



SUSAN GAETA

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Susan Gaeta <susan@susangaeta.com>

Washington DC-area resident Susan Gaeta, whose unique singing style is heavily influenced by music of the Sephardic Jewish tradition, released her first solo CD in 2005, *From Her Nona's Drawer*. Funded by a grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the disk features traditional ballads and love songs, as well as music and lyrics composed by her mentor, famed Bosnian Sephardic singer Flory Jagoda. In 2002, Gaeta was selected by Jagoda to be her apprentice and to learn songs that had been in Flory's family for generations. ***"I had been singing with Flory for several years, but our formal master-apprentice relationship deepened my understanding of this unique music and my dedication to preserve it for future generations,"*** says Gaeta. Sephardic music originated among Jews in pre-medieval Spain, and retains a strong Spanish flavor. When Spanish Jews were forced into exile in the 15th Century, the music picked up influences from the places to which they were dispersed, such as Portugal, Yugoslavia, Turkey, and Greece. Gaeta sees herself as a creative bridge between the traditional music and its modern future. ***"I'm very excited to be interpreting these age-old tunes for a new generation,"*** she notes. ***"Not only are they beautiful songs, but in many ways, they serve as the oral history of Sephardic Jews."*** In addition to *From Her Nona's Drawer*, Gaeta's remarkable voice can be heard on Jagoda's album, *Arvoliko* which has received significant critical acclaim, as well as albums with Trio Sefardi (www.triosefardi.com) and Minnush (www.minnush.com).

Learn more about Susan Gaeta, Sephardic music, and listen to her music at susangaeta.com.

BIOGRAPHY

Susan Gaeta is a Master Artist at Virginia Humanities and an important member of a new generation of musicians who are exploring the varied traditions of Sephardic music. Susan lived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for eight years where she performed classic jazz and traditional Argentine folk songs. Under the auspices of the 2002-2003 Folklife Apprenticeship Program to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Susan completed studies with National Heritage Fellow, Flory Jagoda, composer, singer, and musician known as the "Keeper of the Flame" of Sephardic music.

Susan continued to perform with Flory for several years as a duo and with the Flory Jagoda Trio. She has appeared at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, at the Greater Washington Folk Festival, the United States Holocaust Museum, before numerous Jewish and inter-faith communities and in historic concerts in Istanbul and Sarajevo. She performs nationally as a soloist, as a member of Trio Sefardi and with Minnush, a folk-jazz Sephardic band formed in 2018 with her apprentice, Gina Sobel.

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Additional photos available at SusanGaeta.com

