From amongst the boundless and captivating testimonies that “Nowtilus. Stories from an Urban Lagoon in the 21st Century” encounters as it emerges from, and immerses itself in, the living fabric of the city, popular songs offer a perspective capable of provoking an immediate emotional connection between the marks of tradition and the tensions of the contemporary.

The repertoire performed live by D’AltroCanto Duo (Elida Bellon, Giulia Prete) and Maria Bergamo - to be recorded and reworked into an original composition by sound designer Giovanni Dinello and presented at the end of the summer during “Nowtilus Live!” – invites the listener on a journey through themes that, in popular song, tell the story of the relationship between the city, its inhabitants and the water.

The contents of this first episode of “Nowtilus: A Liquid Songbook” range from the rhythmic singing of the workers who planted the wooden piles in the lagoon to tales of love, fishing, destiny, passing through lyrical descriptions of wandering in the lagoon, lullabies and more satirical pieces, from which emerge references and connections to the Mediterranean and other lands in which the Venetians moved.

The sounds of the words, their musicality, and their still-living testimony to a relationship with an ecosystem which requires affection and respect, are allowed to expand in the unique acoustics of the Church of San Lorenzo, for a human and artistic experience capable of producing new meanings.

S. ISEPPO – CANTO DEI BATTIPALI / SAINT JOSEPH – PILE DRIVER SONG
(trad. Venice)

S. Iseppo    EEEEE
de Casteo   OOOOO
co la piana
e col marteo
fabricava
un gran vasseo.
Fioi mìi
forsa e coragio
che xe longo
sto viaggio,
che 'ndaremo
in Danimarca,
che 'ndaremo
in ta la sabia
in ta la sabia
de l'Egitto.
Gavaremo
gran battaglia,
issaremo
bandiera bianca
banidiera bianca
segno di pace,
issaremo
bandiera rossa
bandiera rossa
segno di sangue,
issaremo
bandiera nera
bandiera nera
segno di morte.
oh issa   EEEE
oh issa...OOOO

A rhythmic song to accompany workers as they planted the piles in the lagoon and which exists with various melodies
and lyrics, often fragmented and without a complete meaning.

Saint Josef of Castello made a great ship with planer and hammer. My boys, strength and courage, this is a long journey,
we will go to Denmark, we will go to the sand, to the sand of Egypt.
And we will fight a great battle, we will hoist the white flag sign of peace, we will hoist the red flag as a sign of blood, we
will hoist the black flag sign of death.

NINA MIA SON BARCAROLO / MY NINA, I AM A BOATMAN
(trad. veneto)

Nina mia són barcaròlo
son dell’arte e son gentile
sulla mia barca se vuoi se vuoi venire
andarémo in alto mar

In alto mar che noi saremo
un gran fuoco accenderemo
e qualche cosa cusi- cusanremo
all’usanza del barcaròl
O barcarolo mio caro
o barcarolo menime via
che voglio andare dalla mamma mia
a contarghe del disonor.

Traditional song found across Italy.

(Him) My Nina, I am a boatman, I am good and kind, if you want to come on my boat we will go to the high seas. And when we are on the high seas, we will light a great fire and we will cook something, according to the custom of boatmen.

(Her) My dear boatman, take me away, I want to go to my mother and tell her about the dishonour.

AGHE BENEDETE / BLESSED WATERS
(trad. veneto/friulian)

Aghe aghe benedete
Dulà vastu simpri jù?

Saludarâs il gno cjâr giovin
Che encje lui al è lajù

Oî no no dilà dal aghe
Che il gno cûr nol dîs di là

Che son paîs fats a proposit
Par vaî e suspirâ

Song from the Eastern area of the Veneto region, with influences from the Friulian dialect. A woman sings to her husband who has emigrated ‘beyond the water’.

Blessed waters, where do you always go down to? Say hello to my dear young man because he is down there too. Oh no, no, not beyond the water, my heart tells me not to go, they are countries made for crying and sighing.

