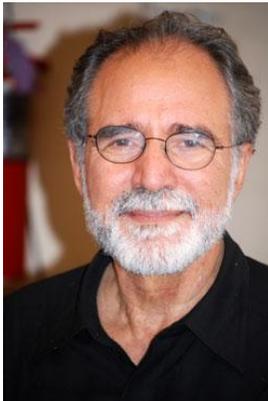


Jerusalem Soul- An Unforgettable Evening of Song and Dance By [Serita Stevens](#)

The refreshing outdoor landscape of the **Ford Amphitheatre** was the home on the evening of October 8, 2010, of **Jerusalem Soul**. With the symbols of the city in the back ground, we were treated to a combination of dance from the **Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble**, and two talented Israeli stars – pianist **Rami Kleinstein** and singer, **Miri Mesika** along with the talents of the **Agape International Choir Ensemble**. The artists celebrated the communal mission of peace and healing by entertaining us with the passions in their heart and joy in their songs.



Jerusalem Soul, Artistic director, Eytan Avisar

Keshet Chaim, now its in 27th year, means Rainbow of Life in Hebrew. The group was organized by **Eytan Avisar** (Artistic director) and **Genie Benson** (Executive Director.) Dedicated to celebrating Israeli culture and Judaism throughout the world, the dance company fuses contemporary Israeli dance with Jewish folk dance. One of the few touring American dance groups committed exclusively to Israeli culture and dance, their focus is on combating prejudice and anti-Semitism through entertainment. I loved all their dances but especially the modernized version of Ma'im (water in Hebrew.) in the Simchat Beit Hashoeva (Water and Wine Festival) and Anachnu Ma'aminim – We are Believers. Choreographers of these wonders were **Ilana Cohen** and **Kobi Rosenfeld**.

The colorful Agape International Choir Ensemble under the direction of **Dr. Rickie Byars Beckwith** and **Tim McAfee Lewis** performed masterfully. The choir is the core **Music Ministry of the Agape International Spiritual Center**, which was founded by songwriter **Dr. Michael Bernard Beckwith** and featured in many spiritual services and celebrations. You can feel the love in their music and it was hard not to want to sing along.

The reading of Pslams by various community leaders touched the hearts of many of the audience.

A special treat for the audience was pop Israeli singer, **Miri Mesika** in her American premiere. One of the highest selling female artists in Israel, Miri could very well be the girl next door. The prior night she participated in a cultural showcase of unity and peace as she sang for the **Consulate General of Israel** and the **Mayor of Los Angeles** as they welcomed the **Egyptian Consul** to our city. So well known was she by the audience that many sang her songs with her and clapped in time. Her versatility was magnificent as she belted out "Cry Me A River."



Photo by Sara Cozolino
Rami Kleinstein with the Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble

Jerusalem Soul: Keshet Chaim dance ensemble with Rami

Performing both with Miri and on his own, **Rami Kleinstein**, one of Israeli's finest composers, entertained us in both Hebrew and English. Compared to Elton John and Billy Joel, he wowed the crowd with his love songs and beautiful voice. As with Miri, Rami popularity was such that people often sang along with him, enhancing the passion in his voice. Already elected Israeli's Radio and Television "Singer of the Year, his albums have reached platinum and gold. His own rendition of Piano Man, also wowed the crowd, showing his unique strengths.



Photo by Sara Cozolino
Miri Mesika with the Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble

Jerusalem Soul - all for peace

The finale – another bid for peace was a performance by all the groups – **Michael Jackson's Man in Mirror** help people mesmerized for several minutes after the show ended.

Accompanying the choir and other performers were **Gil Feldman**, renown pianist and music producer and the **Naked Rhythm Drummers – Alex Spurkel and Avi Sills**.

Among those that helped with the evening were **Shani Yeche, Scott Cargle, Rick Noguchi, Rabbi Randy Brown, Craig Taubman, Lucy Pollak, Gitit Kohavie, Leah Bleiweis, Cecilia Hanono and Sammy Silberstein**.

Sponsors for the evening with **KPFK 90.7 FM, ABC, James Irvine Foundation, Sidonia Lax, Michael and Ronnie Kassman, The Los Angeles Board of supervisors, Milken Family foundation, Lowell Milken, Smauel and Helen Soref Foundation, Winnick Foundation, Israeli Leadership Council, Eytan and Sue Avisar, Isaac and Miri Shepher Jim and Jaleh Nowain, Russell and Heather Gottlich, Marty Sosin, Steve and monica Tyre, Randy Bellous, and LA Weekly**.

There is a passage from a famous rabbi – "If I forget the O' Jerusalem' – well after this night, no one will forget.



Photo by Sara Cozolino
Miri Mesika with the Keshet Chaim Ensemble

Jerusalem Soul