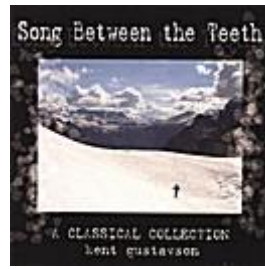


## Mp3 Kent Gustavson - Song Between The Teeth



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Gorgeous, dulcet melodies float to the ceilings of the hall. And a ponderous, rich and dirty string bass anchors the hall down with its lumbering and whistling grace. 7 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: Traditional Details: My father takes credit for the beginning of my musical education: When my sister, Britta, was taking piano lessons, I, at age three, insisted that I wanted to take lessons too. My father convinced my mother that it was a good idea (my mother thought I was too young, according to my father). My mother is a poet and a psychotherapist, and my father is a pediatrician, and I have inherited both creativity and science. Both came together in college through my abrupt decision to drop my studies of science, and pick up music, which now traces the boundaries of my full, and wonderful life. During college, I also began to work with an organization called Seeds of Peace, that works towards the reconciliation of Israel and Palestine through simple co-existence in a summer camp in Maine. The friendships the teenagers make with the 'enemy' carry across political lines, too, when they return home, and they maintain their friendships through email, etc. After college, I was inspired to change the world, as many young folks tend to be, and decided to return to Jerusalem, where I had studied for 6 months during college as well. I used my contacts to start an organization of my own, called 'Sound Peace'. I wrote an entire curriculum, based on sound as the foundation for friendship -- children listening and playing together, teaching one another about their own music, and creating and learning about music in unfamiliar genres. I traveled to Jerusalem in the summer of 2000, and worked to establish Sound Peace with great success and encouragement from every direction. Until, in late September, 2000, Ariel Sharon walked onto the Temple Mount with his political entourage, starting the worst violence perhaps in the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict. A close friend of mine, Asel Asleh, was killed in the first weeks of the fighting. He was a wonderful 17 year old with vision and intelligence, fluent in Hebrew, Arabic, and

English, killed in his Seeds of Peace t-shirt, walking the wrong way in a demonstration. His death crushed me, but I decided to stick it out -- I didn't want his death to mean that what I had started was impossible. I stayed in Bethlehem (where I lived in a small apartment behind a family house) for another few weeks, receiving phone calls from every relative or friend who knew where I was, and from reporters all across the US, asking me what the situation was like in the West Bank. The more my family watched CNN, the more I started to feel pressure to come home. My Palestinian friends told me to go home as well -- they would have left if they could. I wouldn't have been able to continue my work, so I made the right decision returning home. Now there is a wall between the countries, and 'peace' is as dim a thought as my first words. I went home, torn apart at age 22, and the first day I was home, my parents, trying to cheer me up, brought me to an Oktoberfest celebration in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where they live. I watched as the folks in the crowd cheerily danced the chicken dance, and I flipped. I couldn't stand to see people (including me) in such luxury. I felt that my affluence, and my security, was responsible for the oppression of the Palestinians and for the death of my friend. I had dreams that I had killed my friend. I retreated into the mountains, disillusioned and lost. My youth had taken to the hills during the 34 days I spent in Palestine. I wrote into a coming of age memoir all that I had seen, and how my experience had crushed me and awakened me to the suffering of the world. And then I started to heal, finding myself in the place to which I had retreated, Holden Village, a Lutheran Ecumenical Retreat Center in the Cascade mountains of Washington state. I was working as a cook, hiking in the afternoons, sitting on the porch at night, breathing the mountain air and picking banjo. My intellectual self had hit a brick wall, and this existence of picking banjo and wearing Carhartt overalls and hiking into the mountains had taken over, healing my world wounds. I started to write music for the services which happened at Holden Village every day, and I started to sing the way I really felt, and to play for hours every day.

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