

# "SHARED ROOTS"

## **KESHET CHAIM INBAL DANCE THEATRE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

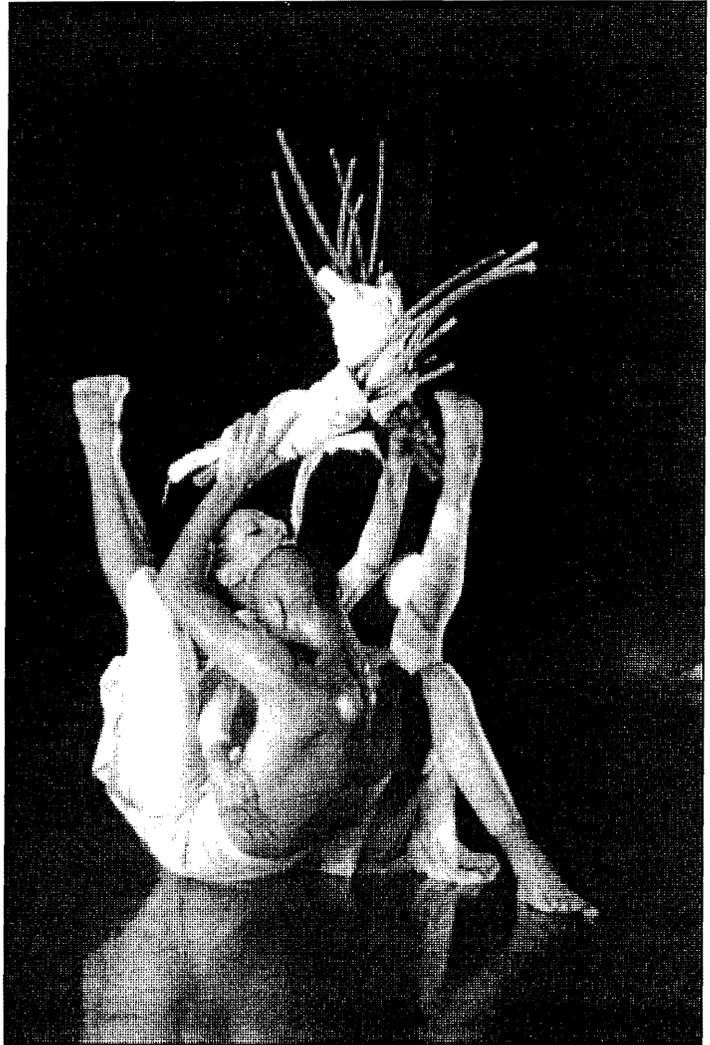
**February 2-3, 2002**

Keshet Chaim, "*Rainbow of Life*," is an American-Israeli contemporary dance troupe, celebrating the spirit of Judaism and Israeli culture throughout the world. Artistic Director Eytan Avisar and his company transcend generations of Jewish thought and emotion through a mosaic of music, dance and color. The company began in 1983 and is presently the major professional company of Israeli folk dancers in the United States. Keshet Chaim's mission is to express the global spirit of Judaism and Israeli culture and to combat prejudice and anti-Semitism through entertainment and education. Influenced by world music, the multi-ethnic roots of the Jewish people and a constant drive for interpreting and exploring Jewish values through art, Keshet Chaim has become a pioneer in the development of Jewish dance.

Keshet Chaim's upcoming project involves an exchange with the *Inbal Dance Theatre* from Tel Aviv. This project is sponsored by the Tel-Aviv Los Angeles Partnership committee of the Jewish Federation and the Skirball Cultural Center. Inbal will travel to LA in January, 2002, and Keshet Chaim will tour Israel the following summer for a series of performances, workshops and collaborative rehearsals. Inbal will spend ten days in Los Angeles to enrich the community through workshops at the Skirball Cultural Center and public concerts with Keshet Chaim at the University of Judaism. Although both companies share many similar goals and passions, they have much to learn from each other. They are contributing to the development of Israeli dance while still maintaining the rich traditions of their culture. They both celebrate diversity in Jewish life through an understanding of people as well as a pride and joy of their cultures.

Israel is a pluralistic society in which each group combines to form the nation but without relinquishing its ethnic identity. Growing public awareness of the importance of ethnic heritage created the need for an ethnic arts center in Israel: thus, the Ethnic Arts Center, Inbal was born in March 1996. This center emerged from the Inbal Dance Theatre, Israel's oldest dance company and the vanguard of heritage preservation. Inbal offers a unique channel through which to experience traditional and biblical Jewish images juxtaposed on a diverse and vibrant Israel of today. The goal of the activities of this project are to strengthen the cultural bonds between American and Israeli Jews, to plant seeds of understanding and creative curiosity in the fertile ground of American Jewish youth as well as the general community, and to expose American audiences to the deeply rooted Jewish traditions of the people of Israel.

Nestled in the picturesque Suzanne Dellal Center, Inbal Dance Theatre, founded fifty years ago by Israel Prize Laureate Sara Levi-Tenai, is a mirror of the old-new Israel. Inbal's unique



**Inbal Dance Theatre in Sajarra**

style, praised by the likes of Martha Graham and Jerome Robbins, uses modern dance to depict the clash between modernity and tradition. Over the past several years, Inbal has worked with internationally renowned choreographers, including Japan's Kei Takei and South Africa's Vincent Mantsoe, which have injected an international flavor to the company. For many generations, Inbal Dance Theatre has served as a cultural institution rooted in Jewish values. Based on Israeli tradition, Inbal's dances have become a national cultural treasure. The company has toured extensively in Europe, Asia and the United States, receiving critical acclaim and enthusiastic responses from critics and audiences alike.

Keshet Chaim is looking for dancers for this project, including the tour to Israel. For information please call Genie Benson at (818) 784-0344.

