



Press Section

American Embassy

Tel Aviv

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release

AMERICAN FOLK BAND OLD GREY GOOSE INTERNATIONAL TO PLAY IN ISRAEL AND HEADLINE THE EMBASSY'S JULY 4TH CELEBRATION

The American Embassy in Tel Aviv is pleased to announce the visit of a unique, very American folk band - The Old Grey Goose International. The Goose's visit is part of series of culture events organized by the Embassy this spring and summer that includes Tony award winning actress Sarah Jones, who performed in April and world renowned Jazz musician Branford Marsalis who will visit in July. The Old Grey Goose will headline the Embassy's July 4th celebration and perform a series of concert and workshops around the country. The band has traveled the world and played in such countries as Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Mauritania and Poland but this is their first appearance in Israel.

Old Grey Goose International is an American folk band that performs old-time country dance music and songs from Maine and New England. The Goose celebrates American values and traditions in songs on love, work, diversity through inspiring vocals and acoustic instruments such as the fiddle, accordion, guitar, banjo, and harmonica. Through its performances, the band tells a story, humorous and educational, of life in old New England. As part of every tour in the United States and around the world, the Goose invests significant time and energy to teach aspiring musicians, children and those who just love folk music techniques and dance at a variety of levels.

In Israel the Goose will be performing at the following venues:

July 1, 8:00 pm - Performance at the Arab-Jewish Community Center in Yaffo - PRESS INVITED

July 2, 2:30 pm - Performance at the Janice and Phillip Levin Music Center, Tel Aviv-Yaffo municipality

Public Affairs Section

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July 2, 8:45 pm - Performance at the Israel Folk Club, Bikurei Haitim, Tel Aviv

July 3, 10:30 am - Workshops with summer camp children at the Arab-Jewish Community Center in Yaffo

July 3, Evening - Headline performance at the U.S. Embassy's July 4th celebration - POOL COVERAGE FOR THE EVENT

July 4, 2:00 pm - Performance at the Hed College of Music, Tel Aviv - PRESS INVITED

July 6, 11:30 am - Performance at the Hebrew University High School "Leyada", Jerusalem

July 9, 8:00 pm - Performance at the Diwan El Lajun Theater, Biladi Center Arara Village - PRESS INVITED

July 10, 10:00 am - Performance at the Rahat Community Center - PRESS INVITED

July 10, 8:00 pm - Performance at "Sudfeh" restaurant, Nazareth - PRESS INVITED

The Old Grey Goose has three recordings available, "Maine Country Dance Music & Song," available from Smithsonian-Folkways, a self-produced cassette entitled, "Old-Time Country Song & Dance Band," and a compact disc entitled, "Opera House Medley." The recordings feature traditional music collected from throughout the Northeast as well as original compositions.

To confirm attendance at any of the events, request an interview with the Goose, to request a music sample or for any other questions, please contact the U.S. Embassy Cultural Section at 057-420-6826, 057-420-6828 or 057-420-6818.

Background Information

Meet the Goose:



Doug Protsik: Fiddle, Piano, and Accordion

Doug has played music all his life since starting piano lessons at age five. In college, he developed an interest in folk music and guitar. After moving to Maine in 1971, he began studying and playing traditional music from New England, adding fiddle, accordion, and country-dance calling to his repertoire. He has performed throughout the United States at folk festivals, concerts, and dances. Doug has also traveled and performed in Europe and spent seven months touring the world learning and exploring the traditional music in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, and Nepal. He composes, performs, and records old-time piano scores for silent movies, teaches at a variety of academic levels, and provides educational programs to schools and summer camps. Doug is the Director of Maine Fiddle Camp, composes and arranges for the band, and is a full-time musician.

