



# שיח השדה Siach Hasadeh

*World Music Collective*

Press Kit

## Contact/Booking :

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## Biography

Formed on a Saturday night in the Laurentian Mountains in Quebec, Siach Hasadeh explores and performs off the beaten track Chassidic and spiritual Jewish melodies, primarily from the early sages of the Chassidic movement, as well as some piyutim from the Eastern Jewish traditions – music that was used to express the deepest emotions, and to attain spiritual heights and closeness to the Creator, in dveikus. Much of the repertoire comes from transcriptions from songs as they are sung in the Chassidic communities of today, as well as from early 20<sup>th</sup> century recordings from Eastern Europe, and a collection of the transcriptions from an uncle from Staszow, Poland, of songs he remembered from before the War. The approach to the material is reverential, and minimalist, but allows for improvisation and self-expression from the voices of the two musicians (and guests) – drawing on their diverse musical backgrounds and experience, without losing touch with the original intent.

Since 2012, Siach Hasadeh as a collective has integrated three formations, as the original duo, as a quartet with violin and cello, as well as with harmonica and oud, in order to explore different musical textures, and further develop group improvisation and collaborative arrangement.

Siach Hasadeh was awarded a 2012 Music *Production Grant from the Canada Council for the Arts*, and recorded and released its second album, *Song of the Grasses*, in the Summer of 2013.



*Siach Hasadeh references the play on words derived by the Jewish Sages, the word roots can convey both “plants of the field,” and “meditation in the field.” It is taught that every plant has its own unique song that it sings, and that those songs are gathered to make holy music. That prayer and meditation are essential components in creation, and that music, and wordless niggun is a means of expressing that which words cannot – awakening the soul directly without language and its inherent barriers and limitations.*

## Members



### **Yoni Kaston (clarinet)**

Yoni's musical education has come from a vastly diverse set of teachers and genres – having studied classical piano and harpsichord at McGill University, he has since refocused on traditional music from around the world, finding his own voice and range of expression within the various styles. Yoni has recently been emerging as one of the very active musicians in the Montreal Jewish and World music scenes, having been featured at the Montreal Jewish Music Festival, the Festival du Monde Arabe, Le Festival Séfarad, the Nights at the Montreal Jazz Festival series, as well as at events in Ottawa and Winnipeg. His other primary project is Ihtimanska – a Balkan/Turkish duo, and he plays with many other groups involving, among others, Yiddish, Chassidic, West-African, Tango, Yemenite, and Turkish music. He has also performed with various groups across Montreal, including OktoEcho, as well as in various recording sessions, and is active as a clarinetist, pianist, accordionist and bass player.

### **Joel Kerr (double bass)**

Originally from Regina, Saskatchewan, Joel's rather eclectic musical interests as well as his versatility have taken him throughout Canada, the US, Europe, Central America and the Caribbean, performing jazz, classical, rock, folk, avant-garde, funk, bluegrass, klezmer and other styles of music. After having worked as a professional musician in Regina, Toronto, Krakow (Poland) and Vancouver, Joel moved to Montreal in 2008 to pursue a Master of Music degree in Jazz Performance at McGill University, which he completed in 2010. In addition to the *Joel Kerr Quintet*, which was a finalist in the *2011 TD Montreal Jazz Festival Jazz Award* as well as nominated for the *Galaxie Rising Star Award*, Joel is the leader, composer and arranger for the jazz ensembles *The M-Theory Collective* and *The Joel Kerr Trio*; a member of experimental jazz trio *Bean*; a member of soul/R&B band *The Key Lites*; a co/leader of the *McLeod/Kerr Trio*; the leader and arranger for the classical string ensemble *Trio Da Capo*; and a freelance musician performing, recording, composing and arranging for a wide variety of artists and ensembles. Joel also has 14 years of private teaching experience.



