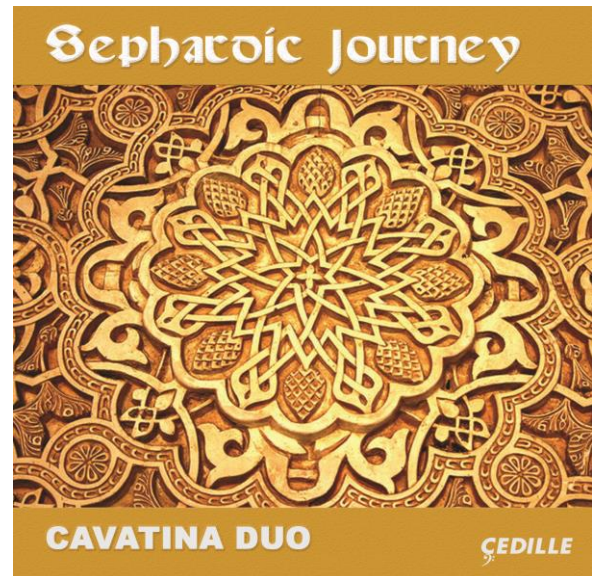


## Pasatiempo

By James Keller



Many Sephardic melodies tug at the heartstrings, their modal melodies being imbued with nostalgia and even mournfulness that we may hear as suggesting the diaspora through which they were spread beyond the confines of Iberia. The Cavatina Duo, comprising flutist Eugenia Moliner and guitarist Denis Azabagic, invited five modern composers to give some of the songs new life in the concert hall by writing chamber works for them to play alone or with colleagues (here violinist Désirée Ruhstrat, cellist David Cunliffe, and the Avalon String Quartet, depending on the piece). Their Sephardic Journey includes works by Alan Thomas, Joseph V. Williams, Carlos Rafael Rivera, David Leisner, and Clarice Assad (both of the latter employing string quartet in their orchestration). Leisner's atmospheric Love Dreams of the Exile draws one back for repeated listening; the sighing microtones of its first movement, a meditation on the song "Yo bolí," add a layer of deep resignation within the calmly flowing figuration that surrounds them. Assad's "Sephardic Suite," conceived as a kind of musical storytelling, is full of contrast and incident, tracing a vague but energized narrative about a young woman who loses her innocence, lets go of an old infatuation, and gets involved in a new one.

# Sephardic Journey



**CAVATINA DUO**

**ÇEDILLE**