

רוקדים

מגזין לריקודי עם ומחול

NIRKODA



עמותת ארגון המדריכים
והיוצרים לריקודי עם



Vol 103 | May 2020

In The Light of Memories

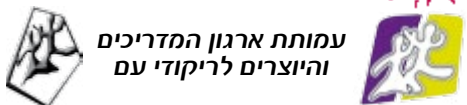


Yonatan Karmon
July 28 1931
February 6 2020

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NIRKODA



Vol. No. 103 | May 2020
To Receive This Issue Please Press **VIP**

■ Publisher:

"Rokdim-Nirkoda" – Rokdim in association with the Israeli Dance Institute Inc. (IDI), U.S.A., Robert Levine, President, Ted Comet, Chairman

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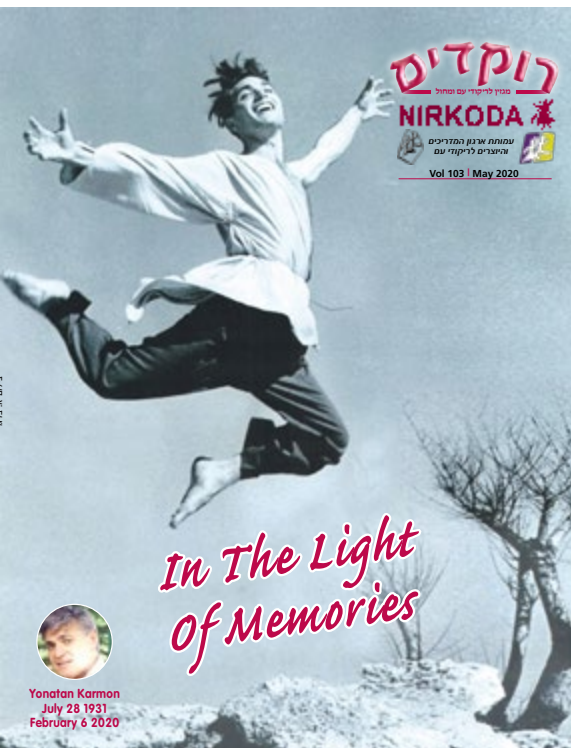
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Dear Readers,

This issue is entirely devoted to the man who molded Israeli folk dance for the stage and who greatly influenced the dances done in dance sessions (harkadot).

In recent years, we, the editors of "Rokdim-Nirkoda" magazine, have decided to interview and present articles about important and significant people who have shaped and influenced Israeli folk dance in the early years of the country (State of Israel). **Yonatan** is of course, is one of the most notable of them.

Therefore, in November 2019, I called Yonatan in Paris and asked that our reporter, **Miri Krymolowski**, who was supposed arrive in Paris, interview him for our magazine. "Not about today's activities", I said, "but rather about your place in the history and development of Israeli folk dance from the 1940s to the beginning of the 21st century.

No doubt there is much to hear from him, I thought.

Yonatan happily agreed and asked me to call him when he arrives in Israel at the beginning of January 2020, and we scheduled a time to meet for an interview at the café that was next to his house in Tel Aviv...The meeting did not take place...I received word that Yonatan was no longer with us.

During the funeral I thought about the interview that did not take place and also about the efforts that were made for Yonatan to receive the Israel Prize which were not successful. Perhaps it is appropriate that we, those who enjoyed his creativity and his personality share with the Israeli dance public in Israel and throughout the world, the experiences and the stories about Yonatan and Lehakat Karmon.

I contacted close to 50 dancers, choreographers and friends and the result is here in front of you in stories and photographs. Many were enthusiastic about the idea and joined the mission. We were exposed to interesting and fascinating stories... and hope that through this magazine you will be fascinated by them as well.

"Lehakat Karmon" is not just the name of a dance troupe, it is an "Israeli cultural brand".

A short video dedicated with love to Yonatan Karmon z"l: <https://bit.ly/2UoVpcX>

Something from the modest commemoration 30 days after his death ("shloshim"): <http://bit.ly/32YA6D1>

Many thanks to all the participants in this magazine:

[Alon Schmidt](#), [Miri Krymolowski](#), [Tzipora Dagan](#), [Shosh Hodorov](#), [Itamar Zukerman](#), [Tzlila Harizman](#), [Ofra Fuchs Manor](#), [Nira Paz](#), [Drora Alon](#), [Danny Uziel](#), [Bat-Tzion Mizrahi](#), [Shosh Leket](#), [Rina Meir](#), [Yoni Carr](#), [Ronit Ronen-Tamir](#), [Lucy Maman](#), [Roni Siman Tov](#), [Miri Shahaf Levi](#), [Tamar Sebok](#), [Hila Amir](#), [Yossi Tal-Gan](#), [Adi Eldar](#), [Levia Shalev-Fisher](#), [Shlomo Maman](#), [Barry Avidan](#), [Izhar Cohen](#), [Shuki Hoffman](#), [Zeev Keren](#), [Yitzchak Maayan](#), [Gadi Bitton](#), [Ilana Segev](#), [Michal Linenberg](#), [Lior Tavori](#), [Alon Schmidt](#), [Yigal Betzer](#).

Links to [dance videos](#).

Enjoy your reading,

Yaron Meishar, Ruth Goodman, Danny Uziel – Editors



Yaron Meishar



Ruth Goodman



Danny Uziel



Yonatan Karmon

The Man And The Creation

FROM THE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ISRAEL PRIZE

Yonatan Karmon was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1931 with the name **Yonel Kalman**, to his parents, **Marcello and Silvia Kalman**. When he was 13, his parents were taken to the labor camps and he managed to escape from the claws of the Nazis on the Kastner rescue train.

In 1944, he immigrated to Israel with "Aliyat Hanoar" – the Youth Aliyah and moved to "Meshek HaPoalot" in Tel Aviv to study agriculture and then to "Ayanot", where he specialized in dairy farming.

His life was intertwined with the history of the Land of Israel: the working settlement, the Palmach, the "Dalia" Festival, the establishment of Israeli folk dance troupes, representation throughout the world, producing historic events over the years from 1944 and performing in them.

Yonatan was invited to artistically conduct and direct nature festivals and other holiday celebrations in the working settlements: at Sha'ar HaNegev, Tzor'a, Shoval, Nir Banim, Ramat HaShofet, Palmachim. These performances were examples and masterpieces, as they expressed the pioneering spirit, which was so characteristic of the early settlement of the country and has been a source of emulation for many years. The holidays in Israel have been glorified in the folk dance as a source of authentic Israeli expression.

Yonatan Karmon's activities in the 1950s:

He created a choreography for the show to inaugurate the instillation of the national pipeline in Rosh Ha'Ayin directed by **Peter Frey**.

He performed as a soloist in HaPortzim Battalion and choreographed for Lehakat "Harel" of the Palmach directed by Rivka Shturman.

In the IDF he served in the Artillery Battalion but continued to dance and perform with Lehakat "Harel" of the Palmach, which was a folk dance troupe. Yonatan did not give up on developing his professional side; he trained and was part of the Israeli ballet troupe of **Gertrud Kraus**, participated in performances by the Israeli Opera and **Naomi Aleskovsky's** Chamber Quartet.

From the mid-1950s, Yonatan established dance troupes around the country for which he directed and composed choreographies, all in the spirit of time and place. His work is unique and special with a folkloric direction from which he built artistic lines, intelligently, with talent, imagination and creativity, combining a story that is illustrated with every step and movement. His dances are filled with sweeping, bursting energy that uses space, captivates and excites the dancers and spectators alike.

Karmon's troupes were numerous and exquisite: Lehakat "Alumim" of the Gadna in Petach Tikva, Lehakat "HaPoel Tel Aviv" Lehakat "HaStudentim Shel Yerushalayim" and "HaLehaka HaMerkazit Shel HaHistadrut" (which became "Lehakat Karmon").

At the fourth "Dalia Festival" in 1958, the



Alon Schmidt

dancer and manager of
Lehakat Karmon – the
Karmon Troupe

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai



Alon Schmidt



Histadrut's main troupe appeared in the choreography of **Yonatan Karmon** and was the crowning highlight of the festival. It was already possible to discern the distinctive talent of Karmon as a unique creator who combines art, professionalism, theatrical and folk, and embedded in all that is the essence of the Israeli dance of yore, which is still so relevant and exciting even today.

The Lehaka was considered Israel's best cultural ambassador in those days:

1958 – In nationwide auditions (see **Itamar Zukerman's** article in this issue) **Ed Sullivan** chose the renowned Lehakat Karmon to appear on his prestigious television show. Thus, the troupe embarks on a long and comprehensive tour on behalf of the Zionist Congress.

These shows in the United States opened the door for Yonatan for performances at prestigious Broadway professional venues, Radio City, New York's Palace Theater, Valentine, and more.

The Lehaka continued to perform throughout the world as Israel's ambassador, with the songs arranged by **Gil Aldema**, winner of the 2004 Israel Prize for Israeli songs who also managed the orchestra. A number of record albums were produced as part of the joint work of Gil and Yonatan, recordings that became an inalienable asset and was groundbreaking for the culture of Israeli song.

At the conclusion of the tour abroad, the Lehaka returned to Israel and performed for a year at "Tarnegol HaZahav" – the Golden Rooster Club.

Bruno Coquatrix, manager of the Olympia Theater in Paris, booked an Israeli performance by Lehakat Karmon. The Lehaka performed on the Olympia stage every evening for more than three months straight.

Following Karmon's success with performances at the Olympia Hall in Paris, **Bruno Coquatrix** offered him the role of artistic director of Olympia, a role he held for several years during which time he also made sure to present the best Israeli artists on this stage.

The performances included some of the best veteran artists in the country, as well as new "stars".

From the early 1960s to the late 1980s Lehakat Karmon represented Israel on the world's best stages: The Lehaka performed at the Olympia in Paris (for three consecutive months), throughout Europe, on Broadway in New York and throughout the United States, in South and Central America and in South Africa. The performances were very successful and ran for long periods of time.

From 1967 to 1974, **Yonatan Karmon** staged musicals that invoked the atmosphere of Israel. In these musicals, Yonatan used his unique choreographies drawn from folk dance. They revealed beautiful Israel, including her problems and contemporaneous events. The success was huge. The audience voted with their feet and the halls were filled to capacity.



Lehakat Karmon at the "Olympia"

Alon Schmidt



Yonatan receives the French Culture Award from Bruno Coquatrix

At the beginning of the 80s, Karmon founded "Lehakat Yerushalayim", which he managed for three years and produced three programs and the musical "David" – a biblical opera presented at the Sultan's Pool in Jerusalem.

Yonatan Karmon continued to pursue activities in which he believed:

- He staged performances in Israel with various artists and dance troupes performing in Israel. Among them, the show "Shorashim" 1983 – a world conference of North African immigrants held at Bloomfield Stadium.
- "Yerushalayim Tamid" 1991 – A tribute to Jerusalem on the occasion of the Independence Day Celebrations at the Jerusalem University Stadium.
- He established Israeli folk dance troupes for Jewish communities throughout the world, as part of a program to bring them closer to Israel and to Israeli culture.

In 1988, **Yonatan Karmon** initiated the Karmiel Dance Festival and was its artistic director for twelve years. Yonatan has created a unique festival of its kind in the world, drawing upon folk dance, but one that exposes the dancers and spectators to different types of dance: modern, classical, jazz, ethnic and others.

Yonatan Karmon's vision, his creativity, his professionalism, his being uncompromising, shaped the character of the Karmiel Festival and made it the focus of mass attraction and one of the most important festivals in the State of Israel.

In the mid-1990s, Yonatan founded "Amutat Karmon" – The Karmon Association (formerly Amutat



Yosef Ve'Echav (Joseph And His Brothers)

Ami) alongside the Lehaka, which established a platform aimed at encouraging talents from neighborhoods and development towns and training a generation of young choreographers.

From the works of Lehakat Karmon:

- "Dance for the Fifty Years of the State", a show representing Israel in Lisbon as part of the EXPO as a mission for Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- The two performances: "Yearning for the Beautiful Land of Israel," and "Being Captivated By You" presented throughout the country.
- Participated in the opera "Othello" which was staged in Caesarea.

During his years of work, Karmon became one of the most prominent figures in Israeli culture. He created his own unique Israeli dance style, raised generations of dancers and choreographers, worked in collaboration with Israeli musicians

His life was intertwined with the history of the Land of Israel: the working settlement, the Palmach, the "Dalia" Festival, the establishment of Israeli folk dance troupes, representation of Israel throughout the world

Alon Schmidt

It was already possible to discern the distinctive talent of Karmon as a unique creator who combines art, professionalism, theatrical and folk, and embedded in all that is the essence of the Israeli dance of yore, which is still so relevant and exciting even today.



Yonatan Karmon and Rivka Shturman



Rehearsals for the Karmiel Festival



Collage comprised of programs and photographs from the Grand Music Hall of Israel, 1967



and artists who grew within Israeli culture and experience, from the various aliyot (immigrations) to the present day. He brought the essence of Israel to the wider world and thus made his mark on Israeli culture and dance, and channeled its way from folk art to sweeping professional dance art.

From his works that became inalienable assets:

Hava Netze B'Machol • Shibolet Basadeh • Yamin U'Smol • Haro'a Haktana • Rikud HaDayagim • Chatuna Chassidit • Rechavia Shel Az • Arba Onot • Gozi Li • B'Ginzey Teiman • Magash HaKesef • Esh Be'Harim • David • Yosef Ve'Echav and more.

The musicals he directed:

"The New Music Hall of Israel" • "The Grand Music Hall of Israel" • "To Live Another Summer, To Pass Another Winter" • The opera "David".

The best Israeli artists who passed under his baton:

The singers: **Shoshana Damari** z"l, **Yaffa Yarkoni** z"l, **Mike Brant** z"l, **Arik Lavie** z"l, **Boaz Sharabi, Ilan and Ilanit, Ran and Nama, Riki Gal, Rivka Raz** and more.

The writers and musicians with whom he worked: **Haim Hefer, Ehud Manor** z"l, **Naomi Shemer** z"l, **Sasha Argov** z"l, **Yitzhak Graziani** z"l, **David Kribushe, Gil Aldema** z"l, and others.

Awards and Honors:

An award from the "Yisrael Hayafa" – Beautiful Israel Association • Honorary Citizen of the city of Karmiel • The Jerusalem municipality's Honorary Citizen For Dance • French Government Award for his contribution to French culture • Key to the City of Brussels • Key to the City of Los Angeles • The Education Minister's Prize for the year 2005 for a lifetime achievement in the field of dance • Landau Prize for the Performing Arts 2008 • Emmy Award 2016 • The Arik Einstein prize for veteran artists 2016.



Miri Krymolowski
art historian, explores
culture in Israel and
around the world

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

The “Karmonic” Language And Spirit



Is there an Israeli dance? Is there a local character to Israeli folk dance? What makes our folk dance Israeli dance?

These and similar questions have been asked for many years by scholars, academics and the general public. It is known to all that the people of Israel were gathered from all over the globe. Did the arrival of Jews from Europe, Africa, America and Asia produce something in common? Something that can be identified as local? Is the local Arab and Druze population, with all their nuances, also part of this common identity? What is their impact on Israeli dance?

When I think of **Yonatan Karmon** and especially about the work of this talented choreographer, all those questions and wondering come up again.

Yonatan Karmon immigrated to Israel from Romania in 1944, a 13-year-old who left his home and escaped on the children's train from Nazi Europe. He left behind his family and home (also see **Ofer Aderet's** obituary in “Haaretz”, February 14, 2020), together with his brother, to an unfamiliar country, with a very different culture.

Upon arriving in Israel, Yonatan gave up his European identity almost completely when he deleted his previous name, **Yonel Kalman** and became **Yonatan Karmon**. An important point in formulating his identity as an Israeli choreographer, not only because he lives and works in this place (Israel), but with a genuine desire to be an Israeli, to belong; so too was born the desire to create something unique to this place (Israel).

How do you define Israeli dance? I’m unworthy. Although I have written about Israeli dance for Kol Yisrael for 20 years and from time to time for this magazine – “Rokdim-Nirkoda”, I find it difficult to define the local dance. Is the fact that most of the dances for the stage and especially

the folk dances are choreographed to Hebrew music and lyrics? Of course not!

What is an “Israeli step” in the country in which a Romanian step sequence for a Hora (from the Romanian Hora), the Yemenite step, and even the Debka step from the Arab dance have infiltrated into the dances? – Apparently there is none, and yet if I ask myself who do I think is the “most Israeli” choreographer we’ve had, I would certainly think of Karmon.

