



## Hit Week: Bringing the Cool Sounds of Italy to NYC, LA, and Miami

Mario Gates (October 03, 2011)



A consortium of bands and musicians representing Italy's popular music scene will be performing in the US for a triple-city tour known as Hit Week (Oct 10th - 16th). Hit Week artists vary wildly, but they share a certain spirit. They flirt with local sounds, satirize local conditions, climb local charts, and pack local stadiums with hundreds of thousands of dedicated fans.



There is more to Italian music than “Volare, Verdi's operas and , mandolin melancholy and maudlin mafia soundtracks. So Francesco Del Maro, who has been immersed in the Italian music industry for 15 years, decided things had to change and he threw a party and got dozens of hip Italian musicians to L.A. for a multi-night, multi-venue blow out.

That was two years ago. Now, Hit Week (October 10-16, 2011) has blossomed into a three-city festival thanks in part to support from Italian institutions, highlighting the catchiest and edgiest music Italy has to offer. On major stages and in intimate clubs in **New York City, L.A.**, and (for the first time this year) Miami, wild-eyed Zappa devotees and electro-powered rock, sleek globally inspired jazz and dubbed-out trip hop collide for a whirlwind romp through the Italian music scene.

For Hit Week, it's about power and savvy, not origins. “Hit Week doesn't focus on the music that's recognizably from Italy,” explains Del Maro. “The language isn't important. We're looking for music of global caliber; that's so good, it doesn't matter where it's from.” This formula has worked: In its short history, Hit Week's audiences have doubled and the festival has established a foothold in some of the toughest U.S. markets.

“There's nothing better than seeing young Americans in their 20s shouting into their cell phones at a show about a group they've just seen,” remarks Del Maro, festival curator and instigator. “When you hear them rave about a band, that they can't believe this is Italian music, it's just amazing.” Though broadly appealing, Hit Week's artists have a distinctly Italian spirit. Several hail from the country's unsung musical hotspots—like the increasingly popular travel destination of Puglia—scenes few Americans are aware of.

The artists participating are: **Subsonica**, who make electro-laced rock with catchy hooks, big sounds, and intense appeal, **Caparezza**, a wacky Adriatic alt-rocker who makes devilishly clever pop, Nicola Conte and his super-cool grooves and worldly sounds put polished spin on jazz, Casino Royale, the slick secret agents of Italian trip hop, *Après La Classe* who make dry humor and uptempo world beats from Puglia (back by popular demand) and Erica Mou, the Italian Alanis Morissette who mixes acoustic flair with thoughtful intensity.

Hit Week artists vary wildly, but they share a certain spirit. They flirt with local sounds, satirize local conditions, climb local charts, and pack local stadiums with hundreds of thousands of dedicated fans. Subsonica have scored numerous number one hits in Italy, making them the current darling of the rock scene. Caparezza sells out major arenas on a regular basis, thanks to his high-energy, always changing, innately quirky shows.

Italian artists are also quietly attracting the attention of international heavyweights, be they edgy producers or major labels. Nicola Conte just signed a deal with international jazz mainstays, Impulse. Casino Royale have teamed up with Scottish DJ Howie B (who's worked with everyone from Tricky to U2) to trade dub breaks and licks. Rising star Erica Mou is working with Bjork's producer, Valgeir Sigurðsson, whose shimmering electronic touches unveil new facets of Mou's raw, personal songs.

Along side these major acts and hot newcomers, Hit Week will showcase the best of Italy's burgeoning crop of emerging music, selected via Facebook contest, thanks to the involvement of the Italian Minister of Young Generation. Young bands get to travel to the U.S. and play for new listeners and industry heavyweights alike. “It's been great for artists just starting out,” explains Del Maro. “Some participants from previous years went on to play various major U.S. festivals.”

Hit Week aims not only to bring creative young Italians to the U.S.; it's reaching out to young Americans, getting them exposed to the coolest moments of the Italian scene. As part of its ongoing partnership with local universities, the festival is arranging several meet-and-greet opportunities at local colleges (UCLA, Columbia, University of Miami) that will bring together artists and audiences in a casual, intimate setting.

“Hit Week shows that Italian artists are second to none,” Del Maro says. “We are not coming from the third world of music, but have something new to tell the world.”



