



fivebyfive & Pegasus Early Music/NYS Baroque
with Lynne Feldman, artist

Old & New: Sephardic Reflections

October 21, 2023

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist, Syracuse

October 22, 2023

Temple Beth El, Rochester

Program

Blanca Ninya

Daniel Akiva (b. 1953), arr. Laura Lentz

Una Matica

Una Matica (from *Three Sephardic Songs*)

Sephardic song
Keane Southard (b. 1987)

Morena me llaman

Morena me llaman (from *Three Sephardic Songs*)

Sephardic song
K. Southard

La Comida de Mañana

La Comida de Mañana (from *Three Sephardic Songs*)

Sephardic song
K. Southard

Intermission

Avre tu puerta cerrada

Sephardic song, arr. Nina Stern

Sephardic Suite

Alta, Alta Va Luna

La Rosa Puncha

Ay Sarica, bre

Clarice Assad (b. 1978)
in a new version written by Ondrej Veselý for fivebyfive

La rosa linda

Porque llorax

Scalerica de oro

Sephardic songs

MUSICIANS



fivebyfive

Laura Lentz (Artistic Director, flute)

Marcy Bacon (clarinet)

Ken Luk (electric guitar)

Eric J. Polenik (bass)

Haeyeun Jeun (piano)

Marc Webster (Executive Director, audio/video engineer)

About fivebyfive

Described as “classical turned loose in the toy store,” “top-flight,” and “imaginative,” fivebyfive is an award-winning, artist-led ensemble known for its impeccable musicianship and adventurous spirit that permeates innovative, cross-genre programming and community engagement. Based in Rochester, NY and formed in 2015, the group has a mission to engage audiences in the collaborative spirit and creativity of today’s chamber music. To realize its mission, fivebyfive presents programs featuring today’s chamber music by commissioning, developing, and performing music by the most forward-thinking composers, advocating for creators who are underrepresented in the field, and collaborating with a wide range of partners. For more about fivebyfive, fivebyfivemusic.com

Laura Lentz (Artistic Director and flutist) released her debut solo recording *Jacob’s Triptych* in early 2023 and includes two new works dedicated to her by internationally known Dutch composer Jacob ter Veldhuis (AKA JacobTV). The recording has appeared twice on *New Sounds* with John Schaefer and on various other radio programs such as Dutch Radio’s *Unheard* program. This year she presents her new book, *Modal Flute Warmup*, at various flute fairs and universities across the country, including as an invited guest to the New York Flute Club in March, 2024. She is presently recording music by Norwegian composer Kari Telstad Sundet and is also working on a project of new pieces for flute and string quartet. For that project she is lead commissioner of a consortium for a new work by Marc Mellits.

Marcy D. Bacon (Clarinetist) holds teaching positions at Nazareth University, RIT and Eastman Community Music School. She earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Eastman School, an MM from Michigan State University as a student of Elsa Verdehr, and a BM from Portland State University in her home state of Oregon.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, **Ken Luk** (Guitarist) has performed at Experiencing Villa-Lobos Festival, Live from Hochstein, The Great Blue Heron Festival, and Grassroots Festival of Music and Dance, among others. Co-founder of Rochester Classical Guitar and the Rochester Mandolin Orchestra, he also serves on the board of the Classical Mandolin Society of America. Ken received his Doctor of Musical Arts in classical guitar at the Eastman School of Music where he also earned a master’s degree in music theory pedagogy.

Eric J. Polenik (Bassist) is a member of the Grammy winning Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, celebrating its centennial season. He holds teaching positions at Roberts Wesleyan University and Hochstein School of Music and Dance. Polenik also performs with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Finger Lakes Opera, Rochester Oratorio Society and Erie Philharmonic.

Haeyeun Jeun (Pianist), a native of Korea, is a prize-winning musician with a long list of achievements including top prizes at the of Seattle International Piano Competition, the Osaka International Competition, and many more. She earned her masters and doctorate degree in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music and currently teaches at Finger Lakes Community College.

Marc Webster (Executive Director, recording engineer, keyboardist, and composer), Webster brings experience in a wide range of musical genres including classical, film score, jazz, rock, gospel, blues, and rap. He also owns and operates [Blue on Blue Recording Studio](#) which has a special focus working with classical musicians and composers to create albums, music videos, concert recordings, and all other kinds of audio and video artistry.



