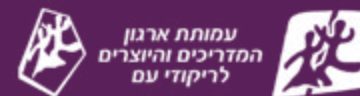




INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL ASHDOD 8-11.7

ASHDODANCE



8.7 Monday

On the Dance Floor
6 p.m. | Beit Yad Labanim

9.7 Tuesday

Mnemosyne
A performance by Kamea Dance Company
6 pm. | Beit Yad Labanim

Israeli Dance: Where is it Facing?
3 p.m. | Monart Cultural Center

Mazal Tov
Our Happy Moments
p.m. 9:30 | Ashdod Amphitheater

Dancing with the Stars Under the Open Sky
11 p.m. | "Hakshatot" Beach
Free Admission

I Have a Sympathy
A tribute performance to Shlomo Gronich
11:55 p.m. | Amphitheater "Hasla'im" at Park Ashdod Yam
Free Admission

10.7 Wednesday

A Dance is Born Competition
5 p.m. | Sports Convention Center
"Hakirya" | Free Admission

Hot Stage
An array of dance troupes at a marathon of performances
7 p.m. | Sports Convention Center
"Hakirya" | Free Admission

Orientation
Dance Performance by Machola Dance Company
7:30 p.m. | Beit Yad Labanim

Dancing with the Stars Under the Open Sky
11 p.m. | "Hakshatot" Beach
Free Admission

Stage Choreography Competition | Dance Troupes Show "Israel's Holidays"
11:55 p.m. | Mishkan Theater

Greek Tavern
11:55 p.m. | Amphitheater "Hasla'im" at Park Ashdod Yam

11.7 Thursday

Non-Stop Art
3 p.m. | Monart Cultural Center
Free Admission

On Wheels
A unique performance with dancers on wheelchairs
5 p.m. | Sports Convention Center
"Hakirya" | Free Admission

Moroccan-fest
5 p.m. | Beit Yad Labanim

Tablao Flamenco
Flamenco with Michal Natan
6 p.m. | Monart Auditorium

30+ Dance Troupes
The Land of the Tzabar
6 p.m. | Beit Yad Labanim

Como El Agua
Rotem Cohen accompanied by bachata dancers
7 p.m. | Mishkan Theater

Edges
Musical Worlds Meet
9:30 p.m. | Ashdod

Dancing with the Stars Under the Open Sky
11 p.m. | "Hakshatot" Beach | Free Admission

Mediterranean Tavern
11:55 p.m.
Amphitheater "Hasla'im" at Park Ashdod Yam



* הזכות לשינויים שמורה
לפסטיבל אשדודאנס



Dancing with the Stars

*מידע על לוח ההרקדות המלא באתר הפסטיבל



Yaron Meishar



Ruth Goodman



Danny Uziel

Dear Readers,

The Tower of Babel...

The well-known story of the Tower of Babel is a story with many insights and ramifications. As a reminder, human beings wanted to ascend up to the heavens and decided to build a tower. At that time, they spoke the same language and they worked together until they had made a lot of bricks to build more and more floors, higher and higher up to the sky... Their concern was ascending upwards and they did not pay attention to the base of the tower.

And then something went wrong ... Was it "the hand of God" or "too many bricks and floors?" Either way, the people "became confused" (hence the name "Babel") and slowly (not in one day) began speaking in different languages, did not understand each other, stopped building and dispersed all over the world with each group having their own language...

Any connection between the story of the Tower of Babel and the subjects dealt with in this publication is purely coincidental and open to each reader's interpretation...

The 101st issue of "Rokdim-Nirkoda" is being published in preparation for the summer, leading up to two major dance festivals:

- The Karmiel Dance Festival that will take place from July 2-4, 2019.
- The "Ashdodance Festival" that will take place one week later, July 8-11, 2019.

In this issue:

- **David Ben Asher** conducted a comprehensive interview with **Avi Levy**, artistic director of the "Ashdodance Festival", about the idea behind the festival and its contents.
- **David Ben Asher**, following an extensive interview with **Yehuda Emanuel**, one of the pillars of Israeli folk dance in the '80s and '90s, describes this man who contributed greatly to the perpetuation and documentation of hundreds of dances.
- **Maya Geva** writes about "Komuna" – a term set by **Hila Mukdasi**, who leads a dance session exclusively for young people in Jerusalem that has a youthful, special spirit.
- **Matti Goldschmidt** (Munich) wrote to us about the dance camp in the Czech Republic and thus opens another window for us to continue to view Israeli folk dance around the world.
- **Israel Yakovee** comments in great detail about the major article, "Israeli Dance – Where is it Heading?" which was presented in the previous issue.
- Dance of the Month – the dance, "Libi", choreographed by **Yuval Maayan Tabashi** which has taken the dance floor by storm all over the world.
- "Alex's Experiences" focuses on the activities of a young and successful dance leader in the north – **Elad Perel**.

Happy reading and dancing,

Yaron Meishar, Ruth Goodman and Danny Uziel – Editors

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Folk Dancing in Haifa with Elad Perel



David Ben-Asher

Photos: Ashdod
Dance Department,
David Ben-Asher

Translation:
Ruth Goodman and
Ruth Schoenberg

Ashdodance Festival

THE GLORY OF DANCE

Dozens of dance troupes. A hundred thousand dancers, 9 events centers. Top performances in the amphitheater with 8,000 seats. The best Israeli Singers. 3 huge dance sites. Academic symposia. Hundreds of guests from abroad. Dance celebration happening. And above all – the city of Ashdod.

From July 8 to 11, the Ashdodance Dance Festival will be held for the third time in Ashdod. Every word like kudos, magnificent, intoxicating, crazy, elation, joy, energy packed, and other such grandiose descriptions will not exaggerate the intensity of the events that will occur at this virtuoso event.

No, these are not exaggerations, if, one by one, we hear what is going to happen there in the crammed days filled with everything that comes to mind in the field of dancing and dance, until 5:00 am.

This young festival is already established in the consciousness of dance lovers, in Israel and abroad, as a leading, innovative, refreshing festival that offers something else,

something that distinguishes it from other well-known and famous festivals.

It seems that this is a special cultural creation, unique in character, with an agenda of beauty alongside professional, educational, pioneering and Zionist goals. Something that is appropriate to the character of the cosmopolitan city, which is diverse and groundbreaking in its innovation and planning – the city of Ashdod.

In order to learn about this festival and to be impressed by its enormous scope, I met for a conversation and a comprehensive tour of the area, with the director, the idea person and the executor of the festival: the director of the city's Dance Department, choreographer and creator, **Avi Levy**.

With bright eyes and youthful enthusiasm, **Avi Levy** tells what will happen here during the turbulent festival days, and lays out his credo about dancing and dance:

The idea of the Festival in Ashdod has been percolating in my mind for 15 years... the dream of my life... the circumstances are ripe, the ground is fertile, and with the uncom-promising encouragement of Mayor **Dr. Yechiel Lasry**, we started in 2017. We are now approaching the third festival. We have gone through a maturation process. We have been learning and improving and all the time changing. Innovative, refreshing festivals are needed, that will "shake out the sheet".



"There are also advantages to the fact that the two festivals (Karmiel and Ashdodance) are in close proximity, and there may be cooperation between the festivals in various areas, and I hope that we will exhaust this option".

In order to preserve and strengthen the folk dance movement in Israel, in order to see the future generation dancing too, styles must change, and at the same time, both innovate and preserve history. The festivals are a lever for preserving this tradition in Israel and around the world. Ashdod, as a city, is the ideal place for an event of this magnitude. There are 270,000 residents from a variety of ethnic groups and cultures. There is modern infrastructure, a beach, a well-developed culinary tradition, suitable and inviting sites, and it is in a convenient location in Israel, with ample parking, pleasant weather, with a calm and vibrant atmosphere.

And there is also an important aspect of local regional perception. All these years, dance events in Israel have been concentrated in the center and in the north. Ashdod represents the South and thus provides an opportunity to develop this culture in the periphery with the wonderful (dance) troupes that we have which do not get sufficient occasions for expression. And to make certain that there is no misunderstanding; troupes from all over the country participate in our festival. I promise everyone who comes, a warm and loving embrace".

"Holit" Group, Beer Sheva. Photo: Kfir Bolotin



Avi Levy. In the background – the Festival localization

And what will happen at the festival, Avi? What will we see; what will we experience?

The program is loaded and varied. I will not elaborate here; the schedule of performances and events is available on the site and it will be distributed free of charge in every way. <http://ashdodance.com>

I will explain what will happen in general. The festival will take place at nine separate sites. Every location is unique and events occur at specific times. There will be both professional and folk dance troupes. A professional group is defined as such if it is financed by the state (such as orchestras, theatrical companies, dance companies, etc.) Popular groups are usually urban or private dance companies that are not funded by the government. I can honestly say that the technical and choreographic levels of the "popular" groups are no less than that of the professionals.

The festival will feature performances by professional dance companies and folk dance troupes from all over the country. There are sites for an audience of 400, 1,000 and 8,000. For example, in the amphitheater, where the mass performances will take place, there will be an 'Edges' show with top-notch artists, a live orchestra with 20 musicians, accompanied choreographies, for example by singers **Shiri Maimon** and **Rivka Zohar**. There will also be nine top singers accompanied by 20 choreographies,

a grandiose show. There will be 1,800 dancers taking part in the various shows. The main show will be called, "Mazal Tov" – Israel's holidays, weddings, bar mitzvahs, births, from all the best of our country.

The opening and closing performances will be great dance celebrations. The opening performance is staged by the **Hoffman Family – Shuki, Dorit and Yaniv** [founders and managers of Mechola], and the closing show by choreographers **Lior Tavori** and **Liran Michaeli**.

In addition to the large shows, there will be small intimate shows such as flamenco, tap dance, the art of dance, and so forth. These will be held in halls seating up to 150 people. Also in the Yad LaBanim Center, which seats 400, there will be professional and folk dance troupes. And here is something new, a special privilege. Each year, one group presents a premiere as part of the festival, and it will receive the stage, the lighting, the sound, the advertising, a very substantial courtesy.

There are also special things in the area of song. After the amphitheater performance, there will be a special evening with Shlomo Gronich [composer, singer, songwriter, arranger, and choir conductor] at the Ashdod-Yam Park in Giv'at HaSela'im. On another evening – "a Greek Celebration" on the lawn around round tables loaded with lavish refreshments and beer (requires reservations). And an evening of community singing (shira betzibur) with **Effi Netzer** for lovers of Israeli song. I've enumerated just some of the events; there will be many more.

And dance sessions for the community of folk dancers?

During the four days of the festival we are expecting 100,000 dance lovers from Israel and abroad. Dance delegations will come from different countries, such as 50 dancers from Chile, as well as from South America, Europe and the United States. Hundreds of dancers from abroad will visit us, and the mass dance sessions are a central and dominant part of the festival.

