. It synthesizes the main themes of all eight subsequent scenes. The two violins, playing solo, dialogue and almost argue with each other, presenting the thematic material and general character of the entire work in concentrated form. In just a few minutes, the listener is immersed in a sound universe that anticipates tension, lyricism, contrasts, gravity, and lightness: the Overture is intended to be an instrumental introduction and a key to understanding the entire work.

The central idea of the project is that of the mirror, or rather the speculum: the music does not accompany the text, but reflects it, distorts it, illuminates it from different angles. Like a speculum, it does not return a neutral image, but amplifies the inner cracks, conflicts, and ambiguities of Shakespeare's characters. In this game of refractions, what is said finds an echo, what is left unsaid finds a sound form. The musical structures do not merely describe; sometimes they suggest what does not appear explicitly in the text, creating a constant tension between presence and absence.

The performance instructions from "Solemn, with severity" to "Tragic, spectral," from "Nervous, always tense" to "Largo, very expressive" are not simple metronomic prescriptions: they are actual dramaturgical signals. Within each movement, in fact, recognizable structural elements recur: rhythmic cells, characteristic intervals, imitative procedures (such as unison or octave canons), contrasts between pizzicato and bowing, between the bridge and the fingerboard, tremolos, glissandos, and articulations that are sometimes lyrical, sometimes nervous. Precise elements function as leitmotifs, guiding motifs: these are thematic ideas that become almost "sound characters" that intertwine, echo each other, clash, and interact elastically with the words. Sometimes their very non-use or their suspension becomes a sort of expressive gesture, creating areas of rarefaction or sudden tragic gravity.

The writing moves along two aesthetic tracks: on the one hand, a search for tone and gesture rooted in contemporary sensibility; on the other, a tension toward cantabile, or a melodic and harmonic interest capable of making the narrative immediate, almost "cinematic." Each movement can be imagined as a scene from a short film: the music constructs an emotional space, into which the words fit without ever dominating it.

The instructions for the narrator are not prescriptive. They are merely guidelines, very loose ones, intended to suggest a necessary balance so that the text does not overwhelm the main lines, which are designed to evoke or describe the dramatic situation. The voice therefore intervenes at specific points, intertwining with the musical fabric, and withdraws when necessary. There is never any competition, but rather a sort of "mutual engagement," a continuous exchange of energy, meanings, and signifiers. At times, the recitation approaches a measured sprechgesang; elsewhere, in most cases, it is guided by the internal breath of the music.

In Shakespeare's Mirror, music becomes a speculum: it is not intended to be a simple reflection, but a living surface that multiplies perspectives, alternating layers of lightness with sudden plunges into gravity and tragedy. Two violins and a voice are enough to construct a world, an "essential" and intense theater, in which love, madness, violence, and destiny are transformed into vibration, gesture, and sound.

Emanuele Stracchi

THE ALBUM TOLD BY THE ARTISTS

I Musici Gemelli: The album brings together some of Shakespeare's most important works in music. We decided to divide the work into nine pieces: seven dramas and one comedy, all preceded by an instrumental overture that brings together the themes of all the pieces. Playing each piece required an in-depth study of each Shakespearean character, each with their own characteristics to be reflected in the sound concept. It is only possible to interpret each piece after studying the characters and Shakespeare's own life. The work is complex because each protagonist in Shakespeare's plays represents virtues and vices of the human soul such as jealousy, love, greed, lust, etc. Playing this album was a profound and engaging journey for us. From a technical point of view, it was really complex to reproduce and convey the idea of dramatic effects, which require a technique that goes beyond the classical way of playing. It is necessary to create something new from a musical point of view. It is always complicated to weave a dialogue with only two instruments and make it stand on its own and make complete sense.

Hanna Kelemen: I knew most of these plays by either having read them in hungarian or have seen them in theaters (often also in hungarian). Therefore the most important first step for me was to read all the plays in english, either for the very first time, or to freshen up its memory. Then I looked at which moments felt most monumental in the evolvent of each story, the drama or the truth revealed between the characters.

Turning points.

According to those moments I've tried to select some of the most poignant lines that might have a bigger, deeper meaning behind them, one that echoes throughout the play. I am most intrigued to now understand how building on those dense moments, those intense lines translates the piece musically!



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

I Musici Gemelli: The members of the duo are Francesco Pio Bertozzi and Giuseppe Pio Bertozzi, both born on September 1, 2000. Francesco and Giuseppe graduated with top marks in violin at the Umberto Giordano Conservatory in Foggia and then they completed a second Master's degree in Chamber Music at the Conservatory of Parma. Both have performed in theatres such as: Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Florence), Teatro Greco (Ischia, Walton Foundation), Teatro Verdi (Brindisi), Teatro Apollo (Lecce), Teatro Comunale Alaleona (Montegiorgio), Teatro Garibaldi (Lucera), Teatro Comunale Corato, Anfiteatro Romano, Palazzo Reale (Napoli), Accademia Gherardeschi (Pistoia), Auditorium del Carmine (Parma), and others. They have participated in national and international festivals namely: Julich Music Festival (Germany), Festival Ritratti, Urti Canti, Musicalis Daunia, Pistoia Musica Antica, etc. The duo is also active in musicological research; their studies have been discussed and broadcast on Rai Radio 3. Their albums have received major recording awards, including: six Global Music Awards (California), one Josie Music Awards Nomination (Nashville, Tennessee), three World Entertainment Awards Nominations (Los Angeles) and one Clouzine Music Magazine Awards (Orlando, Florida). In 2025, they receive two Nominations from the Mississippi Music Foundation at the 9th Mississippi Music Awards (Natchez, USA). They are the first Italian group to have been nominated for the prestigious The American Prize (Danbury, USA).

