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ARTIST BIO (revised Aug-2008): Di Madre in Figlia (From Mother to Daughter)/ CORO DELLE MONDINE DI NOVI & FIAMMA FUMANA

CORO DELLE MONDINE DI NOVI

The chorus of the Mondine of Novi began to sing together about 30 years ago. The idea came to the teacher Torino Gilioli, one evening, on a bus on a return from a trip. How he loved to say, "on the bus, the last places at the back always are occupied by those that have desire to sing."

They had been born all in the same part of the country, Novi. They were more or less contemporaries, so classmates in the elementary schools. Still little girls, had to learn to survive. So it was that they found themselves distant from their houses, in the Piedmont, to do the work of rice weeders. (Mondine)

So, almost as a joke, these same women found themselves again together, to share another experience: and became the "chorus of the rice weeders" (Coro delle Mondine di Novi di Modena). With the leader, Torino they learned to sing, in an organized manner, those same songs that they had invented and sung while they worked in the rice fields of Vercellese.

This group participated in many reviews and shows and also two television transmissions conducted by Paolo Limiti and, and another conducted by Gigliola Cinquetti. Foreign appearances included France, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the Crimea and in Argentina. In Argentina the Mondine represented Italy, and particularly the region of Emilia-Romagna, at an important Festival, "Canta El Pueblo" (the people sing).

To the Mondine they enjoyed the definition that their teacher, Torino, used for them, he called them a group of "songbirds." He said this because a chorus, a "formal" chorus, learns every component of music studying with great rigor the theory and practice of the voice, harmony, etc. But not so in the case of the Mondine, rather they sing in a spontaneous manner, but this doesn't mean that they are not attentive to the study of the actual voice. The search, in this sense, is continuous. The Mondine do not know if they are performing in D or in G, but their form of free singing, driven by the ear, recognizes the regional songs and the movements and feeling each involves; thus, their spontaneity is important and fundamental to their performance. So with their teacher, Torino, this group of women had attractive experiences, and was able to share a lot of that which others did not have the opportunity to know.

In the autumn of 2000 their teacher left them; After many months of inactivity the Mondine met, reflected, listened to the invitation of other choruses, of their friends, remembered their teacher, Torino, who would have wanted to listen to the voices of the Mondine rather than the silence. There came a person in a position to direct them, and to this person the Mondine entrusted this task and now the chorus is directed by Maria Giulia Contri.

Their engagements continue. Every year they organize in Novi a music festival dedicated to the memory of their teacher: "Memorial Torino Gilioli", including participation of choruses, musical bands and youthful groups (like Fiamma Fumana, Tupamaros, and the great Modena City Ramblers). Most recently the choir added important appearances at the Concert of Colors festival in Detroit, Michigan USA; Celtic Connections in Glasgow, Scotland; and a huge celebration of Liberation Day at the Museo Cervi. And perhaps the most exciting news of late, a documentary film, "Mondine - From Mother to Daughter", produced by Davide Ferrario which will be premiered at Toronto International Film Festival on September 5th.

On occasion the Mondine like to sing along to spoken words, which tell of the life in rice fields, on the story of the Mondine and the justifications that push them to continue to sing. This is because the Mondine will continue in their journey, thanks to their untiring desire to sing, to say simple things, and not to forget the most recent story of the struggles for fundamental rights in defense of workers.

Thanks to all the ones, friends and supporters, that share with them the pleasure of song and the love for popular culture.

All the girls of the chorus: Giliola Gilioli, Gabriella Braioni, Italia Pignoli, Diva Cavazzoni, Diva Campedelli, Silva Manicardi, Adriana Paltrinieri, Manuela Rossi, Nunzia Lavagnini, Catia Fiori, Assunta Palermo, Adelmina Cesaretti, Rina Cipolli, Lina Pizzetti, Deanna Bertoni, Laura Bertoni, Rita Pizzano, Agnes Mc. Williams, Lidia Cavazzoni, Manuela Cavazzoni, Vivilde Cavaletti, Anna Bernini, Lidia Ascari, Elda Gilioli, Maria Giulia Contri.

FIAMMA FUMANA

Fiamma Fumana began as a studio project in 1999 -- a tribute to the female vocal tradition of Northern Italy (like the choirs of mondine, the rice gatherers who were all young girls) revitalized by a new generation and electronic dance music culture. The result is an intriguing blend of old Italian dance tunes played to new Italian dance grooves, traditional ballads and state-of-the-art electronica. To these young urbanite Europeans, electronic beats make a natural bedrock for re-interpreting the songs of previous generations.

Female vocals connect past to future with unforgettable pathos. One other key ingredient, a rare regional bagpipe called the piva Emiliana, adds an unexpected Celtic-sounding flavor to the mix. The result is clearly Italian yet broadly international in its appeal.

