



Western  
Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

**FRIDAYS AT 12:30 SERIES  
THE LIGHT OF EAST ENSEMBLE**

Friday, November 22, 2024

12:30 p.m., von Kuster Hall and [via livestream](#)

Tracey Atin, *vocals*

Antonia Sidiropoulos, *vocals*

Jana Starling, *clarinet, accordion*

Mary Ashton, *violin*

Panayiotis Giannarapis, *oud, bouzouki*

Jedd House, *double bass*

Dorukhan Turan, *percussion*

A La Una Yo Naci		Sephardic Folk Song
Ale Brider		Yiddish Folk Song
Zimer Atik		Hebrew Folk Song
Ocho Kandelikas	Tracey Atin, <i>vocals</i>	Sephardic Folk Song
Apo Kseno Topo/Uskudara Gideriken		Folk Song from Asia Minor
Katifes/Kadifeden Kesesi		Folk Song from Asia Minor
Milo mou kai Mandarini	Antonia Sidiropoulos, <i>vocals</i>	Greek Folk Song from from Smyrni
Cecen Kizi		Jamil Bey Tambouri (1871-1916)
Rampi Rampi		Folk Song from Turkey
Ti Se Melei Esenane	Antonia Sidiropoulos, <i>vocals</i>	Greek Folk Song from Smyrni

## THE ARTISTS

Formed in 2006, London, Ontario's **The Light of East Ensemble** has an extensive body of work rooted in the many lands of the Near and Middle East. Its seven stellar players perform this enchanting music with passion, sensitivity, and respect.

The Light of East Ensemble's vibrant repertoire encompasses traditional, folk, Classical Arabic, Sephardic, and Greek Rembetika, music of the Ottoman Court, along with 20th-century urban music from regions like Armenia, Greece (Asia Minor – Smyrni and Konstantinoupoli) and Turkey, and their neighbouring countries, including Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. The timeless rhythms and beautiful melodies of the East are nothing less than mesmerizing, and when coloured with tints of Classical, Jazz, Celtic, and Folk, they give The Light of East Ensemble a unique, worldly sound.

The current Light of East Ensemble lineup spotlights the professional talents of Mary Ashton (violin, harp), Jedd House (contra basso), Tracey Atin (vocals), Antonia Sidiropoulos (vocals), Jana Starling (clarinet, accordion), Dorukhan Turan (percussion, ney, kaval), and Panayiotis Giannarapis (oud, bouzouki, baglama, tzoura, baglama, ney, politiki lyra, stergiano laouto). Guelph belly dancer Ishra is a regular guest performer. Band members draw on diverse musical backgrounds and experiences to offer a shared passion that immediately engages listeners. Panayiotis Giannarapis, the heartbeat of the Ensemble, has deep roots in Greece and Asia Minor. The addition of Windsor soprano Tracey Atin has enriched the group's existing repertoire and introduced music of the Sephardic Yiddish tradition.

This award-winning ensemble (Forest City London Music Awards, Folk Music Ontario Showcases 2010, 2019, and 2022) captivates audiences in a variety of venues – from intimate performance spaces like Chaucer's Pub (London) and Kordazone Theatre (Windsor), Museum London, the Art Gallery of Windsor, Music Concert Series at the University of Guelph, Windsor, and Western Ontario; to major concert halls like The Aeolian (London), Centennial Hall (London), and bustling outdoor events such as the Guelph and District Multicultural Festival, Millrace Festival, Stratford Summer Music on the Barge, Huron Multicultural Festival, Neruda Productions, Diaspora Film Festival, Hamilton World Music Festival, Summer Sunset Sounds, Bloom Festival, London Dance Festival, All that Worldly Jazz Festival, and the London Heritage Council's Canada Day celebrations. In addition, The Light of East Ensemble provided recorded music for the Robin Soans play *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*, which JM Drama presented at Kitchener's Registry Theatre in May 2016. In 2023, the Light of East Ensemble was invited to perform at London's Grand Theatre's production of the East Coast Kitchen Party and the Karen Schuessler Singers and the Toronto Jewish Music Week in 2024.

With performance dates as varied as the 25th edition of London's world-renowned TD Sunfest, the inaugural Windsor Hummus Festival, and receptions for CBC Radio London and Festivals & Events Ontario, 2018-2019 was a particularly busy season for The Light of East Ensemble. It also continues to attract top collaborators from other genres and disciplines, such as the International Symphony Orchestra (Sarnia/Port Huron) and London Symphonia conducted and arranged by Scott Good.

The LoEE has three well-received albums to its credit: *Beyond Our Shores* (2009), *Live at The Aeolian* (2015), and *Sephardic Heart* (2019). The latter release, recorded in November 2018 during a live performance at London's Proconier Hall (The Palace Theatre), celebrates the music of the Jewish communities that flourished in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin after the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492. *Sephardic Heart* (now for sale online and at concerts) is full of passionate love songs, poignant lullabies, and fascinating history lessons.

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