HIT WEEK NYC DETAILS (scroll down for LA and Miami):

10/10/2011, Mon

New York, NY

Après la Classe @ (le) Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 6:00 pm, Show: 7:15 pm

Note: ticket price includes Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (212)353-3474

10/10/2011, Mon

New York, NY

Caparezza @ (le) Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 6:00 pm, Show: 8:15 pm

Note: ticket price includes Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (212)353-3474

10/10/2011, Mon

New York, NY

Erica Mou @ (le) Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 10:30 pm, Show: 10:45 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.

Ph: (212)353-3474

10/10/2011, Mon

New York, NY

Nicola Conte Jazz Combo @ (le) Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 10:30 pm, Show: 11:30 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.

Ph: (212)353-3474

10/11/2011, Tue

New York, NY

Casino Royale @ Highline Ballroom, 431 W 16th St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 6:00 pm, Show: 8:45 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica.

Ph: (212)414-5994

10/11/2011, Tue

New York, NY

Subsonica @ Highline Ballroom, 431 W 16th St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 6:00 pm,

Show: 10:00 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica.

Ph: (212)414-5994

HIT WEEK LOS ANGELES DETAILS:

10/11/2011, Tue

Los Angeles, CA

Erica Mou @ Catalina Jazz Club, 6725 W Sunset Blvd #100

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Show: 8:00 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.



Ph: (323)466-2210

10/11/2011, Tue

Los Angeles, CA

Nicola Conte Jazz Combo @ Catalina Jazz Club, 6725 W Sunset Blvd #100

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Show: 9:00 pm

PNote: Ticket price includes both Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.

Ph: (323)466-2210

10/12/2011, Wed

Los Angeles, CA

Après la Classe @ El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Boulevard

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 8:45 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (323)936-6400

10/12/2011, Wed

Los Angeles, CA

Caparezza @ El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Boulevard

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 10:00 pm

Note: ticket price includes both Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (323)936-6400

10/13/2011, Thu

West Hollywood, CA

Casino Royale @ Key Club, 9039 West Sunset Boulevard

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 9:15 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica. Ph: (310)274-5800

10/13/2011, Thu

West Hollywood, CA

Subsonica @ Key Club, 9039 West Sunset Boulevard

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 10:30 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica.

Ph: (310)274-5800

HIT WEEK MIAMI DETAILS:

10/14/2011, Fri

Miami, FL

Erica Mou @ PAX, 337 S.W 8 St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:30 pm, Show: 9:00 pm

Note: Ticket price include Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.

Ph: (305)640-5847

10/14/2011, Fri

Miami, FL

Nicola Conte Jazz Combo @ PAX, 337 S.W 8 St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:30 pm, Show: 10:00 pm

Note: Ticket price include Erica Mou & Nicola Conte.

Ph: (305)640-5847



10/15/2011, Sat

Miami, FL

Après la Classe @ PAX, 337 S.W 8 St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 8:45 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (305)640-5847

10/15/2011, Sat

Miami, FL

Caparezza @ PAX, 337 S.W 8 St.

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:15 pm, Show: 10:05 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Après La Classe & Caparezza.

Ph: (305)640-5847

10/16/2011, Sun

Miami, FL

Casino Royale @ Grand Central Miami, 697 North Miami Avenue

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:00 pm, Show: 8:25 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica.

Ph: (305)377-2277

10/16/2011, Sun

Miami, FL

Subsonica @ Grand Central Miami, 697 North Miami Avenue

Tix: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door,

Doors Open: 8:00 pm, Show: 9:35 pm

Note: Ticket price includes both Casino Royale & Subsonica.

Ph: (305)377-2277

Hit Week is produced by Francesco Del Maro for Music Experience Roma Italy and Mela Inc. Los Angeles, with the support of The Minister of Young Generation, The Italian Federation of Music Industry, The Puglia Region, The Italian Trade Commission of Los Angeles, The Ministry of Economic Development, The National Italian American Foundation, The Rhythm Foundation Miami, Gibson, Dw, Acqua Panna, Rockol, Made in Roma, Dw Drums, Paiste and more.

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://ftp.iitaly.org/files/caparezza1318028062jpg>