

Celebrating Early Jewish Music



presented by
The UCLA Early Music Ensemble

Directed by Dr. Marylin Winkle
Assisted by Danielle Stein

Monday, October 21, 2024

PROGRAM

<i>W'Édámah</i> 19th Century Pub Songs <i>Los Bilbilikos</i> <i>Durme Durme</i> <i>Amoroso</i> <i>D'Amors qui m'a tolu a moi/Es lo rei tant descauzit?</i>	Obadiah the Proselyte (1070-1150) Traditional Ladino/ Judeo-Sephardic Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro (c. 1475), arr. Monica Cellio Chrétien de Troyes (fl. 1160-1191)/ Israel Caslari (fl. 1327)
<i>Shir hamma'alot</i> (Psalm 128)	Salamone Rossi (1570-1630)
<i>Dio, Clemenza, e Rigore</i> Sinfonia Coro	Anonymous (ca. 1730)

THANKS TO:

TA heroine Danielle Stein for her work coaching, preparing rehearsals, and contributing program notes and translations; to Prof. Mark Kligman, Director of the Lowell Milken Center for Music of American Jewish Experience, for advising this program back in 2019-2020, and for your patience and support as we've strived to see it through despite monumental global challenges; to guest coaches Tamzin Elliott and Ian Pomerantz for lending your time and expertise to coaching our ensemble; to Jody Hirsch for providing translations and pronunciation support; to the scholars of this repertoire, like Ian, Elizabeth Weinfield, Daniel Sullivan, and others, who make it possible for us to study and perform these works respectfully, and in so doing, preserve language and culture; to Adam Gilberti for assistance with disseminating and maintaining period instruments; all of our community volunteers for lending their experience and support in various and invaluable ways; especially Abbey Thompson, for going above and beyond to teach and coach Medieval French diction, and for all of your scholarly assistance with our contrafacta project; and lastly, to all of our ensemble members for their tenacity, creativity, and commitment to community. The EME acknowledges our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples.

PERSONNEL

Voices

Miranda Claxton
Charlotte Kelly
Jillian Lopez
**Danielle Stein
Abbey Thompson

Bowed Strings

Eli Chenevert, baroque violin/treble viol
*Marylin Winkle, bass viol/treble
viol/vielle

Winds

Bruce Teter, recorders/bells

Plucked Strings

Jillian Lopez, medieval harp

Harpichord

Ashley Dao

***Director**

****Assistant Director (TA)**

ENSEMBLE BIOGRAPHY

From the 1960s, professors in the UCLA Music Department maintained a "Collegium" dedicated to Western repertoires prior to 1750. As a result of their advocacy, the School now possesses a fine collection of early instruments for student use (including a beautiful and unique Organ Studio with its own Baroque tracker organ). The group was, however, marginal to the curriculum until it was finally established as the **Early Music Ensemble**, a standing ensemble, offered for credit, in 2008, under the directorship of Elisabeth Le Guin of the Musicology Department. In recent years EME has developed an increasingly adventurous approach to the very idea of "early music." Through its concert programming and rehearsal practices, the group has interrogated the Western European canon, the bias toward composed texts, musical "professionalism" as an exclusionary social system, and the idea of top-down pedagogy. The EME, under the current direction of Dr. Marylin Winkle, remains committed to exploring historical performance traditions within and beyond the traditional canon in an inclusive, welcoming community.

PROGRAM NOTES

By: Rebecca Jean-Emigh, Zoe Ives, Danielle Stein, Abbey Thompson, and Marilyn Winkle

In the year 1102, a Norman-Italian Christian monk named Johannes converted to Judaism, taking on the Hebrew name **Obadiah**, which means "servant of God." Having witnessed the persecution of Jews in Europe by the forerunners of the Crusaders, Obadiah left Italy and embarked on extensive travels through the Abrahamic holy lands of Palestine, Syria, and Baghdad. After a clash with Crusader forces left him wounded, he settled in Egypt to write his memoir. Rather than forsaking his clerical education entirely, Obadiah composed Hebrew liturgical music in the style of early Christian chant, thus producing the oldest surviving notated Hebrew music. According to scholars of Jewish early music, Obadiah's works are the only known examples of Hebrew prayers set to Gregorian chant. Our ensemble has selected one of his chant pieces for today's performance: *W'Edamah*, a short prayer for guidance. While this chant would have originally been sung acapella in a sacred setting, performers today who present these pieces in secular concert settings sometimes choose to add instrumental accompaniment. We have improvised our own instrumental accompaniment using a combination of medieval period instruments: *vielle* (medieval fiddle), harp, and recorder. We would like to thank Niccolo Seligmann for sharing their transcription of this piece with us, and Alkemie for sharing their recorded performance for inspiration.