"Mechola". Photo: Kfir Bolotin



"Another advantage – the attraction of overseas dancers to Israel who will be able to participate in both festivals in one trip. They will catch two dancing birds in one visit. Such a move will increase their presence in Israel and this is good for everyone".





"Tzivei Machol" Chadera. Photo: Kfir Bolotin

The sessions will take place at 3 locations:

HaKirya Arena – a very large air-conditioned hall with a parquet floor, top-notch dance instructors with dancing every night until 5:00 in the morning.

HaKshatot Beach – The Arches Beach – This is a fantastic complex, on the beach, with a 3,200 square meter parquet floor, surrounded by 16 air conditioners and a pleasant sea breeze. [There are] bars, restaurants, pubs about and a huge happening atmosphere Thousands of dancers, four non-stop days from 6:00 pm until the morning.

Third site – Beit Hachayal Hall is an air conditioned and pleasant space for special dance sessions. Workshops for nostalgia, women only, couples, etc. Workshops with dance choreographers Moshe Telem, Eli Ronen, Chen Blum, Elad Shtammer and others.

All the dance sessions are free of charge.

The dance complexes are within walking distance, and there will also be a continuous shuttle bus between the sites for those who are interested. More than 100 of the best dance instructors in the country as well as esteemed

representation of distinguished dance instructors from abroad, will be placed in charge of the mass dance sessions. The entire festival complex is concentrated in a pedestrian accessible area. It is therefore possible to move from site to site in a short time and thus alter location according to personal interest and published schedule. It's easy to hop from event to event, but you can never be present at all of the vast selections.

Prices?

It's totally out of proportion to the quality of the performances. Everything is subsidized and the events are affordable for everyone. And, as mentioned above, all the dancing is free and there are also places with refreshments and free hot drinks.

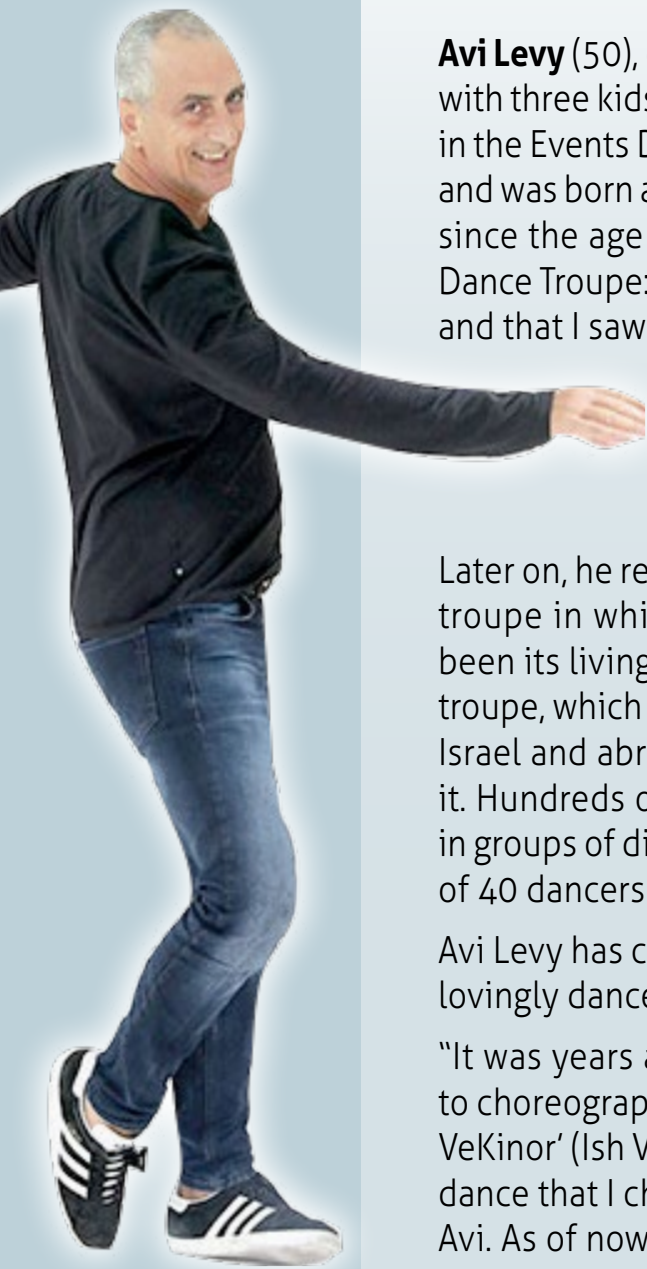
Lodging?

The dancers from the performing groups will be housed in the school on mattresses. 2,000 dancers. Overseas guests will certainly choose to stay at one of the 4 accessible hotels in the city. Every day, the thousands of other dancers will easily come from all over the country, during summer vacation with sparse traffic on the roads".

With the crowding resulting from the two largest festivals within one week, the Karmiel Festival and the Ashdod Festival, would it not have been better to divide them into different periods during the year and thus allow dance enthusiasts to enjoy this pleasure twice a year?

We have examined this issue from all sides. We know that Ashdod is the city of festivals. We have 26 different festivals here (wine, beer, Georgian golden age [Ashdod has the largest Georgian Jewish community in the world.], etc.), which is almost a festival every two weeks. It is impossible to move any festival for reasons of tradition and other reasons. The date we set is the most appropriate in every respect. It is also worthwhile to know that there are advantages to the fact that the two festivals are in close proximity. There may be cooperation between the two festivals in various fields and I hope we will exhaust this option. Another advantage – the attraction of overseas dancers to Israel who will be able to participate in both festivals in one trip. They will catch two dancing birds





in one visit. Such a move will increase their presence in Israel and this is good for everyone”.

Avi Levy (50), one of seven brothers and sisters, married with three kids, is the Director of the Dance Department in the Events Division, under the direction of Iris Naftali, and was born and raised in Ashdod. He has been dancing since the age of 12, in school as part of the “Gvanim” Dance Troupe: “Even then I knew that this was my future and that I saw dance as the love of my life, and I will be working in this environment for the rest of my life”, he says about himself. He, himself is a dancer – jazz, folklore and other styles.

Later on, he realized his dream and established a dance troupe in which he serves as choreographer and has been its living spirit for 20 years. “Avivim”, this famous troupe, which has already performed dozens of times in Israel and abroad and whose reputation has preceded it. Hundreds of young people, children and adults, are in groups of different ages. The adult performing troupe of 40 dancers are professional in every respect.

Avi Levy has created dozens of popular dances that are lovingly danced around the world. [Avi Levi dances](#).

“It was years ago that I suddenly felt brave and dared to choreograph a dance, a dance in Moroccan style: ‘Tof VeKinor’ (Ish VeKinor) - ‘Drum and Violin’. It was the first dance that I choreographed and I was proud of it,” says Avi. As of now, he has choreographed 160 folk dances, many of which, as we already said, are regularly taught in all sessions in Israel and around the world and have become an integral part of our heritage.

What does it actually mean to choreograph a folk dance? What guides you as an ultimate choreographer?

The style of our folk dances is multicultural. It’s not just the old Russian melodies, there is also Yemenite, Moroccan, Georgian and others. First of all, the song has to touch my heart; it should have something that can be enjoyed. It is not enough for the dance to be special; it is important that the dance does not interfere with the song and that there should be nothing blocking the dancers; it will flow making it easy to grasp. I have to know where a

problem will arise and prevent it. Truthfully, most of my dances were created in minutes; apparently, they sat in my head and incubated there until they were released onto the parquet [dance floor] in a burst of creativity.

What are “discussion panels” within the festival?

There will be two panel discussions on folk dance. They will take place in the small auditorium in our cultural center. One panel will deal with “Israeli dance – where is it headed – folklore or modern?” led by Eyal Bar Kama. The second panel is on the topic: “Multiplicity of dances verses the art of creation” will be led by Avner Naim. This subject, the influx of dances (about 300 a year, ed. DBA), disturbs many dancers and dance leaders, and this panel will flesh out the problem in all its aspects”.

Respect for the Founders: “We will honor the founders. We invite those who laid the foundations for the dance of the Israeli people, the choreographers and dance leaders who led us at the start. Those who decades ago began and thus, for dozens of years, kept exercising this pioneering legacy and bringing the folk dance message to the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora. Most of them are in their 80s and 90s. We will arrange a special day for them on Tuesday, with a bus that will include a tour of the city and the port. They will be honored guests at a performance [during the Festival of ‘Mnemosyne’ by Tamir Ginz on July 9] by the “Kamea” Dance Company from Beersheba, lunch, a fun day. Everyone will receive the “Tag HaZahav – Gold Badge”, with free entrance to all performances. They will meet with the dancers at the special harkada [dance session] at Beit Hachayal at 6:00 pm and, after the opening performance, at the main dance session at Hakshatot Beach – Arches Beach. This group includes about 30 vatikim [veteran instructors], who, as noted, will receive the honor they deserve, including veteran dance instructors from abroad.

Thus, the city of Ashdod is on the map of world dance festivals. An event of this magnitude, a four day festival, dozens of events and performances of every kind, from the highest professional level to popular entertainment, with the participation of tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands. We’re facing a first-rate cultural experience. Good luck to the Ashdodance Festival! ✎





David Ben-Asher

Pictures:

David Ben-Asher,
family photos

Translation:

Shani Karni Aduculesi

Yehuda Emanuel Makes History

Yehuda Emanuel is the name of a person. However, it is impossible to define this special person with only a name as there are several Yehuda Emanuel(s). Only the sum of all of these components will create this unique, colorful, accomplished and versatile character with many roles who answers to the name of – **Yehuda Emanuel**. Most of us know him as a dance leader, instructor and choreographer, but there's also the dance troupes, the educator, neighborhood man and the city of Holon.

There's also **Yehuda** the professional surveyor, Yehuda the jurist, the gifted and touching singer, Yehuda and his wife **Lea**, the poet and song writer, whom together are a distinguished and creative team.

But the greatest **Yehuda Emanuel** is Yehuda the historian, who documents the folklore of Israeli dance, perpetuates the great legacy that we, the generations of folk dancers, were bequeathed. It is his life's work that brings him the appreciation and honor that he so much deserves.

This is the story of a man who has been leaving his mark on the scope and diversity of Israeli culture that only few figures in our culture have done. This special man is at the center of this article, in an attempt to give expression to such a wide variety of work and creativity, and with all good intentions, we will only succeed in touching the tip of the iceberg.

Yehuda was born 76 years ago in Jerusalem, in Mishkanot, to a family with Sephardi, Greek-Bulgarian roots, and nine siblings. During his childhood, he experienced both the siege on the city and the injury to his father. Later, the family moved to Holon where he grew up and lives until today.

