

Deborah Margo & Devora Neumark  
*Why Should We Cry? Lamentations in a Winter Garden*  
September 21 to December 21, 2008

All are welcome to participate in the open-air singing lessons that will begin on Sunday, September 21 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Additional lessons are scheduled for October 5, October 19, November 2, November 23, November 30, from 13:00 to 16:00. There is no cost to participate. Please confirm presence.

Final performance: Winter solstice, December 21 at midnight.

*Why Should We Cry? Lamentations in a Winter Garden* is an open invitation to learn from individuals who have experience with forced displacement, currently living in Montreal. This collaborative art project, facilitated by Deborah Margo and Devora Neumark, and presented by DARE-DARE, will reveal itself through the teaching by recent immigrants of mourning hymns and/or chants in their own “mother tongues”. These lessons, open to all, will be an integral part of the project culminating in a public performance on the night of December 21st – the winter solstice.

This participatory project is motivated and influenced by the suffering related to divisiveness and alienation that is ever pervasive as we near the close of the first decade of the 21st century. Fear and misunderstanding are symptoms of, and give rise to, a closing of the heart. Indigenous peoples around the world continue to live in conditions imposed upon them by Colonial settlers and their descendents, often on reservations and without easy access to their traditional hunting grounds and sacred sites. Furthermore, Quebec’s recent experience with the “reasonable accommodation” debate points to a troubling dynamic related to the problematics of coexistence.

A winter garden is a place that is dormant or resting and consequently in its state of suspended readiness, an ideal interstitial space for diverse acts of mourning. Such life affirming gestures are necessary within the constancy of a process of growth, change and the search for wellness. Our project aims to engage with life, community and our environment by exploring public and personal gestures of grieving, recognizing them as vital embodiments of healing.

“As Jewish women born in the shadow of the Shoah (the Holocaust), we feel compelled to engage with the issues of private grief and public mourning processes. Singing, and especially singing songs of lamentations, can provide individuals and social groups with the means to work through the traumas of displacement and reconnect with life. *Why Should We Cry? Lamentations in a Winter Garden* will unfold as self-selected individuals teach us their culturally specific mourning songs.”

Deborah Margo and Devora Neumark have known each other since 1980, last working together in 1991 on the public installation of *L'être et le néon - la publicité avide* (Peel

Metro, Montreal). Deborah Margo lives in Ottawa. Her work combines different visual arts disciplines including ephemeral installations, questioning the contextual qualities of public and private spaces. [deborahmargo.ca](http://deborahmargo.ca) Living in Montreal, Devora Neumark is committed to an interdisciplinary approach. She explores personal and social healing through performative gesture.