

Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594)

Prophetiae Sibyllarum (1600)

Anonymus

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Prologue

Carmina Chromatico,
Quae audis modulata tenore,
Haec sunt illa, quibus nostrae olim
arcana salutis
Bis senae intrepido,
Cecinerunt ore Sibyllae.

Chromatic songs

These songs which you hear,
sung with chromatic progressions,
are those in which the 12
Sibyls once
with confident voice
sang the secrets of our salvation.

1. Sibylla Persica

Virgine matre satus pando residebit
assello,
Iucundus princeps unus qui ferre
salutem
Rite queat lapsis tamen; illis forte
diebus
Multi multa ferent immensi fata laboris
Solo sed satis est oracula prodere
verbo:
Ille Deus casta nascetur virgine
magnus.

The Persian Oracle

Born of a virgin mother, he will sit on a
sway-backed ass,
A pleasant prince, the one who can
properly bring salvation to sinners;
In those days it will chance that many
people pronounce
many sayings of great weight.
But it is enough to give the oracle in
just one word:
He, the great God himself, will be born
of a chaste virgin.

9. Sibylla Europaea

Virginis aeternum veniet de corpore
verbum purum.
Qui valles et montes transiet altos,
Ille volens etiam stellato missus
olympo
Edetur mundo pauper,
qui cuncta silenti rex erit
imperio.
Sic credo et memo fatebor:
Humano simul et divino semine natus.

The European Oracle

From a virgin's body will come the
pure eternal word.
He who will cross valleys & high mountains,
Sent willingly indeed from starry
Olympus (Heaven)
will be given to the world as a poor man,
He who with silent power will be king
of everything.
Thus I believe and shall myself say:
He is born of both human and divine seed.

11. Sibylla Erythraea

Cerno Dei natum, qui se dimisit
ab alto.
Ultima felices referent cum tempora
soles.
Hebraea, quem virgo fere de stirpe
decora,
In terris multum teneris passurus ab
annis.
Magnus erit tamen hic divino carmine
vates
Virgine matre satus, prudenti pectore
verax.

The Erythraean (Red Sea) Oracle

I see the son of God, who has sent
himself down from on high,
Since the last times will bring happy
days.
He, that the demure virgin will bear of
the Hebrew line,
He, that will suffer much from his
earliest years on the earth,
He will be a great prophet nonetheless
in holy songs
Son of a virgin mother, truthful in his
wise heart.

12. Sibylla Agrippa

Summus erit sub carne satus
clarissimus atque Virginis
Et vere complevit viscera sanctum
Verbum consilio sine noxa
spiritus almi,
Despectus multis tamen ille salutis
amore
Arguet et nostra commissa piacula
culpa,
Cuius honos constans et gloria certa
manebit.

The Agrippan Oracle

The highest and brightest will be born
in flesh and of a virgin,
and the holy word truly has filled her womb
according to the plan of the Holy Spirit
without harming her;
Though despised by many, for the love
of salvation
He will judge the sins committed by our
fault,
And his unchanging honour and
confirmed glory will endure.

Nicolò Vicentino (1511-1575)

Musica prisca caput (1555)

Musica prisca caput tenebris modo
sustulit altis
Dulcibus ut numeris priscis certantia
factis
Facta tua, Ippolite, excelsum super
aethera mittat.

Ancient music has recently raised her
head out of the darkness
So that, with antique and sweet numbers to
compete with ancient deeds,
Your great deeds, Hyppolitus, she might
send above the heavens.

*Text & translation kindly provided by
EXAUDI*

Elisabet Dijkstra (b.1998)

here, now (2021)

Virginia Woolf

I see a ring
I see a slab of pale yellow
I hear a sound
I see a globe
I see a crimson tassel
I hear something stamping.

Sylvia Lim (b.1992)

paper wings (2015)

Luzzasco Luzzaschi (1545-1607)

Quivi sospiri (pub. 1576)

Dante Alighieri

Quivi sospiri pianti et alti guai,
Rissonavan per l'aer senza stelle,
Perch' io al cominciar ne lagrimai,
Diverse lingue horribili
favelle,
Parole di dolore accenti d'ira,
Voci alte et fioche et suon di man con
elle.

Their sighs, lamentations and loud wailings
resounded through the starless air,
so that at first it made me weep;
Strange utterances, horrible
pronouncements,
words of pain, tones of anger,
voices shrill and faint, and beating
hands,

(facevano un tumulto, il qual s'aggira sempre in quell'aura senza tempo tinta, come la rena quando turbo spira.)