Pegasus Early Music/NYS Baroque

Nell Snaidas (soprano)

Nina Stern (recorders)

Christa Patton (harp and winds)

Rex Benincasa (percussion)

Deborah Fox (Artistic Director, lute)

About Pegasus Early Music and NYS Baroque

Pegasus Early Music and NYS Baroque have been in an artistic collaboration since 2013, performing early music concerts in the Finger Lakes and Central New York State, especially Ithaca, Syracuse and Rochester. Pegasus was formed in 2005 by Artistic Director Deborah Fox, and NYS Baroque celebrates its 35th season this year. Our concerts encompass the spectrum of music played with attention to historical instruments and performance ideas: medieval, renaissance, baroque and classical music; vocal and instrumental, sacred and secular. We are passionately convinced that early music can be meaningful within the context of contemporary society, and we want to share that with our audience.

Pegasus Early Music

211 Cobbs Hill Drive Rochester, NY 14610

www.PegasusEarlyMusic.org 585-703-3990

NYS Baroque

333 The Parkway, Ithaca, NY 14850

www.nysbaroque.com 607-301-0604

Grammy-nominated singer **Nell Snaidas** has been praised by the New York Times for her “beautiful soprano voice, melting passion” and “vocally ravishing” performances. “One of the world’s leading interpreters of Sephardic Song” (Commonwealth Magazine), she was featured on Canada’s CBC radio alongside Montserrat Figueras and Victoria de los Angeles. She has served as guest artist/Sephardic music consultant for many groups, including The Rose Ensemble, Schola Antiqua, the Toronto Chamber Choir and co-directed/created the highly acclaimed “Sephardic Journey” for Apollo’s Fire with conductor Jeannette Sorrell (which debuted at #2 on the Billboard World Music Chart. Of Uruguayan-American descent, Nell is the co-Artistic Director of the NYC concert series GEMAS: Early Music of the Americas. nellsnaidas.org

Nina Stern has carved a unique and extraordinarily diverse career for herself as a world-class recorder player and classical clarinetist. She has appeared as a soloist or principal player with orchestras including Metropolitan Opera, New York Philharmonic, American Classical Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, La Scala Orchestra, Hesperion XX, Handel and Haydn Society, Philharmonia Baroque, Opera Lafayette and has recorded for Erato, Harmonia Mundi, Sony Classics, Telarc, MSR, Good Child Music, and Smithsonian labels. Recent projects include performances and recordings with her ensembles Rose of the Compass and East of the River (Daphna Mor, Co-Director). Nina was appointed to the faculty of Juilliard’s Historical Performance program in 2012. She is founder and Artistic Director of S’Cool Sounds, an award-winning music education project serving public school children and under-resourced communities in the U.S. and abroad. Nina is the recipient of awards including the Laurette Goldberg Award for Achievement in Early Music Outreach (Early Music America) and the Distinguished Achievement Award (American Recorder Society.) She has served as Director of Community Engagement for Boston Early Music Festival since 2021.

Christa Patton, historical harpist and early wind specialist, has performed throughout the Americas, Europe, and Japan with many of today’s premier early music ensembles including Piffaro the Renaissance Band, Early Music New York, Boston Camerata,

The King's Noyse, Folger Consort, Newberry Consort, Apollo's Fire, Parthenia, ARTEK, and Chatham Baroque, to name a few. As a Baroque harpist specializing in 17th century opera, Christa has performed with New York City Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Atelier, and the Opera Theater of Saint Louis. As an educator and scholar, she has served on the faculty of Rutgers University and the Graduate Center at CUNY. She is also musical director of the Baroque Opera Workshop at Queens College, specializing in the works of early 17th century composers. In the recording industry, Christa has fulfilled the roles of both recording artist and producer.

Rex Benincasa has been a freelancing drummer and percussionist in New York since 1978. Along with hundreds of television/radio soundtracks and commercial recordings, he has performed with the Apollo's Fire, Ensemble Caprice, Alba Consort, Flamenco Latino, Carlota Santana Spanish Dance, Andrea Delconte Danza Espana, Zorongo Flamenco Dance, Pilar Rioja, Amanecer Flamenco Progressivo, American Ballet Theater, Sacramento Ballet, Ballet Austin, the Washington Ballet, and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. He has recorded CDs and/or movie soundtracks for Marty Balin, Karen Mason, Andrea Marcovicci, Ann Kittredge, Celia Burke, Jamie deRoy, Stephanie Pope, Foday Musa Suso, Douglas Cuomo, Philip Glass, Sesame Street, NFL Films, Sons of Sepharad, and the Ivory Consort to name but a few. Broadway shows include Fosse, Elaine Stritch, The Full Monty, Flower Drum Song, Man of La Mancha, Never Gonna Dance, Little Shop of Horrors, The Frogs, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Hairspray, The Drowsy Chaperone, Curtains, The Color Purple, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, Shrek, In The Heights, Billy Elliot, Peter And The Starcatcher, Motown the Musical, and Mrs. Doubtfire. Rex likes all kinds of music.

