

LaDino/LaTino is a program surrounding Sephardic music. *Sefarad* means “Spain” in Hebrew. Thus the concept is to bring together Jewish music from Spain with Spanish music by non-Jewish composers, showing the strong connections and themes interwoven between Sephardic and Spanish music. This amalgamated musical heritage was centered in Andalusia, where Jews, Muslims and Catholics lived together, creating an amazing culture. Jews from Spain built their own language, Ladino: a mixture of Spanish, Hebrew and even French and Arabic. The word Ladino is similar to another familiar word, “Latino,” which refers to Latin America, colonized by Spain and Portugal originally. In a second section, I chose to link selected music from Mexico and Argentina, showing how the influences straddle not only Sephardic and Spanish music, but also Spanish and Latin American music.

The diverse communities of Andalusia shared their cultures with each other, shared common languages and mixed them also. They used to engage with each other, each with their own culture and music, and, sometimes, were influences on each other’s music.

That is why LaDino/LaTino is a program about the encounter and interfacing between:

- Jewish and non-Jewish composers (focusing on the four famous Spanish composers Albéniz, Granados, de Falla and Rodrigo, known as the “Spanish Quartet.” An illustrative example of this revival of Spanish music is the work of Joaquin Rodrigo, a non-Jewish, Spanish composer who wrote Four Sephardic Songs with the help of his wife, a Sephardic pianist.

- Latin America and Spain, such as the famous song “Besame Mucho” by the Mexican composer Consuelo Velazquez, inspired by a Granados’s piece.

- France and Spain, with Maurice Ravel who wrote “Habanera,” a specific dance that with origins in France, Cuba and Spain.

- classical music and traditional music: for example, Astor Piazzolla, an Argentinian composer wrote tangos, a traditional style, but in a more sophisticated and modern way. Also the compositions of German, Jewish Paul Ben-Haim form a bridge between tradition and modernism. His music synthesizes diverse elements, and draws upon traditional music of the Sephardic and Ashkenazi cultures, providing fresh ways of looking at established themes.

- So, between Sephardic and Ashkenazic culture with Paul Ben-Haim’s Three Songs Without Words, based on Sephardic melodies.

I also created new combinations, such as putting together Granados’s Intermezzo and Granada by Albéniz. It is also an interplay between voice and double bass through transcriptions I wrote for this program (none of which was written for double bass originally).