O MARINAIO CHE COSA RIMIRI / OH SAILOR WHAT ARE YOU GAZING AT
(trad. veneta)

O marinaio che cosa rimiri
e io rimiro la figlia tua
ch’è la più bella della città

e la mia figlia l’è troppo giovine,
e a un marinaio non gliela do
e a un marinaio non gliela do
e se tu non mi darai la tua figlia
verrò di notte e la ruberò
e in alto mare la porterò

A song originally from the Veneto Region, now found across Italy.

Oh sailor what are you gazing at, and I am gazing at your daughter, who is the most beautiful in the city, and my daughter is too young, and I won't give her to a sailor and I won't give her to a sailor, and if you won't give me your daughter, I will come at night and steal her, and to the high seas I will take her.

PEREGRINAZIONI LAGUNARI - E MI ME NE SO ‘NDAO / LAGOON WANDERINGS
(trad. Venice)

E mi me ne so’ ‘ndao
donde che feva i goti
siogando la spinèta
ai altri ciochi

Mi g’ho de le fugasse
de quèle de Malghera
ho caminào par tèra
fino a Fusina

Dal trasto a la sentina
cò’ un batelin da stiopo
andeva de galopo
a la Zuèca

Ho caminào la sèca
tuta la Pescarià
ho dà la pope indrìo
ai do castèi

Ho visto l’Orto dei Abrei
cò’ tute le vignolle
da le vignolle indrìo
me so’ reduto

Ho caminào par tuto
l’ho trovà un buranêlo
l’aveva un bel sestèlo
And I went where they make the glasses (Murano), playing the spinet and other games. I have some flat bread, from Marghera, I walked ashore as far as Fusina. From the traslo to the bilge (sailing a bit at random) with a little hunting boat I galloped to Giudecca. I walked in the shallows, the length of the fish market, I rowed backwards towards the two Castelli. I saw the Garden of the Jews (Jewish Cemetery), along with all of Vignole, from Vignole back I went. I walked everywhere, I saw a man from Burano, he had a nice basket, he showed it to me. And I went to the place where the beautiful women were making bowls and playing the spinet.

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**I ANGUELANTI / FISHERMEN**  
(trad. Venice)

Tiorte i remi e vuoga che femo sta calà  
Se no se ciapa gnente no tornaremo a ca'  
A ca' senza mangiare no no se pol tornar  
Ciaparemo un'anguela la spartiremo in tre...

---

**Satirical fisherman’s song from Chioggia.**

Grab the oars and row, so we can drop these nets. If we don't catch anything, we won't go back home. Back home with nothing to eat we cannot go. We'll catch an anchovy and we'll split it in three.

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**SUITE D’ALTROCANTO DUO**  
**LU RUSCIU TE LU MARE / THE SOUND OF THE SEA**  
(Salento)

Na sira ieu passai de le padule  
Entisi le ranocchiule cantare  
Comu cantanu bbelle ad una ad una
**A song from Salento which shares a melody with a Venetian lullaby.**

One evening I was passing through the marshes when I heard the frogs singing, how well they sang one by one, it seemed like the sound of the sea. The sound of the sea is very strong, the daughter of the king has given herself to death. She gave herself death and I gave life; the daughter of the king is married. She got married and I am getting engaged, the daughter of the king is carrying a flower. She is carrying a flower and I am carrying a palm; the daughter of the king is going to Spain, she is going to Spain and I to Turkey, the daughter of the king is my love.

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**O SONO INGANNATORE / BEGUILING SLEEP**
(trad. venitian)

O sono, sono che de qua passava
e che de sto puteo domandava
e domandava cossa che 'l fasseva
e mi go dito che dormir doveva

O sono, sono, sono ingannatore
inganime sto fio par do tre ore,
par do tre ore par do tre momenti
inganime sto fio fin che lo ciamo

E co lo ciamo lo ciamo raise,
ti xe el mio ben che tuti te lo dise,
i te lo dise e i te lo va digando
e sto puteo se va indormensando

---

**Venetian lullaby which shares a melody with a song from Salento.**

Oh sleep, that passed by here, and asked about this child, and asked what he was doing, and I replied that he must
sleep. Oh beguiling sleep, beguile this child for two or three hours, for two or three hours that seem like three seconds, beguile this child until I call him. And if I call him, I call him "my root" (my lineage), you are my good and everyone tells you so. They tell you and they are saying so and this child is falling asleep.