Deborah Fox is a lutenist with a span of repertoire ranging from medieval to baroque music, as a soloist, chamber music player, and baroque opera continuo. She has performed with the major early music ensembles and festivals from Newfoundland to Australia, including the Carmel Bach Festival, Glimmerglass Opera, Les Violons du Roy (Montreal), Spoleto Festival, Opera Atelier (Toronto), Pinchgut Opera (Sydney), Concert Royal (NY), Haymarket Opera and Newberry Consort (Chicago), and others. She graduated *cum laude* from Smith College, and received the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Early Music at London's Guildhall School, specializing in the improvised accompaniment practices of the baroque. Her teachers have included Paul O'Dette, Pat O'Brien, and Nigel North. She has been a Teaching Artist for the Aesthetic Education Institute. She is the founder and director of Pegasus Early Music in Rochester, NY, and the director of NYS Baroque in Ithaca and Syracuse, NY.

GUEST ARTIST

Lynne Feldman, artist, grew up on Manhattan's upper west side and began her formal art training at the age of 12 at the Art Students League of New York. She continued to study drawing and painting there for the next 15 years. She attended New York University and Empire State College and received a Master's in art education from Columbia University. Her works have been exhibited in galleries, museums and public spaces around the country.

After 40 years of painting in oils, she fell in love with a collage technique where she glues beautiful and unique patterned fabrics directly onto the canvas and then paints with acrylics. She has maintained a studio for the past 37 years in the Anderson Arts Building in the Neighborhood of the Arts, Rochester NY.

www.lynnfeldman.com

PROGRAM NOTES

About this collaboration

When Laura Lentz of fivebyfive and Deborah Fox of Pegasus Early Music/NYS Baroque first met, we discovered we had much in common even though our music came from wildly different time periods and styles. What drew us to each other was a sense of being open to musical exploration and an excitement about collaboration. What is similar about the different music that we play? What is different about the similar music that we could play? How do we approach new repertoire? What in our music speaks to our audiences—and can we both reach the same audiences?

Laura mentioned that she had discovered *Sephardic Suite* by Clarice Assad, and had gotten permission from the composer to go ahead with a new version for fivebyfive, which you will hear today. Deb was intrigued with the idea of investigating early Sephardic music and drew on the expertise of colleagues Nell Snaidas and Nina Stern. After further brainstorming between Laura and Deb, the idea for a concert was born.

In the first half you will hear three Sephardic songs played in an “old” version by Pegasus/NYS Baroque, followed by fivebyfive sharing a “new” one, in a work by Keane Southard that was commissioned by the ensemble.

In the second half you will hear the Assad Sephardic Suite for fivebyfive, as well as other Sephardic songs and tunes, and you’ll have the opportunity for a sing-along!

About Sephardic music

After the Jews of Spain were expelled in 1492, they travelled throughout Europe and the Mediterranean in search of hospitable refuge. Although some drifted as far north as London, Amsterdam, Vienna and Hamburg, the majority settled in various parts of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire welcomed this educated population that brought with them usefulness of craft, trade, and technological skills considered valuable to the growth of the Empire. Because of the Ottoman policy allowing their minorities almost total autonomy, the Sephardim were able to continue to identify themselves as Spanish Jews, preserving their old Castilian language (Ladino), and much of the culture of their Iberian experience. Since music was so central to their daily lives, particularly in the domain of women, they were able to preserve this astonishing musical heritage for 500 years by oral tradition.

Telling the stories of its people, Sephardic music is filled with tales of exile and courtship, family life, weddings and pranks, infectious rhythm and haunting melodies. This beautiful, poetic Ladino repertoire includes Romances (ballads of love, loss and adventure), Piyyutim (lyrical embellishments of prayers) and Koplás (strophic festival songs), some of which even feature recipes within their texts.

In order to begin to understand the Sephardic culture, one must also consider the cultures of the Muslims and Christians of Medieval Spain. From the time of the Muslim conquest in 711 to the expulsion of the Jews in 1492 there was a relationship between these Three-Faith-Communities that is referred to as *Convivencia* (“co-existence”). This is not to say that these cultures lived together in total harmony, but that they existed in an environment of cultural openness, where they often lived in the same neighborhoods, engaged in business together, and naturally affected and influenced each other with their ideas.