(all went to make a tumult that will whirl forever through that turbid, timeless air, like sand that eddies when a whirlwind swirls.)

Luca Marenzio (1553-1599)

O voi che sospirate (1585)

Francesco Petrarca

O voi che sospirate a miglior' notti,
ch'ascoltate d'Amore o dite in rime,
pregate non mi sia piú
sorda Morte,
porto de le miserie et fin del pianto;
muti una volta quel suo antiquo stile,
ch'ogni uom attrista, et me pò far sí
lieto.

Oh you who sigh for easier notes,
who hear of Love or speak of him in rhyme,
pray he'll no longer be deaf to me,
sweet Death,
refuge from misery and end of weeping:
that he'll change for once his ancient style,
that makes men sad, and could make
me happy.

Translation kindly provided by EXAUDI.

Christopher Fox (b.1955)

senso comune (2012-18)

Antonio Gramsci, Dante Alighieri

Ogni strato sociale ha il suo 'senso comune' che è in fondo la concezione della vita e la morale più diffusa. Ogni corrente filosofica lascia una sedimentazione di 'senso comune': è questo il documento della sua effettualità storica. Il senso comune non è qualcosa di irrigidito e immobile, ma si trasforma continuamente, arricchendosi di nozioni scientifiche e opinioni filosofiche entrate nel costume. Il 'senso comune' è il folklore della 'filosofia' e sta di mezzo tra il 'folklore' vero e proprio (cioè come è inteso) e la filosofia, la scienza, l'economia degli scienziati. Il 'senso comune' crea il futuro folklore, cioè una fase più o meno irrigidita di un certo tempo e luogo

Every social stratum has its own 'common sense' which is ultimately the most widespread conception of life and morals. Every philosophical current leaves a sedimentation of 'common sense': this is the document of its historical reality. Common sense is not something rigid and static; rather it changes continuously, enriched by scientific notions and philosophical opinions which have entered into common usage. 'Common sense' is the folklore of 'philosophy' and stands midway between real 'folklore' (that is, as it is understood) and the philosophy, the science, the economics of the scholars. 'Common sense' creates the folklore of the future, that is a more or less rigidified phase of a certain time and place.

Così nel mio parlar voglio esser
aspro
com'è ne li atti questa bella
petra

I want to charge my words with as
much harshness
as this beautiful stone has in her
actions.

*Translation kindly provided by the
composer*

Carlo Gesualdo (c.1561-1613)

Itene, o miei sospiri (1611)

Itene, o miei sospiri
Precipitate il volo a lei
Che m'è cagion d'aspri martiri.

Go now, o my sighs

Go now, o my sighs,
may you speed your flight to her
who is the cause of my bitter torment.

Ditele per pietà del mio gran duolo
Ch'or mai ella mi sia
Come bella, ancor pia
Che l'amaro mio pianto
Cangerò lieto in amoroso canto.

Tell her, for pity, of my great grief;
may she now be as compassionate to me
as she is beautiful,
and I shall joyfully turn
my bitter weeping to loving song.

Madrigali libro sesto (1611)

Deh, come un invan sospiro

Deh, come invan sospiro,
Deh, come invan vi miro,
Poichè, crudel, voi fate ogni un gioire
Et a me sol morire!
Infelice mia sorte,
Che la vita per me divenga Morte.

Ah, how I sigh in vain

Ah, how in vain I sigh,
ah! how in vain I admire you,
since, cruel one, you give joy to all
and to me alone death!
Unhappy my fate,
that life for me becomes death.

Translation kindly provided by EXAUDI.

Asciugate i begli occhi (1611)

Asciugate i begli occhi
Deh, cor mio, non piangete,
Se lontano da voi gir mi vedete!
Achi, che pianger debb'io misero
e solo,
Che partendo da voi m'uccide il duolo.

Dry your fair eyes

Dry your fair eyes,
come my heart, do not weep,
when you see me go far away from you.
I am the one who should weep,
wretched and alone,
for in parting from you I am killed by woe.

Languisce al fin chi da la vita parte (1611)

Languisce al fin chi da la vita
parte,
e di morte il dolore
l'affligge sì che in crude pene
more.
Ahi, che quello son io,
dolcissimo cor mio,
che da voi parto, e per mia crudel
sorte
la vita lascio e me ne vado a morte.

He languishes towards his end who is
leaving life,
and the suffering of death
afflicts him so much that he dies in
cruel pains.
Ah, that person is I,
my sweetest love,
that I am leaving you, and through my
cruel fate
I leave life and go to death.

Translation kindly provided by EXAUDI.