



Arts Conference Weekend for Women
March 8-12, 2018
ISRAEL

Ramat Beit Shemesh Aleph

Shabbat at The Pilzno Shul
Rabbi & Rebbetzin Gerzi
Concerts at Matnas Gvanim, 16 Dolev
Thursday in partnership with Iryat RBS
Motzei Shabbat Concert sponsored by
Bamah Laisha – Spotlight on Women
& The RBS Dance & Music Academy

Jerusalem

Emunah Women's College for Torah & Art
Sponsored by The Myrna Zisman Foundation
El HaLev Center
Sponsored by Danielle Sara & Frank Storch
The Davidic Dynasty Legacy Center

At this time, we'd like to take a moment to pay tribute to a great light, artist and friend of AṬARA who passed away almost two weeks ago-- Shoshannah Sarah Chouake, a"b (Pronounced SHWEKU). Shoshannah was an internationally acclaimed composer, improvisational pianist, piano teacher, piano therapist, and recording artist who used all of her many gifts to help and heal others. A recognized child prodigy, she began composing at age six and by age nine was winning classical piano competitions and appearing in Carnegie Hall. Shoshannah devoted her life to bringing spiritual unity, peace and compassion to the world through music.

The daughter of a Holocaust survivor, Shoshannah was born and raised in Queens, NY. She graduated from California Institute of the Arts where she studied with legendary concert pianist and composer, Leonid Hambro.

Shoshannah released four recordings of her healing music and founded an innovative approach to music therapy she called, "Piano Therapy," which taught how to meaningfully create and improvise music in the moment, free of judgment. She was also a Certified Holistic Nutritionist, Health Coach and MindBody Therapist.

Her work, which took her from concert halls like the Lincoln Center, to multi-media events such as dance, theater, TV, radio and film, was a diverse, spiritually rich tapestry of New Age, World, and Neo-Classical music...with a touch of jazz. Shoshannah performed on piano, synthesizer and percussion with many masterful musicians, including Reb Shlomo Carlebach, Glen Velez, David Darling and the Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

Her music is both deep and soaring...at times stunningly powerful, at times flowing and gentle...but always full of heart and healing. Shoshannah's artistic and technical mastery of her instrument gave her the freedom to express the full breadth of her soul through music. She never waived in her commitment to reaching for the highest and the best.

Shoshannah made Aliyah in 2009 but returned to New York to attend to family matters. She passed away while seeking alternative treatment in Mexico. As she had no children, her music is her greatest legacy. All of Shoshannah's music is available to listen to for free at TheHealingPiano.com. The site also includes links to purchase Shoshannah's CDs or download tracks via CD Baby, iTunes and Amazon.

AṬARA is honored to dedicate tonight's concert to the ilui neshama of Shoshannah Sarah bas Avraham, a"b. May her memory be for a blessing.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, March 8

Matnas Gvanim, 16 Dolev, RBSA. NIS 20

- 7:30pm Doors & vendor tables
- 8:30pm Women's Concert *In partnership with Iryat Beit Shemesh* featuring Jezliah Villareal, Shaked Sebag, Judith Gerzi, Sapir Mendlowitz, Chanale Fellig & Gila Carcas

FRIDAY, March 9

- 2-4pm Check in and socializing at the Gerzi Shul, *Rehov Tiveria 5/2, Ramat Shiloh, RBSA*
- 4-5pm Prepare for Shabbos! At host homes.
- 5:03pm Candle lighting at your host home or at the Gerzi Shul, followed by Fri night davenning
- 6:30pm Pre-Kiddush Zmirot
- 7:00pm Kiddush followed by Dinner, pre-registration required
- **The Healing Power of the Arts** – Toby Klein Greenwald, *Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions in creative education, journalism, theater and the performing arts worldwide*
 - **Divergent Minds in a Convergent Mold: cognitive & emotional challenges of creative thinkers in Orthodoxy** – Miriam Leah Gamliel, ATARA co-director
 - **Dvar Torah on Creative Expression** – Shachar Dawn Banin, Shlucha of Venice
- 8:45pm **ONEG FOR THE ARTS, Nachal Sorek 25**
- **A Taste of Bibliodrama** – performance by Bibliodrama pioneer Yael Unterman
 - **Improv Acting** - engaging, interactive exercises to facilitate group comfort & communication with facilitator Leah Bassett, recent oleh from Toronto, Canada.
 - **"Makom B'Maagal"** – creative expression through movement, rhythm and voice with Aviva Spiegel, producer of Tambourine Dream and Jordan River Jubilee
 - **Harmonium Circle** – women's voices in harmony, facilitated by singer-songwriter Michal Shababo from Kfar Saba
 - **Optional: Listening Circle** – supporting each other in our challenges as artists led by Yael Unterman
- Oneg program followed by sleep or socializing until 1am.*

SHABBAT, March 10

- 7am Morning Davening in shuls locally
- 11:30am Lunch meal in small groups to facilitate networking and community strength
- 2:00pm Shabbos Menucha
- 3-4pm **TORAH ON CREATIVITY & THE ARTS, Nachal Sorek 25**
- The Bostonner Rebbetzin, spiritual leader of the women of Bostoner Chassidim
 - The Pilzno Rav, Rabbi Yehoshua Gerzi, spiritual leader of Pilzno Chassidim
 - Rebbetzin Dena Hundert, new spiritual leadership of Yeshiva Simchat Shlomo
- 4:15pm **Pre-Pesach Interactive Bilbiodrama Workshop** with industry leader Yael Unterman, "In Every Generation, As If We Left Egypt"
- 5:00pm Shalosh Seudot 3rd meal
- **The Importance of Creativity & the Woman's Voice** – Dr. Kerry Bar-Cohn, aka "Rebbetzin Tap" and founder of Kol Isha community, Kol Isha Radio
 - **Serving G-d through Music** – Inspiring personal stories of Batya Taylor Shachar & Gila Carcas Wittow, musicians who found their way to Judaism
- 6:30pm Musical Havdallah

8:30pm

MOTZEI SHABBAT WOMEN'S CONCERT

Matnas Gvanim RBS, Nachal Dolev 16, RBSA

Featuring professional female performing artists from all over Israel and the U.S. and Canada. Singer-songwriters, musicians, opera, theater performance & comedy!