In his IDF service, he trained recruits at the famous Base 4. Afterwards, he worked in the copper mines at Timna. He is a graduate of The College of Land Surveying, Holon and an expert in the field. He worked at a private surveying office in Tel-Aviv and later in the municipality of Holon where he was appointed as the municipality's chief surveyor, a position he held for 38 years.

Dance and its Derivatives – a Life Work

After his IDF service, he took a folk dance instructors course at the Histadrut under the baton of **Gurit Kadman**, **Yoav Ashriel** and **Tirtza Hodes**. He completed it with honors. He tells us that at the early age of 10, he taught dance in the chug he ran for children at the Remez and Katznelson schools. He also did so as part of the

Lea and Yehuda Emanuel



Yehuda Emanuel

HaNoar HaOved VeHaLomed -- Working and Studying Youth Movement. As a high school student, he taught dance in different neighborhoods and established small dance troupes, among them a group of at risk youth, as an arrangement in the framework of neighborhood education. In the 60's, he had a musical collaboration with Ran Aldema and took part in professional dance troupes, among them was "Tamburim" who performed for tourists and at elegant venues in Israel.

Yehuda talks about his dance activity, with a fair amount of pride:

Dance always accompanies me to my professional work as a surveyor. However, as far as the spiritual and material resources, it was a top priority and took a very central place in my life. I performed in **Yoav Ashriel's** dance troupes and later on led other dance troupes. I participated in annual events at the Lazaros Community Center in Holon, at **Jessi Cohen** and others. I organized large events on the municipality's stages for Independence Day celebrations and holidays where I served as the host and leader of the programs.



Yehuda Emanuel and thousands of records of dances documentation

And what about your big dance classes, Yehuda?

"At the time, there were very good classes at Tel-Aviv University led by **Shauli Rosenfeld** from Geva and **Moshe Telem**. They asked me to teach an international folk dance, ballroom and singing class every Thursday. I started the class in menza, and understandably, I also incorporated Israeli folk dance. Within a short time my



Yehuda Emanuel with his Certificates of Appreciation from Karmiel Festival

class had a good reputation and it was decided to move it to the gymnasium. It was a huge success. My class grew and gained popularity throughout Israel. Regularly, 1,000 dancers came weekly. They came from Jerusalem, from Be'er Sheva and from many different places and the class flourished. We also had organized groups who came to join the class; it was happy and exciting. I conducted and instructed this class for 20 years; my crowning glory of mass dance sessions.

Nevertheless Yehuda, the crowning glory of your folk dance activity is documentation. Tell us about it.

It really is a craze that caught me many years ago. I felt a personal commitment to the field that I loved so much, our folk dancing, and was looking for a way to express this feeling. I came to the conclusion that this work that is shared by many people who love our country and our dance, may somehow disappear and this very significant cultural heritage will be eroded and thrown into the trash of history, without leaving a trace. I thought that the right thing to do, in fact, really the essential thing to do is to act. I took this assignment upon myself, which in retrospect is an historic mission, to somehow immortalize our folk dancing for the sake of future generations – preserving the culture in this important way – our folk dance.

The task is not at all simple. The idea is correct and good but the execution is much more complicated. And

"As for the flood of dances, I honestly think that one new dance every month is enough.

There also should be a requirement to reintroduce an old dance, to preserve the good old heritage"



Dance session at one of the productions with Yehuda participation



Yehuda Emanuel in his favorite work stations

this wasn't a time with today's digital devices and technology. I started implementing this project. I took dancers to demonstrate the dances; after they knew and performed it well, I initiated musical recordings of the song intended for the dance. I initiated the professional filming of the dances along with their songs and recorded it on tape to be preserved forever. A recorded dance will not disappear. It was a tremendous and very expensive project. Organizing the musicians, organizing the demonstrators and filming is a meticulous and strenuous job which took many years. I added explanations of the dances and, in fact, created authentic documentation of the sources – Eretz Yisrael at its best.

"I've documented the dances of generations of Israeli folk dance choreographers including: **Rivka Shturman, Yankele Levy, Shalom Hermon, Eliyahu Gamliel, Naftaly Kadosh, Tuvia Tishler, Victor Gabbay, Chayim Shiriyon, Avi Peretz, Shalom Amar, Shlomo Bachar, Israel Yakovee, Yoav Ashriel, Yonatan Gabai, Moti Elfasi, Eli Ronen, Moshe Telem, Roni Siman Tov, Se'adia Amishi, Viki** [Shmuel Cohen], **Marko Ben-Shimon, Tamar Alyagor, Tzvi Friedhaber, Shoshana Kopelovitch, Yankele Dekel, Dani Dassa, Meir Shem Tov, Moshe Eskayo**, and others. At that time, the Dance Department of the Histadrut was closed and there was really no one to do such documentation, therefore, I entered this threatening void of loss of heritage.

The Jewish Agency saw this as essential and purchased 500 recordings of the basic dances and sent them to Russia. Dances like Hora Medura, Tzadik Ka'tamar, Simchat He'Amel, Eretz Yisrael Yaffa and such. [It was] 24 dances on cassette tapes for the Diaspora Jews as a Zionist message from the Land of Israel.

In this framework I volunteered not just for the technical documentation but also for my personal instruction all across the globe. I was sent to the Soviet Union, Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong, the USA and European Countries. I not only instructed, but I also brought my experience in spreading our folk dances around the world.

When the "instructors" organization began to fall apart, I, together with **Moshe Telem**, established the "Association of Folk Dance Instructors & Choreographers in Israel and Abroad" [<http://www.markid.co.il/>], in order to promote and nurture those involved.

At the Karmiel Festival, I was the first instructor for the mass dance session, along with **Yonatan Karmon** and **Tirtza Hodes**. I continued to lead these dance sessions for three years.

In between, I myself created 50 dances, among them "Ze Hazemer", "Od Shanah Chalfa", "Bo'u Ve'nashir", "Shir Ha'chatuna" and many more. In order to institute this important activity, along with my friends, I founded "The [Emanuel] Center to Foster Dance" which is responsible for the

legacy of the entire enterprise as done so far and in the future. Thus far, I have documented 1500 dances, a great heritage and enterprise to preserve the culture of Israel.

Apparently your wife Lea, by profession an educator, is also a gifted lyricist and the collaboration between the two of you is particularly fruitful; she is the lyricist and you are the singer?

Indeed it is. I love to sing and I also dedicated my singing to folk dance songs. In this way, I completed something in all directions – I not only create a dance, I teach it and sing it, and the lyrics are also a family production by my wife, Lea.

Musical Creation At It's Best

In preparation for this article, seven CDs were given to me by the Emanuel couple. An enormous production – musically, technically and financially – great in any scale. I listened to the songs, all recorded with the strong, clean baritone voice, with polished diction – the voice of Yehuda Emanuel. It is really a pleasure to listen and enjoy his flowing, and moving singing.

One CD – “Rakadeti Lach Artzi (I Danced for You, My Country)”, brings us the songs which we all dance to at the dance sessions, such as “Eichulim” with lyrics by **Lea Emanuel** and music by **Ya’akov Eish**. This is also the case with Lea’s “Bakramim” to music by **Shlomo Shai**. There are also other songs with Yehuda’s voice drawing us to the dance floor: “Sheleg Al Iri”, “Sham Harei Golan”, “Eich Af Ha’zman”, “Ha’kolot Shel Pireous”, “Korim Lanu Lalechet”, “Shir Ha’emek”, “Bat 60”, “Kotel Ha’mizrach”, “Shiri Li Kinneret”, “Shnei Shoshanim”, “Kan Badarom” and more.

Another CD is all songs to **Lea Emanuel’s** lyrics with music by **Manolo Kleinhaus**, **Nimrod Tene** and others. Among the songs, as mentioned, all to Lea’s lyrics and that are dances we dance to such as: “Ha’chinanit”, “Eichulim”, “Ze Hazemer”, “Debka La’emek”, “Bo’u Ve’Nashir”, “Bakramim”. Did you know to whose lyrics you are dancing to and to whose voice you are moving to in these dances? To her lyrics we also dance “Ahava Leilit”, “Mechol Ha’ohavim” and “Debka Or Chaim”.

Other recordings with Yehuda’s voice: “Od Nashuva El Nigun Atik”, “Zemer Shel Ahava” (medleys of songs in different dance genres: tango, pasodoble, waltz, rumba, and Arava songs, Canaanite medley, shepherds, Palmach, optimistic medley, “Zemer Lach”, “Shabechi Yerushalaim”, Chasidic, Hora) – dozens of songs on this CD. And on the CD “Ze Hazemer” there are numerous dances that greatly contribute to our folk dance.

Two CD’s are dedicated to Sephardic romances and Ladino poetry [piyyutim]: “Loven Ha’shoshana” and “Simta’ot Yerushalim”. The CD, “Loven Ha’shoshana”, is a wonderful collection of Ladino songs some of which have also become the basis for our folk dances.

And finally, Yehuda, from the height of your experience and age, what do you have to say about our folk dances today, the style, the lack of young people, the flood of new dances, about the choreographers and dance instructors/leaders?

“There is indeed a sharp turn in the whole subject. A complex set of steps, many without content. And there is also the phenomenon of dance duplication to the same song, which must be avoided. You must also respect the old dances and not reuse the same song. Once there was more meaning to the movements themselves and today it’s more about creating transient stimuli. Also, the multiplicity of dances creates a situation where every session becomes a world unto itself with specific dances; where is the national unity? In general, I think that each instructor and choreographer should have a main livelihood that is not related to dancing; it’s a healthy thing. As for the youth who stay away from the dance halls, I suggest organizing a creative consolidated arrangement, backed by appropriate resources and supported by municipalities in order to increase awareness of our folk dances and spread them among the youth and adults”.

“I also suggest initiating an instructional folk dance class on television where viewers will literally learn to dance. It will be a televised class (like cooking, cosmetics etc.)”.

“As for the flood of dances, I honestly think that one new dance every month is enough. There also should be a requirement to reintroduce an old dance, to preserve the good old heritage”.

"I love to sing and I also dedicated my singing to folk dance songs. In this way, I completed something in all directions – I not only create a dance, I teach it and sing it, and the lyrics are also a family production by my wife, Lea."



Maya Geva

Translation:

Shani Karni Aduculesi

KOMUNA



Young People Dance Israeli Culture

Every other day, a new dance session pops up. Every week, I hear about this dance session or another which has just opened. Everybody tries to market everything: nostalgia, regular dance sessions, women's sessions, sessions for those with special needs, and then I heard about "a different dance session": a session for young people only. "Young people" refers to ages between 20-40 years old. In the folk dance field today, this is considered young. Young people do not attend folk dance sessions, and if they do come, they are a small minority.

