



## Dream

*«Litanies and laments, in the mazes dance.*

*Whirls the funeral umbrella of my gowns.»*

*Francesca Nicoli*

Early morning. Paris is still sleeping. In the first glittering of the day, wrapped up in mist which seems to be interwoven with the dreams of thousands souls got lost in the spirals of sleep, it appears more magic than ever.

Before stopping to rest for a while, I had taken in my hand the picture of that town, and staring at it, as in a trance, I slid into a sort of torpor. Through the fog that wrapped it up, my mind had perceived the phantasms evoked by dreams when they are about to fade away. Then, the sound of a klaxon suddenly woke me up.

The oneiric dimension is the paradigm of creativity. Music can become our guide and help us to open the doors of the world of dreams.

I asked myself about which Ataraxia's albums were nearer to this dimension. The first one that came to mind was «Orlando», a mini CD released in 1998, inspired by the well-known character of Virginia Woolf's novel. Orlando passes through several different historical ages, from the Middle Ages to contemporary times, acquiring the appearance of a young man, a maiden, and a woman.

*«Someone arrived. A man? A woman?*

*The universal had his/her appearance. Splitting the archetype into a mask with his/her features, in a symbiotic catharsis, I erected a marble-skinned statue to his/her majesty.*

*A man? A woman?»*

*Francesca Nicoli from «Orlando»*

The dualism of the character is well exemplified in two tracks entitled with his/her name. The first one, «Orlando (... a female)», is a march with strong neoclassical influences, which leads to the more intimate atmosphere of the second track, «Orlando (... a male)», a cryptic aria built on complex guitar arpeggios. «Orlando», in my opinion, is the most experimental work the band has ever composed, thanks to its peculiar and original ambiances like the ones of «Bonthrop», the overture, which is gloomy and liquid, rarefied and minimal. The visionary charge of this album is emphasised in the closing track, «Elfine», in which the singing becomes a crazy instrument able to create dissonances having a very impressive emotional impact.

But there is at least another album that reminded me a dreamlike atmosphere, it is «Il Fantasma dell'Opera».

«The Monster owns genius, the one that leads to the sublime creation, from which it's not possible to get back. The Monster senses, knows, has a clear vision of his destiny since the very beginning. He is a titan submitted to a human body that cannot bear the product of his genius, neither physically nor psychologically. The Monster is alone. He cannot receive neither sympathy nor solidarity, and this leads him to despair, folly and death. He has a talent for several artistic skills, particularly for the most ethereal and esoteric of them, Music. He understands that when his sonata, his masterpiece, is completed, he will disappear, because life is worthless if his art cannot flow outside anymore. Erik, the Phantom, owns a deep sensitivity. He lives on an island surrounded by an artificial lake in the dungeons of the Opera Theatre in Paris. This building has a twofold connotation: architectonic rationality and labyrinthine chaos. Erik himself personifies that labyrinth: double ways, tunnels, corridors, doors opening on other doors, mirrors hiding faces wearing masks. The Phantom is afraid, afraid of the world, of people, of himself, and he is not able to express his feeling without wearing a disguise and playing a farce. His world is based on inventions, conjuring tricks, childish fantasies in a lush environment of killing mermaids, oriental palaces, and sensual visions. Only Music allows him to reveal his essence. He cannot give and receive love without acting and covering his face. In need of love he becomes the voice of a moving violin, the fury of the persecutor, the faithful lover's devotion, the torment of the primeval sorrow, the burning suspect. His request for love remains unheard. So, dignified is his departure, quick is the end of his loves, hopes, ambitions and ambiguous appearance...

Erik, now, is nothing but a gossip in the Opera dancers' mouths, a frightening whisper skimming the lips of Theatre lyric singers, a folksy legend. He has left us with or without a mask, it doesn't matter, because he is the man without a face, the erased essence that becomes again a dream...

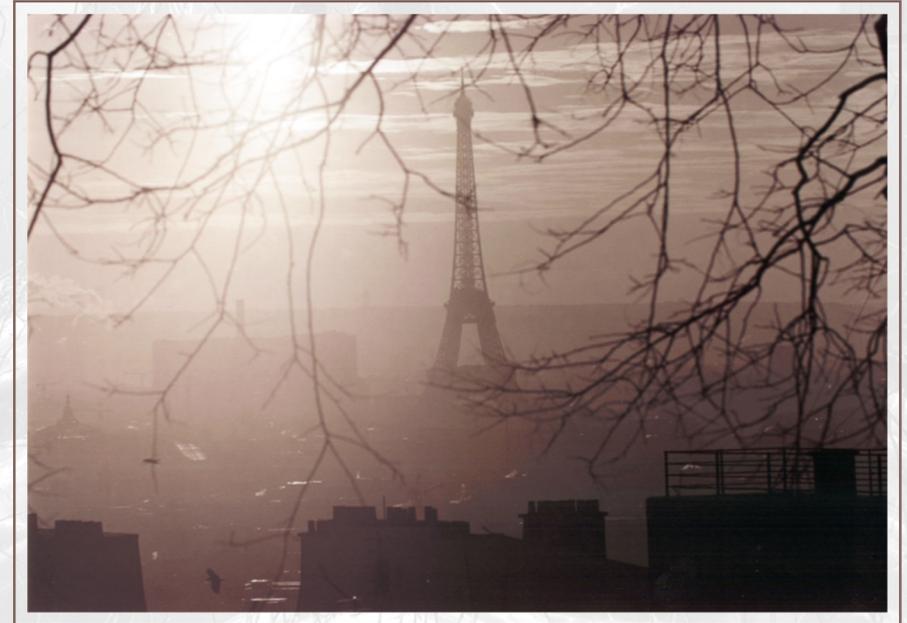
*Be praised our unconditioned love for music!*

*Be praised Erik, our Monster and Phantom of the Opera!»*

*Francesca Nicoli from «Il Fantasma dell'Opera»*

Erik's story is narrated in a tragic way. After all, the phantom is just a soul searching for peace. An anguished, solitary, and angry being because of his condition, that might become eternal.

The songs are magic, rarefied, floating in time, as to evoke the fatuous



«Je suis une rue.  
Une rue bleue.  
Je respire au fil de l'eau.»

*Francesca Nicoli*