- Tziona Achishena – Songwriter & musician with 10 solo albums from Tzfat, Israel
- Shaindel Antelis – Singer-songwriter with three albums from North America
- Avital Macales – Musical theater performer and composer from Efrat
- Rachel Hutner – Vocalist and vocal coach in Ramat Beit Shemesh
- Michal Shababo – Singer-songwriter with debut album from Kfar Saba
- Hadassah Haller – Singer-songwriter originally from RBSA!
- Batya Shachar (nee Taylor) – Singer-songwriter and performer from Matityahu
- Sarah Zier – performer in voice, piano and dance in Jerusalem
- Miriam Eliwatt & Chana Wurtzel – musical theater duet from Ramat Bet Shemesh A
- Batya Yehudit Shrager & Judy Clark – musicians and directors of Studio Musikef
- Miriam Leah Gamliel – musical theater performer from Montreal, QC

SUNDAY, March 11

Day of Master Classes in Theater, Music and Dance taught by industry professionals

Emunah College for Women & Arts, *Derech Beit Lehem 104, Jerusalem*

8:30am

Registration, Browse library/exhibits

9:00am

Welcome from Shlomo Kessel, Director, World Emunah & Amos Safrai,
Director, Emunah College

10:00am

SESSION I

- **THEATER – S. Kim Glassman** – Acting Technique
- **DANCE – Jezliah Villarreal** – Jazz Technique
- **MUSIC – Gayle Berman** – Singing for your Body and Soul

11:30am

SESSION II

- **THEATER – Toby Klein Greenwald**: Playback Theater Midrash
- **DANCE – Shaked Sebag**: Contemporary Dance, focus on improvisation & musicality
- **MUSIC – Yona Saslow Yakobovitz**: The spirit, power and healing in collaboration/
Drumming
- **STAGECRAFT – S. Kim Glassman**: Stagecraft

12:45

Break for Lunch

1:15pm

Presentation by Adv. Barry Schuman: Music Licensing – Israeli, US & Halachic Perspectives

2:15pm

SESSION III

- **THEATER – Leah Bassett**: Improvisational theater
- **DANCE – Sharona Florsheim**: Freedom within Boundaries - Between
Improvisation and Composition
- **MUSIC – Adina Feldman**: Musical Theater Vocal Performance

3:45pm

SESSION IV

- **THEATER – Yael Unterman**: Biblio-drama
- **DANCE – Adina Feldman**: Musical Theater Dance
- **MUSIC – Ana Elya**: A Journey towards Voice

5:30pm

Live Stream performance of Tzohar Seminary for Chassidus & the Arts

7:00pm **SUNDAY NIGHT CLASS ACT CONCERT**

El HaLev Center, 2 Poaley Tzedek St. 3rd floor, Talpiot

- Ina-Esther Joost Ben-Sasson, Jerusalem Symphony Principal Cellist
- Inbar Tabib, leading Israeli-American singer
- Award-winning Noga Dance Company, directed by Sharona Florsheim
- Gitty Porgesz, founder of Carmia Dance Group
- Emuna Bracha (Valentina) Recchia, Italian hip-hop dancer, choreographer RYS Theatre
- Sarah Spielman, Award-winning singer-songwriter
- Bracha Daniel & Deena Lawi, Raise Your Spirits vocal performers
- Audelia Zagury, Raise Your Spirits vocal performer, past performer in Israel Opera
- Esther Leah Marchette. Berklee College of Music singer-songwriter from Boston

MONDAY, March 12

11:00am Davidic Dynasty Legacy Museum Tour

12:30pm Networking luncheon at the Leonardo Plaza Hotel, Jerusalem

2:00pm **Painting the Parasha: A Jewish approach to illustrating sublime subject matter**

Presentation by artist and author Elisheva (Ellen) Horowitz

3:00pm Socializing and networking until 5pm

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS 2018

Tziona Achishena in her own words: I have been singing as long as I can remember...it's always been the most real and powerful thing in my life. My dream is that my music will bring healing because music is the strongest medicine. I pray that my music reaches those who need it, touching those hearts with love. I danced my whole childhood, but only started playing and composing music at age 20, and released my first album at 26: that was punk folk...wild, raw and unique. Shortly after that, I started doing Hebrew chanting and exploring the healing power of music, visiting, and falling in love with, the land of Israel. I have been singing for women across Israel, North America, and Eastern Europe, for the last 17 years. So far I have made over 10 albums of original music, including my best selling "Miriam's Drum", and "The Water Castle", based on a Rebbe Nachman story. A current project, close to my heart, is a sacred singing circle for women called Maagal Ha Lev. (Circle of the Heart). I've recently been inspired by the poetry of Rumi, and I work as a Chaplain in Nursing homes across Israel through an organization called "Music and Memory". Some of my past collaborations include Raz MeSinai, Paul Godwin, Charles Gayle, James LeBrecht, Sheva Chaya, Chava Rachel Saban, and Wings of An Angel. I live in the Northern Israeli town of Tzfat with my 3 children.

Shaindel Antelis is a singer/songwriter who has been singing since a very young age and writing songs since age ten. Her aim is to inspire and uplift women and girls everywhere! Her songs are about real life, and personal experiences that she has gone through. Shaindel has just released her fourth album this week titled "The Sun Is Rising"! She will be doing a U.S. Tour to promote her new album after pesach. For music, videos and more info go to www.shaindelantelis.com

Rebbetzin Shachar Banin, together with her husband, serves as the shlucha of Chabad of Venice Italy. In addition to assisting the local Italian community, Rabbi and Rebbetzin Banin have established a thriving community which has made Venice a well-known destination for all things Jewish

Kerry Bar-Cohn, aka "Rebbetzin Tap" teaches children to love being alive and being Jewish! Kerry has been singing and dancing since childhood. Together with her husband Rabbi David, she creates educational videos with catchy songs and life affirming messages. They have touched thousands of Jewish children's lives, inspiring them and bringing them joy. They currently live in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel and are the proud parents of four sons: Daniel, Ilan, Bentzi and Yeshaya. Kerry is also a doctor of chiropractic and teaches tap dance. In the past two years, she formed the Kol Isha group on Facebook which has attracted over 5,500 women and girls expressing their creative abilities in a safe space online, and has also created Kol Isha Radio, a 24/6 radio station for women-only music.

