

# THE BOSTON CAMERATA

Anne Azéma, artistic director

presents

## THE SACRED BRIDGE

Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Medieval Europe

### I. Songs of exile

Anonymous (Sephardic, Jerusalem)

*Creator, why have you imprisoned your Dove? Why have you put her in chains? She is alone, without her children, crying Father, Father, Father...*

Boray ad ana/Criador hasta cuando

Al naharot bavel (Psalm 137)

*By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept, When we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in the midst thereof We hanged up our harps. For there they that led us captive asked of us words of song, And our tormentors asked of us mirth: 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?*

### II. The Sacred Bridge

Anonymous (Gregorian, Ashkenazic)

*When Israel came forth out of Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his dominion...*

In exitu Israel/ B'tset Yisrael

(Psalm 114, Latin and Hebrew versions)

Obadiah the Proselyte (12th century)

*Who other than Moses stood on Mt Horeb? Who other than Moses led my flock in the desert, bringing them forth water? To the heavens he came to God. Know, my people, 'That your light has come. The Glory has shone upon you.'*

Mi al har horeb (Eulogy of Moses)

### III. Minority Minstrels in the Christian Middle Ages

Mathieu le Juif (13th century)

*I must sing to you, unfaithful lady who torments me. False lovers make true love perish; I have served you faithfully, yet you mock me. Why have you thus betrayed me? For your love I have forsaken my Law, my God. May God make your face so wrinkled and old that all will hate you, save me!*

Par grant franchise

Sueskint von Trimberg (13th century)

(melody: Der Wilde Alexander, 13th c.)

*What sorrow is now thrust upon me, now that my noble patron is gone. Now I must flee the court, let my hair and beard grow long. I shall live in the old Jewry, with a long coat and hat. Slow shall be my walk, and sad my song.*

Wa heb'uf

Isaac Gorni (13th century)

A poet's life (translated from the Hebrew)

## IV. Jewish folksongs of the Mediterranean

Anonymous (Morocco)

Yo hanino, tu hanina

*I am Hanino, you are Hanina, these shall be our names, and the children born to us, Aman, will be like the moon and the sun, Derman, like the moon and the sun...*

Anonymous (Morocco)

Morena me llaman

*They call me the dark one, but I was born fair; I lost my color from travelling so much. Clad in green and scarlet, the betrothed girl speaks thus to her beloved. A ladder of gold and ivory was made for them to climb... The king's son calls me the dark one, and if he summons me, I shall go.*

Anonymous (Balkans)

La rosa enfloresce

*The rose blooms in the month of May, and my heart saddens with the pains of love. The nightingale sings and sighs... Come quickly, O thou my soul, or else I shall die.*

Carpentras (18th century)

Eftach sephatai berinah (Circumcision)

*I open my lips with happiness. We shall sing tomorrow at dinner. I will praise God Highest on the tambourin and the violin... May the child being circumcised today become a wise man; may the exiles and the wanderers be returned; may the redeemer of Zion come!*

## INTERMISSION

## V. Lighten my Shadows: Songs of Mystical Spain

Text: Salomon Ibn Gabirol (1020-1070)

Piyyut "Shahar Abaqeshkha"

Music: Arabo-Andalusian, traditional

*At the dawn I address my prayer, to my Rock and my Redeemer. I expose to you my prayers of morning and evening. Before your supreme grandeur I stand, trembling. Creator, lighten my shadows, hear my song!*

attributed to

Alfonso el Sabio (1221-1284)

Virgen madre gloriosa

King of Castille

*Virgin Mary, full of Glory, Sainted wife and daughter of God, who can glorify you, you who are the dawn? You are the dawn of sinners, darkened by their sins but given light through your grace.*

From The Koran, III, 17

*The Lord looks on His servants, who say, 'Lord, we believe, pardon Thou our sins and keep us from the torment of the fire,' the patient, the truthful, the devout, and those who ask for pardon at the dawn.*

Anonymous (Sephardic)

