



MURMUR MORI

~ NEW EARLY MUSIC ~

Concert Proposal:

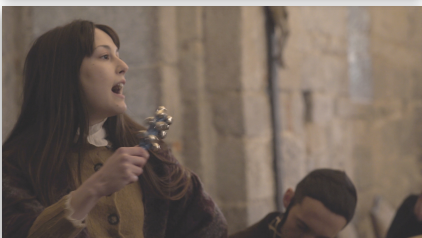
Poetesses, Poets and Jongleurs of Italy



A musical journey that leads to the discovery of early Italian vernacular poetry. Drawing on medieval manuscript sources and on popular folk musical modes from the 12th century to our days, the Murmur Mori ensemble set these fundamental lyrics to music in order to reconstruct the sonorous atmosphere and to spread the history of the first Italian vernacular poetesses, poets and music performers. From the Canzoniere Vaticano latino 3793 the malmartata poem **"A la stagion che'l mondo foglia e fiora"** (In the season when the world grows leaves and flourishes) by La Compiuta Donzella di Firenze, exponent of the Tuscan school, or the **"Tenzone d'amore"** (Love Tenso): a type of tenso of the Sicilian School between two lovers, in which the woman compares her lover to a sparrowhawk, once bounded to her love but now flying over another maiden's garden, the man answers begging for

her mercy and incites her to avoid rumors from who wants to disturb their joy. **"Dança de mai"** (May Dance) is an example of folk poetry intended to accompany dance, and it's contained inside the ms. Franc. (Nouv. Acq.) 7516 from the 13th century. This manuscript, preserved in the National Library of France, contains the chivalric poem Partonopeus de Blois, and these mantuan rhymes written at the very last few pages as a note, in which there's a description of the *rota* (a round dance) survived to our days embodied in the Sardinian *ballu tundu*. On April 26, 1265, the two Bolognese Jovial Friars Catalano de 'Malavolti and Loderingo degli Andalò, whom Dante places in the pit of the hypocrites in his Inferno, set up the Officium Memorialium in Bologna which produced 322 registers of notary deeds in which inside the notaries also transcribed colorful rhymes in the vernacular and jongleur poetry of a popular nature, such as the 13th century ballata **"Pur bii del vin, comadre"** (Drink some wine, cummer), set to music by Murmur Mori. The rhymes depict the adventures of two women who wander drinking around taverns cursing the sailors who carry cargo of linen, for them to spin and weave, instead of wine. The lexicon is Emilian and contains the oldest evidence of the term *"lasagne"*. Lyrics handed down to us without musical notation, although their structure witness that were conceived with music and for the dance, such as **"Seguramente vegna ala nostra dança"** (Surely, come to our dance) and **"Ella mia dona çoglosa"** (And my joyous lady), from the libri memorialium of Bologna too, in which we can have a glimpse of how the dance took place. If Arabic poetry could have influenced the provençal troubadours with Andalusian lyrics and music suggestions it has for sure originated the Sicilian School, then flowed into the Tuscan School, which flourished in the Emirate ground of Sicilian Arab musicians and then of the Norman-Swabian culture.

That fertile land of meetings created poets and musicians with renewed creativity and energy who laid the foundations of the Italian vernacular poetic language. Bonagiunta Orbicciani, in our program with **"Tutto lo mondo si mantien per fiore"** (The whole world is maintained by flowers) taken from the Canzoniere Laurenziano Rediano 9, who as a notable exponent of 13th century poetry and a man of the medieval communes also addresses politics in his rhymes. He wrote his discontent about the new manner of the stil novo poets that started to distance themselves from the Sicilian School and Provençal Poetry. The ballata **"La ballata delle Monache"** (Ballata of the nuns: Kyrie, pregnant are the nuns), preserved in Magliabechiano VII.1078 of the National Central Library of Florence, it's from the beginning of the 15th century and its rhymes satirises about the nuns and their monastic life unexpectedly rich of erotism and sexual encounters. As a one of a kind gem, even if of a later time, that witnesses the performance of an anonymous woman on a bench in a square, probably Piazza Maggiore in Bologna from where the incunabile containing her sonnets was printed in 1507 (Palatino II.20 E.6.5.3., BNCF), shines the poem from a *cantimpanca*, **"La Giullaressa"** (The Female Jongleur), describing her feelings when she gets on the bench <<*in banca sale*>> to sing and where she defends the power of chant feelings when she gets on the bench <<*in banca sale*>> to sing and where she defends the power of chant evoking Phoebus and Amphion.



Manuscript sources:

BAV, Canzoniere Vaticano latino 3793

BSB Clm 4660

BML Redi 9

BnF, ms. Franc. Nouv. Acq. 7516

BNCF, Palat. II.20 E.6.5.3

Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Libri Memorialium (Mem. 78, 1290, Nicolò Iohanini Manelli, c. 165r; Mem. 67, 1287, Nicolò Iohanini Manelli, c. 21v / 121v; Mem. 47, 1282, Antonio Guidonis de Argele, c. 1v)

BNCF, Magliabechiano VII.1078

BnF, Ms Fr 20050

Musicisti e Strumenti Musicali:

Mirko Virginio Volpe: Canto, Guiterne, Symphonia, Tamburo

Silvia Kuro: Canto, Organo Portativo, Nakers, Tamburo

Alessandra Lazzarini: Flauti Traversi, Coro

Matteo Brusa: Citola, Riqq, Darbouka, Triangolo, Campane, Coro

Works:

Anthonius Guidonis de Argele, Nicola Johanini Manelli, Compiuta Donzella, Bonagiunta Orbicciani, Anonymous 13th-15th century, Mirko Volpe, Silvia Kuro



The ensemble has never used the aid of electricity during concerts. The choice stems from the desire to offer an authentic listening that brings the music back to its organic state, also allowing the Murmur Mori ensemble to perform in total freedom, without interposing anything between the music and the audience.

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