Leah Bassett is a natural born actress/ dancer/entertainer/choreographer/mime/comedienne/voice over talent and producer, originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Her formal training began in ballet at The Royal Winnipeg Ballet and jazz, tap, musical theatre and modern under the guidance of Barbara Daurie at The Academy of Dance. Leah performed in local variety shows as well as competing in dance festivals where she received scholarships for her performance skills

and choreography and went on to place second in The Canadian Nationals. In addition to her dance training, Leah's love for all things creative lead her to participate in a myriad of workshops in voice, improvisation, film and theatre. Her professional career began at age 16 in a production of *My Fair Lady* at North America's longest running outdoor theatre, Rainbow Stage. Since her premier professional performance, Leah has had an extensive cross-Canada career in the performing arts both on and off stage, on camera and behind the scenes. Leah was the assistant choreographer for the opening and closing ceremonies of The Canada Games and The Pan Am Games. She produced the Western Canadian Tour for the Sea-Do/Ski-doo divisions of Bombardier, and much more. Upon relocating to Toronto, Leah was accepted into the Professional Conservatory Program at the renowned improvisation and sketch comedy Theatre; Second City. Leah's life changed "dramatically" when she "accidentally" walked into an Orthodox Synagogue, and quickly learned that the talents she was born with were in fact gifts from Hashem. To this effect, Leah became a founder of Koleinu Dance and Performance Troupe, original Board member of ATARA - Association for Torah and the Arts - New York, Sole Producer of Soul Sister Act and Soul Sister Act II - Evenings of Entertainment for women by women. She has lead dance, improvisation and Torah classes and been an entertainer for various girl's and women's groups. Her characters have been invited to bridal showers, weddings, holiday parties etc. Leah knows innately how to emotionally "reset" people, with either comedic-intervention or soul-stirring inspiration. She desires to use all of her talents and experiences to demonstrate Hashem's beauty and creativity on the earth and to help others do the same. Leah and her husband recently moved from Toronto to Bat Ayin, Israel.

Gayle Berman is an internationally recognized soprano, having performed as soloist throughout North America and Europe. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, where she was a Metropolitan Opera Auditions Winner, she went on to perform leading roles with companies such as the Rome Festival Opera, Lake Geneva Opera Festival, San Antonio Opera, Boston Academy of Music and Madison Opera, as well as a soloist with Abendmusik, Choral Arts Society of New York, Chorus Pro Musica, Great Woods Festival, and with members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Her operatic roles have included Violetta in *La Traviata*, the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, the title role in *Susannah*, Lucy in *The Telephone*, Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*, Olympia in *Les Contes D'Hoffmann*, Norina in *Don Pasquale*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, Nannetta in *Falstaff* and in *Sweeney Todd*. Gayle has also served on the voice faculties of numerous American colleges and universities. Since her aliya in 2008, has continued performing and teaching, was the music director of Raise Your Spirits Theatre for their productions of *Judge! Song of Deborah* (in which she played the title role) and *Esther & the Secrets of the King's Court, the Revival*, and is the director of *Kolot Etzion*, one of the top women's choruses in Israel. She is the author, with her husband Harold Berman, of the book *Doublelife - One Family, Two Faiths and a Journey of Hope* (www.doublelifejourney.com)

Gila Carcas Wittow Born in England in 1963, Gila (known outside Israel as Gillian) Carcas has composed over fifty pieces of music, ranging from solo and small chamber works to full orchestral pieces and a chamber opera. Compositional studies were undertaken with Sebastian Forbes, John Casken, Erika Fox and with Peter Manning for electroacoustic music. Qualifications include a PhD in Composition from Durham University, which was received in 1996. Gila has received various commissions, including a setting of 18th century English feminist poems, a piece for Chinese pipa, choral music and an assortment of others. Performances of her music have been given by many artists and ensembles. Last year Gila's music was performed in New York, the Ukraine and Australia (including two world premieres). Since moving to Israel in 2004, Gila has also arranged many Jewish melodies for ensemble. In the past, Gila has taught theory and composition at the Royal College of Music in London and also spent a year as Visiting Lecturer of Composition at Southampton University. She continues to teach privately. Gila's music is generally atmospheric, evocative, dramatic and lyrical. She has recently released a CD of instrumental music she has composed over the past three decades, entitled "Transformations". Her webpage is www.carcas.net.

Judy Clark After making aliya with her family to Bet Shemesh in 2000, she established Studio Musikef, offering instrumental instruction, with an emphasis on the joy of music-making and sharing it with others. She is the weekly music volunteer at the Melabev Center for Eldercare, and she organizes regular student recitals there. She has produced a number of musical shows to benefit Melabev, including "Night of Stars," "Grace Notes" and "Kol Ish," and a music video "Carnival of the Animals," in which her students participate along with Melabev members. She also leads "Baby Parade," an intergenerational musical activity for moms, babies and seniors, and each summer, runs "Kaytanat Musikef," a unique summer program for girls. She's delighted that Yehudit Batya Shrager is now part of Studio Musikef, and she thanks Hashem daily for the gift of music!

Bracha Daniel has been performing since she was 10, when she made her first debut in the Raise Your Spirits Theatre production of *Joseph*. Since then has been onstage for every RYS production and in various shows all over Jerusalem, including ones held in Beit Hillel, AACI, "Encore," and more. While singing and dancing is her obsession, Bracha works as a reflexologist, a dental assistant and an abuse prevention educator for Tahel.

Hadassa Daniels, singer-songwriter and pianist studying music composition in Jerusalem, with a CD called "Dare to Dream." Born and raised in Israel, Hadassa began to explore musical theater and singing in her pre-teens, studying classical piano at 13, and was very active in her school choir, thanks to a very special and influential music teacher. She continued to conduct choirs, and was very enthusiastic about acting and vocal arrangement. Music helped her through rough patches in high school, and she began to experiment

with songwriting. Today she studies music in depth and is constantly awed by how much there is to learn, the beauty, symmetry and miraculousness of this art form.

Miriam (Tara) Eliwatt holds an MFA in Playwriting from Columbia University and a BSS in Performance Studies from Northwestern University. She studied classical voice both privately and at L'Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, France. She was one of twenty-five finalists in the New York Dramatist Guild's Young Playwrights Festival at age ten, a recipient of the Dorset Theatre Festival's Bruce Peyton Playwriting Fellowship, and a recipient of the Charles Cinnamon Award from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. Her plays have been performed in and around the New York area as well as in the "RIBA" Border International Theater Festival in Lithuania. She has both performed in and directed many shows over the years. Before making Aliyah, she founded and directed Camp Oh!Manuyot, a drama/fine arts camp for girls in Passaic, New Jersey. More recently, she has been a part of the Regal Productions team both behind the scenes and on the stage as a performer over the last seven years. She has developed (with fellow artist, Sarah Tikva Kornbluth) the Live Writing Improv Workshop for performers, writers, and anyone else that needs to engage an audience in an interesting and provocative way. Miriam is thrilled to be a part of the ATARA conference!