I wonder who thought of this idea and who really thinks that such a thing can be successful or last. It turns out that apparently such a dance session not only exists exclusively with young dancers with an average age of 24-33, but it has now been very successful for over a year.

I went to visit this dance session along with the editor, **Yaron Meishar**. We went to Jerusalem and met a charming

young woman, named **Hila Mukdasi**, who conceived of the idea and with hard work built this young session.

Hila, who is 28 years old, has a B.A. in Sociology-Anthropology and Linguistics from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, tells me that her romance with folk dancing began at the age of 8 thanks to her parents who also dance: "Since the folk dance world was always an essential part of my life, I also became very much involved in the dance sessions. It is a very unique cultural phenomenon, which keeps captivating me over and over again".

"At the age of 16, with the encouragement of veteran instructors, including **Avner Naim**, I completed the training course for folk dance instructors at the 'Wingate' extension in Jerusalem and ever since, Avner has put me center stage for years".

Also in a thesis for a seminar at the University, Hila wrote on the subject of "Identity in Folk Dancing". [As part of



Hila Mukdasi



"I chose to create a different branding to the dance session and that is why it is called – Komuna and not "The dance session of..." , because for me it is more than a dance session to which you come and go; it is a 'Community In Movement'" .

her research], she asked many participants in dance sessions, among them were dancers from abroad, what it is that attracts them to dance and the answers always revolved around "the need to be a part of something, a sense of belonging".

Where did the idea of "only young people" come from? Why this specifically?

Hila insisted that her idea was to give folk dancing a new concept, to create something from scratch: *"It was brewing in my mind for a long time; I had mixed feelings and deep inside of me I knew I would start a dance session but in a different form, not like anything out there today. [It would be] something with a message, something of value. In recent years, I noticed that there had been a decline in the number of young people attending dance sessions and I wanted to act on it and have an influence. At the university I had access to a core audience, a crowd of young students studying with me and I hoped that they would join hands with me to preserve folk dance"*.

How did you create this wonderful circle of young people?

At first, I was assisted by organizations which provide financial support to social initiatives such as "Ruach Chadasha" (New Spirit), which gave financial assistance to social initiatives in Jerusalem. At first, people were



"It was brewing in my mind for a long time; I had mixed feelings and deep inside of me I knew I would start a dance session but in a different form, not like anything out there today: something with a message, something of value".

skeptical, the same as when any new dance session opens; however, I was determined and decided that nothing would stand in my way. I looked outside the box; I saw the phenomenon as a whole and marked the gaps and needs from my perspective. I built lesson plans designed for young people with an understanding of what might be most suitable for them in terms of style and rhythm as someone who is also in this age group.

In addition, I chose to create a different branding to the dance session and that is why it is called –Komuna (a Co-Op / cooperative), and not "The dance session of...", because for me it is more than a dance session to which you come and go; it is a "Community In Movement", a circle of young people who are connected, who have something in common. I believed deeply in my idea and thank G-d it worked.

And indeed it works for her. "Komuna" was established in May 2017 and has existed for almost two years, with not a small group of young people who attend regularly, Strong connections have been created that have led them to meet outside the weekly sessions and some even join the workshops that Hila conducts abroad.



How do people hear of Komuna?

Friends. Word of mouth; someone saw a flyer; someone received a message through a WhatsApp group or Facebook. Slowly but surely they come.

Hila knows everyone by name and gives warm and personal attention to each and every one. With her, everything is calculated according to the concept of "a dance session for young people only". [This occurs in] her marketing to that age in her posters and advertisements; she allows free admission for exposure to events, dedicates an entire hour to the enrichment and integrating of new dancers; she creates collaborations and fights the stigma that folk dancing is only for "mature adults and the aged".



When I speak with the dancers, I discover the wonderful thing she has done: They had neither done folk dancing nor thought about folk dancing before! I naively thought that some of them had been exposed to the field, but that is not the case. The vast majority of them had never danced and do not have any background in dance. And this "does it" for Hila more than anything else – to know that someone has been exposed to a new unique world and to his own movement ability while strengthening their self-confidence and creating a basis for new friendships. That touched people.

One of the dancers who came from Bat-Yam tells me that she "comes here from time to

time because of the atmosphere". **Yair**, a young engineer who lives and works in Jerusalem, comes there and feels that the field of folk dance is being revived. He dances only at Hila's [sessions] like most of the young people here: "I received a message in the WhatsApp group for young people and decided to come. I came and was captivated. For years, I would see the dance sessions at Safra Square, but it didn't attract me".

He regularly comes to Hila's class: "The repertoire here is interesting, rhythmic, and there are young people my age. Now she also introduced couples dances and it is a platform to meet a nice partner".



I meet **Gabriel**, a new immigrant who comes [to the session] from Bnei-Brak, who is in the folk dance field and is studying at an Ulpan. **Mor** is a Master's Degree student who read about the harkada on Facebook in the Nachla'ot group. She personally contacted Hila and came: "Hila received me warmly and she gave me personal attention".

The group is unified and connected; during the break they chat, laugh and exchange experiences. Shiran, a social work student at the Hebrew University, happened to see Hila by chance at the open dance session she

leads on Fridays at Ha'tachana [The First Station] in Jerusalem [built in 1892 and it had served as the city's main transportation route]. Shachar, a political science student, says that, for him, the session is first of all friends, not only do they meet at the dance session but they go out and enjoy themselves on other nights too.

When I ask them if they attend other dance sessions, the answer is the same for them all. "It is fun to dance with young people of your own age", "I wouldn't go to a regular dance session with older people", "I am here because of the young people. I won't go to another session. Here I have a space which allows me to learn, to make mistakes and experiment with people my age and everybody here is helpful and teaches you".

The dance community consists of religious and non-religious people, and most importantly, there are men who dance here. [While] it is true that the number of women dancers is greater, there are still at least ten men who dance and to me, that is quite an achievement.

I notice that a lot of thought was invested in choosing the dances and the arrangements that are used in the session which is mostly circle dances. The music is contemporary; the arrangements are rhythmic and with remix versions; a lot of work is invested so that the dancers feel connected to the young atmosphere that suits them.

Here you can hear and dance to songs such as "Bi'mdinat Ha'gamadim – In the Land of the Dwarfs" alongside "Bat Shlomo – Solomon's Daughter", a surprising and interesting mixture filled with the shouts and hand clapping of the young people who are dancing.

And what would you do if an older person wanted to attend your session? I ask Hila the inevitable.

Hila answers that, if there are those who are not suitable for this age range, she politely mentions that this session is designed for specific ages in order to encourage young people to join folk dance sessions and she lovingly invites those who are interested to join her open dance session at the [Old] Train Station compound, Ha'tachana, in Jerusalem.

Will you create more Komunot across the country?

"Since the folk dance world was always an essential part of my life, I also became very much involved in the dance sessions. It is a very unique cultural phenomenon, which keeps captivating me over and over again".

It can definitely happen. Now that I have finished my degree, my aspiration is to invest the proper resources and to market Komuna more strongly, so that my vision to preserve folk dancing will be maximized in every way.

I watch Hila from the sidelines. There is no doubt she is talented, precise, with personal charm and high verbal ability. No wonder they flock to her. She creates something different, which does not exist

anywhere else. A special dance session for young people. It's a shame that there was no Komuna in my time...

Hila received "The Discovery of the Year" Award at the Ashdodance Festival [in 2018], for the Komuna Project (see Rokdim-Nirkoda, issue number 100). "It was a big surprise to me", she says, "I did not expect it. I knew that I had a significant achievement, but receiving recognition for my contribution is a great honor for me".

In addition to her activity with Komuna, Hila has been invited to teach at folk dance camps and workshops abroad. I have a feeling that this will not be the only article telling us about her over the next few years.

THE CITY OF MUNICH HONORS ISRAELI FOLK DANCE

It is rare that either a non-Jewish public authority or even a governmental body would be concerned about folk dance, not to mention specifically Israeli (or Jewish) folk dance. However, this is precisely what recently happened in Germany: On November 24, 2017, the Mayor of the City of Munich, **Mr. Dieter Reiter**, expressed gratitude and appreciation to the Israelisches Tanzhaus e.V. (Israeli Dance Club) [ITH, a registered charity] on the occasion of the association's 25th anniversary, for its contribution in nurturing folk dance, in this case, Israeli Folk Dance (IFD).

The certificate was presented to me by Deputy Mayor **Josef Schmid** in the Old Town Hall. Of course, as chairman of the ITH, I am pleased that as a result of the association's diligent work, IFD has been recognized as an integral part of Munich's cultural life.

Presumably, because of my age, I will not continue to serve for another twenty-five years and I am hoping to find either a worthy successor or perhaps a multi-headed committee, which will take on the task in the near future.

By the way, the Jewish Museum of Munich [Jüdisches Museum München], coincidentally operated by the City of Munich, offers a permanent exhibition which "presents insights into the history of the city and the culture of Munich – from a Jewish perspective". Inquiring whether it would be possible to find a place for the Tanzhaus in this museum, its curator, Ms. Jutta Fleckenstein, commented: "In the next few years, like other Jewish museums, we are planning a new permanent exhibition

to present new documentation in a larger space for the years after 1990". Ultimately, however, the director of the museum, Mr. Bernhard Purin, will decide if the ITH will be included. We certainly would be pleased to receive recognition from the Jewish Museum. In the meantime, after all, the ITH has become an integral part of Jewish culture in Munich – the certificate we received should suffice as proof.

Of course, we will keep you updated about any new developments on this subject.