First, there is the “Karmonic Spirit” – enthusiastic, joyous and sometimes even stormy. Karmon's dances are easy to identify: he has a “dance language.” In art – nothing is more important than a unique “language” and a beautiful thing for all creators in the various art fields: theater, music, plastic arts [e.g. sculpture and ceramics] and of course, dance.



Marcello and Silvia Kalman, and their children (from left): Bibi (Abraham), Yonatan, Yuli and Antonica.

Karmon made sure to choose songs and motifs that tell the story of Israel and its people.

Miri Krymolowsky

Karmon's dances are, for the most part, energy-filled dances, rhythmic and full of the joy of dancing. If anything can be said about what makes it "Israeli" then there are the qualities – enthusiastic, happy and yes... even a little arrogant. Yes, yes, there is a certain "shvitz" in Karmon's dance, which means: "I'm here, you can't ignore me". What typified Karmon was a strong presence intertwined with a recognizable aspect of elegance.

Upon arriving in Israel, Karmon studied dance with **Gertrud Kraus**, **Mia Arbatova** and **Rina Nikova**. This classical foundation is found in his works even though it is not apparent to an "unprofessional eye". It is there, and it is that special combination between the freedom of folk and the classical that makes his works unique.



Anyone who looked at this handsome man, with his sparkling eyes, his captivating smile, and his gorgeous locks of hair, would definitely say that this is a typical "Sabra". Despite his being European by origin, he possessed the aura of a Sabra – a native Israel. His dances reflected both.

Perhaps the need for an Israeli spirit adds something that in our time is not considered "politically correct". The intention is that Karmon loved and wanted beautiful dancers in his troupe. When I once asked him who, in his opinion, was "a dancer"? He replied: "A dancer needs to look good. As the singer's tool is his voice, so the dancer's tool is his body."

It is not clear whether an "overweight" dancer



"My stamp" – the stamp of the Israel Postal Company dedicated to **Yonatan Karmon**

could fit into Karmon's troupe, but surely Karmon's dancers had shapely and aesthetically pleasing bodies. In particular, Karmon was careful to maintain the body and, in this regard, of course, the worldview of classical ballet was continued.

He also emphasized eye contact between the dancers. In particular, this relationship is of course noticeable in the partner dances. For example, in the dance "Elem VeSusato" the dancers look like "riders" on a horse. In the second part of the dance the "riders" move away from each other, but they still look at each other from a distance and then join and turn together and walk together. The gaze is very important in this dance, giving it the feeling of a strong relationship even in the sections where they dance (the riders) separately. In the dance "Me'Emek LeGiva" (the song's title is "Shtu Ha'Adarim", lyrics: **Alexander Pen**, music: **Nachum Nardi**), a similar structure can be seen although the movement is different. The couple is wrapped together and maintains eye contact even when the man releases his grip. In the next section the man "chases" the woman as she looks at him while running.

In fact, Karmon's dances currently danced by the public (<http://bit.ly/331cttz>) are part of the dance medleys he created for the stage and they "came down" to the dance floors, after their adaptation to dance classes (primarily by **Danny Uziel**) and are indeed "inalienable assets". Let's look at three more:

Miri Krymolowsky

There's the "Karmonic Spirit" – enthusiastic, joyous and sometimes even stormy. Karmon's dances are easy to identify; he has a "dance language".

The most Israeli dance in my mind, and on a personal note, one of my favorites is "Haro'a Haktana" ("Haroa Haktana Min Hagai"), created in 1955 with lyrics by **Rafael Eliaz**, music by **Moshe Wilensky**. First, there the beauty of the dance in its simplicity. Almost all of the dance is built on the same "basic steps" – jumping on two feet and immediately on one foot, alternating right and left. When the dancers enter the center of the circle it is again with the same steps. This repetition, in various formats, is indeed reminiscent of a sheep that grazes in the pasture but also of the young shepherd who hops after it. In addition, there is the "Karmonic style" of raising arms that accompanies the action and enthusiasm for this motion.

Another important choreography, this time in the form of a partner dance, is "Orcha Bamidbar" or as it is popularly known, "Yamin U'Smol" (1954, lyrics by **Ya'akov Fichman**, music by **David Zahavi**). Karmon chose steps that were bending and low to the earth, the desert land. The steps seem to be wearily "carried away" like a man "carrying" himself in the desert in the heavy heat. A brushing step and then big, wide movements,

a kind of "slow motion" that is possible in the heavy heat of the desert (as opposed to short, fast and jumping movements). A beautiful motif of the kneeling couple while turning their knees, like the Bedouin kneeling in the desert.

"Shibolet Basadeh" (words and music by **Matityahu Shelem**), is one more of the dances associated with Israeli folk dance. This dance features two of the most "fundamental steps" associated with the "Karmonic Language" – alternating between jumping on two feet and one foot ("Haro'a Haktana", "Nad Ilan"), and "scissors kicks back" ("Al Tira", "Haro'a Haktana", "Elem VeSusato", "Me'Emek LeGiva") – this time it is danced in couples and is accompanied by arm movements that simulate sheaves of wheat moving in the wind. These examples prove Karmon's special view of the Israeli landscapes and the people within.

Karmon made sure to choose songs and motifs that tell the story of this country and its people and perhaps just as importantly, a loving look at this place that has been his home for many years.

Yonatan Karmon will be very much missed in Israeli folk dance and I will also personally miss him. 🙌



Tzipora Dagan

one of the first Israeli folk dance instructors in pre-State Israel

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

With Yonatan In The 1940s

I met **Yonatan** in the first courses for folk dance instructors held in pre-State Israel in the mid 1940s. Yonatan stood out with his unique dance style. Some said about him: "his dance is Romanian and does not match the Israeli spirit".

There was something special about the way that Yonatan danced, and it was nice to dance with him. **Rivka Shturman** used to say: "Every nation has a song and dance tradition that is passed down from generation to generation. The immigrants to Israel brought their folk dance traditions from their countries. But today it is time for us to have songs and dances with the spirit of our emerging country".

Indeed, Yonatan knew how to draw the beauty and uniqueness of the dances that were brought from the world's countries and to integrate them with the folk dance style that had just begun to



evolve in Israel. In his own way, he combined artistic dance with folk dance. He was an artist in his soul and contributed a great deal to the dance culture that developed in Israel and the Israeli folk dances that represented, spread and presented Israel to the world at large – much because of Yonatan.

Thank you very much Yonatan. May his memory be a blessing. 🙌



Shosh Hodorov
dancer

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

The "Alumim" of the Lehaka

Petach Tikva was very lucky to have **Yonatan Karmon**. It was from Petach Tikva that the exposure to Karmon's dance style originated.

In the early 1950s, in 1952, Lehakat HaGadna (Lehakat Alumim) was formed. **Elu Gutman** was the commanding officer. They wanted to give the youth something interesting and purposeful. At the age of 15-17, we were young, fresh, energetic and full of joy.

Yonatan was 23 years old at the beginning of his career, and Elu contacted him to come and direct us. We were all captivated by his charm, handsome movie star looks, great charisma and talent.

For about two years Yonatan taught us the entire "Torah". We learned new techniques and ballet, we danced "from the corner", we discovered a new world. There were rehearsals and performances from which Yonatan created "folk dances" with us like "Haro'a Haktana", "Al Tira", "Yamin U'Smol", "Mazurka" and many more. With time, all of these became folk dances for everyone – Israeli folk dances.

We admired him, loved him and danced for hours. We started at Beit HaHistadrut in Hapoel Hall and afterwards, at Beit HaNoar HaOved in Brenda and in Yad Lebanim. Friday afternoons into the night and Saturday all day – were our dancing days. Everyone who passed by outside and watched us, marveled at our determination and joy of life.

Yonatan had an ideal partner for the creation of dances, his first accordionist, **Dudik Hodorov**. Dudik had a rhythm in his playing that really bounced the dancers and perfectly matched Yonatan's rhythm and rhythmic dance styles. The great **Farag** photographed us. **Shmulik Zemach** was the coordinator of the troupe and the commander from the army was Elu.

Yonatan did everything, He planned, wrote, taught. We were like one big family, not just a performing troupe. Everyone helped as well as they could. The mother of one of the dancers sewed the costumes. We got ready for the first evening with two hours of dancing and singing.

Before the big evening, Yonatan became ill and spent the night at the house of one of the girls

and her mother treated him with a Yemenite soup.

Saturday night, August 30, 1954, was a milestone for the Lehaka for which we had been preparing for a long time. "Heichal" Hall was filled to capacity.

The evening was dedicated to Israeli dance with folk dances depicting Israeli life, experiences of the ethnic groups, Yemenite, Bukharian Slavic and Israeli holidays. We had a wonderful singer – **Mazal Shmor** together with **Hillel** and **Aviva**. It was an astonishing performance. The hall was packed and the newspapers were full of praise. It was a novelty: an entire evening of dancing and singing... Yonatan always said that it was his apex.

We performed everywhere, at all the important events of that time, in front of guests from abroad, officers, presidents, closed military events, immigrant communities, even in elections. A very important show was at the state celebration of Mekorot on July 20, 1955 for the "opening of the Yarkon-Negev national pipeline". It was a very impressive ceremony with government ministers, ambassadors from all over the world and Zionist lobbyists. The Folk Dance Section of the Arts Department at the Histadrut organized a dance conference. There were three conferences in November 1954 during Chol Hamoed Sukkot – in the North in Degania Aleph, in the Center of the country in Emek Chefer and in the South in Gvar'am.

Tirza Hodes wrote in a newspaper: "I do not intend to analyze the performance of every troupe, but I must emphasize the grandeur and beauty of 'Lehakat Alumim' from Petach Tikva, who accompanied us at all three of our conferences and surprised us all with the fresh spirit, in a performance that was cohesive and pleasant".

After Lehakat "Alumim", HaLehaka HaMerkazit of



Shosh Hodorov with Yonatan on the program of the Dalia Festival, 1958



Dudik and Shosh Hodorov with Yonatan Karmon

Shosh Hodorov

*Lehakat Alumim*

the Histadrut was established under the direction of Yonatan, of course.

The First Lehakat Karmon

On August 29, 1958, at Beit Tzionei America, auditions were held for a performance on the **Ed Sullivan** television show in the United States. **Ed Sullivan** came to Israel to select Israeli artists to perform on his show and then embark on a "coast to coast" tour for the United Jewish Appeal and other Jewish organizations.

Yonatan chose a group of boys and girls and sent us to the audition. The newspaper wrote that the dance troupe was the highlight of the evening. Of course, they chose us to represent Israel. This is how "Lehakat Karmon" was born.

The original plan did not include the troupe, but **Ed Sullivan** was so enthusiastic about us that he decided to invite us separately and signed a separate contract in which he would serve as manager. All the expenses were paid from his pocket. He stated that Yonatan had created his own style which demonstrated the simple charm and atmosphere created by the dances.

Yonatan, typically, took care of everything to the last detail. **Leah Fletcher** taught us manners and etiquette. They took us to the Arcadia Hotel for a gala dinner according to all the ceremonial rules. Maskit, [the national fashion symbol established by **Ruth Dayan**, then wife of **Moshe Dayan**], donated the proper dresses and high heeled shoes.

On November 2, 1958, in front of 50 million viewers, **Ed Sullivan** said: "This graceful, fresh and cheerful young group, Lehakat Karmon will be a sensation throughout America and


beyond". Indeed, it was. There were performances from coast to coast to show the Jewish communities and the general population the achievements of Israel in the arts. We appeared before all the Americans in Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington and more. The delegation stayed for about two weeks at each place. We made one appearance at each location. Accompanying us were **Itzhak Perlman** (violinist), **Ran and Nama** (singers) and others.

*Lehakat Karmon with Danny Kaye*

Israel was at the height of her popularity. We saw musicals at the beginning of their runs such as "West Side Story". We met backstage with famous artists, movie stars like **Danny Kaye** and **Esther Williams**, politicians and many important people.

After the tour with the delegation, Lehakat Karmon remained in the United States for additional performances. **Gedalia Shiva** was the organizer and manager and he took care of the shows. We were invited to one of the secret places in the city and our hosts were **Eddie Fisher** and **Elizabeth Taylor** who had kept their relationship a secret. We were an excellent and coherent group and we did everything together. Dudik and I were the only married couple, but with time, new couples were created: **Rochele Tasman** met **Dov Lautman**, **Odeda** with **Hovav Kruvi**, **Rochke and Kugel**, **Leah and Gavri Levi**. All of these couples remained together.

Yonatan then released his first record album produced by **Fred Hellerman** and **Gil Aldema**. The album was very successful and sold well in both the United States and Israel.

We lived in America for six months. We were on top: parties, receptions. This trip paved the way for all troupes that followed. We were able to come to the United States and perform in front of 50 million people thanks to **Yonatan Kamron**. 

Rehearsal with Yonatan

"HaLehaka HaMerkazit" and "Lehakat Karmon"



Itamar Zukerman
dancer

Translation:
Alex Huber

In 1956, a dance troupe of dancers from all over Israel – towns, kibbutzim and moshavim – was established. Naturally, most of the dancers were members of youth movements, and lovers of Israeli song and dance.

This group was called "HaLehaka HaMerkazit of the Histadrut" and it was led by **Yonatan Karmon**. Yonatan choreographed all the dances for the troupe. He was inspired by folk and holiday dances that were danced in kibbutzim, and also based upon modern and classical dance in which he was trained.

The troupe was formed with the aim of establishing a "National Troupe" to represent the State of Israel around the world as well as to perform at Histadrut and state events around Israel. It was supported by the Education Department of the Histadrut and the Dance Department headed by **Tirza Hodes**. In order to create the troupe, auditions were held at Beit Lessin in Tel Aviv. Of the dozens of dancers who came to the auditions from across Israel, 12 couples were selected. The dancers were tested

in dance ability and mastery of Israeli folk dances. Some of the dancers were familiar with Yonatan from his work with troupes such as "Alumim Petach Tikva" and "Hapoel Tel Aviv".

It was a troupe of wonderful dancers who performed in many venues throughout Israel. When I say "venue," I mean not only the local air-conditioned Heichal HaTarbut, but every type of stage around the country whether concrete, linoleum or rough wooden planks filled with spikes that hurt the dancers' bare feet.

The young dancers came every weekend, from all over the country, to grueling rehearsals at Beit Lessin in Tel Aviv, where they trained in a variety of dance routines that Karmon created. They also practiced a lot to improve their personal ability and technique.

The troupe performed at the Dalia Dance Festival in 1958, which was also the tenth anniversary of the State of Israel. Troupe members slept in tents, yet the joy of dance and life was at its peak. Although we were the best troupe in Israel and at the Dalia Dance Festival, the manager of the



*The first troupe at the winners ceremony with Ed Sullivan, 1958.
In the center: 13 year old violinist, Itzhak Perlman.*

Itamar Zukerman



Lehakat Karmon With Harry Belafonte in New York



Lehakat Karmon with Esther Williams in New York, 1958

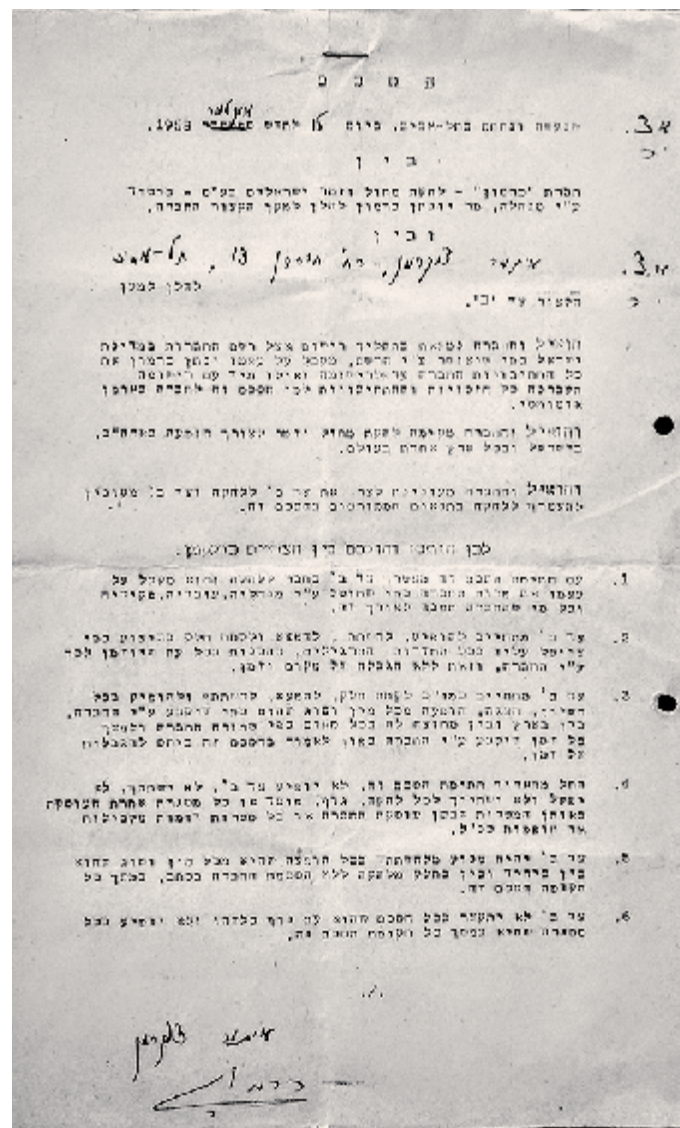
Histadrut Education Department claimed that the troupe was not yet ready to perform abroad. That is when the troupe posed with a sign, cynically written, near the tent in the picture from the festival.