Ana Elya writes, composes, arranges and performs original texts and melodies, along with traditional songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino. Born near Paris, Ana Elya was raised in a secular French culture and started to embrace Jewish practice at the age of 21. She taught and trained groups of all ages to therapeutic and recreational arts - theater, dance and puppetry- in several community centers, and spent two years training in Paris at the French Music Academy. Her continual artistic quest brought her to Jerusalem where she learns at the Oriental Music School, and performs as a drummer and singer with women bands. She composes her own melodies, inspired by Hebrew letters and prayer, and influenced by her multi-cultural roots: African and Moroccan beats, resonances of the shtetl, jazz and blues. She leads women singing circles and performs for women. In her house in Nachlaot, groups of tourists come from all over the country to hear her story and feel her voice. According to the audience, she sings in French, Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino, mixing original compositions on Torah verses or psalms, personal texts reflecting her experiences and inner journey, as well as Chabad, Breslau and Carlebach melodies. She also gives workshops on how to discover the simplicity, the pleasure and the joy of singing: how to let the body and the soul sing in harmony. She coaches who want to step on stage professionally. She also heals those who can not yet express their own voices, sung or spoken. In Israëel eighteen years, Ana Elya is married and mother of 2.

Adina Feldman Adina is a Singer/Songwriter/Choreographer/Director and teacher with a successful career as a performer in the U.S. and Israel. Adina has performed everywhere from New York's Town Hall to the Israel Festival in Jerusalem and has created three highly successful one-woman shows. In March of 2013, Adina had the honor of performing the American National Anthem for President Barak Obama in Jerusalem on the occasion of his historic speech and visit to Israel. Trained in New York City, Adina holds a B.A. in Theatre-Dance and an M.A. in Dance Education from New York University. Professional training in singing, dance and acting give this native New Yorker's performance the polish and punch that have won her exposure on American and Israeli television, radio and movies as well as leading roles in dozens of musicals. Adina has also devoted herself to supporting humanitarian causes through her performance. Adina is a choreographer and a vocal coach who has served as a faculty member at the Hebrew University and the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem. She currently is on faculty at the Ono Academic College at the Music School where she runs the Vocal Performance department and is the Artistic Director of their Performing ensemble, "Glee. She has directed and choreographed numerous shows both in New York and in Israel for the past thirty years. As of today, Adina has released 2 discs of original songs entitled "Here You Are" in 2006 and "Just A Girl" in 2016. She continues to perform both in Israel and abroad.

Sharona Florsheim is a choreographer and improvisation artist based In Israel. In her choreographic work she brings together complex structures of improvisation and set material, emphasizing the relationships formed in real time between space, performers, and audience. Her recent work includes: The Big Game (2012), Connectivity Practices (2014), Noa's Secret of Infinity (2015) Fragile Formation (2016) and The One Hand Sound (2017). Her artistic work, presented in Europe, Africa and regularly preformed in Israel, is deeply inspired by individual uniqueness and identity and how they both relate to a larger whole. Over the years she has collaborated with musicians, video artists, and theater directors from Israel and around the world to create her unique and poignant style of work. In addition to her own choreographic work, Sharona has been the artistic director of Noga Dance Company since its establishment in 2009: a unique professional framework for religious women to choreograph and perform. She teaches in the dance department at Orot Israel College, and is an associate director. She initiates and guides Design in Motion workshops for artists and students from various art disciplines, focusing on somatic learning and experience in creative processes. Sharona graduated from the School of Visual Theater in Jerusalem, and holds an MA in choreography from the Dance Unlimited program in the ArteZ Institute of the Arts in Arnhem, Holland. She is a devoted student of the body.

Miriam Leah Gamliel pursued a BFA in musical theater before becoming observant in 1997. In 2006 she began to produce events in the religious community, beginning with a women's musical and the creation of ATARA in 2007. Since ATARA's first conference at Stern College, she has co-chaired its annual conferences and publishes a monthly newsletter for arts events and

announcements in the religious community. In 2009, she directed a women-only feature film and in 2010 began to create events or programs to increase performance opportunities for women in the NY area. She currently resides in Montreal and pursues an EdD at the Azrieli Graduate School for Jewish Education, working on a dissertation on the needs of creatively gifted students. She hopes to continue fostering creative expression in the religious community.

Judith Gerzi, the soul-singer/songwriting sensation, recently completed a tour for her début album, 'Awakening.' With the voice of an angel, she has been called 'the Jewish Adele' and 'the white Whitney Houston'. She'll take you from joy, to tears, to laughter... all in one show! Judith was born in London England and made aliya with her husband rabbi Yehoshua Gerzi and then two-year-old daughter in 2004. After battling her stage fright, she finally sang in a women's show and, assumed to be a professional, started getting jobs as a singer/ song writer. She lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh with her growing family of seven, is the rebbetzin of their shul and owns a sheitle salon & gemach. She is also the co-director at RBS Dance and Music Academy in the music department. She sings soul and jazz to women only. Her passion is to bring Achdut and awareness through her music.

Rabbi Yehoshua Gerzi, the leader of the Pilzno Shul, spent six years with the Pilzno Rav, and received from him a tremendous amount of Torah learning and practical exercises that form part of a direct mesorah from the Baal Shem Tov. He plays 13 different instruments and leads a Friday night musical davenning for his community.

