

The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress presents  
an evening concert as part of the symposium  
The Lomax Legacy: Folklore in a Globalizing Century

Cosponsored with the Association for Cultural Equity and the Library of Congress Music Division

## AN ACQUISITIONS AND PRESENTATION PROJECT

# THE NATIONAL CHORUS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD AND SAINTS OF CHRIST

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS THE SOLOMON CAREY FAMILY  
TRADITIONAL A CAPPELLA AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUALS AND SECULAR SONGS



AND JUDITH R. COHEN

SINGING SONGS FROM THE LUSO-HISPANIC TRADITION FROM RURAL  
SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, AND FROM THE SEPHARDIC DIASPORA.

FREE AND OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC

**Thursday**  
**January 19, 2006**  
**7:00 PM**

**Coolidge Auditorium**  
**Ground Floor, Thomas Jefferson Building**  
**Library of Congress**  
**10 First Street, SE**  
**Washington, DC**



Request ADA accommodations five days in advance at (202) 707-6362 or [ADA@loc.gov](mailto:ADA@loc.gov)  
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one block south of the  
Jefferson Building

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Formed in 2003, The National Chorus of the Church of God and Saints of Christ carries on a long musical tradition. They sing and compose in the a cappella jubilee style that has been the liturgical music of the Church since shortly after its founding by the Prophet William S. Crowdy in the 1890s. It is the oldest African-American congregation that bases its doctrine and worship on the tenets of Judaism.

This style was first popularized by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the 1870s, and the many choirs of the Church of God and Saints of Christ carried it into the 20th and now the 21st century. Their songs, many of them based on the Psalms and other biblical texts, are composed and arranged by church members.

While working on a film in 1960 in Colonial Williamsburg, Alan Lomax took the opportunity to explore local musical traditions, and was led to the Belleville A Cappella Choir, a group who sang at the Tabernacle Church of God and Saints of Christ in Belleville, near Portsmouth, Virginia. There he recorded an album of the choir that was released the following year, entitled "Honor the Lamb." This album was reissued by Rounder Records in 1997. In his notes to the original album release in 1961, Alan Lomax wrote:

"There have been, of course, other choirs of this type in various Negro churches, yet I myself have heard no group which combines in such an engaging way a repertoire of fresh and thoroughly inspired songs, a conventional choral technique, and which at the same time has not lost the rhapsodic swinging style which ennobles and enlivens American Negro Folk Music."

Among the choir members recorded that day was bass singer Solomon Carey, whose children Solomon Carey Jr., Aaron Carey, and Sabrina Johnson join us tonight. Solomon Carey was also part of a group from the church who came to Washington in 1982 to sing at the "Folk Music in the Roosevelt White House" commemorative program. Mr. Carey's children will sing and give a short presentation before the National Chorus takes the stage.

Dr. Judith R. Cohen is a performer and ethnomusicologist specializing in Judeo-Spanish ("Ladino") Sephardic songs, as well as in medieval and traditional music, including Balkan, Portuguese, and Yiddish songs, and songs from Crypto-Jewish regions of the Portuguese-Spanish

border. Dr. Cohen's performance repertoire and lectures draw on her village fieldwork in several Mediterranean countries and in urban immigrant communities; and on her academic research. She accompanies her traditional-style singing on bowed *vielle*, *'ud* (Middle Eastern lute), dulcimer and traditional percussion instruments, and is an accomplished player of recorders and pipe-and-tabor.

Dr. Cohen is the General Editor for the Spain series of the Alan Lomax Collection, carried out with the Association for Cultural Equity and Rounder Records. She was a founding member of *Gerinaldo*, the internationally acclaimed Moroccan Judeo-Spanish ensemble, and the founder-director of *Nova Tradicija*, an a cappella ensemble specializing in Balkan singing, as well as *Na Carezza*, a women's ensemble specializing in the early medieval repertoire. As an educator, she has worked coaching the Balkan vocal ensemble at the University of Toronto, and is currently Adjunct Graduate Faculty at York University, where she has taught seminars in Mediterranean, Jewish and Medieval music; also Folklore of Canada.

Her doctoral dissertation (1989) examined Judeo-Spanish music in Canada, and her M.A. thesis (1980) described women musicians in the Christian, Moslem and Jewish communities of medieval Iberia.

Judith continues to carry out fieldwork among Sephardic Jews around the Mediterranean, and in villages in Crypto-Jewish regions along the Portugal/Spain border, usually with her daughter Tamar Ilana Cohen. Her articles and book chapters appear regularly, and she presents frequent concerts and lecture-recitals in Spain, Portugal, Paris, Israel, Belgium, England and North America.

The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 and placed at the Library of Congress to "preserve and present American Folklife" through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, public programs, and training. The Folklife Center includes the Archive of Folk Culture, which was established in 1928 and is now one of the largest collections of ethnographic material from the United States and around the world. Visit the AFC on the web at <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>