The cover of Lehakat Karmon's first album

In 1958, the plan was that the troupe, together with Lehakat HaStudentim from Jerusalem, would represent Israel in Turkey. Everything was ready for the trip, but the day before departure, the trip was cancelled due to political reasons (probably due to the crisis that occurred after the Sinai war).

The next day we, 6-7 frustrated troupe members, sat at a cafe in Tel Aviv and came up with the idea to enter the



The Contract of the Dancers Cooperative

competition held at the American Zionist House in Tel Aviv in order to bring Israeli culture to the United States. The competition was organized by the ZOA – the Zionist Organization of America that was established in 1897 to promote relations with Israel. Among its leaders were **Louis Brandeis**, **Abba Hillel Silver**, **Samuel Wise**, and others. The purpose of the competition was to find Israeli artists to perform on the famous **Ed Sullivan Show**. In the initial publicity for the competition, it was stated that they will choose 5 types of performances and a total of 8 artists.

In spite of this limitation, we called Yonatan and raised the idea of quickly forming a troupe of five couples, with Yonatan's guidance and participation. Yonatan was enthusiastic about the idea. We started rehearsals and entered the competition at the American Zionist House, under the name "Lehakat Karmon".

The bottom line was that **Ed Sullivan**, who was

Itamar Zukerman



Dalia Dance Festival, 1958. From right: Yosi Ben Shitrit, Uri Shauli, Avraham Kugel, Chamba, Itamar Zukerman, Gavri Levi and Yonatan Gabay.



Standing from right: Avraham Kugel, Chamba, Yonatan Gabay. Bottom from right: Uri Shauli, Yosi Ben Shitrit, Itamar Zukerman.

present at the competition, became enthusiastic about the troupe that won first place and decided to have it perform on his program. In the delegation with us were also the violinist **Itzhak Perlman**, who was 13 years old at the time, the vocalists **Ran and Nama**, the silhouette artist **Natan Almozolino**, the contortionist **Naomi** and the piano duo, **Bracha Eden** and **Alexander Tamir**.

The Lehaka left for the United States in October 1958 and performed nationwide for six months. Lehakat Karmon had additional performances on the **Ed Sullivan** show.

After this Karmon Troupe, Yonatan established many troupes that have grown in the number of dancers and have performed across the country and around the world.

On their first voyage in the United States, Lehakat Karmon released their first record album, which was followed by additional records. The story of "Lehakat Karmon" became widely known in the history of Israeli dance.

As a member of Karmon's first troupe, I would like to point out the fairness in his decision to build this first troupe as a cooperative (see photo) so that the troupe's revenue would be shared among the members.

I had the honor and privilege to dance for many more years in the various Karmon troupes. These were wonderful periods in my life. 



Wine dance medley



Rikud HaDayagim (Dance of the Fishermen) – HaLehaka HaMerkazit



Rikud Ro'im (Shepherds Dance) – Halehaka HaMerkazit

The next day we, 6-7 frustrated troupe members, sat at a cafe in Tel Aviv and came up with the idea to enter the competition held at the American Zionist House in Tel Aviv in order to bring Israeli culture to the United States.



Tzlila Harizman
(formerly Rahat)
dancer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

*He brought
in the
wide, fast
movements,
flying in the
air, the turns,
the lifts off
the floor.*

The Spirit Of Youth That Lives Within

Someone wrote here that each of us has our own Yonatan. This is so true, because each of us was once young and during that time, if you liked to dance, you wanted to be in Yonatan's dance troupe.

There are those among us who are still young (of course, at least in relation to me). I met **Yonatan Karmon** in 1952. I think that, at that time, his name was still **Yonatan Kalman**. We met at the auditions for an Israeli folk dance performing group that was being arranged for a fundraising tour to the United States because, at the time, Israel was just three years old and needed donations from the United States. **Tirza Hodes** was the one who introduced us.

Both of us, Yonatan and I, laughed secretly. "What kind of folk dances can we perform"? Because, in those long ago and innocent days, what did we dance then? For hours in circles, we danced – "Hora" (a dance, I believe that came from Romania); we danced Cherkessiya Aruka; Shavtem Mayim Besason – Drawing water in gladness... (Mayim, Mayim). In partners, we danced Krakowiak, Polka, and some kind of waltz (perhaps Alexandrovsky – **Y.M.**) and that was it. That was more or less the repertoire in those days.

In those days, a number of creative individuals in Israel decided to create folk dances to suit us, the residents of Israel and the pioneering spirit. In honor of the troupe they wanted to form, all the auditionees were taught a new dance with the words: "Simchu Na, Simchu Na U'firku Ha'Ol – Be joyous please, be joyous please, and unload the burden" (not **Yonatan Gabay's** dance that is familiar to us today – **Y.M.**) and a few other dances that someone had choreographed, for example, **Gurit Kadman's** dance: "Lanu Hakoach La'avod Velismoach – We have the power to work and rejoice" ... in short, the group never came to be because there was actually no material to perform.

A year later, there were auditionees from all over the country for a group that they wanted to establish and send to the 4th World Festival of Youth and Students, 1953, held in Bucharest, Romania (yes, there was such a thing). Yonatan and many others


(myself included), passed the audition and joined the same troupe.

For several months we were in a training camp. The choreographer was **Zev Havatzelet**. He was the first to begin to break out of the customary framework of those days and provide an artistic perspective. It was a beautiful and exciting performance and from those years a wonderful friendship developed between me and Yonatan and later on, also with Shuki.

I joined the army and Yonatan began as a choreographer with Lehakat Hapoel Tel Aviv and also with Lehakat Alumim in Petach Tikva. He asked me to come and give them some dance technique lessons to improve their ability. It was there that I first met **Shosh Hodorov, Yaelka Drori, Gavri Levi** and many others who later joined HaLehaka HaMerkazit – "The Central Troupe", established by the Histadrut with Yonatan as the choreographer.

In these groups, I saw how creative Yonatan was in his thinking and abilities compared to what used to be in those days. He brought in the wide, fast movements, flying in the air, the turns, the lifts off the floor. His artistic choreographies were so special and different with a variety of distinctive melodies, on many different themes.

Yonatan combined dances from various ethnic groups, with the original melodies, and created new steps choreographed for his dances, so that they eventually also became folk dances that everyone danced. He also designed and made many of the wonderful costumes for his groups, tested which colors look better on the stage, and thus he greatly influenced the style of dance that developed thanks to him.

This was at the beginning, and when [David] **Ben Gurion** instructed those who represented Israel abroad to change their diasporic names to Israeli names [Hebraization of surnames], **Yonatan Kalman** became **Yonatan Karmon** and as such he will be remembered for his tremendous, wonderful, and bold contributions. The spirit of youth that has lived throughout all these years – will stay with us forever. 

Yonatan, Me and Ehud



Ofra Fuchs Manor
dancer and singer

Translation:
Dina Matmon

He demanded a lot from us and he fought to achieve what was, in his eyes, right for the dances he choreographed.

I have only good memories from the three years that I danced in **Yonatan Karmon's** Troupe.

I met him when my sister **Edna** and I went to the auditions he held for the troupe. Both of us were dancers with **Mia Arbatova's** dance troupe where we learned classical ballet from the age of 12 and I even continued and performed as a dancer in the Israel Opera for three years. Yonatan was very pleased to have girls with a background in classical ballet, and we were immediately accepted to the troupe.

When rehearsals began, I discovered a new world, the world of Israeli folk dance. And I discovered the man, **Yonatan Karmon**, charismatic, good looking, a wonderful dancer and choreographer. We watched him create his dances and they gave us great inspiration. An amazing man. I fell in love with him right away and became deeply involved.

I was 17 years old and we started to travel around the world. There's no place that we didn't get to – all of Europe, South Africa, South America and we even filmed a movie in Munich, Germany for the local television station.

We performed with **Gilbert Bécaud**, **Yves Montaigne**, **Ed Sullivan** as well as in television performances with **Jacques Brel** in France. At a show in London with **Yves Montaigne**, something embarrassing happened. Yonatan and I both fell on the stage during our solo. Yonatan immediately stood up and apologized in his Romanian accented English and said that we would start the dance again from the beginning. This was graciously accepted.

Yonatan was a very creative choreographer. He demanded a lot from us and he fought to achieve what was, in his eyes, right for the dances he choreographed. His choice of songs for which he created his dances was interesting. Through him, important composers and arrangers of Israeli music made it to stages all over the world.

Over the years, his creations changed, and spanned into different directions. Yonatan loved the theater and here his connection with me was significant as I came from a home in the theater world. My father, **Yehuda Fuchs** and my mother, **Mina Fuchs** were among the founders of the "Zirah" Theater.

The dances that Yonatan created became increasingly theatrical and meaningful, and I was occasionally asked to recite text during the dance. During that period, **Chanita Zahavi** and I were the troupe's singers.


My last performance with the troupe was on Broadway where we received rave reviews and from there we parted. I remained to study theater and I was a singer at the "Sabra" Club in New York. There I met my future husband, **Ehud Manor**, who wrote his first songs for me to record. When we returned to Israel, I introduced Ehud to Yonatan and they clicked immediately. They started to work together and Ehud moderated performances by Yonatan at the Karmiel Festival where he was the artistic director.

In 1999, Yonatan conceived of a wonderful idea for the opening performance based on The Twelve Tribes of Israel. Ehud wrote 12 special songs for this performance and the final number was "Shevet Achim" to music composed by **Kobi Oshrat**. The other melodies were by other musicians and the songs were performed by 12 Israeli singers in Mediterranean style. The choreographies were by 12 artists from the Israeli dance world and were performed by 12 Israeli troupes. Yonatan choreographed the dances for the opening and the closing of the festival.

Today, we are in the process of writing a musical play with the 12 songs from that same performance. How sad it is for me that Yonatan won't be able to choreograph the dances.

It's important for me to emphasize the contribution of **Shuki Spector**, Yonatan's partner, who supported, advised, helped and was always there for him for 40 years.

I miss Yonatan. I love him and admire him. His contribution to our tiny country is tremendous.

May his memory be for a blessing. 



Ofra and Yonatan performing in South Africa

My Yonatan



Nira Paz
dancer

Translation:
Alex Huber

My life was intertwined with Yonatan's for over 70 years ...

Dance connected us! Yonatan's passion for dancing made him leave the kibbutz that he came to as a refugee and move to Tel Aviv where he lived in Meshek HaPoalot. Since I lived in the area, we used to meet on the way to **Gertrud Kraus'** studio and we walked back together. We both danced in Gertrud's troupe. You could say that "we grew up together".

In the early 1950s, I was a dancer in Yonatan's troupe during the ceremonies for the opening of the Yarkon-Negev waterline. It was an historic event in the presence of 20,000 people.

Yonatan popularized rikudei-am (Israeli folk dance) for the masses while establishing a vibrant Israeli image that was accessible to the entire world.

Today, when I see the nation of Israel dancing, I see **Yonatan Karmon**.

Over the years we never really separated. Even though our careers took us in different directions, our paths crossed again and again.




Yonatan and Nira with Shuki Spector (Yonatan's partner) and Aryeh Posner (Nira's husband)

In the 1960s, Yonatan staged a colossal Israeli production at Radio City Music Hall, in New York. I had the privilege to dance at that event. The excitement was at its peak! The show was performed four times a day for a month in front of 6,000 people at each performance. This demonstrated the Israeli spirit at its best. Yonatan was a superstar!

Even though my dance style is classical, Yonatan found a way to also integrate me on the Karmiel Dance Festival stage.

Yonatan was always part of the family, in New York as well as in Israel. At endless dinners with Yonatan and **Shuki**, we enjoyed evenings with stories of his adventures around the world. When they left, we always regretted not recording these stories.

There will never be another Yonatan.

With love. 

***"Today,
when I see
the nation
of Israel
dancing,
I see Yonatan
Karmon".***

From The Histadrut To Independence



Drora Alon
dancer and
choreographer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

In 1957, nationwide competitions were held for Israeli folk dancers, in advance of the Moscow Democratic Youth Festival. About 500-700 dancers came to the auditions, but behind the scenes, it was told that five couples had already been selected, without auditioning, from the main group of the Histadrut, under **Yonatan Karmon's** direction... and that they were looking for only five additional couples.

That was the first time I heard Karmon's name. I passed the auditions and went on the trip which was a wonderful experience.

When I left the kibbutz, I joined HaLehaka HaMerkazit under Yonatan's direction. At the Dalia Dance Conference in 1958, I had two positions: one – as a dancer in his Lehaka and the other – as director and choreographer of Lehakat Yinon HaTeimanit.

For a long time, Yonatan was promised by those in charge at the Histadrut that the Lehaka under his direction would be representing Israel abroad and this did not happen. Yonatan decided to be independent and established the first Karmon Troupe – Lehakat Karmon!

Most of the dancers from HaLehaka HaMerkazit joined the new Lehaka and traveled to the United States. I did not go with the first ensemble, I preferred to study, but we remained in constant contact (including correspondence).

When I finished my studies, I joined Yonatan's Lehaka (I think it was the third ensemble, during




the years 1960-1961). The beginning of the journey was in Greece with the first week in Athens. The press was initially full of praise and the halls were full, but then they were completely empty, and the producer announced that, much to her regret, she cannot host the Lehaka any longer...

The Lehaka had contracts signed elsewhere in Europe, on later dates, and was debating whether to return to Israel for a short time, or what?...

Having no choice, an agreement was made with the "Mediterranean Club" that the Lehaka would perform in the clubs – each club for a week, with one performance in each of the four clubs: in Cefalù and Palinuro in Italy, Aegon and Corfu in Greece. We had a crazy time.

The rest of the journey in Europe was very successful. In Paris I, with sorrow and joy, separated from the Lehaka before its departure to South Africa because I was called to train teachers at Seminar HaKibbutzim. Yonatan and I remained friends and corresponded for years. From a distance, and with love, I have been following the changing ensembles of Lehakat Karmon, and he was always happy and supportive of my professional transformations.

May his memory be a blessing. 



Yonatan decided to be independent and established the first Karmon Troupe – Lehakat Karmon!



Danny Uziel

dancer, choreographer,
teacher and session
leader

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

He molded me as a dancer with the passion to enjoy dancing and to spread the joyful, energetic spirit that defined him.

From the Suites on the Stage to the Dancing Halls

I met **Yonatan Karmon** in the mid 1950's at Café Kassit in Tel Aviv. In those days, **Yoav** and **Mira Ashriel** were the choreographers of the Hapoel Tel Aviv performing group in which I was a dancer. When we met Karmon at Kassit, Yonatan was beginning to organize a group comprised of the best dancers in Israel. That group became HaLehaka HaMerkazit (The Central Performing Troupe) of the Misrad LeChinuch Ve'Tarbut (Department of Education and Culture) of the Histadrut, which was then under the direction of **Tirza Hodes**.

Yonatan asked me to join the Lehaka and I was delighted to accept his invitation. I will never forget my first rehearsal. During the warm ups, the group was doing classical ballet chaînés turns (quick spinning turns on both feet) from corner to corner of the room. The trained dancers were comfortable with spotting so they didn't lose their balance, but those of us without the classical ballet training ended up all over the room! With time, Yonatan brought us to the level where we were able to execute the turns comfortably.