The two Judeo-Sephardic pieces, *Los Bilbilikos* and *Durme Durme* are presented in the traditional Ladino. Also known as Judeo-Spanish, Ladino is a language of the Sephardic Jews that developed from the exile of Jews from Spain in 1492 to various countries that integrate elements of local languages into Old Spanish. "Los Bilbilikos," a lament and love song, is sung from the perspective of someone suffering from deep passion. Using the imagery of birds, the narrator sings of doves (symbols of peace and birds who send messages), and nightingales (birds that represent love and poetry in the Sephardic tradition). The song is made up of one melodic line that repeats per verse and is written in a Hijaz-Nahwand scale (also called Phrygian dominant or the Spanish Phrygian). *Durme Durme*, a traditional Sephardic lullaby, details watching over a loved one as they sleep and the depth of feeling that one experiences in that tender moment and exchange. Like so many lullabies, the text encodes much more than a parent's hopes and aspirations for a child, but also their anxieties and reflections of daily life. As Ruth Rubin has noted in *Voices of a People*, the Jewish lullaby has conveyed shifting values in its communities, from the Torah study and piety encouraged in the lullabies of the early 18th and 19th centuries, to the concerns of flight, immigration, and loss expressed in later lullabies and evolving lullaby traditions. *Durme Durme*, an example of an early-tradition lullaby that has traveled with Sephardic communities throughout the diaspora. Although it has been established that both of these tunes actually originated in the 19th Century, performers like Jodi Savall have endorsed a modern tradition of "medievalizing" them by performing them with ancient instruments. Our performance today likewise uses some light improvised accompaniment on medieval instruments, but we acknowledge that this practice is actually anachronistic, and we thank Ian Pomerantz for sharing his insights with us on the true origins of this repertoire!

In her dissertation titled, *Hybridity in the Fourteenth-Century Esther Poems of Israel Caslari*, Jaclyn Tzvia Piudik studied a pair of texts by Israel ben Joseph Caslari, a 14th-century Jewish physician, living in the very Catholic city of Avignon, Provence. The texts are two separate adaptations of *The Scroll of Esther*, the foundational story for the holiday of Purim. The first was written in French, then later, the 2nd version was written in Hebrew. The text, with its heavy focus on redemption from persecution, was composed in an era of Jewish expulsion and exile, and its relevance made it popular. Caslari's first version (ca. 1327) is in "Judéo-Provençal, the southern French vernacular written using Hebrew characters." It is also written in octosyllabic couplets, much in the same style of other French *romances* from that time. For this afternoon's performance, we have taken one of Caslari's verses, *Es lo rei tant descauzit* (Queen Vashti), and have set it in contrafacta as a responding text within a popular song from a couple centuries earlier by Chrétien de Troyes, *D'Amors qui m'a tolu a moi*. We have chosen to invoke Vashti to provide a woman's counterargument to Troyes's male persona who laments a woman's unrequited love. The "noble ancestor" Vashti is most likely referring to is most likely to be her father, King Belshazzar of Babylon. Caslari's second version of this story (written entirely in Hebrew) specifies Belshazzar by name. It should be noted that Vashti is also believed to have been a descendant of King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, the infamous military leader who destroyed and looted the city of Jerusalem after a 30-month siege in 6th century BC. Nebuchadnezzar's annihilation of the First Temple and burning of Jerusalem, and the subsequent generations of exile and enslavement of its people that followed (i.e. the Jewish Diaspora), are a historical, religious, and cultural cornerstone of Judaism to this very day. Queen Vashti's family origins add an intriguing intertextual question to this story, and all other Esther /Purim tales: is her depiction at all affected by negative bias, conscious or unconscious, in the author or their intended audience? Female empowerment and resistance to male hubris is central to the story of Esther. In this performance, we hope you enjoy the intertextual dialogue we have created across time and religion. (Abbey Thompson)

One of the most noted Jewish composers of early modern Western music is Salamone Rossi (1570-1630). Rossi was an Italian violinist who composed sacred and secular music, for instruments and voices, and utilized texts in both Hebrew and Italian. Stylistically, his works straddle the Renaissance and Baroque periods and can be likened to those of

Monteverdi. *Shir hamma'alot* is a setting of Psalm 128, a song of ascension in which Rossi musically depicts (“text painting”) family growth and prosperity in return for faithful obedience, using a dancle-like triple middle in the middle for celebration and imitative counterpoint at the end to resound “peace be on Israel.”

