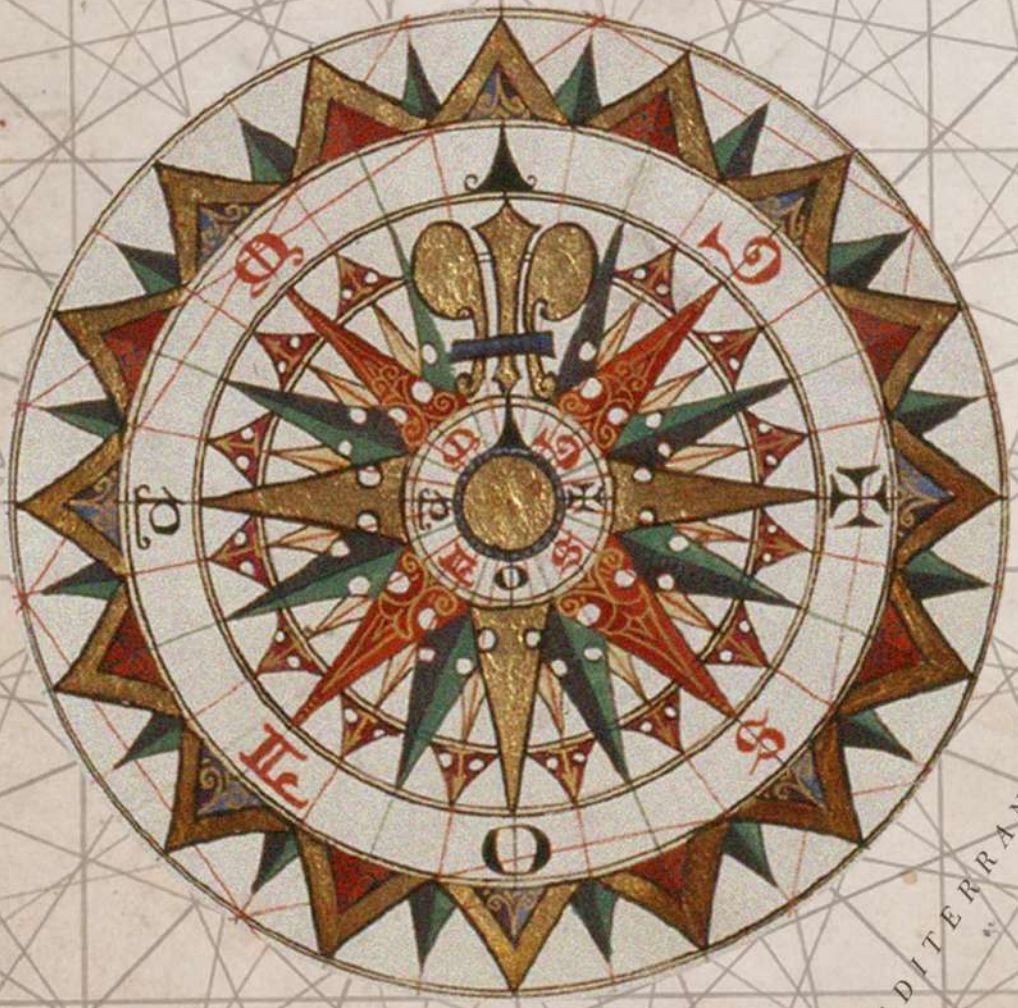
The Journey of Abendino



MEDITERRANEUM MARE

AL TAYR
ENSEMBLE



"They are ships from the ends of the earth, from nations that trust in me,
with the great ships of Tarshish leading the way.
They bring the people of Israel back to their home from afar,
carrying their silver and gold.
They will honor the name of Jehovah, your God,
and the Holy One of Israel. For He has filled you with splendor."

Isaiah 60:9





The Journey of Abendino

The Journey of Abendino recounts the exodus of a Sephardic Jew from his native Granada to Constantinople, a result of the expulsion ordered by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492. During his journey across the Mediterranean, Abendino encounters a multitude of cultural, religious, and musical realities—not without dangers—until his final settlement in Constantinople.

The program integrates the reading of a series of poetic texts by Sephardic authors and historical documents, which frame the narrative and explain the development of events, alongside a repertoire that includes Renaissance and medieval compositions (drawn from the Cancionero de Palacio and the Squarcialupi Codex, among others). These are combined with Sephardic songs, classical Andalusian music, and pieces from the oral traditions of the Balkans and Anatolia, performed on both historical and traditional instruments from the diverse cultures surrounding the Mediterranean.

Al Tayr Ensemble is a group formed by three young performers with extensive experience in the world of early music.

After years of collaborating on different projects, they decided to create their own ensemble to explore their shared passion for early, Sephardic, and Mediterranean music, combining research with the performance and study of numerous historical and traditional instruments.