This was one of his great talents – he was able to recognize the raw ability of natural dancers without the trained technique and bring them to a high level of performance without losing their inherent sense of dance, i.e., Yonatan was able to blend technical and natural qualities in his dancers that created a uniquely spontaneous spirit that captivated audiences.

Whether we came from a professional or amateur background, he expected us to rehearse as professionals and to focus on his every move. To emphasize this point, when Yonatan introduced

"Ha'Ro'a Ha'Ktana" as part of a Shepherd Dance Suite, one of the dancers asked Yonatan, "Which foot do we start with"? Yonatan replied, "Sit down" and he then asked for another dancer to take his place stating that "If you want to dance with us, you need to know how to follow my movements".

In the late 1950s, a lead ballet dancer, **Y. Mashiach**, who had performed in the Israeli Opera, was in a car accident which unfortunately resulted in his having one of his legs amputated. Many of the theatrical performers in Israel – singers, dancers, actors – decided to hold a benefit performance for him in the Ziratron (a large amphitheater) in Ramat Gan and HaLehaka HaMerkazit was invited to be part of the performance.

This was the debut performance of Halehaka HaMerkazit and we presented a suite of dances



Danny Uziel in Yonatan Karmon's partner dance "Elem Ve'Susato" in the Hapoel Tel Aviv performing group, 1959



From right: Yonatan Karmon, Danny Uziel and Shlomo Maman. Photo: Alex Huber

choreographed by Karmon comprised of "Mi Yivne Bayit", "Yamin U'Smol" (Orcha Ba'Midbar) and "Al Tira". This medley became one of the best known stage dances and it was adapted by many performing groups around the world.

The more elaborate form of costumes and the long ponytail hairstyle of the girls became the identifying signature of all Israeli folk dance performing troupes everywhere. After the benefit performance concluded, two journalists came backstage to make sure that we were indeed Israelis because our energy and spirit were so outstanding.

After some time, when **Yoav** and **Mira** left Hapoel Tel Aviv, I took over the Open Sessions and performing group. I asked Yonatan to choreograph for the performing group. He accepted and prepared several new dance suites. In 1960, the group was invited to perform in Cyprus – the first amateur Israeli dance group to perform there.

During the time that I took over the sessions of Hapoel Tel Aviv, I decided to introduce three of the Karmon dances that I adapted from our performing suites: "Ha'Roa Ha'Ktana" (<http://bit.ly/3aO4rXz>) and "Al Tira" (<http://bit.ly/2W5X1eg>) – circle dances, and "Yamin U'smol" (<http://bit.ly/2xysAmN>) (Orcha Bamidbar) – a partner dance.

These dances were enthusiastically received when first introduced more than 60 years ago and to this day, they are still danced in sessions throughout the world, despite the initial resistance from some traditionalists to the change in the style of recreational Israeli folk dances. Well, the rest is history!

When I left Israel in 1961, **Yonatan Gabay** ז"ל, who also performed in HaLehaka HaMerkazit, decided to introduce some of these adapted Karmon folk dances in Haifa as well.

When I arrived in the United States (in 1961) and began to give workshops in New York, I introduced nine additional Karmon dances adapted from the performance medleys: a circle dance – "Nad llan" (<http://bit.ly/2W4ivrK>); and eight partner dances – "Israeli Mazurka" (<http://bit.ly/3cQeTiW>), "Shibolet Basadeh" (<http://bit.ly/2TWRJ1Z>), "Gozi Li" (<http://bit.ly/3cTajAs>), "Elem Ve'Susato" (<http://bit.ly/2TYVMKV>), "Me'Emek Le'Givah" (Shtu Ha'Adarim), "Mi Yivneh Bayit", "Mechol Ha'Yain" (<http://bit.ly/2Q3K7te>) (Mechol Hakerem) and "Shiru Ha'Shir". In total, there were twelve adapted Karmon dances that I introduced into the Israeli folk dance repertoire.

In 2005, as part of a special tribute to me at Hilulim Dance Camp in New York, **Gadi Bitton** surprised me by inviting Yonatan to come from Israel to celebrate with me. It was personally very emotional, and when Yonatan was introduced on the dance floor at the camp, we hugged each other and I was choked up with tears in my eyes. This is a moment that I will never forget.

Yonatan Karmon really changed my life. He molded me as a dancer with the passion to enjoy dancing and to spread the joyful, energetic spirit that defined him. He personally encouraged me to always be better and better, especially when I lacked confidence – and he was successful! Thank you, Yonatan for the special gift that you gave to me and to so many others in the dance world.

I would like to suggest that every year on Yonatan's birthday, July 28th, we commemorate his life by having dance sessions throughout the world dance Ha'Roa Ha'Ktana. 🙌



If you want to dance with us, you need to know how to follow my movements. 🙌

The Second Karmon Dance Troupe



Bat Tzion Mizrachi
dancer,

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

In 1960, after Lehakat Karmon was disbanded, **Yonatan** returned to Israel to form a new dance troupe. I was in a chug rikud (dance class) at Hapoel Tel Aviv conducted by Yonatan who was looking for dancers for his troupe because he had a six-month contract in Europe.

I was 17 years old and Yonatan contacted my father to ask him for permission to release me from school and take me on this trip. My dad gave his permission for my leaving the country.

Yonatan taught us how to dress, put on make-up, attach hair extensions, take down our hair, and maintain proper nutrition.

We departed by ship to Marseille and from there toured all over Europe: Paris, Stockholm, the French Riviera, Rome, Cannes. Yonatan did not allow us to

eat sweets. Chanita and I would buy and hide the sweets outside of Dudik's room and Tepele always stole them from us.

When we got to the Riviera and Cannes, we lived in a nice guest house and we had a surprise celebration for Yonatan's 29th birthday. At the same time, the Olympics were taking place in Rome, in which gymnasts **Ralli Ben-Yehuda** and **Ágnes Keleti** competed in artistic gymnastics. We went to see and cheer the national team of Israel.

It was a half year fairy tale, a beautiful time. We had the opportunity to perform, travel, represent Israel throughout Europe and show the world the folk dances of Israel. We were the trailblazers for all dance troupes that came after us. All thanks to the legendary **Yonatan Karmon**. 



Shosh Leket
dancer in Lehakat
Yerushalayim

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

Stage Presence


I met **Yonatan** when I was 29 years old and when he founded "Lehakat Yerushalayim". It was the highlight of everything I had experienced as a dancer in the dance troupes. From Lehakat Haifa with **Yonatan Gabay** to Lehakat Hora Yerushalayim with **Arik Katan** and then to Lehakat Yerushalayim.

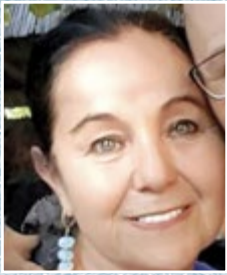
For me, Yonatan was an inspiring choreographer who created dances that always had a story behind them. A story that you, as a dancer, were supposed to understand and experience. Every rehearsal was to be treated exactly as a performance. Not only was the dancer's personal technique important to him, but also stage presence and your ability to express yourself as a dancer, well beyond the exact steps.

Every rehearsal before the performance was a performance in itself. Even though it was not a performance, there was no rehearsal with just marking the steps. When there was a performance, there was no such thing as being sick. You could not show up only if you were in the emergency room. I remember that one time I had a fever and my partner, **Kobi**, insisted that I should not dance in a performance at the Jerusalem Theater. We fought hard and I told him that Yonatan would not accept a reason like that. I showed up for the show.

When I found out that I was pregnant, I was really afraid to inform Yonatan who would surely resent that I did this to him. I was so surprised and relieved when he was happy about it, blessed me, and suggested that I dance as long as I could and as long as my costumes fit. I did dance until my fifth month [of pregnancy]. Years later, I told Yonatan that this son, who was dancing with me until my fifth month, was a fighter pilot in the Israeli Air Force.

From my point of view, Yonatan was the number one choreographer of Israeli dance. His influence on Israeli dance at the Dalia Dance Festivals, the Karmiel Dance Festival, which was the fruit of his labor, and on all the leaders of dance troupes and dance sessions in the country, will remain with us as inalienable assets for generations to come.

On the surface, Yonatan appeared to be tough and demanding toward his dancers, but he also had a huge heart and a special soul. I am thankful for the great privilege I had of getting to know Yonatan, the man and the choreographer. I will always remember him. 



Rina Meir
dancer

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

The Soul Was Elated

Beloved **Yonatan** is connected to our past and that world will remain in the memory of his dancers, as well as the many singers and artists who have shared a wonderful and unique path together with him and thanks to them all, the world has fully known him.

For me, Yonatan was a life coach, a charming man, an interesting and loyal friend! Thanks to him, I've had a long and meaningful life experience. It was the same for all those who danced, sang and played under his baton over the years.

The experiences during the period I danced with Yonatan are engraved in my memory and they are beautiful and rich and are a unique and wonderful part of my life.

The huge symphony that Yonatan created in dance performances, song and music, along with his dance troupes and later on at the Karmiel Dance Festivals – they are unparalleled in our dance history. It's a long and wonderful journey which is a journey of an entire lifetime.

My path into the worldwide dance experience with **Yonatan Karmon** went through the Emek Hefer Troupe, under the guidance of **Yankele Dekel** z"l, the 1962 [Eighth World Youth Festival held in] Helsinki, Finland with **Drora Alon**, continuing with "HaLehaka HaMerkazit – The Central Troupe", established by the Histadrut, under the direction of **Tirza Hodes**. **Odeda Krivi** kept the troupe together until the

arrival of **Yonatan Karmon**, who took us by storm! Initially it was with **Tirza Hodes**, under the auspices of the Histadrut and later, as the independent Lehakat Karmon – Karmon Dance Troupe.

Yonatan faced new challenges with his dancers. His great love of the country, its tradition, its landscape, its holidays, the melodies and the songs of our



poets, is well known. Together with his great love for classical dance, modern and folk dance, he created a new style, even for the dancers who coped with the training routines from the "corner" with the concepts of the classical dance world, and with Yonatan's demand for perfectionism on the one hand and an internal understanding of the mental and emotional meanings of his dance, on the other.

We danced with the sense that we were on the forefront of something new, exciting, interesting and challenging. Yonatan was always focused on his work which resulted in wonderful creations that were uniquely his own.

They were drawn from the traditional sources and current events in the country, and sought to innovate, grow and enrich the content and style on stage.

Yonatan knew where he was going and how he wanted us, the dancers, to bring the young nation of Israel to every place in the world – the Israel that relies on its ancient origins, but in a new style facing the harsh realities of everyday life.

The rehearsals were not easy. Yonatan's "creative pains" also affected our tired feet and aching body, but our soul was elated. The profound experience of working with a wonderful creator and artist like him was huge compensation for every effort or physical suffering.

Yonatan managed to put together "Music Halls" – a perfect format for dance and song performances with which we traveled for a year or more and with which we respectfully represented our country at every place in the world, in the most famous halls in the United States, Europe and South Africa.

The troupe's performances included singers such as **Ilan and Ilanit**, **Yaffa Yarkoni**, **Shoshana Damari**, **Mike Brant**, **Nechama Hendel**, **Geula Gil**, **HaChalonot HaGvohim** (The High Windows), **HaDudaim**, **Habreira Hativit**, **Ran Eliran**, **Itamar Cohen**, **Boaz Sharabi** at the beginning of his career, **Chamishiat HaCarmelim – Oshik [Levy]**, (his brother) **Lolik**, **Hanan [Goldblatt]**, **Michal Tal** and



Rina Meir



*Lehakat Karmon with **Maurice Chevalier***



*Lehakat Karmon with **Charles Aznavour***

Ruti (Ruth) Bickel and others, with a professional orchestra from around Israel, conducted by (the great!) **Ziko Graziani**. There were stunning and symbolic sets, and costumes designed by designers such as **Lydia Pincus Gany**.

Great artists visited us backstage. We felt that we were on a great mission with the dances we took onto the stage and also in the conversations and "workshops" we went through on courtesy, dress and behavior.

Yonatan brought us to the world's biggest stages – The "Olympia" in Paris, "Albert Hall" in London, "The Opera" in Milan and to "Broadway" and "Madison Square Garden" in New York. The long and glorious journeys have shaped our paths and our personalities, formed lifelong close friendships and opened a different perspective to the world and life in it.

We were wonderful ambassadors of the State of Israel during difficult times and we were received with love and respect. The audience voted with their feet and the great halls were filled with excitement.

Even after the Lehaka dissolved, I continued to meet with Yonatan in the United States, where I lived for ten years. When Yonatan arrived with his musical shows in Hebrew and English, he used to visit me at the United Jewish Appeal, where I worked. This is how we continued our special relationship for years.

When I returned to Israel, I was assigned to manage the folk dance section of the Histadrut. This was on the recommendation of Yonatan and **Tirza Hodes**, who retired at that time.

By virtue of the roles and partnership of the Histadrut at the Karmiel Festival, I directed and produced a significant number of dance events at the Festival, in **Yonathan Karmon's** inspired and guided grandiose production.

Our friendship strengthened and deepened, withstood the test of time and undoubtedly enriched my world.



The Israeli landscape (in France) and Middle Eastern Dance

Yonatan was a brother and friend and a member of my family. The day before he died, he asked to meet with me ...

Yonatan, we didn't get to meet, but I'm not saying goodbye to you because I will always remember you as alive and well!

"So I'll go, in the light of memories
Therefore, I understand, the deviating path of my life
Because there is silence at the end of the storms
There is hidden light with happiness that vanishes"

Yonatan Karmon greatly influenced the style of Israeli dance for the stage. Many instructors and choreographers, former dancers, and students of the "Choreographers' Chamber" he founded in the mid-1990s continue to create in his style and spirit.

The Karmiel Festival that he conceived, established and artistically directed for the first 13 years, shaped its content and character, is an example of huge festivals featuring diverse dance styles from all over the world, with dancers from all of the diaspora communities and the ethnic groups living here. There are both young and old participants in folk dancing, folk singing, huge harkadot (dance sessions), workshops, a combination of old and new, and a huge variety of programs that make it a pilgrimage for Israeli popular culture enthusiasts.

We danced with the sense that we were on the forefront of something new, exciting, interesting and challenging.

Rina Meir

Short Stories



Deodorant Spray

Rehearsals for a 1967 performance tour, held in the Hapoel Arena on Ussishkin Street on the basketball court, were intense and arduous. Perspiration flowed. The Lehaka members were comprised of people from kibbutzim, moshavim and cities.... One day, Yonatan stopped the rehearsal, took out deodorant spray from his bag and delivered the message to the members of the Lehaka (the boys of course!)

During the next rehearsal, the hall was covered with clouds of deodorant. The boys "learned" their lesson and sprayed themselves at the end of each dance. We choked! Again, Yonatan stopped the rehearsal and explained: "You put the deodorant on once, after a shower and not after every dance ..."

Diets

Yonatan, the perfectionist, paid attention to outer appearance no less than the show with all its details, and would follow up on unnecessary weight gain. We were fearful and tried every possible diet: bread diet, salad diet, steak and salad, fasting and we especially liked the Hawaiian salad which was made up of lettuce or pineapple, with cottage cheese or yogurt. Needless to say it was harmful, but to be sure, we always wore black before meetings with him, because black was slimming.

Shopping

Whenever we got to a big city, the shopping spree began, and the catchwords were: "Where did you buy it? How much did it cost? And how do you get from there to the hotel?"

Because we stayed in hotels with a kitchenette, we bought utensils and food for extended periods. One day, two guys [in the troupe] arrived and announced that they found and bought super cheap cans of tuna. "Why so inexpensive..." it turned out that the tuna was for cats...

Afterwards, on the way to South Africa, we landed in London. The suitcases were greatly overweight. The guys (not all), sat in the airport and removed all the pans and utensils that they bought just days earlier. Yonatan went crazy from the "refugee camp" scene.

Fines

There was a fining procedure for coming late. There

were laughs on stage. The sharp eye of **Gavri Levi** z"l, who was the Lehaka's director, did not miss any of the mischievous acts that jeopardized our proper functioning. I am reminded of an amusing case. In the wonderful and well-known dance, "Rikud HaDayagim – Dance of the Fishermen," by Yonatan, the girls were seated and the boys stood in an awaking position before going fishing. It was quiet on stage. The curtain was closed. **Rivka Michaeli**, the MC, told the audience about the fisherman's life in Israel. The curtain slowly opened and **Natan Okev** z"l, a stunning and beloved dancer, bounded onto the stage and shouted: "Guys, I found a store... and with the sight of the curtain's opening, he abruptly froze like a fisherman pillar of salt. The fine was not long in coming..."