Toby Klein Greenwald has founded, co-founded or directed more than 12 theater companies or educational theater projects. She is the artistic director of Raise Your Spirits Theatre (www.raiseyourspirits.org), in which capacity she has co-authored (lyrics) and directed musicals on Esther, Noah, Ruth, Deborah and the daughters of Tzelofchad (sole lyricist). She directed and script-advised the show Count the Stars in Gush Etzion in 2014 and directed Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat for both Raise Your Spirits and for the Brothers' Troupe, a project for men and boys in Gush Etzion. She is the co-founder and producing director of the Dor L'Dor Interactive Theater Troupe which grew out of the award-winning psychology website WholeFamily.com, of which she is co-founder and editor-in-chief. She founded and directs Na'na Playback Dance Theater and Playback Hamra. She directed the Gush Etzion Playback troupe, taught Playback in Ramat Beit Shemesh and Jerusalem, and lectured in Playback Theater in the Institute for Expressive Therapists in Jerusalem College for Women. She created a new method called Biblio-Playback (or Playback Midrash) on which she gives workshops in Israel and abroad, and lectures also on Cinema Midrash. She is the recipient of the Yaakov Egerest Memorial Award for Jewish Culture, of the Torah Culture Department of Israel's Ministry, for her work in educational, community and Jewish theater, and the recipient of the Ohr Torah-Shavei Rachel award for her educational Jewish theater work. She is also a journalist, editor, poet, and a teacher of Tanach, Creative Writing and English Literature. She lives in Efrat with her husband, and her children and grandchildren live throughout the land of Israel.

Elisheva (Ellen) Horowitz was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She studied at the Cleveland Institute of Art and went on to study painting and design at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Elisheva's paintings have been exhibited in Israel, New York, Boston, and San Francisco. She made Aliyah in 1986. Elisheva finds inspiration in biblical themes, modern Jewish history, and in the landscapes of Israel. To be both an artist and mother living in Israel, in uncertain times, is often reflected in her work. Elisheva takes a bold approach to drawing and painting and is convinced that one can transcend politics and heal divisions through art. She advocates inspiration without provocation, and is not afraid to broach difficult subject matter. In addition to being an experienced painter, art teacher, cartoonist and illustrator. Elisheva is a writer, activist and speaker. She has worked for and co-founded nonprofit organizations in Israel, such as *the Crisis Center for Religious Women*. She has engaged in academic research and documentary production, authored an acclaimed book on the Oslo peace process, and has a studio in Maale Adumim, near Jerusalem. She is a grateful and very proud mother and grandmother with a growing family all living in Israel.

Dena Hundert made aliya two and a half years ago from Montreal. She was Rebbetzin at a campus synagogue in Montreal for 8 years where she taught, danced with and inspired hundreds. She is a certified Zumba and fitness instructor as well as a certified personal trainer. She has taught in a number of seminaries in Montreal and in Israel. Dena's passion in life is to teach and promote healthy and authentically Jewish balance between body and soul.

Rachel Hutner is a vocalist, voice and guitar teacher living in Ramat Beit Shemesh. After nine years of vocal training, Rachel decided to learn how to teach in order to give other girls and women the same gift that she was given- her voice. Rachel is the co-founder of Camp Azamra, an arts camp for girls that encourages creativity and to discover and develop artistic talents. She is also the co-founder of the Azamra Center of the Arts in Ramat Beit Shemesh, which provides girls and women of Ramat Beit Shemesh the opportunity to develop their talents with the best professionally trained teachers. Rachel inspires girls and women in the community to develop their own unique voice while teaching skills and building confidence.

Ina-Esther Joost Ben-Sasson Since her immigration to Israel in 1989, Ina-Esther Joost Ben-Sasson has been the Principal Cellist and frequent soloist of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra IBA. German born, she studied with P. Fournier, S.

Celibidache and E. Barenboim, after receiving her Soloist's Diploma at the State's Music Academy Hamburg (Germany). Having won top prizes, including the Diploma of the Tchaikovsky Competition, Moscow, and the 1st Prize of the International Cello Competition Belgrade, she has been in high demand as a soloist in Europe, the USA, South Korea, Israel and Brazil, being accompanied by world renowned symphony orchestras from Paris, Geneva, Hamburg, Berlin, Munich, Tokyo, Jerusalem and Rio de Janeiro. Following her performance at the World Cello Congress III in Baltimore, USA, in 2000, she was invited as a Visiting Professor at Towson University, MD, in 2001, played in concerts and festivals and made her New York debut with overwhelming success. Her recordings include French and Israeli compositions for cello solo (IMI), a CD with Romantic and Impressionistic music for cello and piano, the Six Suites by Bach, "Nigunim" for cello solo, a CD with compositions by Gabriel Faure for cello and piano (NAXOS, 2010), and her CD with Russian sonatas for cello and piano, published by NAXOS in 2014. Many Israeli composers dedicated solo works to her. During recent years, she has combined performing as a soloist and teaching master classes in the USA, in Brazil (International Cello Encounter Rio de Janeiro), in Mexico, Poland, Germany, France, Canada and China.

Deena Lawi, Neve Daniel, is a single mother of five and loving grandmother. She is a veteran performer in Raise Your Spirits Theatre where she has played leading roles, such as Barak (*JUDGE! Song of Deborah*), Boaz (*Ruth & Naomi in the Fields of Bethlehem*) and Elazar HaCohen (*SISTERS! The Daughters of Tzelofchad*). Deena is also a member of the professional Kolot Etzion women's choir under the direction of Gayle Berman, where she sings alto, though she is *actually* a born soprano. When she is not singing, Deena works at the Museum for Islamic Art and is duly employed by her family as the loyal caretaker, problem solver and pacifier. In her free time she enjoys gazing at the sky, the clouds and the stars and watching the sunset from her living room.

Avital Macales is a singer, songwriter, actor, and improv comedienne, and has been performing for the past decade on various theater stages around Israel and on screen, in leading roles, including in Raise Your Spirits Theatre and WIT (Women-in-Theater) Modiin. She is a member of the ABSOLUTe Improv troupe and the Kolot Etzion women's choir. In 2016 Avital co-founded The Women's Performance Community of Jerusalem, a place where women can unite through the performing arts and express themselves in a fun environment. Avital has co-written and co-composed two musicals with creative partner Sharon Katz: "Count the Stars: The Journey of Avraham & Sara" (2014) and "Hidden: The Secret Jews of Spain" (2018).

Esther Leah (Aviva) Marchette is a singer and former cantor who has been involved with music from a young age. She holds a B.A. in Songwriting from Berklee College of Music in Boston, which included studies in composition, lyric writing, advanced music theory, jazz and rock arranging. Esther Leah plays piano, guitar and percussion. In high school and college, she performed in musical theatre productions, sang in choirs and ensemble groups and directed an a cappella singing group at Yale University. In her early 20s, she worked as a cantor for a number of years until making the transition to embracing a Chassidic way of life. Since that time, Esther Leah occasionally performs for women and leads workshops, and organizes events and classes co-director of the Boston Breslov Connection. Esther Leah works as a Technical Program Manager, lives with her husband in Boston, and has 3 wonderful children.

