

LOCA ROSA: BIOGRAPHY

LOCA ROSA, which means Wild Rose, is the stage name of Tish Dvorkin, a Canadian-born naturalized US citizen. She chose this name to honor her Sephardi (Judeo-Spanish) heritage, to acknowledge her 30-year residency in Arizona, and to remember her birth place, Alberta, where the Wild Rose is the provincial flower. But it was her love of the traditional ethnic folk music of her Ashkenazi (Eastern European Yiddish-speaking) Jewish heritage that drew her to become a “badkhn” or folk singer.

Tish learned her musical folk traditions from her Jewish family who came from the Diaspora countries of Russia, Belarus, Turkey and Spain; from Israel; and from her Jewish community in Alberta, Canada. Her folk art is rooted in her Jewish heritage where she was taught traditional folk songs in the many Jewish languages of Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Israeli cultures. As a very young child, Tish observed her Jewish relatives perform their traditional songs, stories and dances at family celebrations, community festivals and religious ceremonies. They encouraged her as well to perform the repertoire of her diverse heritage.

Throughout her childhood and teen years, Tish studied with various teachers and performers. She studied classical piano with Constance Kline, receiving certificates for four years training in classical piano and music theory. She studied classical guitar with Billy Bridges, took vocal training from Elgar Higgin, a prominent Alberta figure in opera and musical theatre, and studied drama at Mt. Royal College with Professor Tom Besse. Her education in the popular music field continued with lessons from jazz pianist Jac Friedenbergl and Rock ‘n roll guitarist Klaas Craats. She performed professionally with The Klaas Craats Band and also with the Frank Bailey Big Band Orchestra.

As an adult, Tish traveled across Western Canada working as a professional folk musician at clubs, lounges, resorts, festivals and on tours. Some Canadian career highlights include: Beta Sigma Phi Calgary Chapter Jubilee Auditorium Shows; Banff & Jasper Alberta National Parks Resorts; Chateau Lake Louise Alberta; Peter Pond Hotel, Fort MacMurry, Alberta; Southern & Central Saskatchewan tours; Calgary Alberta Youth Aliyah Fund Raising Dinner, guest speaker Monty Hall; Fort Hotel, Fort St. John British Columbia; and, as the principle singer in the Canadian play, “The Ecstasy Of Rita Joe” produced by Alberta Theatre Projects.

After relocating to Arizona in 1978, Tish studied English and Music and sang in Chorus at Arizona State University and Grand Canyon College, where she made the Dean’s list in English. She attended workshops at the Balalaika and Domra Association of America Conventions as an instructor and as an attendee. There, she studied prima balalaika with Peter Trofimenko, graduate of Tchaikovsky Kiev State Conservatory of Music and conductor of the American Balalaika Symphony, Arlington, VA, and with Peter Rothe, luthier, and member of Firebird Balalaika Ensemble, Reno, NV; and, alto balalaika with Judy Sherman, Gypsy-style singer and founder of Big Rock Balalaikas, Morro Bay, CA. Tish also learned Russian folk dance from Sergei Sinitsyn, graduate from the Russian Academy of Performing Arts and performer with the Leningrad State Theatre Troupe.

Tish has learned to play lute and gusli and various ethnic percussion instruments such as loshki and tof. She has attended numerous workshops at Arts and Jewish Educators Conferences which include: “Creative Community Residency Design;” “Celebrating Our Differences With Cultural Respect;” “Understanding and Using the Arizona Arts Standards;” “Challenges Of A High School Residency;” “Ceremony and Celebration;” “Teaching the Adolescent;” “Songs Of Jerusalem;” “Music, Family and Me: The Fall Holidays;” “Classroom Discipline and Management;” and “How To Talk So Children Will Listen and Listen So Children Will Talk” by Dorothy Neuman, M.A., D.C.H., Behavioral Counselor. Tish has taken foreign language classes in Russian, Yiddish, Hebrew and Spanish to improve pronunciation, and, completed a Music Business course at Mesa Community College. She has been selected continuously since 1992 through rigorous review panels to the Arizona Commission on the Arts Artists Roster, and her group, Byelaroza Eastern European Folk Dance and Music Ensemble were Roster Artists for 5 years

As LOCA ROSA, Tish performs professionally as a folk singer and storyteller throughout Arizona at clubs, coffeehouses, concerts, private parties, Jewish events, holiday celebrations, multicultural festivals, special events, libraries, and schools. Arizona career highlights include: Best Musical Entry MAMA Masquerade Adventure, Tempe; Oxymoron Improv Comedy Group; Arizona and Devonshire Renaissance Festivals; Plotkin Judaica Museum Aliyah ‘90; statewide Multicultural Festivals such as Glendale Community College International Festivals, Mesa’s Fine Folk

Festivals, and Merry Main Street Festivals; Young Audiences Of Santa Cruz County, Nogales; Motorola TCS Global Showcase, Scottsdale; Performing Fine Arts Series for Mohave Community College in Lake Havasu and Mesa Public Schools in Mesa; the Mesa Summer Spotlight Series; and self-produced Kerr Cultural Center Concerts in Scottsdale with Byelaroza Eastern European Folk Dance and Music Ensemble. She has presented many Artist in Residence programs and workshops on Russian-Jewish folk songs, stories and culture for public and private schools and other organizations. Tish's teaching experience also includes 13 years as a Music Specialist where she taught Jewish folk, holiday and ritual songs in Phoenix-area private schools.

LOCA ROSA, dressed in colorful ethnic costumes, performs lively programs capturing Eastern European culture in traditional folk song and legend. Accompanying herself on guitar, balalaika, lute, gusli, frame drum or loshki and singing in many languages which include English, Russian, Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino, Spanish and French (with the occasional Irish and Scottish song thrown in), this irrepressible troubadour involves the audience with traditional, contemporary and original material from her diverse Old and New World, cross-cultural and Russian-Jewish heritage.