

# Il sentimento popolare

The feel and the high temperature of a variety of Italian and foreign folk songs.

Proudly mongrel songs, squarely stolen from their native countries, musics that made people cry and dance! That consoled them! That helped mark the pace of work, or whistle at loafers.

Sincere, whole-hearted melodies.

A concert for us to listen to and celebrate together.

We take our shambolic flight from our seats of an old Milan tavern and whirl to unbridled and odd Balkan beats, then turn towards a Sicilian waltz and, gliding through a Flamenco rumba and a Mexican ballad, we try to land on the casqué of an Argentinian tango. Not before singing a serenade at a balcony, mocking the powerful, shedding a tear of jealousy, singing a child to sleep and dancing for the living and the dead.

In my early twenties, I was once in a nightclub in Bamako and, urged by my friends (my Malian peers, would-be artists like myself) I grabbed the microphone and sang with all my strength and joy and rage along with a traditional local band. After a short time, still very vivid in my mind, I felt a strange sensation: someone had stuck a ten-thousand CFA Franc note to my sweaty forehead.

That moment somehow emboldened me.

And maybe it's responsible for my deplorable and unfailing motivation.

To me, singing was mostly about echoing the piercing, soft, mournful, deep, epic or overjoyed voices found in the field recordings made in post-WWII rural Italy. Or, on a larger scale, lending an ear to traditional sounds from the world over.

Because those sounds talked to me and still provoke and entice me.

I have never felt justified in singing these songs, but I am proud to be a deft and loving thief.

By looting musical rubble found amid the ruins of the past, I have tried to make up my quirky and crude mosaic, greatly shaped on my enjoyment and self-confidence.

I have always been at odds with academies, institutions and the squeals of speculative thinking: the ambiguous territory of performing arts and the nomadic, erratic, slippery and blurred matter of experimental theatre have been my school.

I take pride in oral cultures and believe in rites.

The Sentimento Popolare counts on a changing ensemble of deeply attuned musicians.

Starting from the duo formed by myself and the guitarist and arranger, as well as life partner, Fabio Marconi, it opens up to more artists such as the drummer Alberto Pederneschi, the bass player Ivo Barbieri, the trumpet player Raffaele Kohler, the accordionist Guido Baldoni, the guitarist Massimiliano Alloisio, the poly-instrumentalists Ulisse Garnerone and Donat Munzila, and many many more fellow travellers