



GRACIA
SARAH AROESTE

The word “gracia” means thanks and grace, and this album is filled with both sentiments. I owe thanks to many people, both today and from centuries past, who have inspired me on this record—from a medieval Sephardic heroine, Dona Gracia Naci (1510–1569), for whom this album and title track are named, to the great Judeo-Spanish poet Samuel Ha’Nagid (993-1056), and to several living legends who have done so much for the Ladino music world to keep it alive today.

Many of the songs on this album are original songs that I have written, and express the most personal direction in my career so far. I have written about historical memory, female-power, family, marriage, loss and hope. I have incorporated source materials that vary from medieval poetry and traditional Ladino proverbs, to an obscure piece of Sephardic liturgy, a popular Spanish children’s song, a Mendelssohn violin concerto, a feminist rallying cry from the 1970’s and a contemporary feminist hip-hop poem from today, to name a few. Other songs on the recording are based on traditional Ladino songs, though the versions here reflect my own particular interpretations of the folk lyrics. And still others pay homage to current artists in the Ladino field, to whom I am indebted for helping to lead the way. Together, the songs on Gracia are a detailed mix of feminist, experimental, raw, rock-beat, energetic, empowering, electronic, retro-chic, emotional, Mediterranean-infused Ladino sounds.

The album includes some of the finest musicians in New York, Israel, Morocco, Uruguay, Spain, Colombia and Russia, and includes a 16-piece string ensemble in addition to several incredible featured guest artists. I am humbled and grateful to everyone—musicians, mentors and supporters—who has worked so hard to make this album come to life. I hope that Dona Gracia Naci, who heroically saved hundreds from the Spanish Inquisition by using her creativity, femininity, and commitment to preserving culture, would be happy with the result. It is my proudest project yet and I am truly filled with gracia to be able to share it with you.

-Sarah Aroeste

Gracia

Tu mos das gracia
Tu mos das vida
Tu mos das esperanza

You give us grace
You give us life
You give us promise

Tu mos das bravura
Tu mos das fuersa
Tu mos das feuzia

You give us bravery
You give us strength
You give us defiance

Tu mos das dicha
Tu mos das boz
Tu mos das enspirasyon

You give us command
You give us voice
You give us inspiration

Tu mos das estima
Tu mos das valor
Tu mos das admirasion

You give us esteem
You give us value
You give us admiration

Koro:
Por que ti tenemos
Onor, pleto, effeto;
Por que ti soportamos
Con poder, altas, respekto

Chorus:
Because of you we have the
Honor, fight, effect;
Because of you we stand with
Power, height, respect

Unos tienen las echas, otras la fama—
Las tienes enjuntas.

Some have the deeds, some have the fame—
You have both and the same.

Music: Sarah Aroeste, Lyrics: Sarah Aroeste, Spoken Word: Gloria Steinem, National Women’s Political Caucus (1971); Arrangement: Shai Bachar in collaboration with Nir Graff; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Back Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Drums: Yuval Lion; Percussion: Samuel Torres, Rony Iwryn; Bass: Ziv Harpaz; Acoustic Guitar: Nir Graff; Electric Guitars: Oz Noy; Palmas: Lara Bello, Samuel Torres; Alto Sax: Shlomo Cohen; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

Scalerica De Oro/Dodi Yarad

Scalerica de oro, de oro y de marfil
Para que suva la novia a dar kidushin.

Venimos a ver, venimos a ver
I gozen y logren y tengan mucho bien.

La novia no tiene dinero
Que mos tenga un mazal bueno.

La novia no tiene contado
Que mos tenga un mazal alto.

דודי ירד לגנו
לערוגות בשמו
להתעלס עם בת נדיב
ולפרוס עליה סוכת שלמה
אפריון עשה לו המלך שלמה
ביום חתונתו וביום שמחת ליבו

ישמח חתן עם לב כלה. לקחת לו לגורלו
ותאמר למהללו: אשרי העם שככה לו

A ladder of gold and ivory
So the bride can go up to take her marriage vows.

We've come to see, we've come to see
May they have joy and prosper and be very happy.

