

# ATRIUM ANIMAE DIES IRAE

**ATRIUM:** [latin, atrium: the fore court of a Roman house] It is used especially at the entrance of pagan and religious buildings. In the Middle Ages the name was extended to the open churchyard or cemetery.

**ANIMA:** [latin, soul: the spiritual and immortal part in man].

The name "ATRIUM ANIMAE" can be translated in English as "The Gate of the Soul" or "The Hall of the Soul." It can be considered as a symbolic representation of the passage from physical world toward an immaterial world, a line where two different worlds - the outer and the inner worlds - meet together. In a deeper sense, "Atrium Animae" can be considered as the boundary where Life and Death come together.

Symphonic, neoclassical, heavenly voices with strong influences from classical and spiritual music -- artists and composers such as early-period Dead Can Dance, Arvo Part, Giacinto Scelsi, Stoa and Arcana.

Atrium Animae is a hermetic project distinguished by dusky atmospheres and a mesmeric journey into a world of submission and desperation. In the full-length concept album *Dies Irae*, the recurring theme within the seven tracks is the relationship between Man and God as a symbolic voyage in a silent wasteland made of treachery, defeat and spiritual hunger. A world where the locked embrace of loss and despair are represented through a reinterpretation of passages taken from religious and pagan texts.



Founded in Italy in 2007, Atrium Animae merges the talents of Massimiliano Picconi (keyboards, programming) with Alessia Cicala (Conservatory-trained soprano female vocalist). The music is characterized by a "classical" approach, where the basis of the composition is represented by complex polyphonic vocal parts and expressive instruments centered around orchestral strings and horns. This becomes a new starting point from Alessia's previous experiences in the bands Chirleison and Essences.

The analysis of the human condition and its relationship with God is made on *Dies Irae* through a separation into two main parts.

The first is a representation of the human being with its contradictions, its sense of misery.

Torment, a furious rage against inequity and wrong acts, and the demand of vengeance are expressed in the "Psalmus 57" ("Deus conteret dentes eorum in ore", God shall break in pieces their teeth in their mouth, "Laetabitur iustus cum viderit vindictam manus suas lavabit in sanguine peccatoris", the Just shall rejoice when he shall see the revenge, he shall wash his hands in the blood of the sinner). The possibility of reconciliation between Man and God through the Sacrifice, the human redemption and the remission of sins, is symbolized in "Rex Glorae". A sense of misery and betrayal pervades the "Psalmus 87", ("Elongasti a me amicum et proximum, et notos meos a miseria", Friend and neighbour thou hast put far from me, and my acquaintance, because of misery). A profound silence is the only reply in "Lacrimosa Dies".

# PROJEKT

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The first part is the prelude to the second, the representation of the "Dies Irae" (Day of Wrath). "Signum Iudicii" is the visionary description of the Apocalypse in the prophecy of the Erythraean Sibyl, with words taken from "De Civitate Dei" by St. Augustini. The sense of loss and human despair are expressed in the last two songs, from texts taken from the Apocalypse of St. John (Latin Vulgate version of St. Jerome), with the representation of the opening of the last seal in the dramatic "Sigillum Septimum" (The Seventh Seal) and the visionary description of the end of the world in "Angelum Abyssii" (The Angel of the Abyss).

Seven dramatic tracks - 44 minutes of total playing time - of a desolate journey into an apocalyptic scenario with no hope of redemption.