Mishaps

Yehudit Perry, the former "Water Queen," joined the troupe in the United States. Beautiful and cool, a bit spacey... not so strict about the half ponytail that was typical of the troupe's girls.

In the finale dance, "Keshoshana Bein Hachochim – As A Rose Among The Thorns", the girls sat in a row and the boys jumped over them. During one of the jumps, a guy touched Yehudit's loose ponytail, which was left hanging in the air by the guys...

Cards

The boys – dancers, singers, stage people, found a way to "pass the time" on planes, trains and buses. They used to improvise tables with luggage and they spent their time playing card games. One summer day in Europe, the bus crashed and we had to wait on the road for it to be repaired. The card players, as usual, sat down on the grass alongside the road and took off their shirts to sunbathe and play. They were so absorbed in the game that they didn't notice that we had all gotten onto the repaired bus and that the driver started to drive away. The boys running along with their suitcases, without their shirts, is also an amusing memory.

English

Ziko Graziani z"l, the celebrated conductor, joined our group for meals and entertainment. In Philadelphia, we entered a restaurant and Ziko ordered a hamburger. To our question, "Why just a hamburger?" he replied: "This is the only word I know in English." Since then, we ordered for him!

*To be sure,
we always
wore black
before
meetings
with him,
because
black was
slimming.*



Yoni Caricato
dancer and instructor

Translation:
Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai



"Whatever The Style, What Matters Is To Dance"

Around 1967, **Yonatan** came to see a performance of the Inbal Theater, at the Allenby Theater in Tel Aviv. The name of the concert was "Vered Bar – Wild Rose" by choreographer **Sara Levi-Tanai** ז"ל, founder of the troupe. I was the soloist in the performance. I didn't know that Yonatan was present at the concert. At the end of the show he approached me backstage and asked if I would like to participate in a performance tour to the United States and Europe, as a soloist in his troupe, since his soloist had to leave for personal reasons.


It was hard for me to decide since I had been one of the "Inbal" soloists for seven years, and I knew that **Sara Levi** would be disappointed by such a decision. Ultimately, I decided to leave Inbal and join **Yonatan Karmon**. I danced in the Karmon troupe as a soloist for seven years.

There are no words to express my thoughts today about what I experienced while working under Yonatan's baton. He was a special man, a captivating artist, full of charm, a very handsome man, and in my personal experience – a man with a heart of gold.

When he was in the midst of the creative process, we did not dare to disturb the flow of his thoughts, however he was still open to suggestions.

Yonatan was an optimist and as such, his works expressed joy, airiness, freedom, and a celebration of life. When he was in the midst of the creative process, we did not dare to disturb the flow of his thoughts, however, he was open suggestions from the dancers that came spontaneously, such as in the creation of "Jacob, Rachel and Leah" (**Yonatan, Miri Dolgitzer** and me) and in the creation of "Timna" (**Dani Binstead** and me), where I felt his openness to the imagination of everyone involved.

On tours to the United States and Europe, there were people with us who were already famous, [vocal artists] like **Shoshana Damari, Yaffa Yarkoni** and others, but Yonatan certainly opened doors for many other people like **Ilanit** (I love her), HaChalonot Hagvohim – The High Windows (**Shmulik Kraus, Arik Einstein** and **Josie Katz**), **Boaz Sharabi**, guitarist **Yigal Hared**, singer **Mike Brant** and many more who became famous thanks to **Yonatan Karmon**.

Yontan Karmon changed my life, literally. I continue to teach Israeli folk dance and organize dance camps and workshops. And I know that others, who like me danced in his troupes, still dance and teach. When they do, they will always remember the one and only **Yonatan Karmon**. I'll conclude with a phrase that he used to say that I loved, "Whatever the style, what matters is to dance". We all love you and you will always remain in our hearts. 



Yoni Caricato and Dani Binstead in the finale of of **Yonatan Karmon's** dance, *Broadway*, 1967



Dr. Ronit Ronen-Tamir

Translation:

Alex Huber

"It Is Impossible To Be A Professional And Also Do Shoddy Work"

Yonatan Karmon has raised generations of dancers who have become prominent dancers, creators and leaders of the Israeli dance scene throughout all the years of its existence. We all continue his legacy to this day and will continue to lead the way with gratitude, dignity and determination as we carry with us all that we have been taught by him with love.

From the many warm responses, following Yonatan's unexpected passing, the writers all express a tremendous appreciation for the influence and legacy Yonatan has left. A legacy he left both on a personal level, for everyone who has danced and learned from him, as well as the development of Israeli Folk Dance on which he left his characteristic and unique footprint.

Yonatan epitomized the Israeli spirit at its best; he was unique and special, charismatic and glorious. A confirmation of his influence can be found in the fact that most Israeli dance choreographers today and in the last generation grew up and danced with Yonatan. He undoubtedly left an exceptional imprint on Israeli dance. I appreciate

the great privilege that I had to be a dancer in his troupe.

I remember longingly his creative and unique way. The "elements" and "experiments" that began as a small step or an image that evolved into a whole dance with the help of the dancers. Dancers who looked up to him with admiration and did their best to actualize everything he imagined and dreamed.

It all started on the floor of the rehearsal hall and slowly formed to create a world of stories, images, landscapes and an Israeli atmosphere that all came together into performances that were varied, with much effort invested in them, on a professional level with a live orchestra, a singing group, costumes and lots of soul. We were all captivated by his passion and infected with the stage and Israeli Dance bug. It turns out that there is no cure and no remedy for it.

On a personal level, Yonatan, for me, was a great model and a significant figure. My acquaintance with Yonatan began in my father's home. My

We were all captivated by his passion and infected with the stage and Israeli Dance bug. It turns out that there is no cure and no remedy for it.



Dr. Ronit Ronen-Tamir



uncle and aunt danced in the veteran Karmon Troupe before I was born. Over the years, my father worked extensively to promote the Israeli folk dance movement and supported and believed in Yonatan's work. He was a co-founder of the Jerusalem Troupe (Lehakat Yerushalayim) and a co-founder of the Karmiel Dance Festival under the artistic direction of **Yonatan Karmon**.

I joined the Jerusalem Troupe, as a dancer, at the age of 16. It was a significant experience that shaped me, made me what I am today and influenced every choice I have made in every area of my life, since. Those were five formative years when I learned from Yonatan perseverance, determination, professionalism, and striving to go beyond the maximum possible.

Thanks to Yonatan, I turned the hobby of dance, and Israeli folk dance in particular, into a profession. I have not stopped dancing for one day since! I've always felt like a daughter to Yonatan and my children were his grandchildren. Yonatan deepened my love for Israeli dance, the stage and the Israeli spirit that was expressed throughout his work.



Phrases that will always remind me of Yonatan (phrases that were mentioned and remembered by veterans of the Jerusalem Troupe):

- "The leg can be moved forward, backwards or sideways. You can't do braids with it ... The question is how?"
- "The audience comes to enjoy and not see you sweat and strain ... everything should look effortless".
- "It is impossible to be a professional and do shoddy work".
- "Don't whistle ... it brings bad luck".

- "Jump like 'I'm a butterfly' and not like 'I'm a cow'".

I remember his examining look, and my hope of seeing the approval in his eyes. A look that always excited me. He was always interested in the well-being of my children and my parents. I remember his upright figure and broad smile, his optimism and joy of life. I remember his creative and inspirational thinking and his wonderful stage vision. I remember and miss the days that were and will never return. What remains are the memories and images that will accompany me, all his children/dancers and devotees forever!



Lucy Maman
dancer and
choreographer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

You Must Dance In Lehakat Karmon



I came to Lehakat Karmon after I had danced in Lehakat Beit Hagefen in Haifa, where I heard for the first time about the Karmon troupe from one of the dancers who had previously danced with **Yonatan**. "You must dance in Lehakat Karmon," he said.

One day I came to an Israeli folk dance marathon in Caesarea, where I met **Shlomo Maman** who told me that Yonatan was conducting auditions for Lehakat Karmon for a tour abroad. I was very excited and convinced my parents that I had to go to the auditions.

I arrived at the auditions at Seminar HaKibbutzim and I was accepted. Since I was a sixteen-year-old young girl, my mother had to approve and sign the contract. The trip was in January 1979, and I think that we were the last Karmon troupe to go on a professional long-term tour.

The memorable, exciting experiences from the performances have had a great impact on me that have stayed with me to this day. It was an impressive production with 32 dancers, a live orchestra conducted by **Nancy Brandes** and many artists including **Shoshana Damari, Avi Toledano, Tzemed Tzafri** (Tzafri Duo), **Zulu Puppet Theatre**, instrumentalists from India, virtuoso musicians, and the like. This spectacular "show", created with a lot of thought, was called "The Grand Music Hall of Israel". The dances represented the diverse heritage of Israeli culture. Yonatan worked throughout the time with artists of all disciplines: costume designers, musicians, composers, singers and more... He built a model with a unique structure and style of performances which serve as a beacon for all dance troupes in Israel.

Yonatan's approach was very professional, which I was familiar with from the time when I was a child dancing in Russia. Here too, there was strict adherence to every detail, such as a uniform look for the dancers according to the "look" that Yonatan set: the girls all with long ponytails and

some of them with hair extensions, plus different dance accessories to give a unique, presentable character for an Israeli show.

The aesthetics of the dancers was of uppermost importance for Yonatan. I remember that we were always in awe of him and the way he observed us. In one case, after his comments about the increased weight of a few girls, we decided to go on a diet and eat only apples. Yonatan saw us and reprimanded us: "What makes cows fat?" "Grass!" This statement is etched in my memory.

There is no doubt that it was a different time. Today I laugh and am nostalgic about those moments.


After the tour, Yonatan tried to establish a new, additional troupe at the "Moadon November" club in Jaffa. We had a few rehearsals, but in the end, it did not work out for budgetary reasons.

At the beginning of the 80s, Yonatan approached me and asked me to join a new dance troupe about to be formed in Jerusalem. I helped him recruit dancers and we would travel three times a week to Jerusalem.

Our story ended with disagreements between us at that time. For many years we were not in touch until one day when Yonatan invited all the choreographers to the first meeting for the Karmiel Festival. I was among the invitees. From then on, we continued to be strongly connected all the time, professionally, personally and through family friendships together with **Shuki, Shlomo** and our daughter, **Lital**. Our relationship was only strengthened.

A few years ago, a surprise party was being held for **Yaffa Yarkoni's** eightieth birthday. Yonatan asked me to dance "Yamin U'Smol" with him in her honor. I came to his home, we rehearsed and then performed at this exciting event.

My dear Yonatan – with much love and appreciation I thank you for all this special and meaningful time!

I will miss you very much. 

The aesthetics of the dancers was of paramount importance to Yonatan. I remember that we were always in awe of him and the way he observed us.

The Arts Are Still Alive And Kicking...



Roni Siman Tov
dancer and
choreographer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

He would talk about the atmosphere of the period of his work, the steps and the movement of the body, all that in accordance with the general idea and the corresponding music.

As a 15-year old boy, I was already dancing in the Givat Shmuel Dance Troupe, under the artistic direction of **Shalom Amar** z"l. Shalom, although he was colleague, had a lot to say about **Yonatan Karmon** as a choreographer and director of the Olympia Club in Paris and praised his work and his creations.

One day, at the beginning of the 80s, there was a newspaper ad: "Lehakat Karmon in Petach Tikva seeks post army dancers with dance experience". Throughout that time, the name of the much admired, **Yonatan Karmon** echoed in my ears and I decided to go to the auditions...just to watch. I was just curious to see who **Yonatan Karmon** was.

On the day of the audition, I came to Heichal Shalom in the city of Petach Tikva. There were about 300 dancers already waiting in the lobby, and for a moment, I thought there may be a show or a movie and that I was in the wrong place. I asked: "Is the audition here"? They answered me: "Yes". A few minutes later, the crowd divided into two, like the Red Sea. From the back, three people came into the middle of the two groups. Among the three, a beautiful man stood out, with a lush forelock and stage presence and I immediately realized, although I had never met him, that the man standing before me was the renowned artist, **Yonatan Karmon**. Next to him were **Odeda Kruvi** and **Tuvia Tischler**, his assistants.

We entered the hall and everyone sat down in chairs to receive an explanation. When I came wearing jeans, I sat up just to observe...Yonatan explained that he only needed one hundred dancers and therefore it was necessary to pass the audition in order to be accepted for a position.

During the auditions, there were only ten dancers on the stage at a time. Odeda and Tuvia demonstrated a "dance phrase" and the auditionees had to perform it...At some part of the audition, Yonatan would stop it and say "you, you, and you" wait

here; to the rest, thank you". And so on in cycles over and over again.

I observed the auditions and I felt that I wanted to be there too. I thought to myself: If they can do it, so can I. Roni, take a chance...I was brave, I went onto the stage and to my delight, I passed the audition and was included among those who were signed up.

Finally, there were only one hundred dancers left. The joy did not last long. Yonatan sat us down on the stage and said: "Now I only need seventy dancers". For a moment, I turned pale...we were all still in question and had to fight for our place.

"Please, go to the corner, one at a time, perform turns diagonally to the second corner" called Yonatan. During my turn, I stood in the corner and performed all the turns, properly spotting in focus with my head, feet apart, arms to the sides of the body...to the sounds of the march played by the accordionist, **Roni Aviram**, "He'amini Yom Yavo", the well-known song by the famous singer, **Yaffa Yarkoni**.



Yonatan Karmon with Roni Siman Tov

Roni Siman Tov

I was quite confident about the turning technique I acquired from **Yedidia Amram**, choreographer and dancer in the Israel Ballet. During the turns, I was aware of Yonatan's interest and subsequent gaze. I realized that I had indeed passed the audition. At the end of the audition, we were given the location and time of the rehearsals and we left feeling proud and "see you soon".

I went home with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I felt great joy that I was accepted to the glorious Karmon troupe, and on the other hand, I was embarrassed that I was actually only 15 years old and not a graduate of the army as required!

At the beginning of the first rehearsal I approached Yonatan and asked to speak with him at the end of the rehearsal. With a look of humiliation, I told him the story of my audition and apologized for not telling the truth. Yonatan, with a necklace with a ring in his mouth, listened carefully, thought a little, and finally said: "I want you to dance in my troupe, but don't come to rehearsals with jeans! I'll send you to **Lydia Pincus**; she will sew a pair of dance pants for you". I was happy to the heavens and a huge weight was lifted from my heart. I will never forget when I came to Lydia, the seamstress, and asked for pants "like Tuvia's" ...not tight ballet pants. She smiled and immediately took my measurements: "How much does it cost"? and she said: "Don't worry, Yonatan will bring them to you".

Already at the second rehearsal, Yonatan brought me a bag with two pairs of pants. I asked him about the payment and he said: "It's a gift from me. Just take it seriously". In the same breath he continued and asked: "Do you know **Sammy Schwartzman**"? "Of course", I answered, he is the beloved headmaster of our school in Givat Shmuel".

Yonatan told me: "When the situation in Romania and in Israel was difficult, Sammy – my uncle, supported me financially and he also financed my dance studies. I will never forget this"! Sammy was Yonatan's guest of honor at every performance. He always sat in the center of the first row. Very emotional!

I danced with **Yonatan Karmon** for three years, in Petach Tikva and afterwards, also in Jerusalem. I learned a lot from him about the secrets of choreography and the art of the stage. While working

with the troupe, he used to go into detail about what he wanted to create. He would talk about the atmosphere of the period of his work, the steps and the movement of the body, all that in accordance with the general idea and the corresponding music. He would simply put the dancers into his creation and the ecstasy of the dance, and in this way, they sort of became "partners" ...

The concept was clear: when the dancer understands what he is "doing" on the stage, it brings out one hundred percent of the energy and talent. I, myself, often call the process "neurological engraving" and therefore, to this day, I remember the dances that Karmon created and am emotional every time I am reminded of them or watch them performed on stage.

The professional aspect was always uppermost and when the dancers complained about the amount of their wages, Yonatan would say that "a professional dancer is measured by the level of his performance and not if he gets paid".

Throughout the time that I danced with Karmon, he gave many examples from other artists he worked with and was even influenced by their way of working. Yonatan used to say: "Don't be embarrassed to go and get help from great musicians or artists. They always 'raise you up'".