The bride has no money
May they have good fortune.

The bride has no riches
May they have good luck.

My beloved went to the garden
To smell the perfume
To make love to the daughter of the generous
To cover her with peace
A gown that King Solomon made him
On the day of his wedding, the joy of his heart.

May the groom rejoice with his bride
That he took her of his fate
She will say to the one who praises
Lucky are the people who benefit from this moment.

Music: Traditional (Scalerica De Oro), Yedidya Admon (Dodi Yarad); Lyrics: Traditional (Scalerica De Oro), Sephardic Ketubah Shavuot, adapted from Song of Songs (Dodi Yarad); Arrangement: Shai Bachar & Nir Graff; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Back Vocals: David (Manué) Castellano; Drums: Yuval Lion; Bass: Nir Graff; Nylon Guitar: David (Manué) Castellano; Acoustic Guitar: Eli Lishinsky; Electric Guitars: Nir Graff; Zurna: Amir Gwartzman; Strings: Lea Gadaev Ensemble; String Arrangements: Shai Bachar; Keyboards: Shai Bachar; Programming: Nir Graff

Chika Morena

So la chika morena
La de kaveyos largos
La de los ojos duros
Ama de korason kontente.
Tengo mas de mil anyos
He traversado mares i fronteras
Un dia tornaré a mi tierra
Ke el calor de mi madre me aspera

Koro:
Morena me llaman
Blanca yo naci
De pasear galana
Mi color perdi

So la chika morena
A los reyes he sigido
Suvido eskaleras de oro
Kazado kon el mundo i bivido
Bezado los pies de mis hijos
I las manos de mis ermanos
Sigiendo la boz de mis padres
A topar la guerta de mi madre

I am the dark beauty
The one with the long hair
And the strong eyes
But with a happy heart.
I have lived more than 1000 years
I have crossed seas and borders
One day I will return to my land
Where the warmth of my mother awaits me.

Chorus:
They call me the dark beauty
But I was born quite fair
Parading about
I have lost my color

I am the dark beauty
Who has abided by many kings
Climbed ladders of gold
Married into the world and lived.
I have kissed the feet of my children
And the hands of my brothers
I am following the voices of my ancestors
To return to the garden of my mother.

Music: Roberto Rodriguez ; Lyrics: Sarah Aroeste ; Poetry: Marc Kakon; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Back Vocals: Sarah Aroeste, Marc Kakon; Spoken Word: Marc Kakon; Percussion: Rony Iwryn; Bass: Marc Kakon; Acoustic Guitar: Marc Kakon; Electric Guitars: Marc Kakon; Oud: Amos Hoffman; Piano: Shai Bachar; Strings: Lea Gadaev Ensemble; String Arrangements: Shai Bachar; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

La Comida La Mañana

La comida la mañana
La madre la traigo atras
Que lo sepa la mi madre
Que yo quero t'espozar

Una hora en la ventana
Otra hora en el balcon
Que lo sepa la mi madre
Que yo tengo mucho amor

No se burle la mi madre
No se burle del amor
Ella cuando era moza
Hizo amor con mi señor

Yo lo hize la mi hija
Yo lo hize con t'amor
No son como los de agora
Que dexan con la dolor

The morning meal
In the afternoon I'll bring it back
So that my mother will know
That I wish to marry you

An hour by the window
Another hour at the balcony
So that my mother will know
How much I love you

Don't make fun of me, my mother
Don't make fun of love
When she was young
She made love with my father

Yes I did my daughter
But I did it with love
I am not like young women of today
Who are left in grief

En Suenyo Te Vi

Anoche en durmiendo
Yo en suenyo te vi

Tu sunrisa tan dulce
Tus palavras a mi.

Tu abraso tan tiero
M'incheron de amor

En avriendo los ojos
A mi lado te vi

Tu durmias kansado
De un dia de lavor

Depertar no te kiji
Te deshi deskansar

En mi suenyo tornando
Un gran bezo te di

Anoche en durmiendo
En suenyo te ami

Last night as I was sleeping
I saw you in my dreams

Your sweet smile
Your words to me.

Your tender embrace,
Full of love.