Matti Goldschmidt,
Chairman





Matti Goldschmidt

Translated from German:
Debbie Nicol

July 2018: 20 Years of Machol Czechia¹

Dance camps in Europe? Although today the Continent plays host to a dozen or so multi-day events per year – Machol Finland, Machol Baltica and Machol Italia, to name just three – the first European Israeli dance camp was held in the summer of 1978, when **Maurice Stone**, founder of the Israeli Folk Dance Association IFDA (later the Israeli Folk Dance Institute IFDI-UK, now the Israeli Dance Institute IDI-UK), invited choreographer **Moshiko Halevy** to lead a five-day seminar in England. This dance seminar, later named Machol Europa, recently celebrated its 41st year. Of course, this idea wasn't entirely without precedent: a number of folk dance camps in the USA had already been running for a couple of decades at this point, although most put on an international, rather than strictly Israeli program. (Camp Blue Star in North Carolina, run by the Vienna-born **Fred Berk** for the first

time in 1961, was a notable exception to the rule.) For strictly Israeli dancing, however, **Maurice Stone's** camp was definitely a European "first", and set the wheels in motion. Five years later, Benny Assouline's Association Horaor began Mechol Hashalom in France, which as of now has been held for the 34th time. **Vincent Parodi** then followed suit in 1984 with his first five-day camp in Sylvanès (southern France), which in 1998 was moved to a former cloister in Yenne (Savoie). In 1993, nine years after Parodi's first camp, **Rik Knaepen** held his first Rokdim Choref ('Dancing in Winter') in Belgium, then as now featuring **Moshiko Halevy**. In 2001, the camp was shifted from shortly before Christmas to the (Christian) Ascension Day holiday weekend (a holiday which falls 39 days after Easter Sunday, always a few days before Shavuot), and its name changed to the now more appropriate Machol Aviv (Spring Dance) Weekend. In 1995, the Israelisches Tanzhaus in Munich first presented Machaneh Aviv (Spring Camp), later renamed Machol Germania, but better known by the name of the town where it is held, Pappenheim. Featuring **Yankel Levy** z"l that first year, it has to date been held a total of 23 times (a camp for beginners, Hora Sheleg, also run by the Israelisches Tanzhaus, has been held annually since 2007). In 2019, the 24th Machol Germania will feature ROKDIM website developer and markid/choreographer, **Tamir Scherzer**,

*Dance performance on Motze'i Shabbath.
Photo: Moshe Ben-Simon*



1. This article was published in German under the title, "Tanzen und Judentum: Israelische Tanz-Camps in Europa" (= Dancing and Judaism: Israeli Dance Camps in Europe) in the October 2018 issue of the monthly, "Jüdische Rundschau" [5 (2018), no. 10 (50), 30-31] with the subtitle "In the land of Kafka, Israeli folk dance is also becoming more and more popular".

"It doesn't matter what country you're from, what language you speak, how old you are, or whether you're male or female, a beginner or advanced: IFD connects people, that's why I love it."



A flash mob dancing in front of church Nanebevzetí P. Marie a sv. Václava re-erected in 1903 in the centre of Kralupy.
Photo: David Steiner

accompanied by **Hila Mukdasi** of Jerusalem's "Komuna". Finally, 1999 saw the launch of two eastern European camps: Machol Hungaria², organized by **Gyorgy Ubul Forgacs**, and featuring **Moshe Telem** and Machol Czechia, organized by **Ondrej Novak** and featuring **Boaz Cohen**. Both celebrated their 20th anniversary in 2018. Listing the other camps that followed would take up too much space here.

Strictly speaking, however, Machol Czechia actually started four years earlier. Back in autumn 1996, **Helena Divecká** (then Helena Rothová) and **Linda Kisová** (then Ledererová) began teaching Israeli folk dance in Prague, naming their new group, Besamim (Havdalah Spices). Just one year earlier, in 1995, both had attended the 18th Machol Europa in Bedford, England. Assigned to the beginners' group, they learned exactly 32 new dances during their two-week stay. Rothová and Ledererová's

2. See: "One Week of Machol Hungaria, a Summer Camp for Israeli Folk Dances in Hungary", published in German in 2006 under the title: "Eine Woche 'Machol Hungaria' – Ein Sommerlager zu Israelischen Tänzen in Ungarn", in *Jüdische Zeitung* 2 (2006), no. 6, 16.

travel expenses and camp fees were paid for by **Evan Z. Lazar**, an American attorney residing in Prague. The space for the weekly courses, held on Thursdays, was initially provided by the Drama Department of the Theatre Faculty within the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU) and later, the Jewish community of Prague together with Bejt Praha (Prague House) provided the space for the weekly Thursday courses. Bejt Praha was founded in autumn 1994 by Jewish residents of Prague on Lazar's initiative. It became a registered charity, and subsequently a member of the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic, in 1995.

In an interview at that time, **Helena Divecká** explained her commitment to the dance classes: "We thought it would be a good idea for people who had little or no previous contact with the Jewish community to ultimately find a Jewish identity through dancing". It wasn't long before up to thirty participants were turning up regularly for the weekly class. Building on this initially unexpected success, Rothová and Ledererová began to think about organizing their own multi-day weekend seminar. As a

nod to Machol Europa, they named their camp, Machol Czechia, and found the necessary premises – a dance hall – and sufficient accommodation in Lomnice (Lomnitz), a small town in Brno-Country District in the South Moravian Region approximately 35 km north-west of Brno (Brünn), the second-largest city in the Czech Republic. In early February 1997, under the dance direction of the author of this article, a group of about 30 exclusively Czech dancers were taught 26 dances which had been unfamiliar to practically all the participants including some more challenging choreographies such as Be'er BaSade (**Rivka Sturman**) and VaYinikehu (**Raya Spivak**), as well as three partner dances, one of which was Ge'ulim (**Yankele Levy**). The camp was met with such enthusiasm that the planning of a second Machol Czechia began even while the first was taking place. This second seminar was held just a few months later, in late June 1997, once again in Lomnice and under my direction. This time, the course was substantially more challenging, with the teaching of dances such as Rakdu Yechefim (**Shmulik Gov-Ari**) and Halevai Alai (**Moshiko Halevy**), both of which enjoyed great popularity outside of Israel.

Meanwhile, **Ondrej Novak** returned from a year's study in Israel where he had come into contact with Israeli folk dance for the first time, especially in Jerusalem, mainly at **Boaz Cohen's** and **Yoram Sasson's** weekly sessions. In 1998 he attended his first Machol Europa,

Group photo.

Photo: David Steiner



Circle dance.

Photo: Matti Goldschmidt

accompanied by five other Czechs (including both Rothová and Ledererová), and subsidized by the American Joint Distribution Committee.

Parallel to this, **Rothová** and **Ledererová** organized 'Machol Czechia III', held in the small Moravian town of Velké Opatovice (Groß Opatowitz), around 60 km north of Brno, and featuring **Moshe Telem**. Attendees now included participants from neighbouring Slovakia and Serbia (led by **Dina Dajč**), and now numbered around 70. When Rothová bowed out of the Prague organizing team for family reasons, Novak agreed to step in. In May 1999, he succeeded in persuading Boaz Cohen, who was already in Pappenheim, Germany as the guest teacher at Machol Germania, to extend his overseas stay and travel to the Czech Republic. There, one last time with the support of Rothová, they planned and immediately held a further round of Machol Czechia. Despite its three prior camps, the most recent of which had also been held in Velké Opatovice, Machol Czechia began its official numbering with this camp, i.e., the first one with **Boaz Cohen**, accompanied by [choreographer] **Gidi Eiko**. Whether or not the nine dances taught, among them, 'Manginat HaDror' (**Saadia Amishai**), were suited to the actual level of the group, it is now too long ago to say.

In September 1999, after his first trial run organizing multi-day seminars, **Novak** also took up the post of dance teacher in Prague. Moreover, he now had an entire year to plan another Machol Czechia. Above all, this meant securing a more suitable venue, which the organizers

thought they had found in a castle-like building in Roztěž, around 70 km east of Prague. In April 2000, Novak attended a weekend workshop with **Shlomo Maman**, hosted by the Israelisches Tanzhaus in Munich, where he successfully advertised Machol Czechia 2 (by the new count). In an interview he stated that he had succeeded in attracting about a dozen or so new participants from Germany. However, both the premises in Roztěž (Rostiesch), and more importantly, the lower quality of the meals, were a consistent cause for complaint. This led to a change in venue the following year, to Seč (Setsch), a town 120 km east of Prague and famous for its dam and reservoir, which hosted Machol Czechia for the next nine years. The now-established teaching team of **Boaz Cohen** and **Gidi Eiko** welcomed a third permanent member, **David Sabag** from Jerusalem who only recently passed away, and featured Moshiko Halevy in 2003. From 2009 to 2012, the small town of Třešť (Triesch), about 150 kilometers east of Prague, hosted Machol Czechia. This was followed in 2013 by another four years in Nymburk, a city in Central Bohemia only about 60 kilometers away from Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic and the center for Israeli dance in that country. Other dance teachers featured during this period, usually invited on a one-time basis, were **Moti Menachem**, **Nurit Melamed**, **Ilai Szpiezak** from Argentina, **Eran Bitton**, and from 2016 (as a permanent appointment replacing **David Sebag** z"l), **Eyal Ozeri**.

Around 1800, Třešť, a former German linguistic enclave in Bohemia, had a Jewish population of around 600, about 20% of the total population. **Franz Kafka** came to the town on a number of occasions between 1900 and 1907 to visit his uncle **Siegfried Löwy**, who was not only a doctor (who also treated Kafka), but was also reputed to be a pioneer of motorcycling. Kafka's short story "A Country Doctor" is probably based on various anecdotes from this time. The second floor of the synagogue houses



*Dance scene. From left to right: Katrin Behnke, Radka Svobodová, Markéta Jánková.
Photo: Matti Goldschmidt*

a small exhibition about Kafka and his uncle. As was already the case back in the beginnings of the camp in 1997, the Czech organizers were always at pains to find traces of Jewish life (mostly destroyed by the Nazis) in each town, or at least in the immediate vicinity, where Machol Czechia took place. A synagogue no longer in use, for example, or sometimes just a memorial stone at the site of a previously Jewish institution. The idea was not just to draw the attention of the Jewish camp attendees, who were in the minority, to their own roots, but to familiarize the non-Jewish participants, whether these were Christian friends of Israel or just people who simply enjoyed dancing, with the faint traces of the past.

Anyone who has ever peeked behind the scenes at the planning of a major dance camp knows that the average participant is unaware of just how much work is involved. The process never really becomes routine, since unforeseen stumbling blocks tend to occur, e.g., a certain source of subsidy dries up, the new caterer's cooking falls short of expectations, or there are not enough beds available in the tried-and-tested seminar venue. To ensure, among other things, orderly finances and accurate bookkeeping, Besamim became an officially recognized non-profit organization in 2002. What's more, for over

Anyone who has ever peeked behind the scenes at the planning of a major dance camp knows that the average participant is unaware of just how much work is involved

10 years now, **Novak** has been fortunate enough to be able to rely on the support of a permanent organizing team, including **Linda Kisová** (who was involved even before Novak), **Jana Mrláková**, **Milan Chatul Dvořák** and **David Steiner**. Not forgetting, of course, Novak's Slovakian born wife **Zuzana Kísaková** (Novaková since her marriage in 2005) and their two daughters, now six and ten, who always look forward to a new Machol Czechia. Without this support, the demands of Novak's regular full-time job as a trained sociologist working in marketing research would make the organization of such an event impossible.

