



SOUL DOCTOR: JOURNEY OF A ROCK STAR RABBI

WORLD YIDDISH PREMIERE!
A DORA WASSERMAN YIDDISH THEATRE PRODUCTION

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Montreal, May 15th, 2014 – The Segal Centre for Performing Arts is proud to present the World Yiddish premiere of *Soul Doctor: Journey of a Rock Star Rabbi*, the new bio-musical based on the life of the controversial father of popular Jewish music, **Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach**.

The Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre presents the Yiddish version of the 2013 Broadway bio-musical written by **Daniel S. Wise** with lyrics by **David Schechter** from **June 8 to June 29, 2014**. *Presented in Yiddish with English and French supertitles.*

THE RENEGADE RABBI WHO ROCKED WITH NINA SIMONE

Soul Doctor recounts the fascinating life of the beloved, controversial father of popular Jewish music, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and his unexpected friendship with the high-priestess of soul, Nina Simone. Beginning with his childhood escape from Nazi Germany, the play follows Carlebach's remarkable journey as he becomes a rabbinical prodigy, discovers gospel and soul music through his friendship with Simone, then becomes famous as the "Rock Star Rabbi." Stardom, however, has a price and Carlebach must make peace with his family, faith and personal demons. Featuring over thirty of Shlomo's greatest hits, *Soul Doctor* is an exhilarating musical journey through the triumphs and tribulations of a cultural phenomenon.

**"HE SANG HIS SONG TO THE LOST AND LONELY,
LIFTING HIS BROKEN-HEARTED BROTHERS ONE BY ONE"**

THE VOICE OF THE JEWISH REVIVAL

Known as "The Singing Rabbi," Shlomo Carlebach became the charismatic voice of the Jewish religious revival movement in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, creating a revolutionary musical sound that saw him perform with the likes of Bob Dylan, Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead. Combining folk, pop and soul sounds with traditional Jewish music and liturgy, the modern-day troubadour travelled the world preaching love, redemption, humanity and peace.

A BROADWAY HIT – NOW IN YIDDISH!

Written by Daniel S. Wise, with lyrics by David Shechter, *Soul Doctor* had its Broadway debut in the Summer of 2013 at New York's Circle in the Square Theater where it was hailed as "a joyous, leaping roar" and "an unabashedly celebratory show" by *The New York Times*. The uplifting score includes hits from Carlebach's forty-year career and several of Nina Simone's iconic tunes woven together by **Steve Margoshes**, orchestrator of The Who's *Tommy* and Elton John's *Aida*.

Artistic Director of New York's National Yiddish Theater – Folksbiene and Honorary Artistic Director of the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre **Bryna Wasserman** saw this as a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring the inspiring story of Shlomo Carlebach to Montreal audiences in the Yiddish language:

"The music and journey of Rabbi Carlebach is one that will resonate strongly with our community. In bringing this new musical to the Segal Centre in Yiddish, we have the exciting opportunity to capture the spiritual essence of his songwriting," says Wasserman, who returns to Montreal to co-direct *Soul Doctor* with **Rachelle Glait**.

SOUL DOCTOR: JOURNEY OF A ROCK STAR RABBI

JUNE 8 – 29, 2014

*Presented in Yiddish with
English & French Supertitles*

Music and additional lyrics by
SHLOMO CARLEBACH
Book by
DANIEL S. WISE
Lyrics by
DAVID SCHECHTER

Based on the real life story of
RABBI SHLOMO CARLEBACH
Grant of rights by
NESHAMA & NEDARA CARLEBACH
Conceived by
JEREMY CHESSE
Created & Developed by
DAVID SCHECHTER & DANIEL S. WISE

Additional Material by
NESHAMA CARLEBACH
Orchestrations & Additional
Arrangements by
STEVE MARGOSHES

Co-Directors
**BRYNA WASSERMAN &
RACHELLE GLAIT**
Choreography and Musical Staging
JIM WHITE
Musical Direction
NICK BURGESS
Music Supervision
ZALMEN MLOTEK
Yiddish Text & Lyric Translation
EDIT KUPER, ARON GONSHOR

Set Design
JOHN C. DINNING
Costume Design
LOUISE BOURRET
Lighting Design
LUC PRAIRIE
Sound Design
PETER BALOV
Stage Manager
MÉLANIE ERMEL

Rousing choreography and musical staging by **Jim White** and top notch musical direction by **Nick Burgess**, a company of over thirty community performers and a live band bring Carlebach's moving story and soul-stirring melodies to life.