Yonatan Karmon's thought process and the way he created motivated me to create for myself. Thus, even as a soldier, I began to create folk dances, which I introduced to **Yoav Ashriel**, a special personality in his own right, and immediately upon my being discharged from the army, I began to lead performing troupes independently and became a choreographer.

Already during the first years of the establishment of the Karmiel Dance Festival, under the artistic direction of Yonatan, I was fortunate to participate with my groups in the performances on the main stage.

There is no doubt that it was a great, proud experience to belong to the "Karmonistim – the Karmon dance family" and to feel that the Arts are alive and kicking. Yonatan's image will always be our inspiration and a model for us to aspire to.

May his soul be bound in the bond of everlasting life. ✎



A professional dancer is measured by the level of his performance and not if he gets paid. ✎

Paris With A Hopeless Romantic



Miri Shahaf Levi

Past Executive Director of the Association of Regional Cultural Directors. Presently, Executive Director of Dancing Classrooms Israel

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

There is not enough time or space to share the last quarter century of my life close to this strikingly special man, **Yonatan Karmon**. In my many meetings with him during these 25 years, we have touched on life from such different and interesting angles, along with his fascinating and detailed stories about his contacts with world dignitaries.

I chose to present here the story of Rosh Hashanah 5772, September 2011, when my husband, **Yossi** and I spent five days visiting in Paris. We stayed at a hotel near Yonatan and Shuki's apartment.

Yonatan insisted that we start all our mornings with a fresh baguette and croissants that were bought from a different boulangerie, a French bakery, every time you came to Yonatan and Shuki's house. They had a special breakfast for us, which Yonatan was delighted to prepare:

Israeli vegetable salad, avocado halves stuffed with tuna salad, "beytzya" (a sunny-side-up fried egg as it was known in the years of the state's



establishment in the kibbutzim), and a wonderful variety of fruit jams, and so forth.

The mixed salad that Yonatan prepared for us on the last morning of our visit captured our hearts. He said it's a salad made up of everything in the fridge the second you open it

The ingredients:

2 Belgium endives (a blanched bulb) cut into circles.
1 can of tuna.
1 unpeeled apple thinly sliced
3 hard boiled eggs sliced into eighths.
(Before serving, canned corn and some chopped onion can be added.)

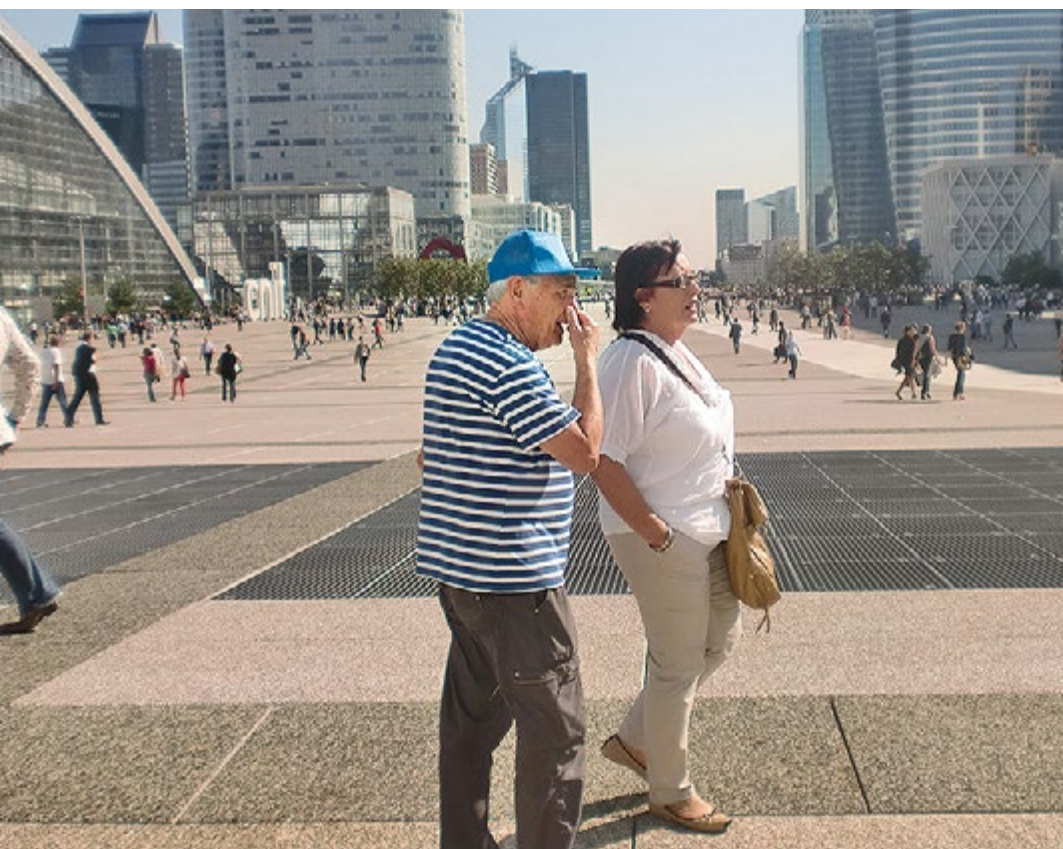
The sauce:

Mix some balsamic vinegar, olive oil, mayonnaise, mustard, sugar, salt and pepper and pour it over the salad.

Yonatan updated us that on the eve of the holiday, we would be staying with **Tami (Tamar) Sebok**, a correspondent for Yedioth Ahronoth in Paris and a close friend of Shuki and him.

Equipped with honey cakes that I had baked ahead of time, we arrived at Tami's beautiful apartment, which was next door to the apartment where Shuki and Yonatan temporarily lived.

In the special holiday atmosphere, we sat among friends of our amazing hostess Tami. These friends came from the world of culture and literature. The table was decorated with honey dipped



Miri Shahaf Levi



It was not history and facts that interested him, but rather, feelings, atmosphere and romance as much as possible.

apples harvested that morning in the courtyard of friends' homes in Normandy.

For the first course, a fragrant chicken soup prepared by Yonatan was served. The main course was also prepared and served by Yonatan. It was sheer perfection! It had all the flavors: On a beautiful plate they had pears stuffed with meat in a sugary sauce, along with wonderful Persian rice prepared by the hostess and an interesting addition of a bit of parmesan baked endive leaves, prepared, of course by Yonatan.

Endive as an interesting side dish:

In a large frying pan, with a little sunflower oil, arrange the endive halves, cut lengthwise (with the cut side up) and fry; (you can also bake it in the oven). Sprinkle Parmesan on the top; (for those who do not keep kosher, you can add goose breast slices).

This is how we spent some wonderful days discovering Yonatan's surprising sides, a fine gourmet chef, and a fascinating guide on our walking tour of Paris, not excluding a thorough presentation of the streets of the city. It was not history and facts that interested him, but rather, feelings, atmosphere and romance as much as possible.

"I will not tell you when this sculpture was created," he said," but up here lived **Dalida** [the professional name of **Iolanda Cristina Gigliotti**, an Egyptian French singer and actress, 1933 - 1987] and up there **Charles Aznavour** [a French-Armenian singer, lyricist, and diplomat]

was there...and **Nina Simone** [professional name of **Eunice Kathleen Waymon**, an American singer, songwriter, musician, arranger, and civil rights activist] and **Édith Piaf** [a French singer-songwriter, cabaret performer and film actress noted as France's national chanteuse and one of the country's most widely known international stars] and so on...it was a fascinating story..." There were countless juicy stories from the lives of famous artists alongside the world's wealthy, and from Yonatan's mouth it was fascinating.

His interesting outlook on life was so different, captivating, and charmingly risqué. It was hard to take your eyes off his beautiful eyes and his white teeth. His smile was so special.

Getting to know Yonatan began, of course, in the dance world, but the deep and close connection between us throughout the years touched on life in all its colors and hues.

Yonatan, I loved you, all that you were! An uncompromising professional like no one before and like no one that will ever be in the Israeli dance world. A hopeless romantic, a good friend, strict when needed, excited about everything he loved. He had a wonderful relationship with Shuki, but his heart was large enough to bestow so much of himself upon those of us surrounding him as well.

I was captivated by you! I will always remember you with love. 🙌

An Exhilarating Experience, Funny And Enriching



Tamar Sebok

Correspondent in France
for the daily Israeli
newspaper "Yedioth
Ahronoth"

Translation:
Alex Huber

He especially liked the elusive whisper of Parisian artistic inspiration, which is so hard to capture and put into words.

Yonatan was not only unique and distinctive. Yonatan was a rare human being. Beautiful on the inside and beautiful on the outside, with a wonderful sense of humor and an amused view on life and its turbulences. He had the smile of someone who saw almost everything. And so he did: From World War II, through the Kibbutz, from his journey as a child, separated from his parents, all the way from Romania to Israel, through classical dance and Israeli folk dance, to Broadway, the Ed Sullivan Show, the Olympia Theater in Paris, worldwide travels of the Karmon Troupe and the Karmiel Dance Festival in Karmiel, Israel.

Thousands have danced in his troupes; hundreds owe him their careers, not just in the arts. His contribution to the image of the State of Israel and the field of folk dance in Israel and dance in general is impossible to estimate. Every choreography and every folk dance in Israel bears his mark. His influence was huge on all of the country's modern choreographers and dance leaders, although not everyone is aware of it.

I will always be touched by the happiness on the faces of those who have danced his choreographies. They are a testament to the joy that he has given to so many people, on stage and in the audience.

Yonatan was my friend. We used to sit in the same café in Paris almost every week, watching the trees change colors in the square in front of us, season after season. He would point to a special green color of this leaf or that flower. Everyone knew of his aesthetic sensitivity from the costumes and images he created for the stage. This very same sensitivity was as sharp and as moving in those delicate moments of life.

Yonatan was intrigued by the theater of street life: toddlers dashing forward, suddenly startled and turning to look for their parents, old men with strange hats who reminded him of old acquaintances, young people with a special stance... Sometimes he imagined their life story. He never lacked inspiration. The characters who crossed his path in his long career were often larger than life.




During the conversation, with a mischievous look in his eyes, he would tell me how he met Jack Nicholson with a monkey on his shoulder, before he became a star, or how he slammed the door in the face of **Nureyev** or how **Mike Brant** started his career in France. Many more stories followed but will not be repeated here for fear of inappropriate public blushing.

Unlike many others, in Yonatan's case, all the stories were true. He was not flustered by anyone. For decades, Yonatan had met with the greatest artists in Israel and around the world. He never judged, but nothing escaped his beautiful eyes. He was a true king. Everyone liked being around him. His charisma flowed and filled homes, halls, cities and hearts. He never used it adversely. He brought much light and confidence to those around him. He was determined, meticulous, especially in the studio, but everyone knew that he was there to build, not to destroy.

The happiness of **Shuki Spector**, his partner, the love of his life, was the most important thing to him. Being around him was a wonderful, exhilarating and enriching experience.

Yonatan enjoyed strolling leisurely through the streets of Paris, inhaling every breeze that carried the city's history. He especially liked the elusive whisper of the Parisian artistic inspiration, which is so hard to capture and put into words. He knew exactly where and when to wait for it to pass, and then, just enjoy it, not owning or immobilizing it. Just breathing it in.

His contribution to Israeli culture will be told by others. I just loved the man and I feel honored and humbled to have had the opportunity to spend many wonderful moments with him. I miss him already, along with thousands of others. Everyone and their Yonatan. Every time I'll walk by our square, opposite the café, I will send a kiss to the trees. I'm sure they'll pass the message on. 

"My" Yonatan



Hila Amir
tour guide

Translation:
Alex Huber

Everyone has his own **Yonatan** ... me too. 22 years ago, I was a new tour guide. I was looking for a local tour guide from Paris. I was on a tour, with an Israeli group, in the Loire Valley. I got **Joshua Spector's** phone number.

I called. A man with a pleasant voice answered. I asked in French to speak to Joshua (at that time he was not called Shuki). I asked if it was possible to switch to English, and the man replied: "It is also possible in Hebrew". This was my first conversation with Yonatan. We talked some more. It turned out that he said to Shuki: "She sounds nice and you will help her!"

I actually met Yonatan through Shuki. Yonatan became a friend of mine as well. Whenever I finished guiding a trip to Paris, I would remain for two or three extra days with Shuki and Yonatan at their home. Shuki worked all day and I would stay with Yonatan.

Yonatan would go down to the Boulangerie, buy a baguette and make me breakfast. But first he would serve me coffee in bed. Later we would stroll the streets of Paris and enter the shops I loved. Once we even went looking for a dress to wear at my son's bar mitzvah. We had coffee everywhere and he always told me stories about the many people that he knew.

He would cook special meals for me and pamper me every time I came to Paris. But not only in Paris...

When Yonatan was in Tel Aviv, I would meet him on Fridays at noon at various cafés on Dizengoff street. Whenever we passed a florist, Yonatan



would buy me a bouquet and say, "you should have flowers for Shabbat."

Yonatan told me many stories about people, some more famous than others. It was never gossip. Always biographical details that allowed me to get to know another side of artists' personality.

Whenever I asked him how he was, the answer was always the same answer: "What shall I tell you? It's all ten."

A hopeless optimist, who sees only the good in everyone, does not argue with anyone and accepts everyone as they are without trying to change them.

He was always interested in the well-being of my family and I could always consult with him about it. If he asked for something, I could not refuse him.

I think in the twenty-two years I knew him, I learned about the history of Israel and that of Paris, more than you could learn from any history book. For Yonatan, the story would take on color and shape, taste and smell and most importantly, a life. 🙌

"We had coffee everywhere and he always told me stories about the many people that he knew."

Three Major Events



Yossi Tal-Gan

former director of the Israel Festival and the Culture Department of the Jerusalem Municipality

Translation:
Alex Huber

In the 1980s, our paths crossed at the following three junctures in **Yonatan Karmon's** life:

1. Creating the Jerusalem Dance Troupe, and the Lincoln Center performance and tour in the United States.
2. Producing the musical "David" at the Sultan's Pool venue in Jerusalem.
3. Establishing the first Karmiel Dance Festival, produced by Margalit Tal-Gan.

My wife and I met Yonatan in the early 1980s, when he returned to Israel after completing his job with the Olympia Hall in Paris. The meeting was initiated by **Arik Katan** who joined the Jerusalem Cultural Department.

Arik was one of the key dancers in Yonatan Karmon's early troupes and later, he became a choreographer and director of folk dance troupes such as "Hora Yerushalayim" and "Emek HaYarden – The Jordan Valley".

1980 – Formation of the Jerusalem Dance Troupe *Lehakat Hamachol Yerushalayim*

This dance troupe, under the artistic direction of Yonatan, brought a new level to folk dance in Israel. Since then, many of the choreographers

and directors have been influenced by its style. The Jerusalem Dance Troupe performed in more than fifty shows a year, in the Sherover Hall in Jerusalem and across the country.

To receive the Jerusalem Foundation's support, I traveled to the United States, with Yonatan, to raise donations for the many costumes needed for the troupe's first show. Upon my return, and with **Teddy Kollek's** intervention, the donations I brought were deposited with the Jerusalem Foundation which enabled the sewing of the costumes.

The Troupe's performances in Jerusalem reflected the great thirst by many for Israeli folk dance, and the pride they felt seeing how Israeli folk dance became as prestigious as that of classical and modern dance.

For the first time, the general public, not only family members of the dancers, came in droves to see the performances, something to which they had not been previously exposed. Yonatan Karmon is the one who elevated Israeli folk dance to its new prestigious status.

Yonatan was joined by a large group of followers and many excellent dancers clamored to join the



Lincoln Center, 1984. From right: Yonatan Karmon, Margalit and Yossi Tal-Gan, and Aliza Karselnik



The first press conference: "We did it", declares Baruch Venger, the Mayor of Karmiel with Yonatan Karmon and Margalit Tal-Gan on either side

Yossi Tal-Gan

troupe. The troupe's management and marketing was sponsored by the youth and cultural divisions of the Jerusalem Municipality.

1983 – Production of the Musical “David” at the Sultan's Pool venue in Jerusalem

I directed the Sultan's Pool venue during those years, as part of my role in the Jerusalem Cultural Division.

Yonatan Karmon directed, choreographed and did the casting for the musical. **Meir Shalev** wrote the wonderful text and **Kobi Oshrat** wrote the great music for the orchestra and the singers. In addition to the extended Jerusalem Troupe, the production featured: **Dani Litani** as David, **Shoshana Damari** as Ba'alat Ha' Ov (biblical fortune teller), **Izhar Cohen** as Yonatan, **Avraham Ferrera** as Saul, as well as **Riki Gal**, **Gali Atari** and **Ilka Raveh**.