When I opened my eyes,
I saw you beside me

You were sleeping, tired
After a long day of work.

I didn't want to disturb you
So I let you rest.

I returned to my dream,
Where I gave you a big kiss

And as I was sleeping
And I loved you as I dreamt.

Music: Traditional; Lyrics: Traditional; Poetry: "Wild Women" by Vanessa Hiday; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Back Vocals: Yael Horwitz, Lara Bello, Samuel Torres; Spoken Word: Vanessa Hiday; Drums: Yuval Lion & Nate Smith; Percussion: Rony Iwryn; Bass: Ziv Harpaz; Electric Guitars: Oz Noy; Strings: Lea Gadaev Ensemble; String Arrangements: Shai Bachar; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

Music: Betty Klein; Lyrics: Miriam Raymond; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Back Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Drums: Yuval Lion; Percussion: Rony Iwryn; Bass: Nir Graff; Electric Guitars: Nir Graff, Joao Erbeta; Strings: Eugene Povolotsky Ensemble; String Arrangements: David Feldman, Shai Bachar; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

Las Estreyas

Las estreyas de los cielos, kerido
Eyas son que arrelumbran
En eyas no hay firmeza
Niño de mi korason
Ya me abasta la mia passion.

Ten pasiensa con ti, kerido
En estos dias speras tu avenir
Que mos sera briyante
Niño de mi korason
Mi amor en ti fondi yo.

Una cosa te diré, kerido
El mundo no kedo ansi
Muchas cosas yo pensi
Niño de mi korason
Ainda no te alkansi.

The stars in heaven, my dear
They are the ones that shine
They are not steady
Boy of my heart
Already my passion in enough for me.

Be patient with yourself, my dear
You will know your future very soon
Which will be shining for us
Boy of my heart
My darling I have built my hopes on you.

I will tell you one thing, my dear
The world does not stay like that
I thought many things
Boy of my heart
I still have not reached you.

Avre Este Abajour Bijou

Avre este abajour bijou,
Avre la tu ventana;
Por ver tu cara morena
Al Dio daré mi alma.

Por la tu puerta yo pasi,
I la topi cerrada;
La llavedura yo besi
Como besar tu cara.

Si tu de mi tolvidaras,
Tu hermozura piedras;
Ningun niño t'en deñara
En los mis brazos mueras.

Open the shade my jewel,
Open your window;
To see your dark face
I will give my soul to God.

I passed by your door,
And I found it was closed;
The keyhole I kissed
As though kissing your face.

If you forget about me,
You will lose all your beauty;
No man will ever bear you children
May you die in my arms.

Music: Traditional; Additional Composition: Dan Nadel; Lyrics: Traditional;
Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Drums: Yuval Lion;
Percussion: Rony Iwryn; Bass: Ziv Harpaz; Electric Guitars: Marc Kakon; Oud:
Amos Hoffman; Piano: Shai Bachar; Strings: Eugene Povolotsky Ensemble; String
Arrangements: Shai Bachar; Keyboards: Shai Bachar

Music: Traditional; Lyrics: Traditional; Arrangement: Shai Bachar in collaboration with
Daniel Anglister; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Cajon: Samuel Torres; Bass: Fima Ephrone,
Acoustic Guitar: Eli Lishinsky; Electric Guitar: Eli Lishinsky; Keyboards & Programming:
Shai Bachar

Tu Portret

El dia ke de mi partites
Tu portet a mi deshates
"Vo tornar" tu me dishites
"Yo te rogo me asperar."

Koro:
Ande stas tu, mi kerido?
Tu prtret st'aki ankolgado.
De ti nunca yo m'olvido
No se mas kualo pensar.

De mi vida tu salites
Ni unta letra me mandares
Ande te desaparestes?
Yo no kedo de yorar.

Dia i noche sospirando,
A tus bezos vo pensando,
I el tiempo sta pasando
Tu figura a kontemplar.

Tu portet yo vo mirando.
La dolor me sta matando,
A tu alma sto rogando
No me deshesh sin avlar.

The day that you abandoned me
Your portrait was all that you left.
"I will return" you said to me,
"I want you to wait for me."