Sapir Mendlowitz Originally from LA came to Israel to pursue her dreams in music. Studying full time at music college she formed an all woman's band and writes and sings her own music. Her style ranges from soul blues pop to a bit of country. Sapir's speciality is creating an atmosphere where she truly connects to the crowd with her soulful voice. Aside from writing her own music and performing sapir has a passion to teach over what she has learnt. She runs the teen and woman's choir program at rbs dance and music academy. She also teaches privately vocal training and piano theory.

Gitty Porgesz, Choreographer / Dancer and Founder of Carmia Dance Group. Gitty trained in classical and modern dance, contact-improvisation, choreography and Iyengar Yoga by some of the best teachers in the country. Gitty holds a diploma from Wingate College and has been teaching dance and movement for the past 13 years. Gitty has performed and participated as a creative dancer-choreographer for as many years. In 2011, as the director and choreographer for Carmia Dance Group, Gitty created her premier work "BishvilMe," a powerful work which emphasizes, validates and empowers women from all sectors of Israeli society. Since then Gitty has created a whole repertoire of work and performed with CDG in many festivals over the country. Her full works of choreography include "Pi" (2014), "The skirt" (2015), "On/off" (2016), "U-turn" (2017).

Emuna Bracha (Valentina) Recchia was born in Italy in 1983. She wrote her first poetry and short stories at the age of 12. Subsequently she devoted herself to the study of dance in various schools, including the Broadway Dance Center in New York. As a result of the experience of living in New York in 2008, she wrote her first musical (*Le Favole Nel* 2009) that was performed in its native region (Basilicata). She wrote the story, directed it, and created the choreographies and the scenographies with the help of an Italian artist, George Sanrocco, who became her husband. She then wrote and directed two more musicals. ("The Masks" and "Gog and Magog"). She then moved to Florence, where in 2013 she wrote and directed her last musical. In 2012 she published her first novel, *Seduta in Riva al Mare* (video book on Facebook). Currently she lives in Israel where she has completed her second book, *The Third World War*. She produced a show with a group of dancers of Kibbutz Migdal Oz, and in 2017 she had her choreographic debut in Israel as one of the choreographers of the Raise Your Spirits show *Ruth & Naomi in the Fields of Bethlehem*.

Shaked Sebag Shaked is a Dancer, Choreographer, Instructor, and the Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director at RBS Dance and Music Academy in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel. Born in Rechovot, Israel to an Israeli mother and an American father, she and her family moved to Tucson, Arizona when she was a baby. Her mother put her in dance class at the age of three and she hasn't stopped dancing since. She began instructing dance classes and choreographing for large productions in her early teens. She started off in the dance track at the University of Arizona and switched out after becoming *chozeret betshuvah* in 2005. Thankfully she was able to pursue her second creative love and proceeded to receive a BFA in Art Education with an emphasis on the fine arts. In 2010, together with her husband and first child, she made aliyah. She started training with Rachel Factor in her Dance Company and also teaching classes at her studio. Upon moving to Ramat Beit Shemesh a year later, Shaked, together with her close friend Jezliah Villarreal, opened up the RBS Dance Academy. After seven years she is happy to say that the studio has touched the lives of several hundred students, attracting women and girls from Beit Shemesh, Jerusalem, Gush Etzion, and Tel Aviv. Their annual end-of-the-year production draws a crowd of nearly 600 and their professional Performance Company, along with Shaked and Jezliah, perform around Israel at various women's events, and this year the academy has added a new music department to their curriculum and are beyond thrilled to have Judith Gerzi and Sapir Mendlowitz join the team. Through the Academy, Shaked is excited to provide a place where every woman and girl can express her creativity and spirituality through the performing arts in a positive and healthy way, and she can't wait, G-d willing, to continue to grow and provide more opportunities for girls and women in the Torah community.

Michal Shababo Academically-trained musician and composer Michal Shababo announces her first international commercial release, *Breathe It In*. The album is a modern take on folk-rock music of the late sixties and is heavily influenced by the Beatles among many others. Mastered by Grammy-nominated sound engineer Emily Lazar, and featuring some of the best Israeli musicians - including the African Hebrew Gospel Choir, the album is a life story that contains a message of unity, hope and peace. As the daughter of a Rabbi, Michal has been performing in synagogue leading musical worship since she was a young child. Her live shows balance the meticulous rehearsal of a Classically-trained pianist with the spontaneous improvisation of a student of Free Jazz. She has performed at renowned venues such as the Baxter Concert Hall in Cape Town, the Whiskey Agogo in Los Angeles and the Felicia Blumenthal Concert Hall in Tel Aviv, as well as various festivals throughout Israel, where she is based. She performs either alone acoustically, or with her band.

Batya (Taylor) Shachar is originally from Boston, but moved to Los Angeles for her formative years. In LA, she worked behind-the-scenes in the music industry. She also performed in a few plays and was a part of a sketch comedy group at Theatre East in Studio City, CA. She loves writing "songs" (poems until they are complete!). Batya has a real knack for the performing arts which she mostly realized during her time in seminary in Israel. She has performed in plays by Rebbetzin Devorah Green and the Women's Performance Community of Jerusalem, and her most notable work in the hit show *ESCALATORS*. Batya works in kiruv and taught dance in Yerushalayim. She currently lives Matityahu settling in to her new family, as she recently remarried. She is humbly thankful to Hashem for His incredible gifts to her, and the opportunity to use them for TOV to entertain and inspire Jewish women.

Yehudit Shrager has a BA in Music Performance from Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. Upon graduating, she spent a year at Neve Yerushalayim seminary in Har Nof. That year, she joined the Ron Shulamit Conservatory Orchestra and helped form their Woodwind Quintet. Seeing all the musical opportunities for religious women and having fallen in love with Israel, she decided to make Aliyah. Over the next few years, Yehudit performed and taught clarinet in Aviv Music School, Bais Yaakov Beit Margalit, Bais Yaakov Bnos Elisheva and the Maale Adummim conservatory. She also performed and recorded with the musical group, "Jewish Family Ensemble." After five years in Israel, she left on a three-year kiruv mission to Boca Raton, FL, where she taught general music for kindergarten through 2nd grade at a Jewish Day School. She and her family returned to Israel in 2015 and settled in Ramat Beit Shemesh where she teaches for, 'Studio Musikef,' a local music studio started by fellow olah, Judy Clark. Nowadays, Yehudit enjoys teaching clarinet as well as flute, piano, voice, guitar and ukulele. In her spare time, she likes to organize local "Open Mic" nights to create performance opportunities for women like her who yearn for the spotlight, but have to be up early for gan drop-off the next morning.

