

HODMADODDERY

'Hodmadod' - old English for Snail (or sometimes Scarecrow)

Tony Carter & Steve Henwood
vocals and acoustic guitars

Two guys with acoustic guitars, it's not such a rare thing on the streets or the concert stages of Italy - neither is it rare back home in England. What is rare is such a degree of compatibility and mutual understanding in a duo; but this is one of the things that makes Hodmadodderly special. Working together for over 15 years has compounded the almost telepathic way the two musicians blend and contrast in performance; conversely, there's no way they'd have continued as a duo for so long if the partnership wasn't always both rewarding and developing.

Their repertoire is another thing that sets them apart from the average acoustic duo. You won't recognise many of the songs unless you're well acquainted with the folk traditions of England, Scotland and Ireland: long ago they decided that crowd-pleasing pop and rock numbers, the greatest hits of famous acoustic artists, weren't for them. These might be easy successes with the public, but they quickly become boring to play, tiresome to listen to yet another repetition whilst never a substitute for the originals, and in the long run the performance and the audience that is prepared to listen both miss out. Their harmonies might be as glorious as Simon & Garfunkel, for example, but you won't get them to reprise any S&G hits to prove it.

The core of their long song list (they can play for hours without repeating anything) is the traditional music of the Celtic countries and the rural parts of England, with additions from the Celtic diaspora, plus a handful of contemporary songs from those same regions (including the US) that fall happily into the same mood. There are even a small number of Hodmadodderly originals: but why fret over your own compositions when the tradition has better songs? - the art of folk music has always been in the interpretation, and every Hodmadodderly number is one they have made their own.

Two voices, solo or in harmony; two guitars also always in harmony (never simple unison), through different tunings, chord inversion, or use of the 'capo': even in this, they are most unusual among the duos you may see around the place, and it's another example of their refusal to take the easy way out. Yet another is the way they have insisted in still performing without amplification on the street, for the sake of the purity of the sound (concert appearances with proper PA systems are of course another matter!). The subtleties in the sound bring out the individual voices in their guitar styles too - distinctive and different, and, in Tony's case at least, even distinguished.

You might easily be able to find other people who do something more-or-less like what they do, but you'd find it difficult to find it done so well.

Hodmadodderly - Grande musica di Gran Bretagna -

DOC - without artificial additives or Genetically Modified (GM) ingredients

Touring in Italy since 1992, Hodmadodderly have been invited performers at the leading street music festivals: Ferrara, Pennabilli, Novara, Bassano del Grappa, Lucania... and numerous well-known smaller events. They have also played many concert engagements, formal and informal, in Italy and France.

In England they are the traditional first act of the first stage to open at the huge and legendary Glastonbury Festival, and always play the prestigious Bath Fringe

Festival, as well as regular appearances in venues all round the southwest of England where they live: Bristol, Exeter, Salisbury, Bath, and so on.

For the larger concert and festival events Hodmadodderly is also available with a selection of their regular collaborators on other instruments if a fuller sound is desired. Violin & Low Whistle; Hammer Dulcimer; percussion; flute & percussion: all possible subject to the availability of the musicians and the budgets involved.