



HANUKÁ!
SARAH AROESTE

Hanuka, the festival of lights, is a celebration beloved by Jews across the globe. It commemorates the victory of the Jewish Maccabees against the Syrian-Greek Army, who had desecrated the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Refusing to worship Greek gods, the Maccabees heroically led a revolt and won! Following their victory, the Maccabees rededicated the Temple using oil that should have lasted only one day, but miraculously lasted for eight.

Many traditions have been adopted over the centuries to mark this holiday, from lighting different styles of hanukiyot (or menorahs), to eating specialty foods, playing games, and more. One of my favorites is singing Hanuka tunes!

Delightful Hanuka songs abound, particularly in English and in Hebrew, but fewer are celebrated in my ancestral language of Ladino (or Judeo-Spanish). Since 1492, Ladino has been the tie that binds many Sephardic Jews together around the world, even withstanding its post-WWII decline as a spoken first language. Although a handful of well-known Ladino Hanuka songs exists, there are just as many unknown treasures. So, I wanted to create a festive holiday album *entirely in Ladino* to showcase the rich musical expression that Sephardic music has to offer in celebrating the joy of Hanuka.

This recording includes some traditional melodies and texts, but except for two songs (Tracks 1 and 10), the rest of this album celebrates either music or lyrics that were written within the last fifty years. As I like to do on many of my recordings, I include several works of my teachers and mentors; for example, I feature an original song by Gloria Joyce Ascher (Track 6), one of the first university professors of Ladino in the United States and a great influence on me and many other Ladino students and activists. Track 3 is a song composed by the beautiful late Ladino singer, Judy Frankel, to whom I owe an enormous debt for her rich body of music. Track 5 is a song by contemporary Israeli Ladino poet, Medi Koen-Malki, who also translated *Ma'oz Tzur* from Hebrew into Ladino on Track 9. Regarding that song, I am including the Venetian melody composed in the 1720's by Benedetto Giacomo Marcello, which is often mistaken to be a Sephardic one. It is not. However, by recording it in Ladino here, I hope

I have made it worthy to include in this album. Note that the song lyrics included herein contain the texts as denoted by each author or translator; I have kept them in their original form for each track.

I have also contributed two original compositions of my own, one based on the Ladino blessings recited over the Hanuka candles (Track 4), and another from the Biblical text read on the Shabat of Hanuka (Track 7). Using research from renowned Sephardic ethnomusicologist Yitschak Levy in his *Antología Liturgia Judeo-Española*, Vol.4, as well as 20th-century Salonikan scholar David Benvenisti, I discovered this parody of the text where Joseph interprets the dream of Pharaoh, but the dream in this song is jokingly of the Sephardic Hanuka treat, *burmuelos*.

And of course, no Ladino Hanuka album could be complete without including music of the incomparable Flory Jagoda. Her *Ocho Kandelikas* has become the standard for Hanuka songs the world over. With her family's blessing, I have given my own take of her song (Track 2), featuring Israeli flamenco singer, Yehuda "Shuky" Shveiky. Perhaps my favorite of Flory's Hanuka songs, however, is her lesser known, *Hanuka, Hanuka*, which I've always loved singing with my children. In fact, my two daughters lend their voices here (Track 8).

Family is precisely what I think about when I think of celebrating Hanuka. It is a time to be together to sing and revel in the light that each of us brings to the world. I hope that the songs on this album will help enhance the celebration of my listeners, and that the songs themselves will serve as a light in the vast musical universe. Ultimately, my wish is that this holiday recording will stand out as a long-lasting testament to the power of joyous Sephardic music and the language of Ladino.

Just as the oil was a miracle for lasting eight days, Ladino, too, is a miracle for having lasted centuries up through today. This album is for everyone who believes in miracles... and beautiful, celebratory music in any language.

So as the opening track announces, we're having a party.

Sarah Asiste

1. Azeremos una Merenda

MUSIC AND LYRICS: TRADITIONAL

Azeremos una merenda
- A qual ora? - Vo lo dire,
Yar aman, enrume aman.

La una kita l'azeite
de un teneke, asta diez,
Yar aman, enrume aman.

La otra kita l'harina
de un sako, asta diez
Yar aman, enrume aman.

Para azer los burmuelos
en los días de Hanuka.
Yar aman, enrume aman.

We're having a party.
- What time? - I'll tell you.
Oh yes!

One person pours the oil
from the jar, ten measures,
Oh yes!

Another takes the flour
from the sack, ten measures,
Oh yes!

In order to make burmuelos
these days of Hanuka.
Oh yes!

2. Ocho Kandelikas

MUSIC AND LYRICS: FLORY JAGODA / FT. YEHUDA "SHUKY" SHVEIKY

Hanuka linda sta aki
Ocho kandelas para mi
(Beautiful Hanuka is here
Eight candles for me)

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas
Tres kandelikas, quatro kandelikas
Sintyu kandelikas, sej kandelikas
Siete kandelikas, ocho kandelas para mi

Muchas fiestas vo fazer
Kon alegria i plazer
(Many parties I will have
With happiness and pleasure)

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas...