Aviva Spiegel facilitates creative expression and movement workshops for women. She is the producer of the Tambourine Dream festival, the Jordan River music festival, and many other events and celebrations for women. She teaches dance improv, creative art workshops, and "Gym-dance-Shticks" for women and girls. Aviva is passionate about connecting women together so that we can help each other to move deeper into connection with ourselves, each other, and haKadosh Baruch Hu. Her journey to Yiddishkeit began with her intense interest in holistic healing, which led to research grants on Jewish health and healing in Israel. A passion for healing and personal transformation as well as an unwavering mission of spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus forms the central motivation for her work with groups of women. She spent several years as a spiritual leader together with her husband running Chabad of Eugene Oregon before moving to Tsfat, Israel with her family.

Sarah Spielman is originally from London and made Aliya to Israel 17 years ago. When she made Aliya, she earned the "Outstanding Artist" award, the highest ranking award for a new immigrant granted by the Ministry of Absorption. Sarah received her vocal training at some of the world's leading conservatories. While earning her BA in Russian and Italian from

the University of Cambridge, she pursued her passion for music and Judaism. She graduated from the prestigious New England Conservatory in Boston, where she was awarded a Master of Music in Vocal Performance with honors, studied at London's Trinity College of Music and the Conservatorio G.B. Martini in Bologna, Italy. Sarah has also taught voice in the US and is a popular voice teacher for Torah-based projects in Israel. She currently teaches voice in the drama department of "Shvilei Beis Yakov" in Jerusalem, as well as teaching privately. Sarah has performed in some of Jerusalem's main theaters and for women's groups and schools throughout the country. Sarah performs frequently at the leading women's 3 day conference in Israel that takes place every summer in Binyanei Hauma called "Binyan Shalem". Lately Sarah has been writing lyrics and composing her own songs and is in the middle of recording a new album at Pluto Studios under the direction of Shlomit and Gadi Finegold. Whilst she trained as an opera singer, her recent song writing led her to explore and express other styles like classic rock and folk. The thread that defines her singing throughout is her passion to uplift, soothe and bring women closer to God and to the beauty and unique voice inside themselves. For updates on performances, videos and album release, Please look up Sarah SpielmanVoice on Facebook. For bookings please call Shlomit Finegold - 0544339560

Inbar Tabib, an Israeli born (American raised) female Orthodox singer, is one of the leading professional singers today, performing in Israel and abroad in various women's events and conventions. Inbar sings in different styles and musical genres including religious upbeat & dance songs, quiet neshama (soul) songs, chasidish and mizrachit, along with her own original songs which she wrote, composed and produced. Aside from her native languages Hebrew & English, Inbar sings in different languages such as Yeminite, Moroccan and Yiddish. With her beautiful, strong and affectionate voice she manages to touch and inspire women and teens of all types and sectors, an angelic voice which comes directly from her heart & soul straight to the hearts and souls of her audience. Inbar has three albums released for women only. Inbar is also a dancer and an actress making her a multi-talented performer. In her unique and individual way she turns any women's event to a special and an unforgettable uplifting spiritual experience.

Yael Unterman grew up in Manchester, England, and wears the many hats of poet, author, actress, life coach, teacher and lecturer, translator and editor, and Bibliodrama facilitator. In addition to spending several years on advanced Torah studies, she holds Masters degrees in Jewish History (Touro College) and Creative Writing (Bar-Ilan University). Her first book is *Nehama Leibowitz: Teacher and Bible Scholar* (Urim Publications), a biography of the legendary Torah teacher was a finalist in the 2009 National Jewish Book Awards, and her second book *The Hidden of Things: Twelve Stories of Love & Longing* (Yotzeret Publishing) is a collection of fictional tales of young Jews searching for love, spiritual connection and identity was a finalist in the 2015 USA Best Book Awards. Yael lectures regularly around the world. In 2002 she discovered Bibliodrama, a technique she has taken all over the world and trained teachers to use. To date she has run over 300 Bibliodramas in ten countries. Her original play, After Eden, an unusual, intense and thought-provoking interpretation of the Cain and Abel story, has appeared in the US, UK, Australia & Israel and was featured in 2006 on Australian National Radio.

Jezliah Villareal is a singer/songwriter/musician/dancer and the co-director and co-founder of the RBS Dance and Music Academy located in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel. Born into an Evangelical Christian home, Jezliah showed tremendous interest in the performing arts and trained in voice, music and dance from a young age. By the age of nine, she started a dance team and by age 12 she was singing lead in a band. When Jezliah was 17, her parents decided to leave the church in search for truth in Torah. Jezliah married her husband, Yosef Daniel, in 2006 and had their first child in 2008. They finished their conversion to Judaism in January 2010 and made aliya in July 2010. Since then she has found her love of the performing arts once again as co-director and co-founder of the RBS Dance and Music Academy and is now working on her debut album called "Trust In You" She is performing and speaking at events around central Israel. Jezliah hopes to inspire all women and girls to dream big and to hold on to Hashem who is in control of it all.

Yona Saslow Yakobovitz is Tofaah's drummer, leader, and founder. She composes and arranges the majority of the band's music. She studied drums and percussion from the age of five and played the piano from age six. After getting her degrees in music and education, she moved to Israel from Saratoga Springs, New York in 1981. There, she played with other young female musicians and decided to create an outlet for religious women looking to express themselves musically. This became Tofaah, which formed with an original lineup featuring Esther Leuchter (vocals), Rachel Kantorowitz (violin), Joy Shapiro (flute), Ann Rahel Silverman-Limor (guitar), Tehilla Shwab (vocals, flute), and Devora Belinky (flute). Tofaah is notable for being the first all-female Orthodox Jewish band, and have released ten albums since 1984. They have toured throughout the United States and Israel, performing at venues as diverse as women's prisons, the International Convention Center in Jerusalem, and the court of the Belzer Rebbetzin. They have also appeared several times on Israeli radio and television. The band plays all styles of Jewish music, from original Jewish rock-and-roll, blues and jazz band to traditional Klezmer, Ashkenazi and Sefardi favorites. Tofaah is the subject of several award-winning documentaries and is hired by Israeli municipalities several times a year, playing to thousands of women at each event. Tofaah's work and music are featured in the archives at Hebrew University and the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem.

