

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Centre of the Arts and Ashkenaz Foundation present the Exclusive Engagement and Canadian premiere of Argentinean musical sensation Simja Dujov

Toronto, ON, January 17, 2013 – The **Koffler Centre of the Arts**, together with **Ashkenaz Foundation**, are proud to present the Canadian premiere and exclusive artist residency of the internationally acclaimed, genre-defying musician, artist and educator **Simja Dujov**. The project was originated by the Koffler as part of its focus in 2013 on the vibrant music and art scene emanating from South America via artists who identify with their Jewish heritage.

Employing unlimited styles that he “mixes...with seemingly effortless flair” (Jewish Daily Forward, New York City, 2009), Dujov harvests local Latin musical traditions of Argentina and blends these with his Eastern European Jewish roots. The Buenos Aires-based artist explores the explosive fusion of Latin rhythms – cumbia, reggaeton, cuarteto – and mashes these genres with electro-Klezmer, Balkan, Gypsy-punk and other musical morsels.

Fresh off an extensive tour of France, Dujov will be in Toronto for a two-week artistic residency from **February 17 to March 1, 2013**. The residency will include an intense schedule of educational activities with youth, including master classes and a free two-week workshop with **SKETCH**, an organization focused on bringing cultural opportunities to homeless and underprivileged youth in Toronto.

The music workshop with ten at-risk youth will explore different music traditions and styles while also working with each participant’s musical preferences and cultural background to develop a collaborative new composition with the participants. This completely original composition will be recorded at SKETCH music studios and the entire process will be documented by the participants of the SKETCH video initiative.

“The Koffler and Ashkenaz are proud to bring a Jewish, South American emerging music sensation to Toronto to workshop with underprivileged youth and play with local musicians,” said Lori Starr, Executive Director, Koffler Centre of the Arts. “Simja Dujov’s residency in Toronto is exactly the kind of program the Koffler excels at, where we bring people together through arts and culture to create a more civil and global society.”

While in Toronto, Dujov will be immersed in an intense musical exchange for the first time with six Toronto musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds, culminating in a one-time only concert – his first ever Canadian performance – **Simja Dujov & Friends** at **Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas Street West** on **February 27, 2013, at 8 PM**. Collaborating and performing with Dujov will be an elite group of Toronto musicians, including the Lemon Bucket Orchestra’s **Chris Weatherstone** (balkan folk-punk saxophone), violinist/fiddler **Jessica Hana Deutsch**, multi-instrumentalist **Demetri Petsalakis** (guitar/strings), drummer **Max Senitt** (from the Juno-award winning band Alex Cuba), and bassist **Sam McLellan**.

Tickets for the Simja Dujov & Friends performance are \$12 advance and \$15 door for the general public, \$10 advance and \$12 door for Koffler Centre of the Arts’ members. To purchase advance tickets and for more information, please visit: www.kofflerarts.org

ABOUT SIMJA DUJOV

The grandson of Ukranian Jews that settled in Argentina, Simja Dujov is a young composer and player of Klezmer, Latin, Gypsy, and world music. He presents eclectic musical projects combining the roots of traditions brought to Argentina by Eastern European immigrants together with contemporary and multicultural streams to create an infusive and innovative sound. From traditional Klezmer music to Latin American and Middle Eastern rhythms and rock, Dujov’s unconventional acoustic and electronic on stage sets construct new possibilities for live music in every different city he visits – often in collaboration with local musicians and their own musical perspectives.

Dujov and his explosive music have traveled around the world, performing in clubs and festivals in Brazil, Chile, Belgium, Spain, France, and the United States. He is also a musical producer for other bands, a curator of cultural and music festivals, and is the resident DJ of Buenos Aires' ultimate sensation band La Bomba de Tiempo. In his own words: "My music is a teleportation machine; sounds for dancing and taking a journey through the mountains of Klezmer, the charming rainforests of Latin rhythms and the roller coaster of gypsy beats."

His most recent album *Santificaras la Fiesta* was released online in 2012 as a free downloadable album. More info: www.simjadujov.com.ar

Read more: <http://forward.com/articles/105236/music-of-the-mind/#ixzz2l9DLTO5X>

ABOUT THE KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

Koffler Centre of the Arts is Canada's only cutting-edge contemporary, multidisciplinary Jewish cultural institution. It has a broad mandate to serve all, and present a wide range of artistic programs through a global lens in a specifically Canadian context. The Koffler Centre of the Arts is an agency of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Planning is underway on a brand new, architecturally innovative Koffler Centre of the Arts on the Sherman Campus at Bathurst and Sheppard. In July 2009, the Koffler's administrative offices and all classes opened in the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus. Starting in fall 2013, Koffler Gallery exhibitions and related programs will be based at Artscape YOUNGplace in downtown Toronto. Koffler programs will continue at the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus and will debut at the new Schwartz/Reisman Centre on Lebovic Campus in Vaughan in fall 2012.

Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of Cultural Season Sponsor **CIBC Wood Gundy**, the **Ontario Arts Council** through the Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Organizations Program, our patrons and members. The Koffler Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support the City of Toronto through the **Toronto Arts Council**, the **Ontario Arts Council** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

ABOUT ASHKENAZ FOUNDATION

The Ashkenaz Foundation is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to fostering an increased awareness of Yiddish and Jewish culture through the arts. Through its biennial festival and an expanding slate of year-round programming, Ashkenaz showcases the work of leading contemporary artists from Canada and around the world working in music, film, theatre, dance, literature, craft, and visual arts. More info at www.ashkenazfestival.com

ABOUT SKETCH

SKETCH creates opportunities for street involved and homeless people ages 15-29 to engage in the arts in a cross-discipline studio environment or in the community. More info at www.sketch.ca

KOFFLER ON THE ROAD!

Watch for Koffler programs off-site around Toronto! As it prepares for its new facility to be completed, the Koffler Centre of the Arts continues to program exhibitions, events, performances, classes and workshops at the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus, the Schwartz/Reisman Centre on Lebovic Campus and at various downtown sites in Toronto. Go to www.kofflerarts.org for details and watch for Koffler events in *your* neighbourhood!

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