

Enter the Magical World of the Italian Fairy

Natasha Lardera (November 15, 2011)



The Italian singer and actress Simona Rodano (aka The Italian Fairy) has debuted in New York with a theater show (titled ITALIAN, The Magical World of the Italian Fairy), an interactive performance that teaches children, three to ten, the Italian language while they are having fun.

This is for the little ones, all the cuties who want to learn Italian while they are having fun. The famous Christmas song goes “Santa is coming to town,” in this case i-italy has a variation “the Italian



Fairy has come to town.”

Yes, the Italian singer and actress Simona Rodano (aka [The Italian Fairy](#) [2]) has debuted in New York with her theater show ITALIAN, The Magical World of the Italian Fairy, an interactive performance that teaches children, three to ten, the Italian language while they are having fun.

The story begins on a hill where the Italian Fairy performs magic tricks while communicating in Italian. She involves the young and the old in a feast of foreign words, fun songs and little dances.

This Off-Broadway show is performed by the Fairy herself and a cast of eight dancers-acrobats from some of the most famous dance companies in the world, such as [MOMIX](#) [3], [Theater on Ice](#) [4] and Magma Dance Company.

i-italy was “granted the wish” to speak with the Italian Fairy and ask her a few questions.

How did you become the Fairy?

The Italian Fairy first started when I arrived in New York about 7 years ago, when music and theater were inspired by the world of “the little ones,” children who were learning Italian here in NYC. Those children I started to write educational songs for, songs that mixed together words, movements and video.

These children themselves created the Italian Fairy. I was observing their reactions to my songs and elaborating their ideas. They are my first source of inspiration! Back in the fall of 2005, while I was performing for a class of children, I heard a father say to his child, “the singing and dancing Fairy is about to show up!” I realized I was “the Fairy,” and from that day on I adopted that name. I started performing as the Italian Fairy in schools, family get togethers and special events.

After years spent working for the Italian television and theater (including Pinocchio the musical by Pooh) I accepted the challenge to walk down a new artistic path, one that I never would have imagined to be mine and to take me, today, on a stage performing for students of Italian who want to sing in our language, a language that they love. New York is a city that can open many doors and pay you back for your efforts and endeavors.

How was this show born?

The show was a major step, a challenge that I, along with the group of both my Italian and American collaborators (the group is comprised of education specialists, teachers and volunteers) have decided to face after 5 years of hard work on the “Italian Fairy” project.

We started from the songs, considered the fabric to “sew a dress” that can be “worn” by children and adults alike. Then we focused on the so called “book,” the spoken part that narrates the story and makes it flow in about 1 hour.

The next step was the artistic one: we had to choose the dancers, all coming from the best international companies, acrobats, like Elisa Angeli, the first ice skater and aerialist in New York, and jugglers. The costumes were designed by the Florentine Enrica Masini, while all props were created by Johna Mancini. The team is 90% Italian! The choreographer was Simona Di Tucci, the music score was composed by maestro Marco Bigi (composer of *Albero Azzurro* on [RALTV](#) [5]).

Our goal was to create an original show that is interactive, fun and educational. I believe it is important to stimulate our young ones and learn new languages through a fun, original and current approach in order to preserve our traditions and to keep an interest for Italy and its language alive.

Up to now, the Fairy could be found only in schools, private homes and special events in New York or other American cities, but things have changed. Now the Fairy is in the theater.

The response has exceeded our expectations: over 2000 people attended our 4 shows (held back in



October). The collaboration with [IACE](#) [6] (the Italian American Committee on Education) and other Italian American organizations that support the project, with new schools and teachers, the collaboration with the [Danny Kaye Playhouse Theatre](#) [7], have definitely contributed to the success of the world premiere of the show.

Tell us about the story of the show and how it is interactive, what do the kids do?

The show mixes together songs, movements and videos. On top of this, the Fairy interacts directly with the audience: the person addressed repeats, singing, the words suggested by her (me) and moves following the music, even with some simple movements of his/her arms. Children are extremely reactive, and even though they are not studying Italian, they are more than happy to repeat what they hear and sing with happiness. 9 spells, in Italian, are what's needed to keep the Fairy alive and her Castle safe. With magic the audience saves the day...

Do you have any cute anecdotes to share with us? Something that happened during the show?

I always like to think back about something that happened during the show. There were three different types of people who came to watch: the child who says "I love the Fairy... she will fly to my house." The 13 year old that says: "The show is pretty cool, I like the frog song." And the adult who says: "I feel like a kid again, and I have sung in Italian!"

How did you get to work with kids?

Parallel to my musical and theatrical activities, I teach singing classes to children and adults alike. Being in New York gave me the chance to enter the world of the Italian language and its teachings. That's something I had never considered when I was back in Italy.

How is theater an effective way to teach Italian?

Theater has great impact on any human being, no matter the age or the ethnic background. In the theater one feel emotions, laughs, cries, learns... You observe, listen, sing and talk: there are all the ingredients to live through a global experience. I strongly believe in this kind of educational and entertaining approach to keep our language and culture alive in the world.

What are your plans for the future? Is this show touring or are you working on something new?

[Incanto Productions LLC](#) [2] wishes to secure a yearly appointment with the Italian Fairy in NYC. We are talking with institutions in other cities so that the show will also tour. I am confident that through collaborations with local authorities and communities, the project will continue to grow and reach a broader audience who wishes to learn Italian directly in the theater.

For upcoming shows and information: <http://www.italianfairy.com> [8]

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Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/animali1321455436jpg>

[2] <http://www.italianfairy.com>

[3] <http://www.mosespendleton.com>

[4] <http://www.usfsa.org/Programs.asp?id=49>



[5] <http://www.rai.tv/>

[6] <http://www.iacelanguage.org>

[7] <http://kayeplayhouse.hunter.cuny.edu/calendar.shtml>

[8] <http://www.italianfairy.com/>