The 20th (according to Novak's reckoning) Machol Czechia was held in July 2018 in Kralupy nad Vltavou, a small industrial town located on the Elbe just a few kilometres north of Prague, whose centre was almost completely destroyed during the German occupation in the Second World War when it was carpet-bombed by American forces. Of a former synagogue, for example, only the outer walls now remain; the interior has been completely renovated. The premises are now occupied by a pastry shop. Nor

*Machol Czechia has loads of young dancers: Kristýna Kovaříková.
Photo: Matti Goldschmidt*



does anything remain of what was once the shop of a certain **Zikmund Katz** on Žižková Street. Because of the much higher numbers of participants expected for the 20th anniversary, organizers were compelled to find a new venue with more available beds. The Sports Hotel appeared to be equipped to accommodate around 180 attendees, even though around a third of the participants were only present for half of the days. Some, for example, had to work Wednesdays and Thursdays and thus could only stay for the weekend, while others had to leave on Friday morning in order to arrive home before the start of the Sabbath. Despite this, the camp was completely sold out weeks in advance; there were simply no more beds available. Participants, of course, were not only from the Czech Republic itself, but also from other 'nearby' countries such as Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Switzerland and the UK. With nine additional attendees from Melbourne, Australia and a handful of Israelis, this year's Machol Czechia turned into a truly international event.

It is perhaps remarkable that Czech dance camps boast a relatively high proportion of young participants. For example, **Kristýna Kíki Kovaříková**, a 15-year-old, only started Israeli dancing just a year ago, simply "out of love for Israel", as she disarmingly puts it. Her group of around ten members in Brno regularly meets once a week. **Natalia Supíková** (21), who is studying social work in Olomouc (Olmütz), the sixth-largest town in the Czech Republic, has been involved in Israeli dancing for 11 years now. In her home town of Třinec, on the border with Poland, she has set up a dance group of her own with around 15 regular participants. For her, dancing means a necessary break from daily routines. She enjoys discovering the background of the dances and passing on this knowledge to her classes. "It doesn't matter what country you're from, what

language you speak, how old you are, or whether you're male or female, a beginner or advanced [dancer]: IFD connects people, that's why I love it." **Tereza Kazdová** (19) from Tisá near Ústí nad Labem (Aussig) in northern Czechia has been dancing for just under three years, and has not missed a single Machol Czechia since 2016. **Adéla Zacharová** (30), a physiotherapist from Jevíčko (Gewitsch), has been dancing for 11 years. She not only enjoys getting to know new people through dancing, but is also interested in Israel in general. **Tomáš Moravka** (30), from Bystřice nad Olší (Bistritz) in the far east of Czechia, works for the Czech State Railway and has been dancing for around two years. In addition to the fast dances and the many Mizrahi rhythms, he likes the lyrics of Israeli songs which have "a nearness to God". **Adam Oláh** (28), a social worker from Prague, began dancing 11 years ago and has been to Israel twice through dancing. He regularly meets once a week with around 15 others to practice the dances they have recently learned. Although he doesn't speak Hebrew, he understands several dozen words, just from the dance names.

Finally, **Markéta Jánská** (23), a pastry chef from Třebíč, has been dancing since the age of four. "I just love the Israeli music and the overall sense of belonging to the dance community. Most of all, I love the sound of the darbuka and I really like the Hebrew language". Particularly worthy of note is that in Třebíč special attention has been paid to the former Jewish quarter, which in 2003 was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site after undergoing a painstaking restoration process. Together with the town's Jewish cemetery, this is the first independent Jewish memorial outside of Israel which has been included in the list of UNESCO monuments. The fact that the current Jewish population of Třebíč is next to nil is, of course, another story. It's therefore hardly a surprise that the cozy and moderately priced 'Rachel' restaurant is Jewish in name only. A local dance group, 'Yocheved', established well over thirty years ago and with more than 25 members, specializes in exclusively Jewish-themed dances.

In total, **Cohen, Eiko** and **Ozeri** taught 25 dances over the four-day camp, rounded off by my own dance,

'Shacharut', named for a settlement 40 km north of Eilat and six kilometers west of Kibbutz Yotvata [on a ridge above the Arava valley]. On Saturday evening, 25 selected dancers also performed a stage choreography by Cohen. Petr Gros, who turned out to be a professional musician, then played for us, accompanied by his two daughters **Tabítha** and **Kesia Anna Grosová**. And of course there were the delicious cakes that for years now have marked the end of the camp. A very full program was consistently provided throughout. As is always the case with such events, "post-camp is pre-camp", i.e., no sooner is one camp over than the planning of the next one begins. Of course, apart from reaching the traditional age of majority, the 21st Machol Czechia won't be a 'milestone anniversary', but even so, Novak will already be busy with the organization of Machol Czechia 2019, with the dates set for July 24-28. In addition to the permanent team of **Cohen, Eiko** and **Ozeri**, this year's line-up will include **Michal Bachar** and **Yaron Ben-Simhon**. In conclusion, he'd like to explicitly thank Prague's Jewish community, which has provided both him and this project with financial support almost from the beginning, while not forgetting the loyal participants who come back year after year, thereby transforming Machol Czechia into what might almost be called a family affair. ✎

Participants ... were not only from the Czech Republic itself, but also from other 'nearby' countries such as Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Switzerland and the UK. With nine additional attendees from Melbourne, Australia and a handful of Israelis, this year's Machol Czechia turned into a truly international event

Shorashim 28 שורשים

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Israeli Dance - Where Is it Heading?

COMMENTS



Israel Yakovee
Translation:
Ruth Goodman

In my humble opinion, the discourse at Ashdodance 2018 and in the article published in "Rokdim-Nirkoda" [Issue #100] is just a "first step" on a very important subject. I read the article carefully and I found that there were points of view in the reactions of some of the writers that were consistent with my own.

I feel that there is room to continue the subject of "Israeli Folk Dance – Where Is It Heading" and it is important for me to see it from the point of view of the creators: **Moshiko Halevy, Saadia Amishai, Moshe Telem, Moshe Eskayo, Danny Uziel, Shlomo Bachar, Israel Yakovee, Naftaly Kadosh, Dani Dassa, Shmulik Gov-Ari** and others. Their opinions are very important here.

Dganit Rom said it well when she analyzed the subject in three areas that are actually the pillars of today's Israeli folk dance – the past, present, and future – and I will detail my opinion:

The Past

It was the Jews, in my case Yemenites, that lived in exile for 2000 years and who maintained Jewish tradition in religion, in song, and in dance. For example, **Barry Avidan** cites **Berel Katznelson**; in music [lists]: **Naomi Shemer, Moshe Wilensky, Sasha Argov, Dubi Seltzer, and Nahum Heiman**. This did not speak to me at all because I grew up in Sha'araim [the south end of

Rehovot, settled by Yemenites, which became known as Sha'araim].

I miss the mention of **Rabbi Shalom Shabazi, Tzion Golan, Shoshana Damari z"l, "Mocaa" [Shlomo Mocaa], Shlomo Dechyani**, and all the other singers who shaped who I am today.

The Present

Everything that has developed in Israel since the First Aliyah until today: **Gadi Bitton** explains that we are "stuck, or treading in place". It means that "there is nothing new under the sun"; naturally, today Gadi is the "leader" at all levels and he has done and still does great projects with a very innovative point of view in the field of folk dance. His actions have caused everyone to "copy" him because they want to be as successful as he is, also in creating new folk dances. He is correct and I cautioned that everyone copies from Gadi and there is no one to innovate or lead forward.

Gadi also disproves of the creators [choreographers] living abroad because "they do not experience the present, physically in the country". However, in his biography, Moshiko Halevy claims that the years he lived abroad were the most productive years of his life, in which he created, composed and produced his masterpieces.

Truthfully, I was not physically present in Israel when Chanan Yovel sang "Leil Chanayah" (lyrics by **Nathan Alterman**, music by **Yair Rosenblum**). And Gadi personally

The inspiration and images came from the fact that I forced myself to remain faithful to the original elements that I felt inside, within me, from which I had come, without letting the reality around me influence the creation of the dance.



seems to have been greatly influenced by the content of the song and the connection to the event that caused the song to be written and he created a dance that expresses his feelings in movement. On the other hand, even if I had been physically in the country, I would not have created a dance to this song because the song and style doesn't speak to me and I would not connect to the subject.

In contrast, at the same time, **Shmulik Gov-Ari** lives abroad and creates the dance, "Sh'ma Elohai" which tugged at my heartstrings and that of the entire world. (Song: "Ke She Halev Bocheh – When the Heart Weeps", Lyrics: **Yossi Gispan**, music by **Shmuel Elbaz**, sung by **Sarit Hadad**). The song was written following the lynching in Hebron.

Dani Dassa created "Bein Harei Hevron – Between the Mountains of Hebron", "Shedemati – My Field", "Joshua" and "Sa'eynu – Carry Us". His inspiration for creating the dances came from the Bible, while he physically resides abroad. But if we observe Dani Dassa dancing barefoot, the dances he created, he emphasizes his connection to the earth and the strength of the dance with each stamping step. The dances he created are today "inalienable assets", i.e., profound cultural assets in Israel and around the world.

Moshe Eskayo created a dance for the song, "Livavtini Achoti Kallah" with lyrics from the text of Shir Hashirim (Solomon's Song of Songs). **Shlomo Bachar** with his dances "Tefilah", "Shir Hashirim", and "Hashachar". **Danny Uziel** with his dances "At V'Ani" and Hanokdim". **Naftaly Kadosh** with dances such as "Ashir Lachem", "Zara", "Ahava Asura", and more... All these dances by each of these creators residing abroad have proven themselves and are now profound cultural assets in

Israel and abroad.

The truth is that Gadi is not the first to raise the issue of "creating dances abroad". **Yoav Ashriel** was one of those who boycotted any folk dance that was created abroad on the pretext that it was "not an Israeli dance" because it was not created [while the choreographer was] physically in Israel. Dances that were choreographed

abroad were not taught in any of the [hishtalmut] courses he sponsored. The late **Yankele Levy** circumvented this "boycott" and taught my dance, "Ahot Lanu Ktana", as a dance that he himself created ... Yoav later retracted and apologized.

I have a very clear answer for **Gadi Bitton** and **Yoav Ashriel**:

In my case (I want to believe also for the rest of the choreographers abroad), it worked "in reverse". I personally did not need any physical connection to the land on which I was residing, and at the time I said to Tirza Hodes at the hishtalmut [training course for Israeli folk dance instructors], with tears in my eyes: "Even if I were living on a gentle moon I would create and produce Yemenite dances because that was the fire that burned within me and required me to create something that speaks to my soul". In those days, I also wanted to narrow the gap between the Yemenite and Mizrachi [Middle Eastern] style in all the folk dances.

The very fact that I am far from the "mother's womb" – the family, the neighborhood, the Yemenite culture from which I came and grew up in – has made me concentrate more on the creation of Yemenite dances, which until then were not a sufficiently respectable part of our folk dance repertoire.

