

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday, March 18, 2021 1:15 pm

Live streamed from The Church of the Transfiguration in NYC

to midtownconcerts.org, [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com)

ALBA Consort

*Margo Andrea – mezzo-soprano, vielle, zills ~ Carlo Valte – oud
Jason Priset – lute, guitars ~ Rex Benincasa – percussion, psaltery, voice*

Dancing over the Caucasus to the Sea...

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| Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa | Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643), Florence |
| Cantiga #5: Quantas Sabedes Amar Amigo | Martim Codex (12 th century), Galicia |
| Nahawand Kabir Khar | Abdul Qadir Maraghi (13?–1435), Persia |
| Cypriot ballad: En vous amer | Anon from <i>Turino Manuscript</i> (14 th c.), Cyprus |
| Havun Havun | Grigor Narekatsi (mid-10 th century), Armenia |
| Ayu Haas aqi | Traditional Arabic, Andalucia poem by Ibn Zuhr (1094–1162) |
| Si la noche haze escura | Anon from <i>Villancicos de diversos Autores</i> aka <i>Cancionero de Uppsala</i> (published 1556), Venice |
| Fandango | Santiago de Murcia (1673–1739), Spain |
| Voglio di vita uscir | Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643), Venice |
| Dunulá | Sephardic Traditional, Thessalonika |

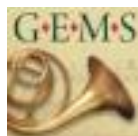
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Texts and translations

Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa

Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa,
la fresca rosa ridente sta,
la siepe ombrosa di bei smeraldi
d'estivi caldi timor non ha.

A balli, a balli, liete venite,
ninfe gradite, fior di beltà.
Or, che sì chiaro il vago fonte
dall'alto monte al mar sen' va.

Suoi dolci versi spiega l'augello,
e l'arboscello fiorito sta.
Un volto bello al l'ombra accanto
sol si dia vanto d'haver pietà.
Al canto, al canto, ninfe ridenti,
Scacciate i venti di crudelta.

Quantas sabedes

Quantas sabedes amar amigo,
treides comig' a lo mar de Vigo.
E banñar nos emos nas ondas.
Quantas sabedes amar amado,
treides comig' a lo mar levado.
E banñar nos emos nas ondas.
Treides comigo a lo mar de Vigo
e veremos o meu amigo.
E banñar nos emos nas ondas.
Treides comigo a lo mar levado
e veremos o meu amado.
E banñar nos emos nas ondas

Cypriot Ballad #23: En vous amer

En vous amer Ai mis labour,
Dame au vis cler Digne d'honneur,
Car de dous sour, Estes garnie,
Fresche et polie.

When the ever charming breezes blow,
the fresh roses are laughing,
the shady hedge of fine emeralds
does not fear the summer heat.

To the dance, to the dance, merrily come,
welcome nymphs, flowers of beauty.
Now the murky springs are clear
running from the high mountains to the sea.

The bird expresses his sweet verses,
and the sapling is in flower.
A beautiful face at the edge of the shadow
only boasts of having pity.
Sing, sing laughing nymphs,
Drive away the winds of cruelty!

Those who know love,
come to the sea at Vigo,
and we will bathe in the waves.
If you know the love of a lover,
come to the rising sea
and we will bathe in the waves.
Come to the sea at Vigo
and we will see my love,
and we will bathe in the waves.
Come where the sea surges,
and we will see my lover,
and bathe in the waves.

To love you is my life's work,
Lady, your bright face worthy of honor
As you exhale gently, you are to be protected,
so fresh and so beautiful

Ayyuha-s-Saqi

Ayyuha-s-Saqi Elayka-l-Mushtaka
Qad Da'awnaka Wa-en Lam Tesma'i

Wa-Nadeemon Hemtu Fee Ghurratihi
Wa-Sharibtu-r-Raha Men Rahatihi
Kullama Estayqatha Men Sakratihi
Jathaba-z-Ziqa Elayhi Wa-Ettaka
Wa-Saqani Arba'an Fee Arba'i

Ma li-'Ayni 'Ashiyat Bi-n-Nathari
Ankarat Ba'daka Dhaw'a-l-Qamari
Wa-Etha Ma She'ta Fa-Sma' Khabari
'Ashiyat 'Aynaya Men Touli-l-Buka
Wa-baka Ba-dhi 'Ala Ba'dhi Ma'i

Kabidon Harra Wa-Dam'on Yakiffu
Ya'rifu-th-Thanba Wa-La Ya-tarifu
Ayuhha-i-Mu'ridhu 'Amma Asifu
Qud Nama Hubbuka 'Endi Wa-Zaka
La Taqul Enni Fee Hubbika Mudda'i

Si la noche haze oscura

Si la noche haze oscura
y tan corto es el camino,
¿Como no venis, amigo?

La media noche es pasada
Y el que me pena no viene;
Mi desdicha lo detiene,
¡Que nasci tan desdichada!

Házeme bivar penada
Y muéstraseme enemigo.
¿Como no venis, amigo?