## Daniel Fuchs (violin)

Daniel Fuchs was born in Montreal, Quebec. After playing the piano as a child, he decided he wanted to learn another instrument. He began taking violin lessons when he was eight with Jean-Ai Patrascu and soon joined a local youth orchestra. After several years of study, he joined the Montreal Youth Symphony Orchestra in 2008, and was named concertmaster the following year. The same year, he also played with the McGill Sinfonietta. In 2010 and 2011, he was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, and toured as concertmaster for Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade. Daniel has performed solo with the Montreal Youth Orchestra and the West Island Youth Symphony Orchestra. Daniel completed his examinations at the McGill Conservatory of Music with high distinction, obtaining the highest mark of his year. In 2009, he was a finalist in the Canadian Music Competition. He is currently studying performance at McGill University's Faculty of Music, while also working on various styles of traditional music, particularly klezmer and Jewish music, having studied with Merima Kljucic, Deborah Strauss, Cookie Segelstein and Jake Shulman-Ment at KlezKanada in 2011 through 2013, and been a member of Siach Hasadeh since 2012.



## Gaël Huard (cello)

Gaël Huard is an active Montreal musician, performing extensively in classical and world music, is an orchestra member of the Ottawa Turkish Choir, of the ensemble SaOmetis, and of Siach Hasadeh. Gaël has been interested in music since the age of 7, when she began to play violin. She since took up the cello at 9 years old, and one year later was admitted to the Conservatoire de Musique de Montreal, in the class of Guy Fouquet. Gaël continued her studies which led to a Bachelor of Music in performance, under the tutelage of Louise Trudel. In addition to her studies and performances of classical music, she is delving into various musical styles, which has led her to develop an eclectic and colourful personal style. Among others, she has been exploring flamenco, tango, Turkish, Arabic and Jewish music. From world music to experimental music, via pop, jazz and improvised music, Gaël is called to various reputable stages, particularly the Place des Arts, for the Montreal International Jazz Festival, the Festival Juste Pour Rire, and the Festival du



Monde Arabe, at the side of musicians such as Jean Derome, Pierre Tanguay, Loco Locass, Stéphane Rousseau, and Claude Dubois.

## Guests

### Jason Rosenblatt (harmonica)



Composer, producer, pianist and harmonica player Jason Rosenblatt is one of the world's foremost innovators in diatonic harmonica technique. His performance on the unassuming instrument has helped to open new musical ground for the instrument long associated with "the blues," into art forms as diverse as jazz, bluegrass, Klezmer and Turkish music. Since 2002 he and his group Shtreiml, for which he serves as musical director, have performed internationally at notable festivals and venues in Canada, the U.S.

and Europe. His music has been heard on radio and in films including the 2010 Bravo production, "Last of the Wild Jews." In 2010 Jason spearheaded the first Montreal Jewish Music Festival and as artistic director continues to promote Jewish music concerts and workshops to a multi-generational, multi-cultural and multi-lingual audience. Jason is especially concerned with educating the next generation of musicians and has given workshops and lectures on harmonica, and klezmer music to students of all ages. Jason's skills as a composer and musician have been recognized through awards granted by the Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des Arts du Montreal, the Lasko Foundation and PennPAT.

### Ismail Fencioglu (oud)

Ismail Hakki Fencioglu was born in Turkey, in 1968, into a family with a rich musical tradition. He started playing oud professionally at the Municipal Conservatory of Bursa, in 1986. A year later he enrolled in the department of chant of State Conservatory of Istanbul Technical University. He worked with Alaeddin Yavasca, Bekir Sitki Sezgin and Tulin Yakarcelik, and he specialized in classical Turkish music singing techniques. While still a student, he gave many performances on television together with his teachers and solo.



He was a member of the State Classical Turkish Music Chorus conducted by Nevzat Atlig. After earning his Bachelor's degree from the Conservatory, he started working as an arranger and composer in various audio recording studios. He is also a master builder of musical instruments. Since his arrival in Canada in 2001 he has been conducting Turkish music choruses in Ottawa and in Montréal which presented 17 successful joint concerts so far. Ismail Hakki Fencioglu regularly performs with his own bands: Fenci's Ensemble founded in 2003, and Duo Turco, as well as with Shtreiml, and Okto Echo. He performed with the renowned Turkish musician Erkan Ogur at the "Festival du Monde Arabe" and with Karen Young at the "Festival de Musique Multi-Montréal." Since 2006 he has been performing with the Peruvian artist Lucho Quequzana. He has participated with the Cirque du Soleil and appears on a number of their recordings.