Only a giant creator like **Yonatan Karmon**, with his charisma and boldness, could assemble such an impressive and diverse list of stars with the meager means at his disposal. The Musical, “David”, was performed three times in front of a huge audience, but despite the hopes and expectations, did not evolve into an international tour.

Immediately after this production and with the help of veteran dancers, **Morry** and **Aliza Karselnik** who decided to sponsor the troupe, Lehakat Yerushalyaim under its well-known name “Lehakat Karmon”, went on tour at Lincoln Center in New York, and in Las Vegas.

The publicity and credit received by the troupe on the one hand, and the development of folk dance on the other, led to the initiative of the late Mayor of Karmiel, **Baruch Venger**, to establish the Karmiel Dance Festival.

1988 – Establishment and Production of the First Karmiel Dance Festival

The connection began with a meeting in Mayor Venger's office in 1987, together with **Yonatan Karmon** and myself. I was present in my capacities as manager of Lehakat Yerushalayim, director of the Jerusalem Cultural Department and in charge of the Sultan's Pool venue. Also present at this meeting were a number of architects from Haifa, and senior representatives from the city of Karmiel. Yonatan, typically brimming with vision and boundless imagination, spoke of “a gigantic stage and an amphitheater that would hold two hundred thousand people... like in Dalia”. Those sitting around the table were horrified by the

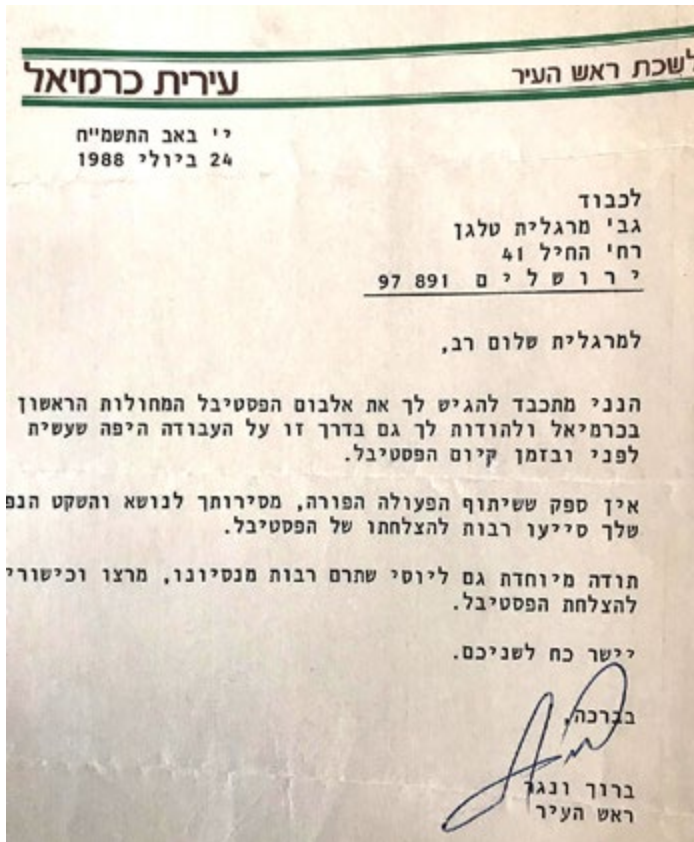
The Troupe's performances in Jerusalem reflected the great thirst of many for Israeli folk dance, and the great pride they felt when seeing how folk dance had gained a prestigious status equal to that of classical and modern dance.



The founding team at the amphitheater site. From right: unknown, Baruch Venger, Shlomo Maman, Tirza Hodes, Yonatan Karmon, Bracha Dudai, Aharon Solomon and Margalit Tal-Gan

Yossi Tal-Gan

Only a giant creator like Yonatan Karmon, with his charisma and boldness, could assemble such an impressive and diverse list of stars with the meager means at his disposal.



Letter of gratitude from Baruch Venger z"l to Margalit Tal-Gan

numbers and Mr. Venger referred the question to me. My answer was that an amphitheater that would hold twenty thousand people would satisfy us, provided the stage was as big as Yonatan asked for – three times the standard stage size. Yonatan immediately said: "What Yossi says..." and everyone breathed a sigh of relief...

Later, we all went to the roof of the City Hall building to look out over the whole area. The place chosen was a rocky hill, without any infrastructure. To carry out the project, the Karmiel Municipality brought together the JNF (Jewish National Fund), our experience in Jerusalem and the advice and approval of **Teddy Kollek**. Within a year the hill became an impressive amphitheater under the direction of the energetic mayor, who inaugurated the Amphitheater during his lifetime and was able to reap the rewards of his efforts. **Baruch Venger** passed away 5 months after the first Karmiel Dance Festival.

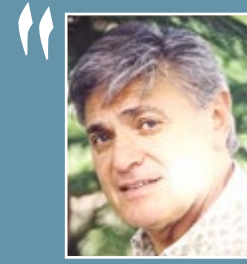
The first festival, which opened on June 27, 1988, while workers were still laying the last pieces of grass as the spectators were entering, fulfilled the dreams of many. The program was performed by hundreds of dancers, accompanied



Karmiel Dance Festival, 1988

by a great orchestra conducted by **Ziko Graziani**. **Margalit Tal-Gan** produced the first festival working from an office in Tel Aviv made available to her and to **Yonatan Karmon**, the festival's Artistic Director, by our friend **Shlomo Maman**. Several years later, **Shlomo Maman** replaced Yonatan as the festival's Artistic Director.

Here is the place to say that without the initial enthusiasm of the host city's officials, executives, residents and a large number of fans in key positions in the cultural establishment, such as **Dr. Dan Ronen, Tirza Hodes, Bracha Dudai**, dancers and troupe directors from the entire country – we would not have merited the beginning of a tradition with more than thirty years of successful dance festivals in Karmiel. 🙌



It is impossible to be a professional and do shoddy work. 🙌

If In Arad They Sing Then In Karmiel They Will Dance



Adi Eldar

The Second Mayor
of Karmiel

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

We were envious of the Arad Festival, which was a national hit in those days. The Mayor of Karmiel, **Baruch Venger** z"l, [1988] decided to try and put Karmiel on the cultural map of Israel through dance. For that, it would only be natural to go to the dance guru in Israel, **Yonatan Karmon**.

I remember the first meeting with Yonatan very well. I was very impressed by his personality which was lovely inside and out. After the meeting, I was appointed as a consultant and assistant to the then Minister of Education and Culture, **Yitzhak Navon** z"l. In this capacity, I had the privilege of assisting with the first festival. It didn't occur to me then, that a year later, as the Mayor of Karmiel, I would be a part of the festival for 30 years.

Through the years, the relationship with Yonatan became very strong. **Yonatan** and **Shuki** were like family members to us and they became very friendly with my wife, **Sonia**. Undoubtedly, after Yonatan's retirement from the festival, it was



Circle dancing - Karmiel Festival

only natural to choose his disciple and right-hand man – **Shlomo Maman**, who continued Yonatan's spirit in the designing of subsequent festivals.

The State of Israel should have awarded Yonatan the Israel Prize for his achievements in the field of folk dance in Israel. His contributions to the national dance, in general, and for advancing and highlighting the city of Karmiel as the Dance City of the State of Israel, in particular, will be remembered forever. 🙌

Beauty, Grace And Love For People



Levia Shalev-Fisher
former Spokesperson and
the head of Karmiel's
Public Relations Department

Translation:

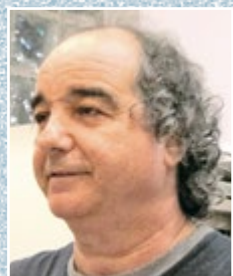
Alex Huber

My memories of **Yonatan Karmon** are memories of beauty, grace, love of people, movement, dance and culture. Alongside these are memories of inexhaustible knowledge, every nuance of every movement, while striving for perfection.

The Yonatan I knew was a warm, hugging and loving man. A beautiful man, inside and out. This is how he will always be for me.

May his memory be a blessing. 🙌

In The Light Of Memories



Shlomo Maman

dancer, choreographer,
Artistic Director of the
Karmiel Festival for 20
years

Translation:

Benny Levy

In my early days as a folk dancer, I really liked Yonatan Karmon's dances. I marveled and was impressed by my ability to perform various variations of the staged performance style.

Over time, I met dancers, instructors, creators and choreographers who danced in "Lehakat Karmon" (the Karmon Dance Company). From them, I heard many stories and experiences about the Lehaka's tours and performances around the world. Everyone emphasized the unique, unusual choreographies of **Yonatan**, the "stage wizard". Each of them, with endless enthusiasm, spoke about him with sparkling eyes. Right then, I made a decision that, in time, I too would join one of Yonatan's groups and this fraternity as a dancer in the famous troupe, and could have the same experiences they had told me about and be exposed to the choreographic work of an admired and statured artist like **Yonatan Karmon**.

At the end of my military service, I was accepted into the Inbal Dance Theater. I danced in the company for almost two years, under the direction of the choreographer and artistic director, **Sara Levi-Tanai**, who was awarded the Israel Prize [in 1973] for her contribution to dance in Israel.

I'M ACCEPTED INTO LEHAKAT KARMON

I had really enjoyed dancing the Inbal Company's dances, but since I was folk dancing almost every evening, I wanted to have the experience with a group that was all Israeli folk style, influenced by the easy, bouncy movements that were an integral part of the Israeli folk dance style.

Indeed, in 1976, I learned that Yonatan was conducting

auditions at Seminar HaKibbutzim [Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts] in Tel Aviv for a major European tour, and that the premiere would take place in the most famous European concert venue in Paris, L'Olympia [The Olympia]. I went to the auditions and I was accepted. Since dance was my profession and my source of income, I asked Yonatan for an additional job within the company, so I could get some kind of a salary from this big tour. Yonatan agreed and assigned me as his brother Antonica's assistant for wardrobe and stage accessories.

YONATAN'S UNIQUENESS AS A CHOREOGRAPHER

The rehearsals in Israel were intense, very stressful and challenging. There I found to my astonishment that the choreographer creates the dances while rehearsing with us, the dancers, which was something unique to Yonatan and a few other choreographers. Most choreographers create the choreography in advance and come to rehearsals when the dance is already completely prepared. It was very exciting to see how Yonatan creates something out of seemingly nothing. His ability to create endless variations for each section was very impressive. Yonatan's unique talent was reflected in the very "Karmonistic" movements while at the same time he had a spatial view of the stage with all its elements.

His unique style of movement captured us all. He instilled in us a sense of "team spirit". We were proud to represent Israel with his dances that were influenced by Biblical stories, Jewish roots, ethnic dances and the working settlements – the kibbutzim and moshavim.



Lehakat Karmon at the "Olympia", Paris, 1977

Shlomo Maman



Yonatan agreed and assigned me as his brother Antonica's assistant for wardrobe and stage accessories.



Lehakat Karmon at the "Olympia", Paris, 1977

I remember our enthusiasm with Yonatan's professionalism, from thinking about every detail throughout rehearsals to performing on stage, as he made sure that each dance had a different character and unique style.

As dancers, we had already recognized that Yonatan has the soul of an artist and each of his dances became a classic work which audiences can enjoy even today.

YONATAN IS ALSO ATTENTIVE TO VOICES AND SOUNDS

Yonatan choreographed new dances for new tunes written especially for the troupe by our great composers including: **Yaakov Sagi, Shaike Paikov, Dov "Dubi" Seltzer, Izhak "Ziko" Graziani** and many others.

In one of the dances, he asked us to sing while dancing. It was a new song composed by **Dubi Seltzer**. For me to sing while dancing was a refreshing novelty. I really liked the idea because I really liked the song and for me, the connection between the dance and the singing was perfect.

In one of the medleys, **Dubi Seltzer** composed a debka style tune. In 1978, **Haim Hefer** wrote lyrics for this melody, and the song was called, "Belev Echad – In One Heart" and the song was performed by **Hedva Amrani** at the pre-Eurovision Song Contest. The song came in first tied with "A-Ba-Ni-Bi – Abanibi", sung by **Izhar Cohen**, however, because Hedva's song had already been performed on stage at the Olympia, it lost its place to "Abanibi".

The person who told the judging committee about it was producer **Shlomo Tzach**, who produced our Olympia tour. The show featured the best Israeli artists including **Izhar Cohen, Ilanit, Ilana Avital, The Brothers and the Sisters**, and **Shlomo Bar** (with a band that played special musical instruments). The conductor of the large orchestra was **Ziko Graziani**, and his substitute was a young musician who came to Israel from Romania, **Nancy Brandes**. Thanks to Yonatan, a close acquaintanceship was formed between me and Nancy. Later on, together with him in the largest recording studios in the

Shlomo Maman



Yonatan in 80s

country, I recorded music and playbacks for dance troupes and unique recordings of folk dance music.

Some of the orchestra players at the Olympia were French and some came with us from Israel. One of the guitar players was **Kobi (Jacob) Lurie** who is now known as a lyricist and composer, who wrote and composed for military groups [e.g., Lehakat Hanachal], including "Ya Lel", "The Slang Song", and others. He collaborated with many other artists including Yeshayahu "Shaiké" Levy with whom he works to this day. This is how Yonatan laid out connections between people, and thanks to that, lasting relationships were created.

FROM WHAT DO COWS GET FAT?

At one of the shows, a French Jew who was enthusiastic and excited about the show, came up to us and asked me and Kobi whether he could help us with something. We told him that we were renting rooms at the hotel and that it was very expensive. He offered us one of his apartments in Paris to stay in and we stayed there for an entire month.

One day, a large group of dancers were sitting at one of the restaurants near the Olympia while Yonatan happened to pass by, saw all the cakes we ordered for dessert and scolded us for it. Another time, he saw that the girls in the group were filling large plates with lettuce. Yonatan rebuked them and he said: "What do you think they use to get cows fat? They put on weight with lettuce." That was his way of telling us to watch our figures with humor and wisdom.

STRONG FRIENDSHIP

From that tour we developed a relationship that over the years grew into good friendships and mutual appreciation. In 1978, Yonatan again came to Israel to recruit dancers for Lehakat Karmon for performances in Europe. I suggested to **Lucy**, my ex-wife (who was then my girlfriend), to join the group. Lucy, who was and still is an excellent dancer, and through the years also became

one of the gifted choreographers in the country, took the audition and, of course, was accepted.

When I came to watch Lucy's audition for the company, I met the choreographer and dance instructor, **Shmulik Gov Ari**, who was already a well-known dancer at sessions (harkadot) in the Northern Region of Israel. When I met Shmulik, I was surprised to hear that he did not pass the selection process for the troupes. I convinced him to come back with me into the auditioning hall. I suggested to Yonatan that he not give up on Shmulik. Yonatan agreed and accepted Shmulik into the troupe. There was no doubt that this was a win-win situation – Yonatan enjoyed Shmulik's performance as a dancer and Shmulik learned from him what he knows today about stage choreography. I believe that some of Shmulik's beautiful folk dances were influenced by the time he had danced in the group.

LEHAKAT YERUSHALYIM – THE JERUSALEM TROUPE

In 1980, Yonatan founded Lehakat Yerushalyim – The Jerusalem Troupe. One Saturday, important guests were invited to watch the presentation of the show. On that Saturday, one of the dancers had contracted meningitis. The dancer was admitted to the hospital and could not come. Yonatan "urgently called" me into the show to take his place. I said I was unfamiliar with the dances, but Yonatan pressed me to do it. I ended up dancing the entire show, without even knowing a dance. I simply 'copied' the other dancers.

When the show was over, **Dr. Dan Ronen** ז"ל, a great person who I appreciated very much, while praising and complimenting, said that he was surprised

"I warn you; do not steal ideas and dances from Yonatan, as everyone else does"



From left: Yonatan Karmon, Shlomo Maman, Meir Shem Tov and Shlomi Mordechai

Shlomo Maman

to find that I was a dancer in this troupe. I told him that I was actually a last-minute substitute for one of the dancers. At that moment, he told me something I will never forget. He said: "I warn you; do not steal ideas and dances from Yonatan, as everyone else does." It shook me.

I later understood Dan's intent. As we know, many dancers and choreographers who danced with Karmon have taken and danced Yonatan's dances as their own, rather than being influenced and inspired by Karmon and choreographing their own dances.

YONATAN, FOUNDER OF THE KARMIEL FESTIVAL

In 1988, Yonatan undertook the task of establishing the Karmiel Festival and becoming its first artistic director. Yonatan met with me and asked me to join him as his right-hand assistant.