BARBACHECO / POOR UNCLE CHECO  
(trad. Venice)

Povaro Barba checo  
che l'è casuo in canale  
sensa saver nuàre  
al s'ha negao

Me l'ho recuperao,  
me l'ho messo qua drento  
par darghe de bon tempo  
o carnavale.  
Non l'ha vulesto stare  
l'ha vulesto 'ndar via  
e si al se perdàr  
sarà so dano

Revèdarse 'altrano  
tegnine a mente questo  
e puo' ve dirò il resto  
e resto in paxe...

Venetian Carnival chant.

Poor Uncle Checo, who fell in the canal, without knowing how to swim and drowned, I picked him up and put him in here to show him a good time during Carnival. He didn't want to stay, he wanted to go away and if he gets lost it will be his loss. We'll see each other next year, keep this in mind, and then I'll tell you the rest, and I rest in peace...

PIANZE LA MARE / SEA LAMENT  
(trad. Venezia)

Pianze la mare quando che un fio l'arleva  
Che i lo fa s-ciavo e remo de galera  
Bela se ti savessi le galere  
Come che va pulito in alto mare  
A pope e a prora che xe le bandiere  
De drento via l'inferno al naturale

Amore mio 'co ti xe fora dal porto  
Mandime a dir del tuo felisse viagio
Mandime a dir se ti xe vivo o morto
Se l'acqua de lo mar t'avesse tolto

Vespero sona e lo mio ben non viene
O che l'è morto o che qualchedun lo tiene
Tute le barche 'riva a la so' riva
E quela del mio ben no riva mai

Lament of a mother and sweetheart as they await the return or news about a man sent to war as a slave and oarsman on a galley.

A mother cries when the son she raised becomes slave and oarsman on a galley. (Him) Sweetheart, if you knew the galleys, how fast they go on the high seas, with flags from stern to prow, but undercover there's real hell. (Her) My love, when you are out of the port, let me know if your journey is good, let me know if you are alive or dead, or if the seawater has taken away your life. Vespers are sung but my love does not come, perhaps he is dead or perhaps taken prisoner. All the ships are landing on the shore, but my love's boat never arrives.

VUSTU VEGNIR CO MI BELLA RAGASSA / DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME
(trad.veneta)

Vustu vegnir con mi bella ragassa
te menarò sulla riva del mare
te menarò per mare e anca par tera
vusto vegnir con mi a far la guera

Trai Nineta cara partenza amara
che abiam da fare,
chi va alla guerra spera ritornare

Di Fransa e di Germania son venuti
a prenderci per forza militare
e dopo quando ci sarem battuti
addio cara Gigetta buona sera

Trai Nineta cara partenza amara
che abiam da fare
chi va alla guerra spera di tornare

Ve raccomando a voi cari fradei
de tegnir cura dela mia Maria
e verrà il giorno che se vedaremos
con paxe e con amor se godaremos

Se tal partenza cara
te par sia giusto te par sia bela
Composed in the 1700s when the independent Republic was fighting against the French and Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is the farewell of a soldier to his sweetheart.

Do you want to come with me, beautiful girl? I'll take you to the seashore. I'll take you on the sea and over land, do you want to come and make war with me? Go dear Nineta, we must have a bitter farewell, those who go to war hope to return. From France and from Germany they have come, to fight with military forces, and after we have fought, goodbye, my dear, good evening. I ask you, dear brothers, to take care of my Maria, and the day will come when we will see each other and enjoy in peace and love. And if you think that this farewell is just, you will have no more news from me.