Los pastelikos vo kumer
Kon almendrikas i la myel
(The little pastries we will eat
Filled with almonds and honey)

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas...

3. Hanuka

MUSIC: JUDY FRANKEL; LYRICS: LINA KOHEN ALBUKREK

Mos viene la fiesta de la hanukia
A todos mozos hinche de alegría.
La mujer nunca manca de su taría,
Porque a ella encombe hanukia.

Los Hasmonayim en este luzio dia
Mostraron sus tan grande baraganía.
Y siempre de ellos mos acodraremos
Y al Dio grande siempre bendizeremos.

Que plazer ya es para las creaturas
Cuando empesan a recibir dulçurias,
Los tan hermosos jugueticos del padre
Con las tan luzias caresas de la madre.

El Dio mos salvo de tanta grande dolor.
El sea siempre nuestro grande salvador.
Nunca no tengamos mal ni hazinura,
Que no mos de nunca ningun' amargura.

The festival of Hanuka is approaching
It fills us all with joy.
A woman never fails to do her duty,
For she is entrusted with the hanukiyah.

The Hasmonayim, on this bright day
Showed us their great valor.
We shall always remember them
And we shall always bless our great God.

What a pleasure it is for the children
When they begin to receive sweets,
Beautiful toys from their father
With warm hugs from their mother.

God saved us from great sorrow.
May he always be our great savior.
May we never have trouble or sickness,
May we never know bitterness.

4. Fiesta de Hanuka

MUSIC: SARAH AROESTE; LYRICS: TRADITIONAL

Bendicho tu Adonay nuestro Dio,
rey del mundo, ke nos santifiko kon sus enkomendansas
i nos enkomendo por ensender kandelas de Hanuka.

Kandelas de Hanuka...

Bendicho tu Adonay nuestro Dio,
rey del mundo, ke izo milagros a nuestros padres
en los dias los estos i en el tiempo el este...
milagros de Hanuka.

Milagros de Hanuka...

Fiesta de Hanuka...

Praised are You, Our God,
Ruler of the universe, who made us holy through
Your commandments and commanded us to kindle the Hanuka lights.

Candles of Hanuka

Praised are You, Our God,
Ruler of the universe, who performed wondrous deeds
for our ancestors in those ancient days at this season...
Miracles of Hanuka

Miracles of Hanuka

Festival of Hanuka

5. Las Kandelikas de la Fiesta

MUSIC AND LYRICS: MEDI KOEN-MALKI

Mos reunimos todos aki
Kon kantes i kon alegría
Kantando de las maraviyas
Kon las kandelikas, ocho dias.

Las kandelikas de la fiesta
Luz i amor mos traen,
Los bimuelikos son para komer
Hanukalik, vamos mereser.

La alegría de Hanuka
Kon esta luz i estos kantes
Ya vino el dia de Hanuka
Para alavar dias de antes.

Las kriaturas, van baylando
En esta fiesta tan presioza,
Las tokas van arredeando
I, muestra luz es tan ermoza.

Let's all come together
With stories and cheer
We'll sing of the miracles
With the candles, eight days.

The holiday candles
They bring us love and light,
Little bimuelos for us to eat
Hanuka, we will deserve.

The happiness of Hanuka
With its light and songs
The day of Hanuka came
To praise the days long ago.

The children will dance
In this precious holiday,
The tops will spin
Our light is so beautiful.

6. Ya Viene Hanuká!

MUSIC AND LYRICS: GLORIA JOYCE ASCHER / FT. GLORIA JOYCE ASCHER

Hanukía, bayla mi tía,
Hanuká, bayla mi bavá

Afuera ya sta frío i eskuro –
Largas noches del invierno!
Ma no ulvidemos:
La ora mas eskura
Es para amaneser!
Toda eskurina podemos dezazer
Kon el nombre del Dío!
Ya viene Hanuká!

Al tiempo muy eskuro de los Makabís
Fue el Templo desakrado,
Ma eyos, pokos kon koraje,
Lo rekonsakraron –
Izieron Hanuká!
El alzete de un día ocho días ya turó
Kon el nombre del Dío!
Ya viene Hanuká!

Hanukiya, my aunt is dancing,
Hanukkah, my grandmother's dancing

Outside it's cold and dark –
Long nights of winter!
But let us not forget:
The darkest hour
Comes right before the dawn!
All darkness we can dispel
With the name of God!
Hanukkah is coming!

In the very dark time of the Maccabees
The Temple was desecrated,
But they, a few with courage,
Rededicated it –
They made Hanuka!
The oil for one day tasted for eight days
With the name of God!
Hanukkah is coming!

7. *Vayehi Mikets*

MUSIC: SARAH AROESTE; LYRICS: TRADITIONAL

Vayehi mikets
Burmuelos kon miel
Paro los hacia
Yosi se los komia

Hanuka bayla tu tia
Hanuka bayla tu babá

Vayehi mikets
Burmuelos kon miel
Paro al kanyo
Yosi al banyo

Hanuka bayla...

