



A nun's lament for wanting a love affair, a cleric who despairs at the departure of his beloved younger pupil travelling on the Adige river, the song of the Modenese guards sung during the long nights of vigil, poems which celebrate the song of the birds and the beauty of Nature; these are some of the themes contained in the Medieval Latin lyrics which in "CARMINA" come back to life thanks to musical reconstructions, curated by Silvia Kuro and musicologist Davide Daolmi, based on the neumatic notations contained in the manuscripts created, between the 9th and 11th centuries, inside the European scriptoria. The places of culture were steeped in Christianity, but they didn't remain immune to the calls of classical antiquity. Like siren songs, the pagan divinities emerged in profane verses and diverted minds from the path of the gospels, finding themselves evoked in the melodies today performed by the Murmur Mori ensemble, directed by Mirko Virginio Volpe, and which had not been played for long centuries.

Who sang this profane Medieval Latin songs and when?

Before the vernacular languages were used in poetry for the profane songs, in Latin, not only religious chants were composed, but there was a repertoire of profane songs to entertain every social class. The erudites and the nobles were interested in financing Arts and during the early medieval period jongleurs were paid to play and sing such songs to attract the people. We have some testimonies of great interest: in the book III of the Sermones by Sextus Amarcus, 11th century poet, it's written that a jongleur is payed by a noble man to entertain the guests after dinner. The musician takes his harp out of a leather case to start singing about David and Goliath, about Pythagoras and the octave, of the nightingale and its splendid voice, while people from the streets near and from the courtyards started to gather around him to hear him play. These songs were also used to teach to students and clerics how to sing and learn music theory. This type of education was mainly in use inside the abbeys, in whose scriptoria monks copied greek and latin classics. Since the monks needed to know by heart many sacred chants, it is probable that the teachers used more popular profane songs to let them better understand the principles of chant and music.

Musicians and musical instruments:

Mirko Virginio Volpe: Chant, Carolingian Cythara, Lyre, Drum

Silvia Kuro: Chant, Portative Organ, Bells, Cymbals

Matteo Brusa: Citole

Alessandra Lazzarini: Transverse Flutes

Murmur Mori ensemble has never used electricity or amplification during its shows, a choice that is not only aesthetic but determined by the desire to offer a more authentic listening experience, since ignoring or modifying the sound of the place would be a failure towards the music that Murmur Mori wants to reconstruct. Music resonates within historical environments that for centuries have returned it to our ears enriched with their personality.

Tracklist:

I • Vestibunt silvae tenera ramorum

(CC23) - Lyrics: Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare LXXXVIII (83), f. 59r, mid-9th century, Saint-Denis Abbey (FR) - Music: Mirko Virginio Volpe

II • O admirabile Veneris idolum

(CC48) - Lyrics: Cambridge, University Library, Gg.5.35, f.441v, mid-11th century, St Augustine's Abbey of Canterbury (UK) - Music: "O Roma nobilis" in Montecassino, Archivio dell'abbazia, cod. 318, f.291r, 11th century, Montecassino (IT) - Arrangement: Mirko Virginio Volpe

III • Crus ocelle meum velle

Lyrics, Music: Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 3251, f. 96r, 2nd half 11th century, Lodi/Novara (IT) - Musical reconstruction: Silvia Kuro, Davide Daolmi - Arrangement: Murmur Mori

IV • Fragment

Music: Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 3251, f. 106v, 2nd half 11th century, Lodi/Novara (IT) - Musical reconstruction: Silvia Kuro - Arrangement: Mirko Virginio Volpe

V • Levis exurgit Zephirus

(CC40) - Lyrics: Cambridge, University Library, Gg.5.35, f.441r, mid-11th century, St Augustine's Abbey of Canterbury (UK) - Music: Mirko Virginio Volpe

VI • O mihi deserte natorum dulcis imago

(CC31), Hypsipyle's lament at Staius' Thebaid V. 608–15 - Lyrics, Music: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 13046, f.62v., 10th century, Corbie (FR) and München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 6396, f.53v, 10th century, Freising (DE) - Musical reconstruction: Silvia Kuro - Arrangement: Silvia Kuro, Alessandra Lazzarini