At that time, I did not have a good enough answer for **Yoav Ashriel** to prove to him that he was wrong, except to continue along the path I chose and also to come annually to Israel to teach my dances.

Today I can tell **Gadi Bitton** that with time, history will prove itself. I believe that Gadi recognizes this fact because to this day, he has only given me respect and appreciation for my contribution, every time that I visit him at a session or at Camp "Bitnua" in Eilat. Today, thank God, my dances have proven themselves and over time have become profound cultural assets in Israel and around the world.

There are those who believe that Michael Barzelai is the new spirit in Israeli folk dance who brings them out and pushes them forward. In my opinion, Michael has to do what **Gurit Kadman** and **Moshiko Halevy** did at the time when they tried to preserve folklore from the settlements of Yemenites, Moroccans, Arabs and Druze by

"Even if I were living on a gentle moon I would create and produce Yemenite dances because that was the fire that burned within me and required me to create something that speaks to my soul"



documenting and personally learning their rich culture from them.

Sara Levi-Tanai established the Inbal Dance Company in order to preserve Yemenite folklore and culture. That's what I did too and I do it with the same conviction. Accordingly, every young creative artist must first learn from the sources, from which they came – Moroccan, Yemenite, Georgian, etc., and

then come and create. This means to first go to learn from the source and absorb from there on the path forward.

The Future

In my opinion, there is a way to stop the “flood” of new folk dances which are now, on average, about 300 folk dances per year. You have to turn things around. Give one good song to 10 choreographers who have already acquired it, i.e., let them create a dance. And then convene a committee of “elders of the people” like **Moshiko** and **Yoav Ashriel**, two from the artistic side – musicians, and two more from an academy of artistic dance, and then, as before, the best dance will be promoted and learned at all the sessions. We have to stop the idea that every “Bastard is a King” and giving a seal of approval to the “veterans” who receive a stage with an online video on “Rokdim”. It should end immediately. What I suggested was a project that **Gadi Bitton** has to mount. He has the ability and the means to put it into action.

How do we move on, with all that we have drawn from the past, and move forward toward the next generation? True, **Shai Gottesman** said that, “the creative processes in all aspects of stage art are primarily (but not exclusively) a product of inspiration, a source of creativity...”

I also liked the approach of **Shuki Hoffman**, who said, “As a creator of Israeli Dance, I urge the younger generation to preserve the folklore alongside modern and contemporary dances”.

Oren Halaly: “Maintaining the identity of Israeli folk dance is very important to me”.

That's what I, **Israel Yakovee**, warned **Michael Barzelai**. When he presents a folk dance abroad, he is actually

the ambassador of a country. If he chooses a dance with instrumental music only, for example, a dance called “Ana Aref”, which is a good dance in itself with elements he sees, but the Jew or Israeli living and dancing abroad and who thirsts for dances he can identify with and especially for Hebrew songs, I believe he cannot identify with such a dance. **Michael Barzelai** can teach what he wants in Israel, but abroad he has a greater responsibility.

Hagit Zargari claims that “Israeli dance in all its varieties is recognized internationally. The Israeli dance scene is vibrant, kicking, developing...”. She is correct; I argue that music is the driving force in the creation of folk dances. It demonstrates and inspires an abundance of the nation's creativity. And she continues: “Here at Hora Yerushalayim there is an old and magnificent repertoire of ethnic dances for stage created by the top choreographers” and these are the profound cultural assets of today.

I really liked **Dganit Rom's** approach: “In any art it is important to preserve the past, touch the present of the society and at the same point in time, look forward”. I personally approached every dance creation from the perspective of “holy”. The inspiration and images came from the fact that I forced myself to remain faithful to the original elements that I felt inside, within me, from which I had come, without letting the reality around me influence the creation of the dance.

Dganit adds: “I believe that I must preserve Israeli folklore otherwise we will not know where we came from and where we are heading ...”. And “I make sure to use Israeli music...” **Lior Tavori** also claims that, “The music will always be in Hebrew”.

Shlomo Maman believes and says: “The choreographers have the obligation to dig search and thoroughly delve into Jewish sources, history, culture, our roots here in the Land of Israel, and in contemporary cultural characteristics and from them create folkloric dances”.

These quotes reinforce what I said, that in order to be inspired and be seen correctly, all other creators should do homework and go home to learn a bit more about their roots and heritage. Maybe from there they will absorb the material to create new folk dances.

Yaron Meishar Responds to Israel Yakovee's Statements

I am not the "commentator" of **Gadi Bitton**, but I understood other things from him. You write: "Gadi also disapproves of the choreographers who live abroad because they do not experience the present, physically in Israel". So, in my opinion, he does not rule out, but rather points to the outcome of what has been created abroad – as dances that don't connect as much to the Israeli experience. There is no dispute that the dances of the choreographers you mentioned were created with a lot of thought and from the depths of emotion and experience of each of them. Yet, it is very likely that if they and you both lived in Israel, the dances you create would turn out to be "a little" (maybe a lot) different.

"Those who have been living abroad for a long time have been influenced by a different way of life and culture and are already 'a bit different'. I would not want them to participate in the general elections for the Knesset".

Therefore, there is no negativity, not of dances that were created abroad, and not of the choreographers living abroad, but rather thinking that the distance from Israel and life in a different reality also creates a different attitude or a different interpretation of the music that is created in Israel and, therefore, what to do; Israeli authenticity is greater for those living in Israel.

The choreographers you named were all born in Israel and / or grew up there and lived there for many years. Those who have been living abroad for a long time have been influenced by a different way of life and culture and are already "a bit different". I would not want them to participate in the general elections for the Knesset, although they have the right to vote, unless the outcome is that they return and live here again.

There are others, good and beloved friends, who create "Israeli folk dances," but they never lived in Israel, some do not speak Hebrew and some never visited Israel. Some of the dances they have created are to non-Israeli music and the lyrics are not in Hebrew. Some of these dances never "made aliyah" to Israel and they are danced only abroad under the heading, "Israeli folk dances". Apparently this heading attracts an audience and brings in money.

I'm sure that everyone does it out of love for Israel and for our dances, but is that enough? Where is the boundary? What is it that makes a dance an "Israeli folk dance?"

The world today is a "great global village" and nevertheless, an "Israeli folk dance" created in the State of Israel by those who live here and experience the language, the culture, the holidays, the politics, the cost of living, the wars, etc., is much more authentic.

As for the documentation on the "Rokdim" website and the "Flood":

Your proposal for an "organizing committee" is unrealistic. It is technically impossible and ethically incorrect. The days of committees that decide for everyone have long since passed. You write that videos on the "Rokdim" website are responsible for the "Flood". Come on, really... the television weatherman shows the clouds, the approaching rain and says that there'll be rain; so, is he responsible for the rain falling?

Let's look at reality through our eyes: The truth is that the dance camps abroad are the biggest driving force for creating more and more new dances. Many dances are created in preparation for and for trips by the invited choreographers. Others look forward to the day when they will be invited abroad...

The videos on "Rokdim" do not determine that the dance has endured. Always on Facebook and YouTube there is a previous video that is accessible to everyone. The videos on "Rokdim" are the most accurate and have the best documentation for the dances and for the future. There is clear instruction (as much as possible), with demonstrations of the dance while giving credit to all the artists (singers, composers, lyricists) and not just the choreographer of the dance. "Rokdim" enables anyone in every corner of the globe to purchase the music to a dance, while paying for the rights to use it. Is there another place like this?

Are you perhaps suggesting that we not list the names of the dances and their details in the internet catalog? Or that we should not show YouTube videos on the site? Do you also suggest that there should not be any order?

LIBI

(My Heart)

About Yuval Maayan
Tabashi and his danceTranslation by Ruth Goodman and
Ruth Schoenberg

[Dances of Yuval Maayan
Tabashi](#)

Yuval Maayan Tabashi was born in 1986 in Pardes Hanna. He began his dance career with the dance troupe of the school, after he fell in love with one of the girls in the troupe. There Yuval discovered his love for dance, music and stage and he decided to include dance in his path in life.

At the age of 15, Yuval began to create dances for the stage and became a leader for troupes of children and youth. He later danced in dance troupes of choreographers **Shlomo Maman, Yonatan Karmon** and **Maayan Itzhaki**. He constantly appeared in numerous performances and festivals in Israel and abroad.

He did his military service as a combat medic in the Artillery Corps. After completing his military service, he studied and graduated with honors from The Dance Department (Choreography and Israeli Dance) of "The Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance" in Jerusalem. Between the years 2009-2011, he was artistic director of the Israeli Dance Center in London and choreographer for the dance company of the Jewish community of England – The Oranim Dance Troupe.

Between the years 2013-2016, he was an assistant to choreographer **Shlomo Maman**, from whom he learned a great deal about professional work with dance companies, production of performances and the creation of folk dances. Yuval works with dance companies in Israel and abroad, produces shows and also teaches and creates folk dances in many seminars around the world. His outstanding dances: "Hamalach Hagoel Oti – The Angel Who Has Delivered Me", "Libi – My Heart", "Mushlemet – Perfect", "Ha'Yechida – The Only One" and others.

About the dance "Libi" he says:

The dance "Libi" was created at the very moment that I first

heard the song. I dropped everything, put on headphones and set the steps. When I first heard the song it was very difficult to understand the words (apart from the word, 'libi – my heart), but something in the melody moved me and the steps seemed to come by themselves in a very short time.

As a choreographer who creates dances for the stage, I place great emphasis on hand movements because, in my eyes, you can dance with your legs but to express something in dance requires mostly the hands. I tried to give the dance steps Hasidic and Jewish style with movements of prayer, longing, holding a prayer book [siddur] and modesty. I am glad that the dance was accepted with love and many dancers, both in Israel and abroad, like the dance and are moved by it.

Libi ([Dance LIBI](#))**Dance:** Yuval Maayan Tabashi**Formation:** Circle; Structure: Three parts**Meter:** $\frac{3}{4}$ [waltz rhythm] each count notated represents one measure of three beats**Part A:** Face CCW, begin with R**Section 1**

- 1 Waltz step fwd: RLR.
 - 2 Step L fwd with right toes pointed behind L (first beat), hold (2 beats).
 - 3 Step R bwd, L to left side to face center, cross R over L.
 - 4 Facing center: Balance step with L (L to left, R behind L, L in place).
- 5-8 Repeat counts 1-4. (Section 1).

Section 2: Face Center

- 1 Full turn rt.: RLR moving fwd to end facing CCW.