As individual performers, they have collaborated with other ensembles, taking part in international festivals and concert series in Spain, France, the United States, Germany, and Portugal—countries where they have also trained as artists.

In 2024, Al Tayr Ensemble was invited to perform at festivals such as Bloomington Early Music (USA), the Festival de Música Antigua de Granada, Renaixement Festival (Valencia), and the Early Music Morella Fringe, as well as at CaixaForum and the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid as part of the MUSAE concert series.

In 2025, they already have concerts scheduled in various locations across Spain, including performances at the Festival de Música Antiga dels Pirineus and the Museum of the Jewish Quarter of Girona.

Program

Jon Wasserman | voice & plucked strings
Olga Rodon | flutes
Alberto Espinosa | percussion

Morena me llaman – Traditional Sephardic

January 2, 1492. The Catholic Monarchs march into Granada, marking the end of eight centuries of Muslim presence in Iberia. The medieval world collapses, its ancient certainties shattered. East and West, two epic journeys begin—one bathed in triumph, the other steeped in exile.

Una sañosa porfía - Juan del Enzina
Rodrigo Martínez - Anonymous Spanish

[...] We hereby order in this edict that the Jews, both men and women of all ages, residing in our dominions or territories, shall depart with their sons and daughters, servants, and small or large family members of all ages by the end of July of this year. They shall not dare to return to our lands and shall not take a step forward to trespass. Thus, if any Jew who does not accept this edict is found in these dominions or returns, they shall be sentenced to death and the confiscation of their belongings. [...]

Edict of Granada, March 31St in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ 1492.

Avraham Avinu (El rey Nimrod) - Traditional Sephardic
Ya rasha al fattan - Anonymous Andalusian

Thousands of sephardic Jews, like Abendino, left the realms of Castile and Aragon as a result of the expulsion policy of the Catholic Monarchs. The majority departed through the ports of Valencia. Once again embarked on the Mediterranean, they retraced the path of their ancestors in search of a new home. Alongside them were the Moriscos, Muslims who had lived for centuries in the Christian kingdoms. No distinction is made between those who reject the Holy Cross.

Fantasía 11 para vihuela - Luis Milán

Has the flood returned to inundate the earth, and can only the sea be seen? Are there no longer men, nor birds, nor life? Has the entire world been annihilated? How sweet it would be for me to see now a mountain or a pit or the desert! I look everywhere and there is nothing, only water and sky and the abyss, and Leviathan boiling the waves, as if the sea wanted to turn white; and the heart of the sea hides the boat, as if it were in the hand of a thief. My soul rejoices to see the angry sea that carries me towards the temple of the Lord.

Yehuda Ben Samuel Haleví

Non perchi speri, donna - Lorenzo da Firenze



Variaciones sobre la cara cosa - Anonymous Italian

After being with the nobles of the West, how will I enjoy sleep? How will my heart find rest? [...] Let my right hand forget its skill if I forget them, and if I wish to rejoice deprived of their faces! If my God were to lead me back to Granada, my paths would be blessed, and I would be satisfied with the waters of the Genil, pure even when the delightful torrents flow turbid; a land where my life was pleasant, and where the cheeks of Destiny unfolded before me.

Mosé Ibn Ezra

Durme durme - Traditional Sephardic
La gelosia - Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro

Yet even as the Italian city-states offered temporary refuge to many Sephardic exiles, the Mediterranean remained a sea in turmoil. While the Muslim West collapsed, a new power arose from the ashes of the Eastern Roman Empire —under the banner of the crescent, the Ottoman Turks advanced, threatening to seize every land within their grasp. In the Balkans, a new cultural ecosystem was born from this clash of civilizations.

Todos los bienes del mundo - Juan del Enzina

Jovano Jovanke - Traditional Macedonian

Thus, Sultan Bayaceto, the king of Turkey, learned of all the harm that the Spanish king had brought upon the Jews and heard that they were seeking refuge and a final abode. He took pity on them and wrote letters and sent envoys to proclaim throughout his kingdom that none of the rulers of his cities should be so wicked as to deny entry to the Jews or expel them. Instead, they should be given a courteous welcome.

Eliyahu Capsali

Kopanitsa - Traditional Bulgarian
Los caminos de Sirkedji - Traditional Sephardic

I have been told in my youth that Spain was a delight for the eyes. Its light was like a sun in the midst of the heavens. The fragrance of its land was to the palate like honey. Its air was the life of souls, its land the best of lands. It was the splendor of souls, the joy of God and men. The fruits of its gardens were like stars in the sky, its land like a lily of Sharon, a rose of the valleys.

Yehudá Ben Selomó

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