

The Spirit of Sepharad

Saturday, March 20, 2010 at 5:00 PM
Helene Zelazo Center for the Performing Arts
2419 East Kenwood Boulevard

Written and Conceived by Gerard Edery & Vivienne Roumani
Directed by Vivienne Roumani

CARAVAN ENSEMBLE

Gerard Edery (vocals, guitar) ■ Amir Vahab (vocals, saz, percussion)
Glen Velez (percussion) ■ Ara Dinkjian (oud) ■ Barbara Martinez (dancer, vocals)

Artwork: Brigitte Edery ■ Photo and Video Editing: Alex Koch

Translations: Gerard Edery & Amir Vahab

Management: Sandra Noreen, Sefarad Management

PROGRAM

SPIRIT OF SEPHARAD

ACT 1

PROLOGUE

Common Legacy, Abraham

1. SHALOM ALECHEM

(Hebrew) *Spain*

Peace be unto you, Ministering angels,
Messengers of the Most High. the King of
Kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He.

2. CUANDO EL REY NIMROD

(Ladino) *Spain*

When King Nimrod went out into the fields, he
looked at the heavens and at all the stars. He saw
a holy light above the Jewish quarter, a sign that
Abraham our father was about to be born.

Abraham our father, beloved father
blessed father, light of Israel.

Terah's wife was pregnant. Day after day he
would ask her why her face was so changed. She
already knew the good thing she had within.

Let us greet the godfather and also the moel.
Because of his virtue may the Messiah come to
redeem all Israel

3. KOCHAV TZEDEK

(Hebrew) *Morocco*

Abraham was unique in his generation, the
bright and righteous star of generations to come,
who in springtime recognized his creator and
there in his hideout discovered the sacred laws

In later years he sat on a council as a man of
peace. His name was not even mentioned among
soldiers. His sole passion was to create
communities and to teach them the moral of his
experience.

Like a lion from the midst of the forest
And with a tiny group of people He rose up
against the armies of four kings.
And turned their swords into dust

The son Kush was then thrown into the fire
But an angel descended to cool his body and
spirit. Because he believed so deeply in God,
Abraham was unique in his generation.

SCENE 1
Heritage

4. DRUM SOLO

5. PUELLAE GADITANAE

(Spanish) *Spain*

The Puellae dance so popular in Rome, with its celebrated swaying, hips moving, while finger cymbals were played with much skill and rhythm. Since pre-Aryan times one already danced for Mother Earth, venerating her on mountaintops, by the sea, in the deep of caves, singing and dancing. So it is that these dances come from ancient times, from before the Tartesios (original inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula) and before the Phoenecians. Religious dances of fertility which one already danced in ancient times And so the “meneito” reached Cadiz in prehistoric times and there took root. The girls of Cadiz danced in Rome and were famous throughout the Empire. It was the dance of the Puellae of Cadiz.

SCENE 2
Muslim Era

6. NAVOEE

(Persian) *Iran*

Everyone is loyal but not you my flower. How beautiful in the gathering of love, where a beggar sits across a king as equal. Following your palanquin, I will cry so pitifully, to sink the camel into the mud which was created by my tears.

7. WAR DRUMS

**8. BIN EL BARACH OUL YOUM /
KI ESHMERAH SHABBAT**

(Arabic/Hebrew) *Algeria/Morocco*

Between yesterday and today, oh small and beautiful night, I am very happy and in love. I hope to God I will not forget. Divine night I remember. My heart is happy though I have lost my sleep. If I safeguard the Sabbath, God will safeguard me. It is an understanding between Him and me.

Continued Below

SCENE 3
Christian Era

9. L'MA BADA YATATHANNA /
EL ADON

(Arabic/Hebrew) *Spain/Syria*

When she started to shine
Love of beauty ravished me
When she glanced at me, I was lost.
She is like a blossoming branch

Oh my Fate, what astonishment!
There is no one to have mercy on me
I am in the throes of love but the
Beauty behind the beauty will cure
Love of beauty has ravished me.