Kaddish (instrumental)

with

Alfonso el Sabio

Madre de Dios, ora por nos

*Mother of God, pray for us on this day of judgement, when the trumpets shall sound and the dead shall be raised.*

Alfonso el Sabio

Des oge mas quer eu trobar

Anonymous (Morocco)

En ciudad noble y encina

Alfonso el Sabio

Todo logar mui ben

Arabo-Andalusian, traditional

Taouchia (from Nouba Gribt Lahcine)

Alfonso el Sabio

A Santa Maria dadas (Cantiga 140)

*To Saint Mary, let there be given the highest praise.*

*Let us praise her moderation, her merit and her worth, her good sense and her wisdom, more than a hundred thousand times. To Saint Mary, let there be given the highest praise.*

*Let us praise her nobility, her honour; her rank, her mercy, her honesty and her most precious virtues. To Saint Mary, let there be given the highest praise.*

*Let us praise her loyalty, the comfort she provides and her kindness, her presence and her truth, in well-sung praises. To Saint Mary, let there be given the highest praise.  
Let us praise her judgement, her advice and her courtesy, her qualities, her distinction and her well-born grace. To Saint Mary, let there be given the highest praise.*

Arabo-Andalusian, traditional

Sanaa "Allah hoo Yalamo"

*God alone knows how much my soul is consumed with love for you, but I reassure it. For a gaze cast upon you, O my quest, O my hope, has a greater price for me than the world and all it contains.*

Piyyut "Yonah tamma"

*Perfect dove, daughter of the King, I have heard your voice. The day when your deeds shall be better, I shall hasten your redemption.*

Alfonso el Sabio

Muit e benaventurado

Text: Salomon Ibn Gabirol (1020-1070)

Piyyut "Shahar Abaqeshkha"

Music: Arabo-Andalusian, traditional

*At the dawn I address my prayer, to my Rock and my Redeemer. I expose to you my prayers of morning and evening. Before your supreme grandeur I stand, trembling. Creator, lighten my shadows, hear my song!*

The Boston Camerata  
Anne Azéma, Artistic Director  
Joel Cohen, music director emeritus

Anne Azéma, *voice*  
Joel Cohen, *director of this production, voice, gittern, lauta*  
Michael Collver, *voice, cornetto*  
Jesse Lepkoff, *flute, recorder*  
Carol Lewis, *vielle*

Assisted by  
Sharq Arabic Music Ensemble  
Ziya Tabassian, *percussion*  
Boujemaa Razgui, *percussion, ney, voice*  
Mehmet Sanlikol, *voice, oud*

The Boston Camerata tours nationally under the auspices of its own offices.

Please be in touch with us via e-mail: [manager@bostoncamerata.org](mailto:manager@bostoncamerata.org),

or visit us on the web: [www.bostoncamerata.org](http://www.bostoncamerata.org)

## About this program

*The Boston Camerata undertakes many new productions, but is also happy to keep in repertoire many of its by-now classic programs. My earliest association with The Sacred Bridge was as a young solo singer. The moment in Paris was somber, because of a recent terrorist attack in that city. But both I and the audience were moved by the message of hope inherent in the material and by the collaborative efforts of the cast including Jewish, Christian and Muslim musicians. Since that time, via many tours and a commercial recording, this program has evolved. In its current incarnation it continues, in my opinion, to be one of The Boston Camerata's important achievements.*

Anne Azéma, 2010

Much of the music you are about to hear was produced by religious minorities within Christian Europe. Some of these songs come from especially sad and most cruel corners, the ghettos of the North. Yet Jews, Muslims, and Christians, though separated and in frequent conflict, were in many ways, both large and small, dependent on each other. Our program will attempt to trace some of those ways through the music and poetry of pre-Enlightenment times.