www.imusicigemelli.com



Emanuele Stracchi: A multifaceted Italian musician, he is a pianist, composer and conductor. A graduate in piano, composition, applied music (film scoring), and conducting of vocal and sacred repertoire, he studied at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome. With a Philosophy Degree, he is a winner of international prizes both as a soloist (Grand Prize Virtuoso) and as a composer: major awards include 1st prize in composition at the New York Global Music Competition 2023 (Carnegie Hall, NY), the Carl Reinecke International Music Competition and the Vitti International Competition 2024. His scores have been performed at prestigious institutions such as Rai Radio 3 and abroad (USA, UK, Sweden, Croatia, Switzerland, Romania). Active as a conductor and arranger, he also composes music for film and theater; author of two musicals, he has published numerous scores and essays on musical topics, most notably the text dedicated to György Ligeti's Musica Ricercata. He is a lecturer at the Conservatory.

www.emanuelestracchi.com



Hanna Kelemen: Is a Hungarian Actress. She has training in singing and playing piano and guitar. She earned a Bachelor's degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS , 2023/2026).

Her latest theater roles:

Eli - Let the Right One In, RCS, Directed by Finn den Hertog
Titania - A Midsummer Night's Dream, RCS, Directed by Alasdair Hunter
Yasha - The Cherry Orchard, RCS, Directed by Hugh Hodgart
Marian - The Apples Family, RCS, Directed by Peter Collins
Roxie Hart - Chicago, Sopron Petőfi Theatre, Directed by Károly Eperjes
Cécile de Volanges - Dangerous Liaisons, Operetta Theatre, Directed by Csaba Kiss
Juliet - Romeo and Juliet, Pest Hungarian Theatre, Directed by Károly Eperjes

www.hannakelemen.com

HISTORY OF THE WORKS

Antony and Cleopatra

The story of the intense and destructive love affair between Mark Antony, a Roman general, and Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. Torn between his political duty to Rome and his passion for Cleopatra, Antony gradually loses power and prestige. Their enemies exploit this weakness to defeat them. The play explores the conflict between love and reason of state. The ending is tragic and marks the downfall of both protagonists.

Othello

Othello, a Moorish general in the service of Venice, marries Desdemona, the daughter of a Venetian nobleman. Iago, a jealous and evil officer, plots against him, insinuating that Desdemona is unfaithful. Blinded by jealousy and deceived by false evidence, Othello kills Desdemona and then, upon discovering the truth, commits suicide. The play explores the themes of jealousy, betrayal, racism, betrayed trust, and the consequences of deception.

Romeo and Juliet

Romeo and Juliet fall in love despite their families, the Montagues and the Capulets, being enemies for generations. They marry in secret, but a series of misunderstandings and misfortunes leads to tragedy: Mercutio and Tybalt die, Romeo is exiled, and eventually both young lovers commit suicide. The tragedy shows impossible love, hatred between families, fate, and the consequences of impulsive choices.

Macbeth

Macbeth, a valiant Scottish general, receives a prophecy from three witches who predict that he will become king. Driven by ambition and his wife Lady Macbeth, he kills King Duncan to become king. His conscience torments him, and paranoia leads him to commit further murders to maintain his power. In the end, Macbeth is defeated and killed by Macduff, while Lady Macbeth dies of guilt. The tragedy shows how ambition and lust for power can corrupt and destroy.

King Lear

King Lear decides to divide his kingdom among his three daughters according to the love they show him. His eldest daughters, Goneril and Regan, betray him and plot against him, while Cordelia, who loves him sincerely, is cast out. Lear goes mad with grief and witnesses betrayal, injustice, and war. In the end, almost all the protagonists die, including Lear and Cordelia. The tragedy deals with themes of power, betrayal, madness, justice, and filial love.

Hamlet

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, discovers that his uncle Claudius has murdered his father to take the throne and marry his mother, Gertrude. Distraught and indecisive, Hamlet feigns madness to uncover the truth and plans his revenge. Along the way, he faces betrayal, intrigue, and his own hesitation, leading to the deaths of many people, including Polonius, Ophelia, and ultimately himself and Claudius. The tragedy explores revenge, morality, human frailty, doubt, and confrontation with death.