- 2 Step L fwd, rock back on R, rock fwd on L.
 - 3-4 Repeat counts 1-2 (Section 2).
 - 5 Face center: Balance step: RLR (like a Yemenite step R – side, back, cross).
 - 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ turn left CCW on the line of the circle with three steps LRL to end facing CCW with L fwd.
 - 7 Facing CCW: Step R fwd lift L fwd with bent knee, hold.
 - 8 Yem. L bwd.
- Repeat Part A and end facing center.

Part B: Face Center

Section 1

- 1 Waltz step fwd: RLR toward center while raising arms upward.
- 2 Waltz step bwd: LRL while lowering arms.
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ turn rt. (CW) moving fwd toward the center of the circle with a waltz step RLR. (End with back toward center.)
- 4 Waltz step bwd: LRL.
- 5-8 Repeat the pattern of counts 1-4 moving out of center to end facing center.

Section 2

- 1 Wide step with R to rt. and hold with knee bent and arms extended sideways.
- 2 Drag L to cross L behind R, R to rt., cross L over R and face CCW.
- 3-4 Two waltz steps fwd: RLR, LRL, end facing center.

- 5-8 Repeat counts 1-4 (Section 2).

Repeat Part B

Part C: Face Center

Section 1

- 1-2 Start with elbows bent and hands at shoulder level, palms facing forward. While traveling, lower arms with palms down as you move on the circle line: Back mayim step: R to rt., L behind R, R to rt., L over R. Sway: R-L.
- 3-4 Repeat counts 1-2.

Section 2

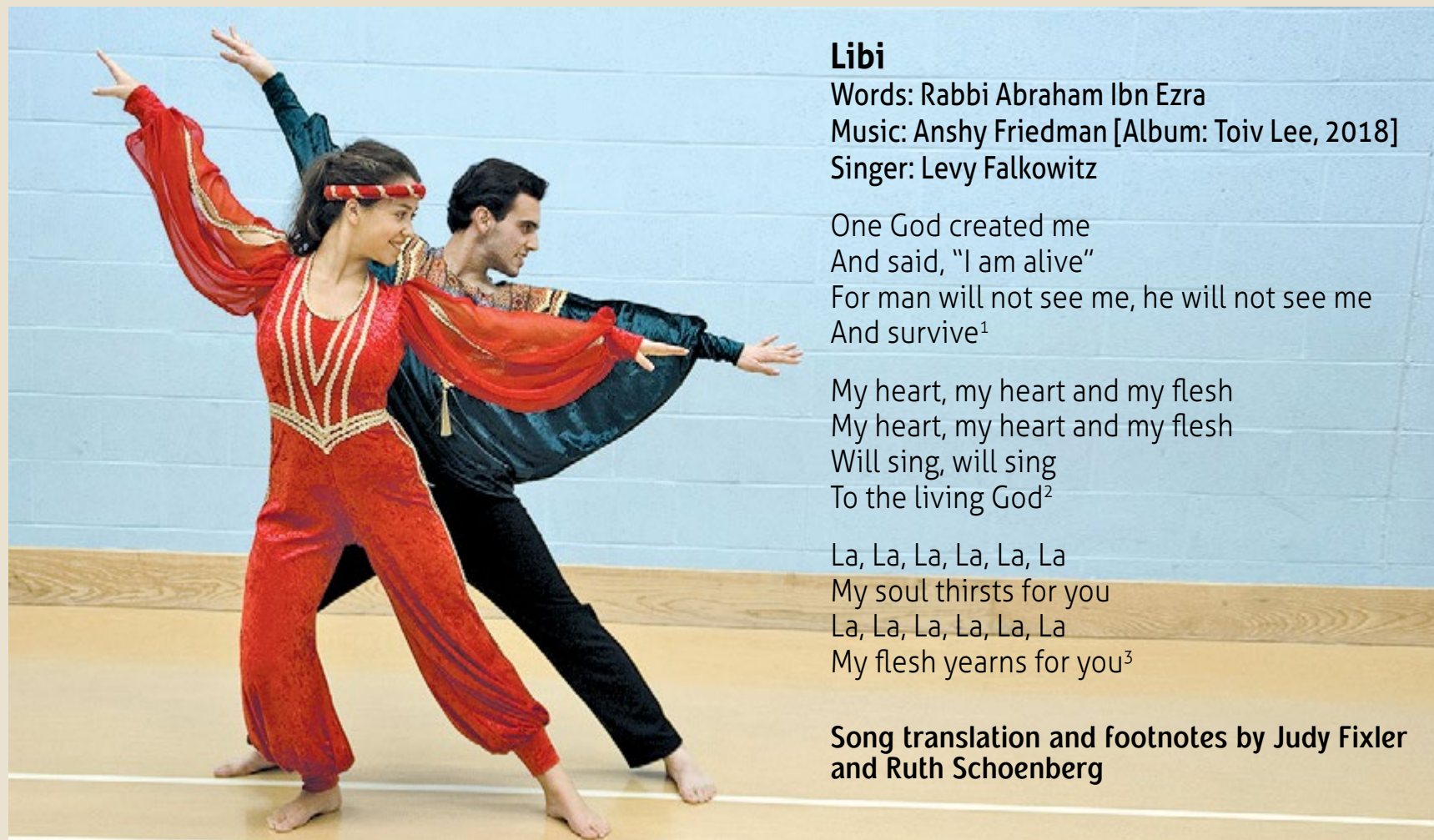
- 1 Face center: Cross R over L while bowing head toward left, step L bwd in place, R to rt. side.
- 2 Cross L over R while bowing head toward rt., step R bwd in place, L to left side.
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ turn rt. moving fwd toward center with a waltz step: RLR to end facing out of center.
- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ turn left moving fwd out of center toward the line circle with a waltz step: LRL to end facing center.

Repeat Part C

Repeat the entire dance from the beginning.

Ending: Step R fwd toward the center of the circle while looking upward and raising arms fwd and upward.

Dance notation by Ruth Goodman



Libi

Words: Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra

Music: Anshy Friedman [Album: Toiv Lee, 2018]

Singer: Levy Falkowitz

One God created me
And said, "I am alive"
For man will not see me, he will not see me
And survive¹

My heart, my heart and my flesh
My heart, my heart and my flesh
Will sing, will sing
To the living God²

La, La, La, La, La, La
My soul thirsts for you
La, La, La, La, La, La
My flesh yearns for you³

Song translation and footnotes by Judy Fixler
and Ruth Schoenberg

1. This paragraph is from the poem/song, "Tzma Nafshi", by Ibn Ezra.

2. Piyyut by Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra was written as an "optional" piyyut for the prayer of Nishmat on Shemini Atzeret. Nowadays, the custom of singing piyyut on Shemini Atzeret is preserved only among the Jewish community of Babylon. Moroccan Jews sing the piyyut when singing the requests of Parashat Chayei Sarah. In the Ashkenazic communities the piyyut is one of the Friday night songs/zmirot.

3. Nigun, "Tzama Lach Nafshi" by Shneur Zalman Brockovich, founder and first Rebbe of Chabad.



Alex's Experiences

Alex Huber documents important Israeli folk dance events with his camera

Folk Dancing in Haifa with Elad Perl

Elad began to dance at the age of 15, in the various dance sessions in the Haifa area. At the age of 16, he joined the Haifa-based IFD dance troupe with whom he performed abroad and at the Karmiel Dance Festival. He began his career as a dance instructor in a neighborhood group that he opened at the community center in Neve David, Haifa. Before going to the Army Elad got his IFD instructor's certificate from Tel Aviv University

For the past 13 years, 3 evenings a week, Elad has been leading dance sessions in the city of Haifa, making sure to combine new dances, old and middle of the way dances. Leading sessions to a varied group dancers of all ages. He demonstrates couples dancing with his wife, Danit, a lawyer by profession, and is accompanied by other family members who take part in preparing the session.

On Sundays, at the University of Haifa, a combined session of circles and couples, with an emphasis on the first hour, designed to integrate new dancers.

On Tuesdays at the youth building in Neveh-David, in a circles only session, dancing is very varied. New dances are taught every week, alongside older dances, thus expanding the dance repertoire with the Haifa audience.

On Thursdays he holds a large regional session at the Technion Of Haifa. This is one of the oldest sessions in Haifa that was passed down through several old time Markidim like Bentzi Tiram. It's a session of circles and couples with dancers of all ages dancing side by side. The repertoire is very varied, with a selection of new dances alongside old ones, and interesting selections of unique dances that are not always done in other sessions.

[Elad Perl Dances](#)



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החוויות של אלכס

אלכס הובר מתעד במצלמתו את האירועים החשובים של ריקודי העם



ריקודי עם בחיפה עם אלעד פרל



אלעד החל לרקוד בגיל 15, בהרקדות השונות באזור חיפה. בהיותו בן 16 הצטרף ללהקת המחול הייצוגית של חיפה איתה הופיע בחו"ל ובפסטיבל כרמיאל. בגיל 17 החל את דרכו כמדריך ריקודי עם, בחוג שכונתי שפתח במרכז הקהילתי בנוה דוד, חיפה. לפני גיוסו לצבא הצטרף לקורס המדריכים לריקודי עם של אוניברסיטת תל אביב ובסיומו קיבל את תעודת המדריך.

מזה 13 שנים, בשלושה ערבים בשבוע, אלעד מקיים הרקדות בעיר חיפה, מקפיד לשלב ריקודים חדשים, ישנים ואמצע הדרך, ומרקיז מגוון רחב מאד של רוקדים בגילאים שונים. הוא מדגים את ריקודי הזוגות עם אשתו דנית, עורכת דין במקצועה, ומלווה בבני משפחה נוספים שלוקחים חלק בהכנת הערב.

בימי ראשון, באוניברסיטת חיפה, הרקדה משולבת של מעגלים וזוגות, תוך דגש על שעה ראשונה שמיועדת להשתלבות של רקדנים חדשים.

בימי שלישי בבניין הנוער בנוה דוד. הרקדת מעגלים מגוונת מאד. בה נלמדים מדי שבוע ריקודים חדשים, לצד ריקודים ותיקים ובכך מרחיב את רפרטואר הריקודים אצל הקהל החיפאי.

בימי חמישי הרקדה אזונית גדולה בטכניון. הרקדה משולבת של מעגלים וזוגות בה רוקדים מכל הגילאים צעירים ובוגרים זה לצד זה בהרקדה דינאמית וסוחפת.





הפסטיבל הבינלאומי למחול אשדוד 8-11.7

אשדוד-אנט

הופעות מקוריות וחד פעמיות עם מיטב האמנים



מזל טוב
 השמחות שלנו...
9.7.2019
 יום שלישי | 21:30 | אמפי אשדוד

הפקת מקור

קצוות
 עולמות מוזיקליים על במה אחת
11.7.2019
 יום חמישי | 21:30 | אמפי אשדוד

הפקת מקור