Jeff McKeen: Accordion, Fuitar, and the Bones

Jeff grew up in a musical household, singing at home and at church. As a young man he began playing the guitar, first learning popular and rock and roll music, later turning towards folk and traditional idioms. In college, he began playing banjo and mandolin, later adding fiddle and button accordion. In 1977, he co-founded the traditional music group Old Grey Goose and has toured with them throughout his native New England as well as in the southern Appalachians and the Pacific Northwest. In 1990, he toured Brazil with Project Troubadour, an organization devoted to international cultural exchange through music. He has worked as a folklorist for numerous cultural organizations in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes, conducting research, producing folk festivals and radio documentaries, and collecting folk songs and dance tunes from traditional musicians. In 2002, the Governor of Maine appointed Jeff to the Maine Arts Commission. When not playing music he is co-owner and operator of an oyster farm.

Eric Rolfson: Guitar, Mandolin, and Harmonica

Eric grew up in France where he began playing rock and roll music in the mid-1960's, influenced by the British and American bands of the period. His mother bought him a banjo as a high-school graduation

present. He took it with him to Maine in 1969 where he also discovered the mandolin and began playing the traditional music of the region. While teaching in Europe, he wrote a textbook on how to use folksong in the classroom to teach American History and Social Studies. "Folksongs bring history to life," Rolfson explained. "Because these songs tell a story, you quickly get to the essence of the drama. Live performance, which has immediate emotional impact for students, also helps them retain detail," Rolfson noted. Rolfson currently works at the University of Maine as associate vice president for development.

PERFORMANCE VENUES:

THE ARAB JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER IN YAFFO --The Arab Jewish Community Center in Yaffo serves the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities in the city and surrounding neighborhoods through cultural activities, workshops and exposure to traditions from the different religions. The Community Center was established in 1993 for the purpose of bringing together Jews and Arabs, with the goal of educating towards mutual recognition and cooperation. Its location in the heart of a city that has been integrated for many years offers a unique opportunity for long-term interaction among members of the three religions. The Center - an affiliate of the Tel Aviv-Yaffo Municipality's Department of Community Centers - is a thriving example of the partnership between Israel's diverse populations, and is a model of co-existence between the Jewish and Arab populations in the Yaffo area. The Community Center operates in the spirit of humanism and equality of values, providing a site for innovative programs that promote shared educational and cultural goals.

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL (LEYADA) is a high school - 7th to 12th grade -- that aims to create a learning atmosphere that provides academically gifted students with a challenging and supportive environment. It is also a school with a strong social agenda fostering a vision of citizen involvement in a more caring and cohesive society. There are about 1400 students, 5 to 6 homeroom classes per grade.

HED COLLEGE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

www.hedmusic.co.il

The Hed College of Contemporary Music in Israel is an accredited college that grants Bachelor of Arts degrees and is affiliated with Oklahoma City University in the United States. The college was founded ten years ago and today enrolls approximately 150 students. Hed College plays an important role in the contemporary Israeli music scene as it helps to process and refine the raw talent of Israeli musicians. The College contributes to the cultural vibrancy of Tel Aviv as its students and faculty make frequent public performances in many different venues.

PHILLIP LEVIN MUSIC CENTER -- Established in the early 1960's as an offshoot of the Tel Aviv Youth Band, the Tel Aviv - Yafo Music Center has been identified as a home for music lovers and young musicians growing up in Tel Aviv and Yafo. Leading Israeli musicians are an integral part of the Music Center's staff. The Tel Aviv Yafo Music Center runs a curriculum revolving around learning to play a musical instrument. The pupils participate in music theory classes and are members of one or more orchestras and musical ensembles. In addition, the pupils may participate in workshops and courses - such as music with the aid of computers, electronic music, composition, arrangement and orchestration and percussion ensembles - throughout the year.

DIWAN EL LAJUNTHEATER, ARARA, was established by the actor Gassan Abbas in Um El Fahem, in 2001 and is operating as a registered association and non profit organization. Their aim is to enrich the cultural and community life in the area of Wadi Ara, the Triangle and all neighboring villages with a wide variety of artistic and cultural activities as well as providing a cultural center. They offer courses for adults, teachers, librarians, teaching theater and storytelling skills as tools for professional and self development. They hold many events and activities attractive to both Arabic and Jewish audiences in order to bring more understanding and respect between the two cultures.

“SUDFEH” RESTAURANT, NAZARETH. The restaurant is located in a beautiful restored old building and became a venue for artistic performances.

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