Chorus:
Where are you, my dear?
Your picture is here hanging,
Nothing of you I forget,
I do not know what more to think.

You exited from my life,
Not even a letter did you send me.
Where have you disappeared?
I cannot rest from crying.

Day and night I sigh,
Remembering your kisses,
Time goes on to pass
As I contemplate your face.

I stare at your picture.
The sadness kills me,
From your soul I beg:
Don't leave without telling me.

Music: Sarah Aroeste; Lyrics: Matilda Koen-Sarano; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Percussion: Rony Iwryn; Tenor Saxophone: Greg Wall; Piano: Shai Bachar; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

La Vida Do Por El Raki

La vida do por el raki, no puedo yo dexarlo;
De beber nunca me arti de tanto amarlo.

Cuando esta en el baril,
El no havla del todo;
Cuando me hago yo candil,
Me ago baños de lodo.

El ya mos aze divorsar
Casamientos de oro;
La vida yo quero pasar
Con risas y con lloros.

Me siento yo hijo varon,
Me siento yo primario;
Sin tener liras el cashon,
Me siento millionario.

I give my life for alcohol, I cannot leave it;
I never tire of drinking for I love it so much.

When it's in the barrel,
It doesn't speak back at all;
When I get all fired up,
I take a bath in mud.

It makes us divorce
Our golden weddings;
I want to go through life,
With laughter and with tears.

I feel like a real young man,
I feel like a winner;
Even without money in the drawer,
I feel like a millionaire.

Music: Traditional, Lyrics: Traditional; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Drums: Yuval Lion; Bass: Uri Kleinman; Electric Guitars: Oz Noy; Violin: Lea Gadaev; Shofar: Yonnie Dror; Piano: Shai Bachar; Keyboards & Programming: Shai Bachar

El Leon Ferido

Kuando el mundo avla una lingua ke no entiendes
I tus pensadas no tienen traduksion;
Kuando las palabras viajan avagar avagar
I se pierden durante la tranzmision.

Kuando tu amante de la vida no es komo lo akodras
I su golor i savor te son estranyas;
Kuando tu bives tu dia komo un aktor
Ma el senario esta en la nievla.

Koro:
En los tiempos de grande apreto,
Enfortese tu korason.
Afilu si tu estas en la puerta de la muerte,
La lampa tiene luz antes ke se amato,
El leon ferido ainda save bramear.

Kuando tu temes ke esto es todo ke tienes
I no ay mas shenas en la opera de tu vida;
Kuando tu demandas si agora ya no es tadre
I si puedes tomar otra vision.

When the world speaks a language
you don't understand
And your thoughts have no translation
When words travel in slow motion
And get lost in the transmission

When your lover is not as you remember
And his scent and taste are strange
When you move through your day like an actor
But the script is in a haze.

Chorus:
At times of great fear,
strengthen your heart.
Even if you stand at death's door,
The lamp has light before it is extinguished.
The wounded lion still knows how to roar.

When you're scared that this is all you have
And there are no more scenes to your life's work
When you ask if it's too late now
If you can take another look.

Scalerica De Oro (DMD Remix)

Produced by Avi Elman

Music: Sarah Aroeste, Lyrics: Sarah Aroeste, inspired by the poem "Wounded Lion"
by Samuel Ha-Nagid; Arrangement: Shai Bachar; Lead Vocals: Sarah Aroeste; Drums:
Nate Smith; Upright Bass: Dave Richards; Clarinet: Greg Wall; Piano: Roei Friedman;
Strings: Eugene Povolotsky Ensemble; String Arrangements: Shai Bachar

Executive Producer: Sarah Aroeste
Musical Producer: Shai Bachar
Mixing: Eli Lishinsky at Artsonic Studios (NY); "Gracia" mixed by Noam Levinberg
Mastering: Scott Hull at Masterdisk (NY)
Recording: Noam Levinberg at Pluto Studios (Tel Aviv); Zoar "Baba" Burger & Eli Lishinsky at Nir Graff Studio (NY)
Strings Section Conductor: Roei Friedman
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GRACIA



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