Audelia Zagury Audelia Zagoury, from Tzur Hadassah, made aliya with her family 13 years ago from Morocco. She graduated from the classical vocal department of the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance. She sang as a soloist in the Ankor Choir for the

president of Italy Bralosci in 2009. Audelia participated as a choir singer for the Israeli Opera in an opera by Puccini under M. Zubin Mehta's baton in the Culture Palace (Heichal Hatarbut) in Tel Aviv and in the Boito opera production also with the Israeli Opera during the 2008– 2009 season. She participated in many vocal master classes with masters from Russia, Britain, Italy, Germany, France, the U.S.A. and Israel, who gave master classes in Israel. She was the recipient of the American-Israeli Culture Foundation scholarship for the years 2010 – 2014. She learned at the Zohar Midrasha in Bat Ayin. Today she teaches vocal training in the Me'ever Lamusica music school in Jerusalem and works in the City of David. She enjoys learning Torah and creating a line of natural cosmetics. Audelia played the lead role of Ruth in the 2017 Raise Your Spirits Theatre Revival of *Ruth & Naomi in the Fields of Bethlehem* and was very excited to be representing a character, with such beautiful attributes, who started the royal chain of David!

Chana Wurtzel is a professionally trained musician, singer and actor who has been performing her entire life. She has a Masters degree in education, and has spent most of her adult life teaching children and adults of all ages about music. She made aliyah with her family in 2010 and currently gives private instruction in piano and voice at her home in Ramat Bet Shemesh. After making aliyah, Chana became involved with Regal Productions and performed in two of their shows. Since then, she has been working behind the scenes and has composed all of the original music for their last six shows. This past year she served as musical director for the show and conducted the Regal Girls Choir, a group of over seventy girls who recorded and performed her original choir songs. These songs were also performed by choirs internationally. Chana loves sharing her joy of music and, in particular, of musical theater, with her students, friends, and family. She is looking forward to working with Miriam Eliwatt as they establish Camp Nashir, a choir camp that will provide girls with the unique opportunity to learn proper performance and vocal skills in an environment that promotes teamwork and collaboration. She is honored to participate in the ATARA conference.

Sarah Zier began her piano studies at the age of three. She added voice and ballet classes to the mix, and soon knew that she was to be a lifelong musician. Wanting to earn a degree and teach music as a career whilst staying within a frum environment, Sarah began her undergraduate studies in Israel at Levinsky Teachers College and the Ron Shulamit Conservatory, where she is currently finishing up a Bachelor of Education degree in music. As a pianist, Sarah has performed in various chamber ensembles and as a soloist in America and in Israel. As a vocalist, Sarah has performed in numerous stage productions and concerts, and as a soloist with numerous ensembles and orchestras, including Zmora, the professional chamber orchestra of the Ron Shulamit Conservatory. She currently enjoys teaching music and dance in several places throughout Israel, and performing in musical theatre productions, most recently seen as Hodel in the WIT production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

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ATARA is a community of individuals both committed to Torah observance and interested in the development and expression of creative talent. Together, we aim to create an infrastructure for the global community of observant artists, facilitating networking, performance and educational opportunities. We promote both social and professional communication between artists, and in any way we are able, support creative exploration and development within the framework of Jewish law. By recognizing our shared goals, we can help each other in achieving our independent, unique visions, as well as strengthening the resources and opportunities for creative work expressing Torah values as well.

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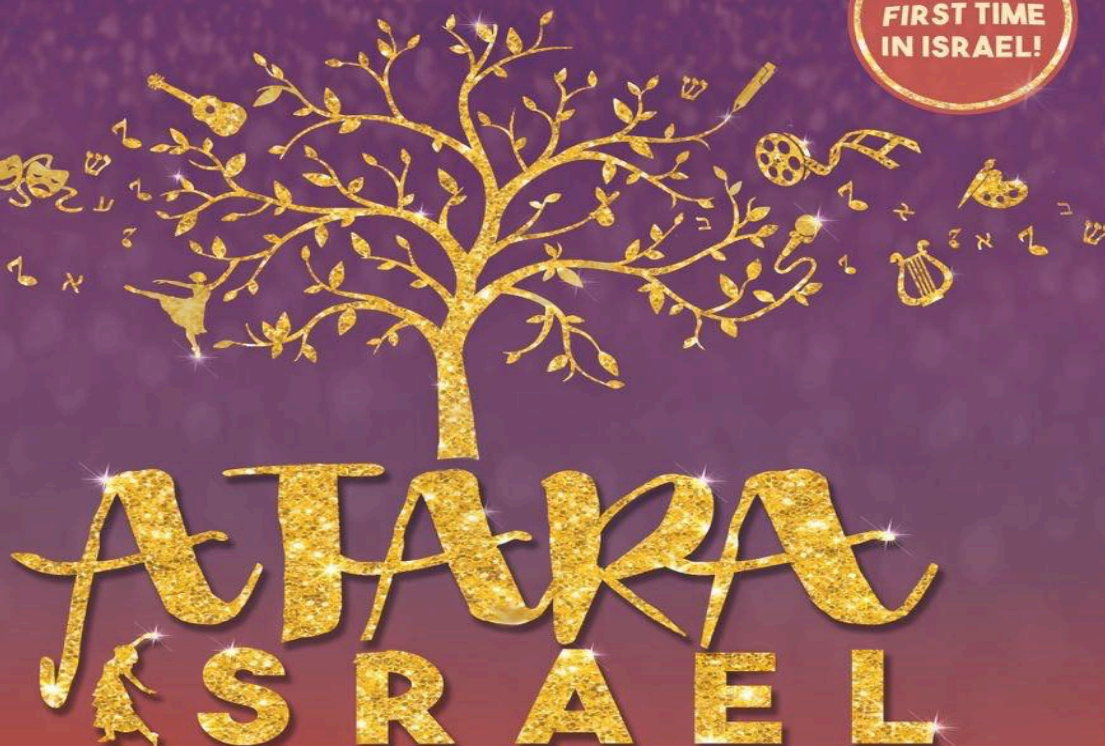
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