Vayehi mikets
Burmuelos kon miel
Paro al bet ha-hayim
Yosi a los kidushin

Hanuka bayla...

"And it was at the end"
Burmuelos with honey
Pharaoh made them
Joseph ate them

Your aunt danced on Hanuka
Your grandmother danced on Hanuka

"And it was at the end"
Burmuelos with honey
Pharaoh fell into the mud
Joseph went to the bath

"And it was at the end"
Burmuelos with honey
Pharaoh went to the cemetery
Joseph went to the wedding ceremony

8. *Hanuka, Hanuka*

MUSIC AND LYRICS: FLORY JAGODA

Hanuka, Hanuka
Ocho diyas di felisita (Eight days of happiness)
Lai, lai...

Hanuka, Hanuka
Ocho diyas di kantar (Eight days of singing)
Lai, lai...

Hanuka, Hanuka
Ocho diyas di baliyar (Eight days of dancing)
Lai, lai...

Hanuka, Hanuka
Ocho diyas di guzar (Eight days of enjoying)
Lai, lai...

9. Ma'oz Tzur (Ladino)

MUSIC: *BENEDETTO GIACOMO MARCELLO*;

LYRICS: *TRADITIONAL (HEBREW), LADINO TRANSLATION: MEDI KOEN-MALKI*

A mi Dio de salvasion, donare l'alavasion.
Tu, mi kaza d'orasion, fraguaras kon bendision.
Al ladrador d'enimigo echaras kastigo.
Yo entonses kantare, tu altar alavare.

Oh mighty stronghold of my salvation, to praise You is a delight.
Restore my house of prayer, and there we will offer thanksgiving.
When You have prepared the slaughter for the blaspheming foe,
Then I will celebrate with song of hymn the altar's dedication.

10. Dak il Tas

MUSIC AND LYRICS: *TRADITIONAL*

Dak il tas, toma'l tas
Las muchachas meten bas
En shabat de Hanuka
Ocho dias de Hanuka,
Lehadlik ner shel Hanuka.

La gayina de la kuzina
Dale a gostar a la vizina
Ke le seia milizina
Ocho dias de Hanuka,
Lehadlik ner shel Hanuka.

Mete la karne al tandur
Tanyeremos un buen santur
En shabat de Hanuka
Ocho dias de Hanuka,
Lehadlik ner shel Hanuka.

El vino de la serada
Ke a mi mucho m'agrada
A beber en Hanuka
Ocho dias de Hanuka,
Lehadlik ner shel Hanuka.

Beat the plate, take the plate
The little girls play
On the Shabbat of Hanuka
Eight days of Hanuka,
Light a Hanuka candle.

The chicken in the kitchen
Give it to the neighbor to taste
So that it will be a medicine
Eight days of Hanuka,
Light a Hanuka candle.

Put the meat in the oven
We will play a good santur
On the Shabbat of Hanuka
Eight days of Hanuka,
Light a Hanuka candle.

The wine of the evening meal
Is very much to my taste
To drink on Hanuka
Eight days of Hanuka,
Light a Hanuka candle.

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Executive Producer: Sarah Aroeste

Musical Producer & Arrangements: Shai Bachar

Mixing and Mastering Engineer: Tal Ethan Rom

Art Design: Amos Funk

MUSICIANS (in alphabetical order by last name):

Sarah Aroeste

(vocals, all tracks)

Gloria Joyce Ascher

(vocals, Track 6)

Shai Bachar

(piano, keyboards, melodica, Tracks 1,3,6-10)

Dalia Blaugrund

(backing vocals, Track 8)

Irit Blaugrund

(backing vocals, Track 8)

Danny Flam

(trumpet, trombone, tuba, Track 3)

Ziv Harpaz

(bass, guitar, Tracks 1, 3, 4, 6-8)

Eran Horwitz

(flamenco bass, Track 2)

Ilan Katchka

(drums, percussion, Tracks 1, 3, 4, 6-10)

Israel Katumba

(backing vocals, percussion, Track 2)

Javi Katumba

(backing vocals, percussion, Track 2)

Talia Yona Klinger

(backing vocals, Tracks 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

Eitan Refua

(santur, Track 10)

Yehuda "Shuky" Shveiky

(vocals, guitarra flamenca, Track 2)

Yaniv Taichman

(violin, oud, baglama, Tracks 1, 9)

Tal Yadin

(classical guitar, Track 5)

1. *Azeremos una Merenda* (3:15)
2. *Ocho Kandelikas* (3:38)
3. *Hanuka* (3:08)
4. *Fiesta de Hanuka* (2:30)
5. *Las Kandelikas de la Fiesta* (1:58)
6. *Ça Viene Hanuká!* (1:43)
7. *Uagehi Mikets* (1:45)
8. *Hanuka, Hanuka* (2:16)
9. *Ma'oz Tzur (Ladino)* (2:27)
10. *Dak il Tas* (3:07)