Like the living language, Ladino or Judeo Español, the music of the Sephardim also evolved. While there are arguably aspects of Medieval Spanish melodies in some Sephardic songs, much of the repertoire took on the melodies of their adoptive homelands, while often retaining the various dialects of Judeo Spanish. Elements of more complex eastern rhythms are found in pieces like “La comida la mañana”, with a complex rhythm (7) where divisions of 2 and 3 are on display. --*Nell Snaidas*

About the fivebyfive music

BLANCA NINYA is a romance from the Middle Ages from a Sephardic Anthology for flute solo by composer Daniel Akiva. **Daniel Akiva** is a musician (guitarist) and composer, born in Israel. This is a special arrangement by fivebyfive flutist Laura Lentz for this concert.

THREE SEPHARDIC SONGS for Flute, Clarinet, Electric Guitar, Double Bass, and Piano was composed in the early months of 2023 by **Keane Southard**. It was commissioned by fivebyfive (Rochester, NY) who requested modern settings of three songs, Una Matica, Morena, and La Comida, to be composed for their unusual instrumentation and performed in a concert alongside traditional settings of these songs.

The composer, Keane Southard, writes: “In thinking about how I could approach setting these melodies for this ensemble, I realized I had a choice to make: I could immerse myself in recordings of these and other Sephardic songs to better understand this musical tradition, plus listen to fivebyfive’s many recordings to see how other composers and arrangers have approached using this rare combination of instruments, or I could avoid listening to recordings and take these melodies and this instrumentation, meditate on and play around with them, to come up with my own ideas for what this ensemble can do and what these melodies could become. I chose to take the latter approach and largely avoided listening to recordings or analyzing the songs’ lyrics. The result is something that, except for the melodies themselves, is most likely far removed from the Sephardic musical tradition and I hope gives a new perspective on what these fascinating melodies are and can be. “
fivebyfive is premiering this new work at these concerts.

Keane Southard (b. 1987) is a composer and pianist who believes deeply in the power of music to be a catalyst for positive change in the world and change how people think, feel, and act. Proclaimed as “a terrific discovery” (*Bandworld Magazine*) and “highly-professional and well-orchestrated” (*Portland Press Herald*), his music features a wide range of styles and approaches from traditional to experimental, systematic to free, and sacred to secular, reflecting a belief that creativity is stimulated by exploring and finding value in all aspects of the spiritual and physical worlds. Keane earned his Ph.D. in composition at the Eastman School of Music, his M.M. in composition from the University of Colorado-Boulder, and his B.M. in composition and theory from the Conservatory at Baldwin Wallace University. His primary composition teachers include Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, David Liptak, Allen Shawn, Carter Pann, Jeffrey Nytch, Richard Toensing, Daniel Kellogg, Loris Chobanian, and Kenneth Girard, plus additional studies with Samuel Adler, Derek Bermel, João Guilherme Ripper, and Stephen Hartke.

SEPHARDIC SUITE by **Clarice Assad**, new version written by **Ondrej Veselý** for fivebyfive, consists of three pieces inspired by love songs and relationships. Each movement represents a different aspect of these connections, be it an emotional condition, psychological state, or the poetry associated with the lyrics. The through-composed portions of this musical composition are meant to be perceived as an expansion and development of these ideas in a programmatic, story-telling way. The first movement is a song about a young woman who loses her innocence when deceived by a scoundrel —her spirit is lifted while looking for justice through God’s work. The second movement is a song about letting go of an old love — and meeting a new one. It is that in-between-place where feelings are still raw and unsettled. The music goes back and forth between those different worlds of emotions like a roller coaster.

The third and final movement is a humorous depiction of a couple. Upon hearing the song, visualized a bickering older couple, founders of a vivacious and vociferous family who enjoy gathering around the house — a little too often. They contribute to a somewhat chaotic, albeit party atmosphere. The piece was constructed based on the lyrics, which provide the following scenario: Husband sits and rests comfortably. Too lazy to get up, he nags his wife to bring him some water. Midway through the piece, a flute cadenza sets the tone — quite irritated, representing the wife's voice. Displeased by the constant amount of work and requests she gets from him and everyone else, she is met by a sorrowful and apologetic guitar cadenza (husband) who seems to promise they'll be more loving and caring. Everyone's happy and the family celebrations resume in fun, lively, even more exciting ways than before.

fivebyfive is premiering this new version for its instrumentation, written by Ondrej Veselý with permission from Clarice Assad. The original instrumentation is for flute, guitar, and string quartet.

Clarice Assad is a Brazilian-American, Grammy-nominated composer, pianist, and vocalist. Her music is vibrant, diverse, soulful, and colorful. Carefully crafted textures permeate her musical world, which embraces a wide variety of styles, including her own original concepts.