The celebration pieces presented today originate from the Italian Jewish community of Casale Monferrato, a small town in Piemonte, from the years 1732-1735. Composed by anonymous composers for the celebration for the Jewish holiday, **Hoshanah Rabbah**, the seventh day of Sukkot, and counted among the days of Hol Hamoed (intermediate days of the festival), meaning “the great hoshanah.” A hoshanah is a series of seven liturgical poems calling upon God to rescue and redeem the Jewish people. The original manuscript for the celebrations contains three musical scores for the ceremonies of the holiday. Each ceremony contained two parts; part A: a series of instrumental and liturgical pieces; and part B: a cantata or a cantata-quasi-oratorio, *Dio, Clemenza, e Rigore*, (God, Defender and Accuser) whose libretto was written especially for the occasion. Scored for 3 voices, choir and strings, oboes, trumpets and basso continuo, these ceremonial pieces present rich Italian baroque textures with Hebrew texts. The author of the libretti of the two cantatas is identified as S.H. Jarach, whereas Joseph Hayyim Chezighin (G.V. Clava) who was formerly believed to be the author of the texts and the composer of the music, is now considered the coordinator of the Hoshanah Rabbah Casale Monferrato events and likely the compiler and editor of the music. The oratorio presents an impassioned dialogue between Clemenza (Defender) and Rigore (Accuser) resulting in the exalting of God and salvation of the people. The liturgical pieces utilize the Song of Solomon 2:14 “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, In the secret places of the cliff, Let me see your face, Let me hear your voice,” in duet unfolding to another triumphant chorus “Dôdîm,” “lift up your voice to the God we exalt in splendor.”

TEXTS/TRANSLATIONS

W'ÉDÀHMA

מה ואדע	That I might know
מה ואדע	That I might know
בשערים אדבר	what to speak within your gates,
אומר ומה	What should I say
אומר ומה	What should I say
למדני תען ומה	and you should answer—teach me!

LOS BILBILIKOS

Los bilbilikos kantan
Sospiran del amor.
Mi nexama, mi ventura
Estàn en tu poder.

The nightingales sing
They sigh of love.
My soul, my fate
Are in your power.

La rozga enflorèse
En el mes de mai.
Mi nexama s'escurèse
Sufriendo del amor.

The rose blooms
In the month of May.
My soul suffers of love.

DURME DURME

*Durme, durme mi alma donzeya
Durme, durme sin ansia i dolor
Durme, durme sin ansia i dolor*

*Heq tu sklavo ke tanto dezeya
Ver tu suenyo kon grande amor.
Ver tu suenyo kon grande amor.*

*Ab ke sufre mi alma
Ab, mi linda dama !
Ab, mi linda dama !*

*Siente, siente al son de mi guitarra
Siente ermoza mis males kantar.
Siente ermoza mis males kantar.*

Sleep, sleep my beautiful child.
Sleep without worry or sorrow.
Sleep without worry or sorrow

Here is your slave who wants so much to watch over your
sleep with great love. So much to watch over your sleep
with great love.

Oh how my soul suffers
Oh, my beautiful lady !
Oh, my beautiful lady !

Listen, listen to the sound of my guitar
Listen, beautiful girl, to me sing of my woes.
Listen, beautiful girl, to me sing of my woes.

D'AMOURS QUI M'A TOLU A MOI/ ES LO REI TANT DESCANZIT?

Transl. Daniel E. Sullivan/ Transl. Susan Milner Silberstein, slight alterations to the text
were made by A. Thompson & M. Winkle to fit the syllabic & rhyming structure of its
musical destination.

MAN:

*D'Amors, qui m'a tolu a moi
N'a soi ne me veut retenir,
Me plaing ensi, qu'ades otroi
Que de moi face son plesir.
Et si ne me repuis tenir
Que ne m'en plaingne, et di por quoi:
Car ceus qui la traissent voi
Souvent a lor joie venir,
Et g'i fail par ma bone foi.*

*S'Amors, pour essaucier sa loi,
Veut ses anemis convertir,
De sens li vient, si com je croi,
Qu'as siens ne puet ele faillir.
Je, qui ne m'en repuis partir
De celi vers qui me souploï,
Mon cuer, qui siens est, li envoï;
Mes de noient la cuït servir
Se ce li rent que je li doi.*

*Dame, de ce que vostres sui,
Dites moi se gre m'en saurez,
Nenil, voir, s'onques vous conui,
Ainz vous poise quant vous m'avez,
Et des que vos ne me volez,
Dont sui je vostres par ennui.
Mes se ja devez de nului
Merci avoir, si me souffrez,
Que je ne sai servir antrui.*

MAN:

Of Love, who has taken me from myself
and who wishes not to retain me,
I lament in this way: I grant that from now on
she should do with me as she pleases.
Yet I cannot keep myself
from complaining, and I'll tell you why:
because I often see those who betray her
achieve their end,
and I fail because of my good faith.

