

Created by: Edward F. Nesta

## Tommaso Starace Quartet - Blood and Champagne

Saxophonist Tommaso Starace's release [Tommaso Starace Quartet - Blood and Champagne](#) is a fusion of jazz and blues that was inspired by everyday events and books he read, and the resultant arrangements are influential, expressive, and perceptive.



### [Tommaso Starace - Blood & Champagne](#)

**Blood and Champagne:** *Il Tunnel della Libertà; Soundtrack; Prel. No 20 in Cmin Op 28 (Even Mice Dance); Johnny Come Lately; Nuovo Cinema Paradiso - Cinema Theme; Days of Wine and Roses; Intercalare; The Party's Over; Blood & Champagne*

**Personnel:** Tommaso Starace: Alto and Soprano Saxophones; Frank Harrison: Piano; Laurence Cottle: Electric Bass; Chris Nickolls: Drums

**Blood & Champagne**, released on the [Music Center Lissone](#) label, is Tommaso Starace's third release as a bandleader along with a solo release. Tommaso draws his inspiration from things that touch him artistically and emotionally such as books, photographs, and various idiosyncrasies that he encounters in every day life. His muse is life and he translates his feelings through the music that he writes and arranges. To read a review of two of Tommaso's previous releases visit the [Music Scene](#) section for the release [Tommaso Starace Quartet - Don't Forget](#) and his solo release [Tommaso Starace - Plays the Photos of Elliot Erwit](#).

The release opens with the track *Il Tunnel Della Libertà*, which translates into the Tunnel of Freedom, that is the same name of a book that Tommaso read about two Italian students living in West Berlin who dug a tunnel under the Berlin Wall to the east that provided freedom to over 36 people, and who were never caught. A fast moving song that builds on the feelings of suspense, worry, exhilaration, and tension that the students felt as they took their own lives into their hands in exchange for the freedom of others. A page turner of a book and the same goes for the song.

The track *Soundtrack* is a melodic arrangement that typifies Tommaso's style of crafting a sense of steadiness and evenness within all of his songs regardless of the tempo and "meaning." *Prel. No 20 in Cmin Op 28 (Even Mice Dance)* is a combination of Chopin and Michelle Petrucciani's *Even Mice Dance* waltz, which was an interesting accompaniment that flowed seamlessly and rendered a charming song. Tommaso covers a few standards with *Johnny Come Lately*, *Days of Wine and Roses*, and *The Party's Over* where his interpretations are refreshing and innovative.

*Nuovo Cinema Paradiso - Cinema Theme* is a track from the composer Ennio Morricone whom Tommaso admires and pays him a tribute through his saxophone work that creates an arrangement that is moving

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and inspiring while fashioning a sense of wonderment.

The track *Intercalare* is based off the idiosyncrasy where someone continually uses the same phrase or comment whenever they speak, or as Tommaso call it "a verbal tick." His arrangement drops in a repetitive two-bar melody throughout that draws the harmony together to create a vibrant and rousing track.

The track *Blood and Champagne* was inspired by a book of the same name written by Alex Kershaw based on the life of war photographer Robert Capa whose photographs and life mirrored each other with respect to danger, adventure, raw emotion, and coping with reality. The track starts off in disarray with a series of scattered saxophone notes and the disperse accompaniment of drums, guitar, and bass. The track settles down into a cohesive arrangement in the middle, but life in wartime does not allow for any long periods of control, and the arrangement portrays the feeling of ebbing and flowing in and out of control with a crescendo finish.

Websites where you can procure **Tommaso Starace Quartet - Blood & Champagne** are [CD Market](#), [iTunes](#), [IBS](#), and [Amazon](#).

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