Assad's music has been commissioned by Carnegie Hall, Fundação OSESP, the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, New Century Chamber Orchestra, Boston Land-marks Orchestra, Concordia Chamber Players, Albany Symphony, The Harris Foundation, Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, BRAVO! Music Festival, and La Jolla Music Festival, among others. Her works have been recorded and performed by prominent artists, including Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Yo-Yo Ma, Mike Marshall, the Turtle Island String Quartet, Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, Anne-Marie McDermott, Eugenia Zuckerman, Ida Kavafian, and Chanticleer. Her music has been performed by internationally acclaimed orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony, Queensland Symphony, and Orquestra Sinfônica de São Paulo, and led by exciting conductors such as Marin Alsop, David Alan Miller, Alondra de la Parra, and Christoph Eschenbach.

Ms. Assad has received awards from the Copland House, League of American Orchestras, ASCAP, Meet The Composer, New Music USA, NPR's All Songs Considered, American Theater, the Visiting McKnight Composer Fellowship, the Jerome Foundation, American Composer Forum, and the Franklin Honor Society. She has also been nominated for the Best Contemporary Classical Composition Grammy Award.

Ondrej Veselý is a concert guitarist/ arranger/ music scholar based in Slovakia. He devotes his artistic activities solely to contemporary music, collaboration in chamber music, and interdisciplinary projects. His compositions and arrangements have been performed in Europe, Asia, and the USA by artists like Yo-Yo Ma, Sergio & Odair Assad, David Russel, and Palomar ensemble and gained reviews in renowned American newspapers such as the Chicago Tribune, Las Vegas Review-Journal, and Indystar.com. His arrangement of a composition by Clarice Assad entitled 'The Last Song' was recorded by Yo-Yo Ma on cello, guitarists Sergio and Odair Assad, and pianist Kathryn Stott.

fivebyfive and Pegasus Early Music/NYS Baroque thank Temple Beth El and May Memorial Unitarian Universalist for hosting these concerts. These concerts were made possible by the support of individual donors and New York State Council of the Arts; and with support from the Rochester Area Community Foundation and the Dawn and Jacques Lipson Fund at the Rochester Area Community Foundation.

Visit our websites!

fivebyfive



Pegasus Early Music



NYS Baroque



OLD & NEW TEXTS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Una matica de ruda, una matica de flor Hija mia, mi querida Dime a mi quien te la dio.</p> <p>Una matica de ruda, una matica de flor Me la dio un mancevico que de mi s' enamoró.</p> | <p>A sprig of rue and of flower Darling daughter, tell me who gave these to you.</p> <p>A sprig of rue and of flower They were given by a young man who loves me.</p> |
| <p>Morena me llaman, yo blanca nací De pasear galena mi color perdí Scalerica de oro y de marfíl Para que suva la novia a dar kiddushin.</p> <p>Dizime galena, si quieres venir? Los velos tengo fuertes no puedo yo venir!</p> <p>Morena me llaman, el hijo del Rey Si otra vez me llama, yo me voy con él!</p> | <p>They call me the dark one, yet I was born fair. As time passed, my color changed. A little ladder of gold and ivory was made for the bride to climb up to give her blessing on the union. “Tell me, beauty, would you like to come with me?” “My vows are strong, I cannot come with you.”</p> <p>They called me the dark one – and so does the King’s son; if he calls me again, this time I shall go with him!</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>La rosa linda salió a la mar Ay Sarica, linda y hermozica Tráeme agua.</p> <p>No te puedo yo traerte agua Soy descalza, me cayo roció Yo me vo yelar.</p> <p>Quite galechas, mete zapatos Si el Dio Grande me ayudo Yo te vo mercar zapatos de capan.</p> <p>No me prema mi que me merques tu Padre tengo mercader muy grande Él me mercará zapatos del capan.</p> | <p>The pretty rose went out to the sea Oh, my beautiful young girl Bring me water.</p> <p>I cannot bring you water I am barefoot, the dew has fallen And I will freeze.</p> <p>Take off your slippers, put shoes on If the great God helps me I will buy you shoes at the market.</p> <p>Do not lavish your gift upon me My father has a very large store He will buy me shoes at the market.</p> |
| <p>Scalerica de oro y de marfíl Para que suba la novia a dar kiddushin</p> <p>Venimos a ver Que gozen y logren y tengan mucho bien</p> <p>La novia no tiene dinero Que mos tengan un mazal bueno</p> <p>La novia no tiene ducados Que mos tengan un mazal alto</p> | <p>Little staircase of gold and ivory So the bride can go up and take her wedding vows.</p> <p>We are going to see May they have joy and prosper and have great happiness. The bride doesn't have money May they have good luck.</p> <p>The bride has no coins May they have good fortune.</p> |