In spite of the enforced segregation of the Jews, exchanges with the Gentile world were frequent, continuous, and bilateral. The synagogue gave to the Early Christian church some of its ancient melodies; the recitation formula of the psalm *B'tset Yisrael* ("When Israel went forth out of Egypt"), for example, survives in the Gregorian chant repertoire as the *tonus peregrinus*. It is thanks to a Christian that we have the oldest surviving example of written-down Jewish music, the beautiful *Eulogy of Moses*. It was composed by Giovanni, a monk, who, converting to Judaism, took the name Obadiah. Since he was a child of the Mediterranean world -- Sicily, then Egypt -- we have imagined accompaniments of near-Eastern kind to this sketchily notated melody.

Jewish minstrels were apparently not uncommon during the Middle Ages, though only a few have left traces of their activities. Two songs are attributed in French manuscripts to a mysterious "Matthew the Jew". The conventions of courtly love -- an adoring trouvère, and his distant, cruel Lady -- are deepened and darkened in *Par grant franchise*. Here, the poet's wounds are real, his parting *envoi* nearly a curse. Like Matthew, the minnesinger Sueskint suffered from his break with the Jewish community. In *Wa Heb'uf*, he vows to forsake courtly life and to return to the Jewish fold. The extraordinary, tragicomic autobiographical poem of Yitzhak Gorni (written originally in Hebrew) bears unruly witness to what it felt like back then to be an outsider.

If the Jewish musicians felt themselves to be different, their ways of being were nonetheless infused and informed by the majority cultures in which they evolved. The Judaeo-Spanish melodies we perform were collected only a few years ago in Morocco and the Balkans; there, remnants of the Jewish community exiled from Spain in the fifteenth century clung tenaciously to their Spanish heritage. (The last remnants of the once-flourishing Jewish community in Sarajevo were evacuated only recently, during the civil war in the former Yugoslavia.)

The second half of our program is devoted to the music of medieval Spain, an exceptional corner of Europe in which, for many centuries, Islamic, Christian, and Jewish traditions and practices coexisted and interacted in extraordinary ways. We have thus intentionally juxtaposed ancient songs and prayers of these three Hispanic religious traditions, with an eye

towards their points of confluence and similarity. The scale patterns, the melodic profiles (sometimes, even, the identical melodies), and the spiritual intensity of these repertoires allow them to be heard together in neighborly good concord, just as Jews, Christians, and Moslems managed to exist together for many centuries in the Iberian peninsula. Though separate in many ways, the different peoples who created Spanish music were all contributing, consciously or not, to the making of some uniquely precious musical dialects. From diversity came harmony and wholeness, as they will come again someday on our troubled planet, when the nations finally cease so furiously to rage.

Program notes by Joel Cohen

## **A Portrait of The Boston Camerata**

Founded in 1954, The Boston Camerata was associated until 1974 with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. From 1968 to 2008, Joel Cohen directed the ensemble's teaching, research, recording and concert activities. Since the autumn of 2008, the Boston Camerata's Artistic Director has been French-born singer and scholar, Anne Azéma.

Camerata began touring overseas in 1974, and has maintained an international presence ever since. In recent seasons, Camerata has been heard in Canada, England, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Singapore, and Israel. In the United States, Camerata has participated in early music festivals at Berkeley and San Antonio, as well as in many of the biennial Boston Early Music Festivals. The ensemble has maintained an extensive touring schedule across the entire United States. Camerata's second, third and fourth invitations to the renowned Tanglewood Festival came in 1992, 1994 and 1995, respectively. Other important Camerata appearances include, among others Lincoln Center, New York; The Brooklyn Academy of Music; the Smithsonian Institute; Queen Elizabeth Hall, London; Cité de la Musique, Paris; Palau de la Música, Barcelona.

Camerata undertook its first Japanese tour in 1995; it gave its first Scandinavian performances in 1996. The group's first invitation to participate in the Kalamazoo Medieval Institute came in 1997. A widely praised national tour of *Cantigas* in 2000 marked Camerata's first collaboration with the Sharq Arabic Music Ensemble; the two groups appeared together again in Paris in 2007 and in Boston in 2009. Camerata celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2005 with festive productions in Boston (Boston Early Music Festival) and Paris (Théâtre de la Ville). At the latter appearance, then director Joel Cohen was decorated by the French government. Additional Camerata tours of early music repertoires are scheduled for 2010-2011 in the US, Germany and France.