VII • Sacerdos et Lupo (Quibus ludus est animo)

(CC35) - Lyrics: Cambridge, University Library, Gg.5.35, ff.440r-440v, mid-11th century, St Augustine's Abbey of Canterbury (UK) - Music: Mirko Virginio Volpe

VIII • Plangit nonna fletibus

Lyrics: Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 3251, f.178v, 2nd half 11th century, Lodi/Novara (IT) Music: Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Clero secular regular Car. 689, N. 21, 12th century, Santa Maria de Obarra (SP) - Musical reconstruction: Davide Daolmi, Silvia Kuro - Arrangement: Mirko Virginio Volpe, Matteo Brusa

IX • Ut quid iubes pusiole

Lyrics, Music: Godescalcus - Paris, BnF, lat. 1154, ff. 131va-132rb, 10th century (FR) - Musical reconstruction: Silvia Kuro, Davide Daolmi - Arrangement: Murmur Mori

X • O tu qui servas

Lyrics, Music: Modena, Biblioteca e Archivio Capitolare, O.I.4, f. 154v, 9th-11th century, Nonantola (IT) - Musical reconstruction: Silvia Kuro - Arrangement: Murmur Mori

XI • Aurea personet lira

(CC10) - Lyrics, Music: Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. soppr. F.3.565, ff.4v-6r, 12th century, Central Italy (IT) - Arrangement: Murmur Mori

XII • Abeo in silvas

Music: Mirko Virginio Volpe, Matteo Brusa, Silvia Kuro, Martino Ismaele Arosio



Biography:

CONTIGIT IOCLATOREM EX LANGOBARDORUM GENTE AD KAROLUM VENIRE, ET CANTIUNCULAM A SE
COMPOSITAM DE EADEM RE ROTANDO IN CONSPECTU SUORUM CANTARE

*It happened that a Langobard jongleur came to Charlemagne and sang a little song composed by himself
about this matter within view of his own people
Chronicon Novaliciense, book III V.10 – 11th century*



What would probably scandalize the jongleurs, if they lived today, would not be seeing their lyrics performed, but witnessing a show without Love.

This belief generates the original expressiveness that characterizes the engaging concerts of the murmur mori ensemble where the audience often finds itself having an active role during the performance.

Inspired by the popular Muse and the realities in which she still survives, since 2015 Mirkò Virginio Volpe and Silvia Kuro have been investigating jongleurs poetry and music from the 9th to the 13th century, working directly on the original sources, bringing the earliest lyrics and melodies from Italy back to life. The musical instruments used are reproductions based on depictions from medieval sources.

In 2022 the French version of the musical program "Poetesses, Poets and Jongleurs of Italy" was presented at the prestigious "Festes Baroques" festival. In the same year, "Dançando La Fressca Rosa" was published: a mini-album resulting from Mirkò and Silvia's research on the Bologna Memoriali of the 13th century, carried out with the Alma Mater Studiorum of Bologna, MemoBo project; also in 2022 they released

the single "Aiuta De', vera lus et garçat", a musical reconstruction of a troubadour Alba survived in a single manuscript written in a Piedmontese vernacular from the 13th century.

In 2023 they released the album "Canzoneta, va!" concerning the connection between Provençal and Italian poetry in the 12th and 13th centuries, in the same year they were contacted by the Italian Cultural Institute of Bratislava for two concerts included in the cultural events of the "Week of the Italian Language in the World", a success also replicated at the IIC in Cologne. Murmur Mori won the 2023 Medieval Italy award, ranking first in the "entertainment" category.

In 2024 after a serie of concerts in Europe, ended in France at Noirlac Abbey, the program "Canzoneta, va!" has been recorded live at Cantar di Pietre Festival by the Radio Télévision Suisse and RSI. In the same year Forum Musicum Festival (Narodowe Forum Muzyki) commissioned Murmur Mori a program focused on the theme of the crusades. After the success of the event held at the Town Hall of Wrocław, the repertoire was recorded for the album "Make love, not crusades".

MURMUR MORI

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