The band members themselves are an interesting mix. **Alberto Cottica**, veteran of the acclaimed Modena City Ramblers, hails from Emilia Romagna and plays accordion, guitar and piano. Tuscan **Jessica Lombardi** is a Celtic music devotee who plays flutes and whistles as well as the bagpipes. Lead vocalist **Roberta Carrieri**, from Bari in the South, brings a Mediterranean scent to the group's singing. **Claudia Ferrari (Missy J)** is the group's DJ, who keeps the loops and samples flowing while **Paolo Perego** provides rhythm on drums and percussion.. These dynamic contrasts are well expressed in the band's name, which translates as flame and fog, opposing elements of fiery emotion and ageless cool.

History

Fiamma Fumana were formed in 1999 by three people who shared a love for the musical tradition of Northern Italy in general and their native Emilia Romagna in particular, but had otherwise very diverse backgrounds. **Alberto Cottica**, accordionist guitarist and pianist, has been active in the Italian folk-rock music scene, for over ten years as co-founder of the highly successful (well over 350,000 albums sold) Modena City Ramblers; **Marco Bertoni**, an electronic musician and record producer who cooperates regularly with top-rank Italian DJs such as Santos; **Silvia Orlandi** (a.k.a. Fiamma) at 22, was then an absolute beginner who had been brought up musically in the Emilian countryside, by her mother and grandmother.

FF's first album, **1.0**, was released in 1999 in Italy by Mescal and soon travelled beyond national borders. Universal Music Japan engineered a Japanese release in 2000, and Omnium Recordings an North American one in early 2001, to a wide acclaim. In the meantime, the core group had built up a young, predominantly female live band to play this material. The band were invited to **WOMAD 2001** in Palermo; to the **CMJ Music Marathon** in New York in the same year (the event cancelled because of the Twin Towers tragedy); to the **Detroit Festival of the Arts** in 2002 and to many festivals and gigs in Italy and abroad.

In September 2003 FF signed to American label Omnium and released their second album, **Home**; more focused on northern Italian roots than 1.0, and more extreme in sound, with a harder, more "live" approach to electronica. The album was accompanied by a relationship with booking agent SRO Artists in the USA, and an American tour, which saw FF perform at many key American world music festivals and clubs (Chicago, Detroit, Bloomington, Minneapolis, St. Louis...). Since 2004 Home is in distribution in Sweden (by CDA) and in Italy (by Mescal). Since 2005 is distributed in the Netherlands (by Xangò).

Fiamma Fumana spent Summer 2004 touring Canada, achieving a big success in the circuits of the Canadian World Music festivals, and the panel of Penguin Eggs magazine (the most important Canadian magazine exploring the world music scene) has voted the band as "Best New Act of 2004". After this tour, the prestigious London Magazine FRoots published a feature article on Fiamma Fumana in late 2004, while in Italy both **World Music Magazine** (2005) and **Traditional Arranged** (2004) celebrated Fiamma Fumana with a cover.

2005 brought a strong touring schedule for FF: Midwest US in April, a performance at the **Amsterdam Roots Festival** in June, and a seven week North American summer tour which saw the band increase its profile, playing the **Kennedy Center** in Washington DC, more Canadian festivals, and finishing with a national radio appearance on the Mountain Stage program (heard on more than 250 radio stations across the U.S.)

Following this tour, Silvia Orlandi left the band to pursue a solo career; her replacement (after extensive scouting and auditions) is **Roberta Carrieri**. The new lineup was selected for an official showcase at **WOMEX**, the pre-eminent World Music conference which took place in Newcastle (U.K.) in October 2005. The new album, **Onda (If you can't ride the wave then you're gonna go unda!)**, steered by producer Peter Walsh (Peter Gabriel, Simple Minds, Pulp, Robert Plant, AfroCelt Sound System) and featuring some of the brightest stars in the "urban roots" international scene, such as **Transglobal Underground**, McNavigator of **Asian Dub Foundation** and Italian super-top-globalista rapper **Jovanotti**, was released in summer 2006 in Italy and North America. The album itself is dedicated to the late Scottish piper and DJ Martyn Bennett, clearly a strong source of inspiration for the band.

Fiamma Fumana are:

Lady Jessica Lombardi – bagpipes, flutes, bass, vocals
Alberto Cottica – accordions, acoustic guitar, piano, vocals
Roberta Carrieri – lead vocals
Claudia Ferrari (Missy J) – live electronics, loops, vocals
Paolo Perego – drums/percussion

Album releases:

1.0 (1999)
Home (2003)
Onda (If you can't ride the wave then you're gonna go unda!) (2006)