Award-winning designer **John C. Dinning** creates the set design for this exciting new production, with lighting design by **Luc Prairie**, costume design by **Louise Bourret** and sound design by **Peter Balov**.

A proud contributor to Montreal's vibrant Jewish cultural renaissance, the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre continues to promote Yiddish language and culture, while presenting moving and entertaining stage productions accessible to all.

SHLOMO CARLEBACH – 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PASSING

Considered by many to be one of the foremost Jewish religious songwriters of the 20th century, Shlomo Carlebach (1925-1994) was a religious teacher, composer and singer known as "The Singing Rabbi" during his lifetime. Born in Berlin in 1925, he fled from Nazi Germany to Switzerland with his family and immigrated to New York in 1939, when his father, descended from a great line of European rabbis, took over a small Upper West Side synagogue. Educated at Orthodox yeshivas in the 1950s, Carlebach came to reject his strict heritage and brought the Hasidic love of song to mainstream religious Jews. Upon his father's death in 1967, he took over what's now known as the Carlebach Shul, where he remained as the spiritual leader until his death in 1994. In a career that spanned over forty years, he composed thousands of songs and recorded over 25 albums that continue to have widespread popularity. Twenty years after his passing, Shlomo Carlebach's influence on contemporary Jewish culture retains its voice.

DID YOU KNOW?

According to several accounts, Carlebach met jazz singer Nina Simone in 1957 when she was working as a pianist and lounge singer in Atlantic City. Drawn to the unconventional rabbi, she even recorded a song in Hebrew! Both Carlebach and Simone's music helped define America's most defiant era.

The Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre: Celebrating over 50 years of Yiddish culture!

The Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre (DWYT) is the resident theatre company of the Segal Centre for Performing Arts. Since 1958, the DWYT has been dramatizing the Jewish experience and sustaining the Yiddish theatre legacy at home in Montreal and abroad. The Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre has presented over 90 critically-acclaimed productions, ranging from classics and original works to dramas and musicals. Founded by Dora Wasserman, OC, OQ, the company was led to new heights by Dora's daughter, Bryna Wasserman, who remains its Honorary Artistic Director. The DWYT continues to celebrate and preserve Yiddish theatre, language and culture through main stage productions and a year-long series of staged readings, films, and concerts.

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FOR TRAILERS AND BEHIND THE SCENES!

CAST

Stephanie Ammendolea, Mark Bassel, Avi Bendahan, Maria-Rachelle D'Amour, Chloé Edwards, Stephanie Finkelstein, Paula Frank, Aron Gonshor, Annabel Gutherz, Nikki Hanchet, Justin Johnson, Betty Kis Marer, Sharon Koifman, Jesse Krolik, Bryan Libero, Burney Lieberman, Cheryl-Ann Lilieth, Gabriel Maharjan, David Peterman, Jonah Presser, Stephen Maclean Rogers, Ronnie Roter, Mikey Samra, Orel Shuker, Rhona Sobol, Sam Stein, Adam Stotland, Coco Thomson, Aron Widman, Benny Winkelman-Batchelor, Nicola Woloz

MEDIA CALL

Tuesday, June 3rd – 12:00 p.m.

Opportunity for interviews, video and photo ops with cast and director

OPENING NIGHT

Thursday, June 12th, 2014 – 8:00 p.m.

Please RSVP before Monday, June 9th

PERFORMANCES

June 8th – June 29th, 2014

Previews:

June 8th – June 11th, 2014.

Run:

Monday – Thursday - 8:00 p.m.

Saturday – 9:30 p.m.

Sunday – 7:00 p.m.

Matinées:

Sunday, June 8th – 1:30 p.m.

Sundays – 2:00 p.m.

GO BEYOND THE STAGE!

Sunday @ The Segal

Sunday, June 8th – 11:00 a.m.

Guest: Sigmund K. Shore, Jewish Music Educator
Entrance is free

Monday Night Talkbacks

Mondays June 16th & 23rd after the performance

WHERE:

5170 chemin de la Côte-Ste-Catherine,
Montreal, H3W 1M7

Tickets: \$24 - \$49

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Dream Big

Discover the Segal's 2014-2015 Season