

BIOGRAPHY



MARIA ZOPOUNIDIS

[Songs of the Judeo-Spanish Sephardic Tradition: From Medieval Andalusia to the Former Ottoman Empire]

Maria Zopounidis grew up in Greece, immersed from an early age in a dual musical heritage: her Pontic Greek father passed down traditional songs from Greece, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea, where their roots lie; her Franco-Italian mother, a pianist, taught her piano and provided her with a classical musical education.

She moved to France to pursue her musical studies and, in 2018, obtained a **Diploma of Musical Studies** in lyrical singing from the Regional Conservatory of Avignon (CRR). She furthered her training at the **Institut Supérieur des Arts of Toulouse**, where she earned, in 2022, the National Higher Professional Musician's Diploma in lyrical singing under the guidance of Sophie Koch and Didier Laclau-Barrère. She also earned a Bachelor's degree in Musicology from the University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès and the **State Diploma** in lyrical singing. In 2021, she received the "**Espoir**" Prize from the **Maurice Ravel International Academy** in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, and in 2022, she began her professional singing career with the National Choir of the Capitole of Toulouse. In both 2023 and 2025, Maria performed the role of Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Nuits Musicales en Armagnac festival.

Her passion for orally transmitted ancient songs led her, in 2022, to enroll in the **Sacred and Secular Songs of the Sephardic and Al-Andalus Traditions** program with Françoise Atlan at the **International Institute of World Music** in Aubagne, where she obtained her **Diploma of Musical Studies** in November 2023. Since then, she has been assisting Sandra Bessis in teaching the **Sephardic Judeo-Spanish Song Tradition and Associated Repertoires** program at the same institute. She has also been teaching Modern Greek there since 2022 as part of the **Songs of Greece and Asia Minor** course led by Maria Simoglou. Additionally, Maria completed a Master's degree in Musicology at the University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès and presented her work under the supervision of Florence Mouchet, lecturer in medieval musicology, at the conference *Modal Music of Yesterday and Today*, held in April 2023 at the Abbey of Sylvanès.

Since June 2023, Maria has collaborated with various artists from the world music scene, including Iranian multi-instrumentalist Soroush Kamalian and guitarist and artistic director of Compagnie Rassegna, Bruno Allary.