Performed in collaboration with the Tero Saarinen Company, *Borrowed Light*, a dance production using Shaker songs, has toured extensively in Europe, (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom) and America since 2004, with a south Asian tour recently completed in 2008, to critical acclaim. More tours are scheduled for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 seasons. *Borrowed Light* was named 'Best of the Decade' by the *Village Voice* (December 2009).

Media appearances by the Boston Camerata have included a nationally syndicated radio series in the U.S. and numerous broadcasts on French, English, Canadian, Dutch, Spanish, Swiss, Norwegian, Swedish, Israeli, Australian and New Zealand radio. The ensemble has made several appearances on French television; in the spring of 1992 its video production of

the Roman de Fauvel was telecast nationwide in France. In the United States, Camerata provided the music for *Guardian of Memory*, a 1993 TV project for the Library of Congress. Camerata's video of *Shall We Gather at the River* received numerous "plays" on American cable television during the winter of 1992-93. *Simple Gifts* (1995), and *The Golden Harvest*, (2007) the group's Shaker music projects, have been the subject of extensive coverage on national television, on American public radio and the BBC.

The Boston Camerata's numerous recordings on the Erato, Harmonia Mundi, Nonesuch Telefunken, Glissando, and Warner Classics labels have received worldwide distribution. In 1989, Joel Cohen and the Camerata were awarded the coveted *Grand Prix du Disque* for their recording, based on original sources, of the medieval *Tristan and Iseult* legend. This now-historic recording was re-released in the spring of 2008. Camerata's recorded performance of Jean Gilles' *Requiem* became a bestseller in Europe during the spring of 1993. The CD recording of the ensemble's 1992 Tanglewood Festival program, *Nueva España: Close Encounters in the New World*, was released in autumn, 1993 to critical acclaim in both Europe and America. *Simple Gifts*, a recording of Shaker spirituals and chants was the number one best-seller on the national Billboard magazine classical chart during later 1995 and early 1996. Three new releases in 1996, *Dowland--Farewell*, *Unkind: Songs and Dances*; *Trav'ling Home: American Spirituals 1770-1870*; and *Carmina Burana* each won critical acclaim in the European musical press; the Dowland recording was nominated in January, 1997 for the French *Grand Prix des Discophiles*. The Boston Camerata's most recent new recording, *A Mediterranean Christmas*, (Warner Classics) became an international bestseller during late 2005. *A Boston Camerata Christmas*, a three CD compilation of earlier recorded repertoire, appeared on Warner Classics in late 2008, and a co-ordinated series of Americana re-releases by Camerata also appeared on Warner Classics in early 2009.

The Boston Camerata is frequently invited to participate in educational projects: master classes, lectures and colloquia. An annual summer workshop in Medieval Song was produced by The Boston Camerata in Coaraze, France, from 1996 to 2005. During the autumn of 2007, Camerata was in residency at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This semester-long residency, under the auspices of the university's MARCO Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, was the group's most extensive and ambitious educational project to date. The Boston Camerata has recently participated in the first international colloquium of Camerata Mediterranean at Saint Guilhem le Désert, France, in June 2009. European touring projects for Camerata in coming months will include appearances in Strasbourg, Paris, Roubaix, Reims, France; Ludwigshafen, Germany; Groningen, Netherlands; Helsinki and Turku, Finland.