The Tempest

Prospero, exiled on an island with his daughter Miranda, uses magic to control spirits and creatures, plotting revenge against those who betrayed him in the past. When the people responsible arrive on the island by chance, Prospero tests them, helps lovers, and ultimately forgives his enemies. The story ends with reconciliation and the return of power. The play is about revenge, forgiveness, redemption, magic, and control of knowledge.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

In a magical forest, fairies and enchanted creatures play tricks on Athenian lovers, creating romantic confusion and comical situations. Puck, the fairy servant, uses a potion that makes people fall in love with the wrong person, while Oberon and Titania, king and queen of the fairies, resolve their conflicts. In the end, all loves are happily resolved, and the lovers marry. It is a comedy that mixes love, magic, madness, and fun.

MONOLOGUES

Antony and Cleopatra

Soothsayer: you shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

Charmian: O, excellent! I love long life better than figs.

Our leader's led, And we are women's men.

Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself.
Say that the last I spoke was Antony,
and word it, prithee, piteously.

Othello

It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul.
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars, It is the cause.

Yet I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow and smooth as monumental alabaster.

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light.

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore
Should I repent me. But once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume. When I have plucked thy rose
I cannot give it vital growth again,
It must needs wither.

I'll smell thee on the tree.
Oh, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword! One more, one more.

Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee
And love thee after. (kissing her)

One more, and that's the last.
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears.

This sorrow's heavenly,
It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.

Romeo and Juliet

This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves:
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

It seems she hangs upon the cheeck of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,

That is shall say goodnight till it be morrow.

Macbeth

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight?

Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation?

I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.

I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.

Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout.

There's no such thing:
Whiles I threat, he lives:

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

King Lear

Nothing will come or nothing: speak again
Unhappy that I am,
I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.
As you are old and reverend, should be wise

He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love or a whore's oath.

Hamlet

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah fie!
'tis an unweeded garden, that grows to seed;
things rank and gross in nature possess it merely.
That it should come to this!

But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this, Hyperion to a satyr;

so loving to my mother that he might not beteem the winds of heaven
visit her face too roughly.
Heaven and earth! Must I remember?

Why, she would hang on him, as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on:
and yet, within a month-- Let me not think on't--Frailty, thy name is woman!

A little month, or ere those shoes were old with which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears: why she, even she…Oh, God!

A beast, that wants discourse of reason, would have mourn'd longer…
Married with my uncle, My father's brother, but no more like my father than I to Hercules.

Within a month, Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears had left
the flushing in her galled eyes, She married.
Oh, most wicked speed, to post With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

It is not nor it cannot come to good.
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

The Tempest

We are such stuff
as dreams are made on; and our little life
is rounded with a sleep.

Alas now, pray you,
work not so hard. I would the lightning had
burnt up those logs that you afe enjoined to pile.

If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs the while. Pray, give me that.

It would become me
as well as it does you, and I should do it with much more ease, for my good will is to it,
and yours it is against.

Pray, set it down and rest you.
No, noble mistress, tis fresh morning with me when you are by night.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer.
My next is "Most fair Pyramus."
Heigh-ho! Peter Quince? Flute the bellows-mender?
Snout the tinker? Starveling?
God's my life, stol'n hence, and left me asleep?

I have had a most rare vision.
I have had a dream-past the wit of man to say what dream it was.
Man is but an ass if he go about to expound this dream.

Methought I was…there is no man can tell what.
Methought I was, and methought I had…but man is but a patched fool,
if he will offer to say what methought I had.

The eye of man hath not heard,
the ear of man hath not seen,
man's hand is not able to taste,
his tongue to conceive,
nor his heart to report what my dream was.

I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream.
It shall be called "Bottom's Dream" because it hath no bottom.

And I will sing it in the latter end of a play before the duke.
Peradventure, to make it the more gracious,
I shall sing it at her death.



RECORDING INFO

Microphones
Violins: 2 x M149 Neumann Tube
Narration: M149 Neumann Tube

AD/DA
Merging Hapi

DAW
Pyramix MassCore

Analog Mixing Console
Studer 962

EQ
2 x GML 8200
Prism Sound Maselec MEA-2

Effect
Bricasti Design M7+ M10

Compressor / Limiter
Manley Variable MU
Prism Sound Maselec MPL2

TRACKLIST

01	Overture	06:15
02	Antony and Cleopatra	03:47
03	Othello	04:24
04	Romeo and Juliet	04:37
05	Macbeth	04:15
06	King Lear	03:56
07	Hamlet	04:45
08	The Tempest	04:05
09	A Midsummer Night's Dream	05:10

Total time: **41:14**

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Recording engineer: **Sándor Árok, Pál Kerekes**
Balance engineer: **Sándor Árok**
Mastering engineer: **Sándor Árok, Tom Caulfield**
Recorded audio format: **DSD256**
Photographer for I Musici Gemelli: **Luca De Michele**
Photographers for Hanna Kelemen: **Csongor Bozó, Tamás Dobos,** and **László Emmer**
Photographer for Emanuele Stracchi: **Leonardo Zen**
Producer: **Róbert Zoltán Hunka**
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