## Press and Reviews

*“This is rich, introspective music, beautifully arranged and performed... Kaston’s sensitive clarinet playing is soulful and tasteful, and the musicianship on the album is excellent. The musicians all communicate nicely throughout, maintaining the spiritual focus of the melodies while at the same time adding their own personal expression.”* – Binyomin Ginzburg, Blog in Dm

[blogindm.blogspot.ca/2013/08/in-review-siach-hasadeh.html](http://blogindm.blogspot.ca/2013/08/in-review-siach-hasadeh.html)

*“Kerr joue alors à l’archet, ailleurs, il se fera vaguement jazz ou très dense. Kaston joue avec le souffle et le rythme, devient atmosphérique, allège parfois les brisures sonores et le caractère tragique. Il s’en dégage une belle atmosphère de quiétude, même quand la pulsion devient plus rapide.”* – Yves Bernard, Le Devoir

[ledevoir.com/culture/musique/379543/disque-song-of-the-grasses-siach-hasadeh](http://ledevoir.com/culture/musique/379543/disque-song-of-the-grasses-siach-hasadeh)

*“What makes the album so vastly different from similar projects is how this band extends the niggun-space, improvising within each niggun’s vocabulary in a way that continues the meditative, mystical space released by the music. Although classical, folk, jazz, and klezmer elements all briefly enter the works at some point, the overall sound is quite incomparable to anything else. The niggunim are not translated into any one of these styles’ paradigms – instead, the music’s centrality remains with the niggunim themselves, as the collective moves through soul-tugging renditions”* – Jake Marmer, Jewish Daily Forward

[blogs.forward.com/the-arty-semite/189388/best-experimental-jewish-music-of](http://blogs.forward.com/the-arty-semite/189388/best-experimental-jewish-music-of)

*“Although the music is sweet, the duo explores the rougher sides of harmony as well. There is a delightful tone poem/art song/modern classical dissonance that weaves in and out of these tunes, from the opening "R' Levi Yitzchak Berditchever's Niggun" to "Niggun firn di tsaddikim in gan eyden" or "Rabbeinu's Niggun" featuring Shtreiml masters Jason Rosenblatt on harmonica and Ismail Fencioğlu on oud. For those who enjoy digging deeper and letter ways of niggun wash over them, this is a rich recording.” – Ari Davidow, Klezmershack*

<http://www.klezmershack.com/archives/013026.html#siach.hasadeh.grasses>

*“Siach HaSadeh are among the elite vanguard of jazz-inclined improvisers breathing new life into otherworldly old Hasidic melodies from centuries past. The Quebec-based band further distinguish themselves with their many haunting diversions into moody, mystical Middle Eastern sounds. Their latest album *Song of the Grasses*, a collection of exquisitely sad songs, exquisitely played... Slow tempos and subdued, highly nuanced playing with minute dynamic shifts are the constants throughout the album’s seventeen tracks. Several of the instrumentals feature elegant handoffs from one instrument to the other; others employ a lot of intricate, sometimes awestruck harmony between Yoni Kaston’s clarinet, Joel Kerr’s bass, and Gael Huard’s cello...*

*...Is this the best album of the past several months? It’s certainly one of them, as darkly unforgettable as anything you’ll hear this year.”*

[newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2014/02/26/siach/](http://newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2014/02/26/siach/)

## Performances

- September 2014 Ashkenaz Festival, Toronto, ON
- March 2014 Mini US tour, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Vermont
- August 2013 CD Release performance at Klezkanada, Lanthier, QC
- May 2013 Official CD Launch at the Bagg St. Shul, Montreal, QC
- May 2013 Improvising Musicians of Ottawa/Outaouais, Ottawa, ON
- August 2012 Montreal Jewish Music Festival with Magillah, Sala Rossa
- January 2012 Nights at the Ghetto Shul, with Jason Rosenblatt and D'Harmo
- August 2011 Montreal Jewish Music Festival, with Hassidic New Wave (NY), Sala Rossa
- June 2011 Montreal International Jazz Festival
- June 2011 With Craig Pedersen Quartet (Ottawa), Casa Del Popolo
- 2010 Nights at the Ghetto Shul

## Discography

- **Song of the Grasses, released May 2013, independent**
- **Siach Hasadeh, released April 2012, independent**
- **Soundtrack, “Mon Diner Au Parc,” short film directed by Nicolas Krief, 2013**

[www.siachhasadeh.com](http://www.siachhasadeh.com)

Fiche Technique - Siach Hasadeh en Tournee, Quatuor