### **ANNE AZÉMA**

French born vocalist, scholar and director Anne Azéma, began her tenure as Camerata's Artistic Director in the fall of 2008. Ms Azéma has been acclaimed by critics on five continents for her original, passionate, and vivid approach to songs and texts of the Middle Ages. *De Volkskrant*, an Amsterdam publication, noted that "Azéma is, in her genre, as great as Callas or Fischer Dieskau." Anne Azéma has also been widely praised in many other repertoires, from Renaissance lute songs to Baroque sacred music to twentieth-century music theater. Highlights of Ms. Azéma's most recent work include the production of *The Night's Tale: A Tournament of Love*, the result of a residency at the Arsenal Metz during the 2005-2007 seasons; a celebration of American history and values, *A Land of Pure Delight* (2008); a production of late renaissance and early Baroque psalmody in honor of the Jean Calvin's year, *A*

*Symphony of Psalms* (2009); and a concert program built around the legend of Alexander the Great (2010).

Anne Azéma has been a soloist with numerous ensembles, large and small, early and contemporary. Besides her long time association with The Boston Camerata, she is also the co-founder of the Camerata Mediterranea, touring with them internationally and appearing on all of their CDs (Edison Prize). She currently directs her European based ensemble, AZIMAN. Her recent festival invitations as a soloist, recitalist or director include Amsterdam, Graz, Dresden, Leipzig, Utrecht, Spoleto, Seville, Versailles, Jerusalem, Berlin, Boston, Bergen, Ambronay, Utrecht, Casablanca, Perth, Wellington, Kyoto, Tanglewood and Tokyo. Ms Azéma's current discography numbers over thirty five recordings as a soloist, recitalist or director. Among her teaching activities are master classes, seminars and residencies at conservatories and universities in France, Holland, Mexico and the U.S. She has contributed articles to scholarly and general audience publications and maintains a very active international touring schedule. In September, 2010, Anne Azéma was named a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government.

### **JOEL COHEN**

Joel Cohen, Music Director Emeritus of the Boston Camerata, is a leading authority in the field of medieval, Renaissance, and early American musical performance. He has received widespread acclaim as performer, conductor, and writer/commentator in his chosen field, and his unique style of program building made the Camerata ensemble famous on five continents. Mr. Cohen studied composition at Harvard University. Awarded a Danforth Fellowship, he spent the next two years in Paris as a student of Nadia Boulanger. He has taught and lectured at many East Coast universities, including Harvard, Yale, Brandeis, and Amherst. Abroad, he has given seminars and workshops at the Schola Cantorum in Basel, at the Royal Opera of Brussels, in Spain, Singapore, and Japan.

Among many accolades, Cohen has been awarded the Georges Longy Achievement Award and the Howard Mayer Brown Award for lifetime achievement in early music. He is an Officer of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of the French Republic. His music-and-dance collaboration with Finnish choreographer Tero Saarinen, *Borrowed Light*, based on original Shaker songs, has toured the globe extensively since its première at Le Havre, France in 2002. Cohen also co-founded Camerata Mediterranea in 1990, devoted to the performance of early-music repertoires from the Mediterranean basin. Camerata Mediterannea's recording of medieval *Cantigas* from the court of Alfonso el Sabio won the Edison Prize in 2000. Camerata Mediterranea, with Joel Cohen as its Artistic Director, is now incorporated as a French nonprofit association with an intercultural musical and educational mission.

### **MICHAEL COLLVER**

Upon finishing his degree at San Diego State University in 1975, Mr. Collver continued his musical education in Switzerland at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis with specialization in early vocal techniques and cornetto. Collaboration with the Schola has continued since then with residencies involving special projects, recordings, books, and research publications. Mr. Collver is a founding member of Project Ars Nova (P.A.N.), with which he has concertized extensively in Europe and the U.S, and has released six CD's under the New Albion and Telarc International labels. Michael Collver's professional performances have also included solo work with Ensemble Sequentia of Cologne, the Empire Brass Quintet, Tafelmusik, Boston Baroque and the Boston Camerata. Many of these concerts have been augmented by recordings with, Telarc International, Erato, Deutsche EMI, and Harmonia Mundi. As an oratorio soloist he has performed with orchestras ranging from Aston Magna to the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