If Love, to extend her dominion,
wishes to convert her enemies,
it makes sense, I think,
that she should not fail her own.
To the one from whom I cannot
leave off beseeching,
I send my heart, which is hers;
but I don't think that I serve her at all
if I only give over what I owe.

Lady, that I am yours,
tell me if you will agree.
Not at all, truly, if ever I knew you,
rather it bothers you that you have me.
And since you do not want me,
I am yours through annoyance.
But if ever on anyone you should
have mercy, have mercy on me,
for I know not how to serve anyone else.

*Merci trouvasse au mien cuidier,
S'ele jüst en tout le compas
Du monde, la ou je la qier,
Mes bien croi qu'ele n'i est pas.
Onques ne fin, onques ne las
De ma douce dame proier;
Proi et reproi sanz exploitier,
Comme cil qui ne set a gas
Amors servir ne losengier.*

VASHTI

*Es lo rei tant descauzit?
Ieu non cre que sia de menz
Que el non sia isit de senz...
Mal sembla mon senher avi,
Que era tant bon e tant savi
Que begra de vin per aire,
Ieu sai ben qui era son paire:
Vilan de natura semblava;
Las egas de mon paire gardava.*

MAN:

*Cuers, se ma dame ne t'a chier,
Ja mar por cou t'en partiras:
Tous jours soies en son dangier,
Puis qu'empris et comencé l'as.
Ja, mon los, plenté n'amerat
Ne pour chier tans ne t'esmaier;
Bien adoucist par delaiier,
Et quant plus desiré l'auras,
Plus t'en ert douls a l'essaier.*

SHIR HAMMA'ALOT

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר יְיָ כָּל-יְרֵא [אֲדַנִּי] הַהֵלֵךְ בְּדַרְכָּיו:
יְגִיעַ כַּפֶּיךָ כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁר יָדוּב לָךְ:
אֲשֶׁתְּךָ כְּגֶפֶן כְּגֶפֶן פְּרִיָּה בְּיַרְכְּתֵי בֵּיתְךָ בְּנֵיךָ כְּשֶׁתְּלִי זֵיתִים סָבִיב
לְשִׁלְחָנְךָ:
הִנֵּה כִּי-כֵן יְבָרַךְ גְּבֹר יְרֵא [אֲדַנִּי]:
יְבָרְכֶךָ [אֲדַנִּי] מִצִּיּוֹן וְרֵאָה בְּטוֹב יְרוּשָׁלַם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:
וְרֵאָה-בְּנִים לְבְנֵיךָ שְׁלוֹם עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

I would find mercy, I think,
if it were anywhere
in the world, where I seek it,
but I really think that it is not there.
I never leave off, I never tire
of beseeching my sweet lady;
I beseech and beseech again without success,
like one who does not know at all
how to serve or deceive love.

VASHTI

*Is the King so vulgar?
I don't think it's any less a thing
than that he's gone out of his mind...
He resembles little my noble ancestor*
who was so fine and prudent
that he would drink wine like air,
I know well who his father was:
he seemed of lowly origin;
He used to keep my father's mares.*

MAN:

My heart, if my lady does not hold you dear,
never will you leave her for this:
stay forever in her dominion,
since you have begun to give yourself over.
Never, I swear, will you love abundance,
do not despair over precious time;
delay sweetens the reward,
and the longer you will have desired it,
the sweeter it will taste.

Blessèd art thou that fearest God, And walkest in his ways:
For of thy labour shalt thou eat, Happy shalt be thy days.
Like fruitful vines on thy house-side, So doth thy wife spring out:
Thy children stand like olive plants, Thy table round about.
Thus art thou blest that fearest God, And he shall let thee see:
The promisèd Jerusalem, And her felicity.
Thou shalt thy children's children see, To thy great joy's increase:
And likewise grace on Israel, Prosperity and peace.

Dio, Clemenza, e Rigore, Transl. Israel Adler

CORO

O come let us sing and a joyful noise make
Let us sing to the Rock of Salvation
Exalting His Name shall we ring it out loud
Rejoicing with joy of eternal duration.