Voglio di Vita Uscir

Voglio di vita uscir, voglio che cadano
Quest'ossa in polve e queste membra in cenere,
E che i singulti miei tra l'ombre vadano,
Già che quel piè ch'ingemma l'herbe tenere
Sempre fugge da me, ne lo trattengono
I lacci, ohimè, del bel fanciul di Venere.
Vo che gl'abissi il mio cordoglio vedano,
E l'aspro mio martir le furie piangano,
E che i dannati al mio tormento cedano.

poem by Ibn Zuhr (1094-1162)

O, cupbearer! To You I complain
To you I have called out, even if you shall not listen

I complain of a drinking companion whose face I fell
in love with. From his palms I drank the wine
Every time he was aroused from his inebriation
He would pull the wineskin back to him and then lay
down And from four wine cups, he has poured me
wine four times

What is it with my eyes that they would go blind?
Upon seeing you, they have come to reject the light of
the moon. And if you desire so; then listen to what I
have to say of my situation. My eyes have gone blind
from crying too long, And a part of me has grieved
over another part of me with me

My heart burns and my tears pour down
He knows what the fault is, still he does not confess
to it
O, you whom I have been speaking of and describing
Your love has sprouted inside me of me and
blossomed
Do not accuse me of being untrue in my love to you.

If the night is dark
and the way is so short
why do you not come, my love?

Midnight has passed
and he for whom I pine does not come
My misery detains him
How unhappy I am born!

Make me live in pain
and show me my enemy
Why do you not come, my love?

I want to depart this life, I want my bones to fall into
dust, and my limbs into ashes,
and my sobs to disappear among the shadows,
since those feet, which adorn the tender grasses,
are always fleeing from me; nor are they restrained,
alas, by the bonds of the lovely son of Venus.
I want the depths of hell to see my sorrow,
and the Furies to weep for my harsh agony,
and the damned to attest to my torment.

A Dio crudel, gli orgogli tuoi rimangono
A in crudelir con gl'altri a te rinuncio,
Né vo' più che mie speme in te si frangano.
S'apre la tomba, il mio morir t'annuncio.
Una lagrima spargi, et alfin donami
Di tua tarda pietade un solo nuntio,
E s'amando t'offesi, homai perdonami.

Farewell, cruel one, let your pride remain to torture
others; I renounce you!
I no longer want you to dash my hopes to pieces.
The tomb opens: my death is here.
Shed but one tear, and at the last give me
a single sign of your belated pity;
and if my love has offended you, alas, forgive me.

Dunulá

Dunulá, vos cara de luna
Avrimos la puerta
Que esta haziendo lluvia

Dunulá, your face is as the moon
Open the door
For it is raining

Mancevo alto y delicado
Por ver una moza
Quedo dezmayado

Tall and delicate lad
To see such a handsome young man
makes me swoon

Dunulá mi cara de luna
Avrijme la puerta
Que esto en medio la lluvia

Dunulá, my face of the moon
Open the door for me
for I am in the pouring rain

De avrirte, avro mi lindo mancevo
Non te doy la mano
Si non te conosco

I will open it, my handsome young man
I will not give you my hand
If I do not know you.

About the Program

A journey of Medieval and Renaissance songs and dances from Persia, over the Caucasus Mountains to Armenia and the Mediterranean, seaward to Cyprus, Greece, Italy, France, North Africa, then through Iberia, dancing to the rhythms of the Atlantic.

About the Ensemble and Artists

ALBA CONSORT performs Early Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque music on period instruments as well as modern compositions for its unique instrumentation, bridging the ancient to the present with songs, compelling dances and virtuosic improvisations. ALBA illuminates melodies, dynamic rhythms, improvisation traditions and the poetry of the Mediterranean with four acclaimed performers: **Margo Andrea**, mezzo-soprano & vielle; **Carlo Valte**, oud & baroque guitar; **Jason Priset**, lutes, theorbo & guitars; and **Rex Benincasa**, percussion, voice and psaltery.

ALBA has performed at distinguished concert series throughout the United States such as “University of Chicago Presents”; Early Music Now, Milwaukee; Academy of Early Music, Michigan; for CUNY TV’s Classic Artist Showcase, the Long Island Baroque Ensemble; in NYC on GEMS Midtown Concerts Series, Barge Music the Jerome L. Greene Space (podcast on WQXR radio with GEMS); and was a proud participant in the New York Philharmonic’s *New World Initiative* as part of their 175th Anniversary. ALBA enjoys residency at Avaloch Farm Music Institute and has led workshops and lectures at the University of Chicago’s Oriental Institute, Hofstra University, and NYC Public Schools. This season, ALBA Consort will premiere “Four Persian Mystic Songs” by renown composer Reza Vali.