### **JESSE LEPKOFF**

Jesse Lepkoff, baroque flute and recorder, holds a degree in early music performance from New England Conservatory. He received his graduate education at the Royal Conservatory in Holland with flutist Wilbert Hazelzet. His many performances include appearances with the Smithsonian Chambers Players, the Musicians of Swanne Alley and as a soloist with the National Symphony under the direction of Christopher Hogwood. He is a current member of the Arcadia Players. He performs and records regularly with The Boston Camerata, has toured with them in the US, Europe, Israel and the Far East, and has recorded for American and European radios, as well as for the Erato, Fleur de Son, and Nonesuch labels. He has given lecture concerts at the Smithsonian, New England Conservatory and Louisiana University, Lafayette.

### **CAROL LEWIS**

The viola da gamba playing of Carol Lewis has been called “wonderfully vivid - brilliantly florid”. As a virtuous and versatile musician, she has performed internationally as a soloist, as well as in performances of cantatas and Passions by Bach and others, most recently in the St. Matthew Passion with the Portland Symphony Orchestra and the St. John Passion with the Providence Singers. Carol Lewis is most frequently heard as an ensemble musician; she performed with the internationally acclaimed ensemble Hespèrion at the Berkeley (CA) Early Music Festival, and she has toured and recorded extensively with that ensemble and with the Boston Camerata. Ms. Lewis has recorded on EMI, Lyricord, Harmonia Mundi, Nonesuch, Erato and Koch International, and is a co-founder of the Society for Historically Informed Performance. A long time collaborator to The Boston Camerata, Ms Lewis can be heard on many of its recordings.

### **ZIYA TABASSIAN**

Ziya Tabassian studied western classical percussion and completed a Bachelor degree in percussion interpretation at the Université de Montréal. After further training on the tombak, a Persian percussion instrument, he completed a residency at the Banff Centre for the arts, where he explored the contemporary music on the Persian percussions. He plays in several early, contemporary and world music ensembles and is an active member of both Constantinople (Middle Age and Renaissance music) and Duo Prémices (soprano & percussion). Ziya has performed in several concerts in Canada, Mexico, Germany, the U.S.A., Greece, Tunisia, notably with Hossein Omoumi, Keyhan Kalhor, Liu Fang, Kronos Quartet, En Chordais, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal and Caprice. Tabassian has received several grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. He has already produced many CDs in duo with his brother, Kiya Tabassian and Constantinople on the ATMA label, and recorded for many other productions, such with the Kronos Quartet, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and Lo'Jo. He is frequently heard on CBC Radio and Radio-Canada. He has recently released his solo CD called TOMBAK, on Ambiances Magnétiques label.

### **BOUJEMAA RAZGUI**

Boujemaa Razgui hails from Marrakech, city of Dakka (percussion). A regular with The Boston Camerata since 2002, Razgui's recordings include *Dralion* with Cirque du Soleil, *Mediterranean Christmas* with the Boston Camerata, and *Al-Andalus* with Sharq Ensemble.

Boujemaa performs all Arabic music styles, from Andalusian, N. African, Oriental to Folk. His versatility is internationally recognized, as he plays a variety of instruments (ney, kamaja, percussion) and also sings.

### **MEHMET SANLIKOL**

Mehmet Sanlikol, president of DÜNYA, came to the United States in 1993 when he won a scholarship to Berklee College of Music. In 1997, he founded the band AudioFact and toured Mexico, Argentina, the USA and Europe. The same year, he received Berklee College of Music's Clare Fischer Award and completed his degree in Jazz Composition and Film Scoring. In the beginning of 1998 he released the CD "Black Spot" with AudioFact. Sanlikol graduated from New England Conservatory of Music in 2000 with a Master's Degree in Jazz Composition. In 2004 Mehmet completed his Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Composition at the New England Conservatory. Recently, he is writing a book about the organization and the music of the Ottoman Janissary Bands and is teaching at Emerson College and Tufts University.