



Aşkına

"Ashkina – Sakinah – Shalom" Concert

By Pam Froman

Peace and the collaborative unity of music is the message behind Aşkına *Ashkina – Sakinah – Shalom*, a cooperative concert presented by The Yunus Emre Institute as the financing sponsoring organization, and the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony (LAJS) and Apricot Music and Art as the performing organizations.

"We're very grateful that the Yunus Emre Institute has taken us under their wing," says Dr. Noreen Green, Founder, Artistic Director, and Conductor of the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony. "Our missions are aligned in presenting programming that highlights cultural similarities."

The composers and works come from Sephardic-Jewish, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic communities using music as a bridge to develop cross-cultural understanding and communication between the cultures of the Near East and beyond.

This cultural harmony will be represented both through the pieces performed as well as the performers on that day:

Dr. Noreen Green (LAJS Conductor)
Ömer Faruk Tekbilek (Turkish Ney/Oud virtuoso)

Chloe Pourmorady (Persian-American vocalist)

Dr. Ayşe Taşpinar Gatenyo (Turkish-American pianist)

Asher Shasho Levy (Syrian Oud player)
MB Gordy III (Percussionist)

Alfredo Schiftan (Guitarist)

Hazan: Hazan Hayim Mazrahi of the Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel (Vocalist)

Featured composers/pieces include:

West Coast Premiere of Sharon Farber's "Ashkina"

US Premiere of Ulvi Cemal Erkin's "Piano Concerto No. 1"



Composer Noreen Green of Los Angeles Jewish Symphony

World Premiere of Erberk Eryilmaz's "Yan Yana"

World Premiere of a medley arranged by Önder Özkoç based on melodies of Yunus Emre

"This performance is special because it allows communities to come together and show people that they share mutual understanding and mutual civilizations," says Gokhan Coskun, USA Executive Director for Yunus Emre Institute. "Human and human, country and country, organization and organization we'll start to understand each other better when we feel connected."

The concert title, Aşkına *Ashkina – Sakinah – Shalom*, ties together words of unity from the cultures represented in the program: "Love" (Turkish) – "Peace/Serenity" (Arabic), and "the spirit of God" (Hebrew) – "Peace/Harmony" (Hebrew) – "Peace" (Arabic/Hebrew).

The Los Angeles Jewish Symphony will be conducted by Noreen, who will be joined onstage by soloists including Turkish-American pianist Dr. Ayşe Taşpinar Gatenyo, Turkish ney/oud virtuoso Ömer Faruk Tekbilek, Syrian oud player Asher Shasho Levy, featured percussionist MB Gordy III, guitarist Alfredo Schiftan, and Persian-American vocalist Chloe Pourmorady.

Musical highlights will be *Ashkina*, composed by Grammy Award-winner, and Israeli-American Sharon Farber and commissioned by The Foundation for Universal Sacred Music. Featuring a mixed choir, a chamber ensemble, and an assortment of ethnic instruments, *Ashkina* moves freely between Traditional, Western, and Middle Eastern musical influences and brings about a fusion of Hebrew, English, and Turkish languages. The purpose of the piece is about using music as

a cultural bridge between Western music, Middle Eastern music, and Near Middle East music.

"The musical highlights for me are *Ashkina* and the piano concerto played by Ayşe," says Noreen. "You can expect music that crosses boundaries. To me, those are the two pivotal pieces in the program."

The concert will also feature Turkish-American composer Erberk Eryilmaz's *Yan Yana*, and a set of Sephardic-Jewish liturgical songs rooted in the Sufi musical traditions, which symbolize the coexistence of Jews and Muslims.

"I love this idea of being onstage with people who have completely different traditions and heritage and yet their music has great similarities," says Noreen.

All proceeds from the evening will be donated to UNICEF towards their efforts aiding the children of Ukraine.

"We are donating as much as we can to bring to attention to the people of Ukraine so we can support them and the women and children who are the victims of the war," says Gokhan.

The Yunus Emre Institute plans to duplicate this cross-cultural concert in other cities with Noreen coming in as conductor and Ayşe as the piano soloist for additional charity performances. Plans include New York, Washington DC, and Chicago and then overseas in Istanbul, Tel Aviv, and Spain.

The *Aşkına Ashkina – Sakinah – Shalom* concert takes place at The Gindi Auditorium, 15600 Mulholland Dr., in Los Angeles on Sunday, June 7th, 2022 with the reception and gallery exhibition at 6:30 p.m., and the concert begins promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$45 – \$414. To purchase log onto www.eventbrite.com/e/ashkina-ashkinah-sakinah-shalom-tickets-322671738857

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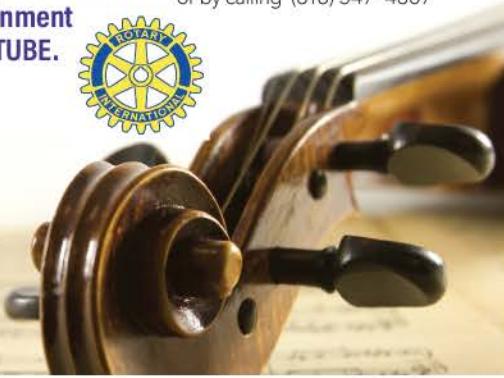
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