ALBA means white, the white light of dawn, and an ALBA is the troubadour genre of a morning song – often a lover’s song at dawn. **ALBA Consort** continues to illuminate cross cultural influences through ancient and modern music. www.albaconsort.com

“[ALBA’s] pulsating rhythms...were undulating and hypnotic...bringing the contrasting harmonic idioms of the various regions vividly to life.” *Chicago Classical Review*

“[ALBA’s] highlights were some haunting Sephardic songs and some beautifully played instrumental tunes.” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

Margo Andrea (Artistic Director) Mezzo-Soprano, Vielle, Zills

Early Music America Magazine wrote "If one performer deserves special note, it is **Margo Andrea**, whose unique voice is perfect for these songs" in its review of Ivory Consort's recording "Music in the Land of Three Faiths". *Chicago Classical Review* noted her "effortlessly pure intonation" in its review of ALBA Consort's performance. She is soloist on "Einstein on the Beach" by Philip Glass and Robert Wilson for Sony Classics which she toured in opera houses around the world including BAM; Opera Bobigny, Paris; The Liceu, Barcelona; Melbourne Opera House and the McCarter Theatre. In addition to performances with ALBA Consort, she has performed with prominent early music ensembles and festivals including New York's Ensemble for Early Music, the New York Collegium, The Ivory Consort, at the Indianapolis Early Music Festival, Bloomington Early Music Festival, the Cloisters, Academy of Ancient Music, Bargemusic, The Greene Space, and Early Music Now. Her recordings include "Music of Medieval Love" for EEM with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Jesus Blood Never Saved Me Yet" by Gavin Breyers with Tom Waits, and for the film score of *Kundun*. She has performed live on WQXR, WNPR, and has performed choral works at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Under the direction of David Mamet, she was a founding member of The Atlantic Theatre Company where she performed in "The Cider House Rules" directed by Tom Hulce. An extensive theatre résumé includes performances at the Goodman Theatre of Chicago, the Lincoln Center Theater and with the London Shakespeare Company. Margo Andrea is also the Artistic Director of the Long Island Baroque Ensemble, celebrating a 51-year-old concert series in Nassau and Suffolk Counties [www.libaroque.org]. Ms. Andrea's vielle is on generous loan from the Early Music Foundation.

Carlo Valte Oud, Baroque Guitar

Carlo Valte is an active performer and educator in New York and abroad. Some past performances include Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, L'Auditori de Barcelona, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, Lincoln Center's Out of Doors series, Museo Tamayo (Mexico D.F.), and The United Nations. He has given workshops, master classes and educational programs with Sendeban (www.Sendeban.com), as Oudist, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Queens College (CUNY), Northern Illinois University and many public and independent schools in New York City and the Tri-state area and Spain including Barcelona, Tarragona and Reus. He has coached ensembles since 2005 for the annual New York Guitar Seminar. He performs as the Oudist for ALBA Consort, the group Sendeban, Adufera and performs with Hesperus on guitar, oud and percussion for the live music with silent film project "The Golem". Carlo is currently a faculty member of Mannes College of Music's Prep department. His past recordings are with One Soul Records, Vienna Modern Masters, and New York Collegium. His own education started in classical guitar with conductor Michael Dadap. He received his Bachelor of Science and Master of Music degrees at the Mannes College of Music as a student of Frederic Hand. His interest in Medieval and Near Eastern Music led him to study the Oud with Simon Shaheen in New York and Nasser Houari in Rabat, Morocco.

Jason Priset Lutes, Baroque & Renaissance Guitar, Theorbo

Based out of New York City, Jason Priset is a regular soloist and performer in the United States and internationally. In addition to his work with ALBA Consort, Jason has appeared through the Chamber Music Society of Detroit, Early Music New York, and the Riverside Symphony including performances in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine & Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in Manhattan and the L'Auditori & Museu de la Música de Barcelona in Barcelona, Spain. As an international artist Jason has appeared in concerts in Spain, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Jason holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Stony Brook University and a post Doctorate degree from Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC) in Barcelona, Spain and specializes in historical guitars and lute. He has studied with James Piorkowski (State University of New York at Fredonia), Jerry Willard (Stony Brook University), Xavier Diaz-Latorre (ESMUC) and Pat O'Brien. Dr. Priset is currently serving as Executive Director for the Lute Society of America summer festival, faculty for Amherst Early Music, and faculty for Montclair State University in New Jersey.

Rex Benincasa Frame drums, Darbouka, Riq, Hurdy-gurdy, Castanets, Psaltery, Voice

Rex has been a freelancing drummer and percussionist in New York since 1978. Along with his work with ALBA Consort, he has performed with the New Music Consort, Ensemble Caprice, Apollo's Fire, Seraphic Fire, Flamenco Latino, Carlota Santana Spanish Dance, Andrea Del Conte Danza Española, Zorongo Flamenco Dance, Pilar Rioja, Amanecer Flamenco Progressivo, The Sacramento Ballet, Ballet Austin, The Washington Ballet and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Rex has recorded CDs and/or movie soundtracks for Marty Balin, Andrea Marcovicci, Philip Glass, Sesame Street, NFL Films, The Sons of Sefarad, The Ivory Consort, and the Gerard Ederly Ensemble. His most recent Broadway appearances have been with Fosse, The Full Monty, Flower Drum Song, Man of La Mancha, Little Shop of Horrors, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, All Shook Up, Hairspray, The Drowsy Chaperone, Curtains, The Color Purple, Shrek, Billy Elliot, and Motown The Musical. Rex likes all kinds of music.

NEXT WEEK: Arnaut Consort
Medieval Treasure from Three Manuscripts