God-the Master over all works
Blessed by the mouth of every soul
His greatness and love fill the world
Wisdom and insight surround Him

10. TRES MORILLAS

(Spanish) *Spain*

I am in love with three Moorish lasses in
Jaen, Axa, Fatima and Merien.

Three Moorish beauties
Were going to pick olives,
And found them already picked in Jaen,
Axa, Fatima and Merien.

And they found them picked
And returned disheartened
And pale of colour in Jaen,
Axa, Fatima and Merien.

I said to them: 'Who are you ladies
Who have captured my heart?'
"Christians, though once we were Moors
from Jaen, Axa, Fatima and Merien.

With their great beauty,
Manners, wit and good sense
They sealed my fate and fortune,
Axa, Fatima and Merien.

Three alluring Moorish girls
Went to pick apples in Jaen,
Axa, Fatima and Merien.

11. DES OGE MAIS

(Galician-Portuguese) *Portugal/Spain*

And so I wish to begin
How you were approached by Gabriel who said
To you well favored Beloved Virgin of God
With He who will save the world
Be now filled and also your cousin
Elizabeth who was despairing
Is expecting and repentant

And I also wish to tell how she arrived so tired
To Bethlehem and was led to
The porch's entrance
Where she gave birth straightway
To Jesus Christ and laid him down
As any poor woman might
Where they store the barley
And there did keep Him
Amid the beasts of burden

And I don't want to forget of the angels song
Who sang of God and peace on earth
Such as was never seen
And three kings from foreign shores
Saw a star and without delay
Without delay they offered tears
Strange and precious

SCENE 4
THE INQUISITION

12. GOLE SANGYAM

(Persian) *Iran*

I am a flower made out of stone, how shall I tell you how I need you. If you don't shine on me like the sun, I am cold and colorless. If you hold back the rain I shall wilt in a day or two. I am all sighs and sorrow, caught in a furious desert storm, choking in dust and sand. Your heart of stone must feel sorry for me.

INTERMISSION

ACT 2
SCENE 1
The Diaspora

13. LOS GAYOS EMPEZAN A CANTAR

(Ladino) *Turkey*

The roosters are beginning to sing, it is time to rise,
We don't wait for the sun or the day in our little colony
We will go to high mountains, happy days to drink
We will make a small house and this will be our little luck.

14. NIHAVENT LONGA

(Instrumental) *Turkey*

SCENE 2

Memories

15. A LA UNA YO NACI

(Ladino) *Spain*

At one I was born
At two I grew up
At three I took a lover
At four I married

Tell me young lass where do you come from
For I wish to know you
And if you have no lover
I will defend you

Going off to war
I blew two kisses into the air
One was for my mother
And the other for you

16. BIYATA GOL

(Persian) *Iran*

Come let us scatter flower petals everywhere
Come and express your love for me
We can make this world a beautiful place
Life is better when we express our tears
You are everything to me
My life is in your hands

17. FEL SHARAH *Egypt*

(Arabic, Italian, Spanish, French, English)

The girl with beautiful dark eyes was strolling
down the street, her face, lovely as the moon,
Lit up the boulevard.

I wanted to speak to her, but she insulted me,
As her father was at the train station nearby, with
her umbrella, she hit me in reply to my greeting.

Why hit me my dear, when I'm so in love with
you? If you want to show me your love, then we
mustn't quarrel.

18. LEILI, LEILI

(Persian) *Iran*

Show me my love, from where comes this
feeling, your tears are my body. My Leili, my
flower, do not be so hard on me.

19. PAPU SOLEY MANI

(Kurdish) *Iran*

Oh beautiful, dark-eyed one, stay with me.
Your glances and flowing tresses have captured
me. Be mine and mine alone I pray .
I am from Kimansha and you are from Ghasr.
It's not my fault if I've fallen in love with you.

CONCLUSION

Legacy

20. ADIR HU

(Hebrew) *The Balkans*

Mighty is He
May He build His temple soon
Speedily, speedily, Soon in our days

Glorious is He, Great is He . . .
Honored is He, Pure is He . . .
Powerful is He, King is He . . .