It was my honor to serve alongside him in this role. It was a time when I was instructing dance troupes all over the country, artistically directing several festivals in Ashkelon and other cities and even arranging a big festival at the Caesarea Amphitheater.

Of course, I immediately agreed and even suggested that he use the services of my office located at 20 Berdichevsky Street in Tel Aviv. We sat together in this office for seven consecutive years and all through these years with him, I was the producer of the Opening and Closing evenings of the festival.

At the first festival, Yonatan asked me to produce the "integrated" shows in the community gymnasium. It was not easy to get the audience accustomed to attend these shows, but with all sorts of tricks and



Yonatan with Shlomo Maman



Yonatan with Shlomo and Ofra

publicity, we were able to make this an important event that attracted a very large audience.

After the first years, when the dance sessions (harkadot) at the festival were directed by Yehuda Emanuel and later on by Yoav Ashriel, Yonatan asked me to manage them, in addition to the other productions, and so it was. When I was appointed Chairman of Irgun Hamarkidim (Organization of Folk Dance Instructors), I informed him that I was transferring all dance-session management in the festival to Irgun Hamarkidim. He did not object, but his condition was that the responsibility for all content and dancing would be mine alone.

WITH TRUMPETS AND THE SOUND OF A SHOFAR

For the first festival's opening night, Yonatan pictured a large group of dancers with shofars. He asked me to arrange for 60 dancers, and every few days he asked me for more and more dancers. Finally, just from my own performing groups, I managed to arrange 100 boys who danced on stage with shofars. Only Yonatan is capable of making us, the choreographers, ready to carry out every task and idea that came into his mind.

During one of the performances at the amphitheater, the stage was covered with dew and the dancers were slipping. (Yonatan was not around.) I approached the night's MC, **Dr. Dan Ronen**, and asked him to go on the stage and engage the audience. And while he was reading a poem to the audience, I came up on the stage along with dancers and producers, and we wiped the wet linoleum.

His unique style of movement captured us all. He instilled in us a sense of "team spirit". We were proud to represent Israel with his dances that were influenced by Biblical stories

Shlomo Maman

It didn't really help. After a dance or two, the dancers slipped again. I turned to **Graziani**, the conductor of the IDF Orchestra, and asked him to engage the audience in a sing-a-long, so I could try to solve the problem again. **Graziani** was concerned about Yonatan's reaction. I assured him that it was all my responsibility. As the orchestra played and the crowd sang along, we rolled the entire linoleum back, which later turned out to be a solution to the problem. Ever since, we have never laid linoleum on the Amphitheater stage.

During the community singing, Yonatan arrived and asked **Graziani** for two more songs to sing with the audience. From that event and on, community singing with the orchestra became a tradition in the show.

WHEN WRITERS VIE, WISDOM MOUNTS

One year, Yonatan decided to hold a "folk dance competition," but the choreographers did not cooperate. He contacted the festival's active choreographers and asked them to create folk dances and that's how he made it happen. During the festival, he also asked me to create a dance for the competition. I couldn't work on a professional recording, but I didn't give up, and I choreographed the partner dance, "Ma Omrot Einaiyich - What Do Your Eyes Say", accompanied only by an accordion and it won first place in the competition.

Alongside the folk dance competition, Yonatan conceived of the idea of holding a "stage choreography competition", with the aims of providing an incentive for creating, as well as attracting an audience to come to the (award-winning) competition in order to elevate and promote the field of Israeli dance for the stage.

Over the years, this competition that Yonatan initiated became a very prestigious performance at a festival, attended by outstanding choreographers and the best dance troupes in the country. It is a show that attracts a large audience.

EAST AND WEST

One year, it was decided to extend the festival to four days. One of the main evenings in the amphitheater was called, "East and West." For this evening, choreographers created special dances from both ends of the rainbow. For this show, I choreographed the work called "Resurrection". It was in Chassidic style based on a dance that the Chassidim do at

weddings. This dance was danced by dancers from all my performing groups, and the soloists were the choreographers Dado Kraus and Amos Kav.

The rehearsals were successful, but at the last minute, Dado was injured and I had to replace him. I was very nervous because I didn't really remember the role and I had to improvise the dance. I remember Yonatan helping me behind the scenes, encouraging and supporting me before going on stage. He gave me the strength to go through the show successfully, even though I had gotten into it at the last minute.

IN THE LIGHT OF MEMORIES

One year, Yonatan decided to have a performance of duets at Alon Park, after midnight, in the wee hours of the morning. The show was called, "In the Light of Memories" based on the songs of Shoshana Damari who also performed them. Each choreographer chose a pair of dancers to perform the dance. The general rehearsal took place in front of Yonatan, at Bikurei Ha'itim, together with **Shoshana Damari**. I created a choreography to the song, "Nagen Ugav", performed by two of my long-time dancers – **Lilach Barda** and **Ami Sheetrit**. Yonatan did not really like all the dances. Not wanting to offend certain choreographers, he sat us all down and asked three pairs of dancers to dance their dance again. He then spoke to the choreographers, very gently, asking them to correct the choreographies and to deepen and style them in the character that is unique to each choreographer. This was Yonatan's way of improving and commenting without hurting anyone's feeling. I remember this show as one of the most successful that had ever been in the festival.

HOSPITALITY IN PARIS

When I used to travel to festivals or to dance camps across Europe, especially if it was in France, I always stopped to visit Yonatan and Shuki. There were times that I stayed with them for a few days. At the first time, in that cute little studio apartment in Paris, when I woke up, I couldn't find my suitcase. When I asked, Yonatan took me to the shower, where I found the suitcase that was placed under the faucet.

This apartment was very small but filled with lots of warmth and love. And I had the sheer pleasure of staying in this cozy apartment again and again. Yonatan was an excellent cook, and sometimes he made very delicious Kosher meals especially for me.

At the last minute, Dado was injured and I had to replace him. I was very nervous because I didn't really remember the role and I had to improvise the dance.

Shlomo Maman

I was most surprised when he showed me paintings and sculptures he had created. I never imagined that he also painted and sculpted so beautifully.

SALUTE TO YONATAN KARMON AT THE 30TH KARMIEL FESTIVAL

I thank God that along with some good friends – **Aharon Solomon, Eli Sadeh, Shalom Carmi, Liat Katz Parachan, Lilach Waxman Rana, and Adi Eldar**, the former mayor of Karmiel, I had the great opportunity of dedicating the opening show at the 30th Karmiel Festival to Yonatan. On this evening, dance troupes re-created Yonatan's dances, artists who accompanied him over the years sang in his honor, and the audience cheered with appreciation and respect. The show, of course, took place on the same stage that Yonatan conceived of before the first festival.

The show reflected the style that Yonatan believed in and outlined from the first festival, whereby all dance styles fit together, co-exist, become integrated and influence each other in a complete way.

A SPIRITUAL TEACHER WHO IS ALSO ENGRAVED IN MY FLESH

Yonatan had educated generations of dancers. I feel that Yonatan was my spiritual teacher. I learned a lot from him about Israeli dance for stage. Everything I know about festivals, directing and stage management with professionalism and in-depth thought – it's all thanks to him. Over the years, Yonatan accumulated tremendous knowledge and since I had been able to be with him for a long time, I learned new things from him every day with love and great passion.

When I was a young dancer, during one of my first rehearsals with Lehakat Karmon, we were rehearsing the Fisherman's Dance, which was full of jumps and tumbles. I was injured on the chin and in need of medical care - stitches to close the skin, which left a scar that is still there until today. This scar is a reminder of those days in the troupe, and of Yonatan as its leader.

Yonatan is already missed by each and every one of us. I miss him as a friend and as a father figure. I cannot forget the day I was notified of my own father's death, a few seconds before the Karmiel Festival's finale. Yonatan gave me a long hug and encouraged me. I stayed with him to manage the



Akum Prize for Yonatan Karmon

stage until the end of the show, and only after it ended, did I go to mourn with the family in Tiberias.

A GREAT MAN, WITH A MODEST AND HUMBLE PERSONALITY

All the greatness and fame that Yonatan had while alive did not make him conceited even for a moment. He remained modest and humble, and all of him was about giving and love. This is a huge loss of a legend, a person who significantly paved the way for the field of Israeli dance. Yonatan has imprinted his unique dance legacy on each and every dancer in Israel and around the world. I still can't internalize his parting from us.

Whenever I think of a dance, Yonatan's image immediately comes to mind. It's hard for me to think I can't call him, consult, talk, and meet with him just like I used to do.

Yonatan was most deserving of receiving the Israel Prize for his immense contribution to Israeli dance for the stage. No one is worthier than him to be praised and recognized for his great work. We, the choreographers, will continue our journey and spread its great heritage everywhere in Israel and around the world. ✎



“What do you think they use to get cows fat? They put on weight with lettuce.” That was his way of telling us to watch our figures with humor and wisdom. ✎

Two Fathers



Barry Avidan
dancer and
choreographer,

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

My father, **Rabbi Avraham Bouhadna z"l**, brought me into the world, raised and educated me in Jewish tradition, Judaism, Zionism, Halacha and Mitzvot. As a result, I became a student at the Nativ Meir Yeshiva High School in Jerusalem.

My second father was my spiritual father, **Yonatan Karmon z"l**, from whom I absorbed the principles of choreography, learned staging, who inspired my creativity and guided my first steps in the Israeli dance world.

It all started when I was a yarmulke wearing soldier who came across a dance session (harkada) at a flight school in Hatzetim where I had been serving. I was fascinated. From there, the road to losing interest in the prestigious course was short and my new road was paved into the world of Israeli dance.

I became an avid fan of dance sessions (harkadot) and marathons and joined the ranks of the "Shalom 80" dance troupe directed by **Gavri Levi z"l**.

I met **Lucy Maman** at one of the marathons. She was sort of a talent scout when she noticed me and vigorously convinced me to join *Lehakat Yerushalayim*, directed by **Yonatan Karmon**.

When I came to the rehearsal, I felt drawn to the heart of the Bohemian... Yonatan was charismatic and magnetic and conducted the troupe with charm. That



Shabbat was Shabbat Bereishit (Genesis), on October 4, 1980, and to this day I remember the steps that Yonatan created in that rehearsal. Still, I didn't feel like I belonged. I felt inadequate. I could not internalize it then and I returned to the Shalom '80 Dance Company.

About a year later, what I call the fateful encounter happened. At the end of my military service, as I was walking on Ibn Gvirol Street in Tel Aviv, I saw Yonatan walking towards me. I was excited, but I kept going, for obvious reasons. But Yonatan called out to me with his "rolling R"... "Barrrry?!" I was surprised that he remembered me; I felt flattered and enthused when he said, "I don't forget a good dancer – ever!"

At that meeting, I told Yonatan that I was dancing with Gavri and would be flying abroad with the troupe.

Yonatan kindly said: "Go, have fun, come back and then come to us." And so, it was.

I returned to Israel and immediately purchased a ticket for a performance of "Lehakat Yerushalayim" at Heichal Hatarbut (Cultural Hall) in Tel Aviv.



Barry Avidan dancing "Rafsodia"

Barry Avidan

I was surprised that he remembered me; I felt flattered and enthused when he said, "I don't forget a good dancer – ever!"




Yonatan pulled me out of the audience and met me backstage and said, "I have a problem. One of the soloists sprained his foot. Do you think you can replace him and dance in a small solo section, Nitzanim Nir'u Ba'aretz, tonight"??

I was thrown into deep water. And the rest is history. I continued to dance in Lehakat Yerushalayim for another eight years. These were wonderful years when I had the privilege of being in the presence of this great man. These were years in which he molded me as a person and as a choreographer, and even outlined my professional path.



The totality of Yonatan and his dedication to Israeli dance reminded me of my father's innocence and devotion to the Jewish religion.

Over the years, I have learned to integrate the two worlds – the Jewish and the Israeli. I created dances inspired by these two worlds and this is what I have been doing with love to this day.

Years later, my wife also danced with Yonatan. And so, we named our first son **Stav Avraham** after my father and our second born son, **Yonatan**. 

We Continue To Dance And Sing



Izhar Cohen
singer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

Yonatan Karmon knew my parents before I was born, and he knew me from my infancy. Our professional connection began in 1975 when Yonatan had me join the performances at the Olympia in Paris.

Since then, our relationship has been powerful and irreversible. He was alongside me throughout my career and personal life. He was always concerned and advised me and, luckily, he also appreciated me as an artist.


I had the great privilege to be close to him, even in his last days, as well as to **Yehoshua Spector** (Shuki), who attended to him with rare devotion.

In my opinion, Yonatan has been a legend since his youth, but unfortunately, in adulthood he did not receive the national recognition that he deserved.

I, my family, my friends and all his loving and faithful



Izhar Cohen, Yonatan Karmon and Miri Shahaf Levi

friends will always cherish him in our hearts until our last day and maybe all of us will meet up there one day and continue to sing and dance endlessly. 



Shuki Hoffman
Dancer and
Choreographer

Translation:
Alex Huber

Memories

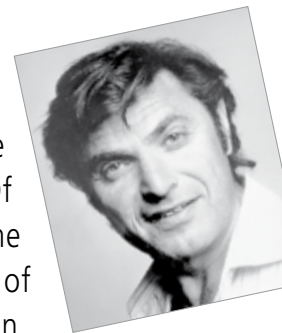
Yonatan Karmon was a teacher and the spiritual father of dozens of Israeli choreographers who absorbed and learned from him about staging, aesthetics, folklore, ideas, the blending of dance technique... and what else? I, Shuki Hoffman, was among them.

In 1988, my husband, **Shlomi**, and I opened the "Mechola" Dance School in Jerusalem, after 15 years of our managing "Hora Yerushalayim – the Jerusalem Hora" Troupe. This was also the year that Yonatan established and created the Karmiel Dance Festival. In subsequent years, we always celebrated together both the Karmiel Dance Festival and the anniversary of the Mechola Dance School.

When we celebrated the 18th anniversary of the Mechola Dance School, with a big show at the Jerusalem Theater, we bestowed upon Yonatan the title of "Honorary Mechola Member." Yonatan walked up on the stage emotionally moved by the cheers and applause of the audience, received the certificate, thanked us, and spoke about our mutual respect and admiration. During this show, we dedicated to him the dance "Shevet Yehuda", which he choreographed for us a few years earlier. This dance was performed at the Karmiel Dance Festival with the dancer, **David Dvir**, and later with **Oren Mansura**.

If we go back to the first few years, Yonatan met

me when I came to rehearsals to see my beautiful friend **Lucy Maman**. Of course, it was a good excuse for me to see the greatest choreographer of Israeli dance in the country in action.



In the Mechola Dance troupe that I founded, I started a troupe of adult dancers. I had nine couples, some of the best dancers in Israel. Karmon arrived at the rehearsal hall, in the German Colony in Jerusalem, and was very impressed with the dancers and their high level of technique. He requested that I attend the Karmiel Dance Festival even though I did not have the required 12 couples per troupe.

Yonatan created a professional committee we called "the gang" whose members were entrusted with building the plans for the Karmiel Dance Festival. The group was made up of his former dancers – **Amos Keb, Barry Avidan, Shlomo Maman, Dado Kraus** and other excellent and beloved dancers. I was the only woman in the group who did not dance with Yonatan in her youth (unfortunately).

We would meet on the roof of our dear Odeda Krivi's house. What a beautiful memory.

There is no doubt that Yonatan gave me artistic support and guidance in choreographing themed dances for the annual Karmiel Dance Festival under his direction. Creations like "David And His Wives", "Tarantella", "Sing To A Pepper" (an excerpt from a dance sequence done about the Machane Yehuda market to words by Ehud Manor and music by Menachem Koren), "The Evil Eye Will Not Hurt Me," and more... Works that are performed to this day by the Mechola Dance troupe.

In Alon Park, at midnight, after the main event of the Karmiel Dance Festival, the show "In the Light of Memories" was presented. It was a tribute to Shoshana Damari's love songs with her participation. Ten "duets" were selected for the show which included a couple from the Mechola Dance troupe that performed the dance "Adayin Kan". This duet won the 2006 Dance of the Year Award presented by Omanut La'am (National Arts Award).



Mechola in the dance, "LeYerushalayim", which was created for the 1995 Karmiel Festival



Zeev Keren
dancer and
choreographer

Translation:
Ruth Goodman



At the beginning of my journey as a dancer in the late 1960s, all the dancers and creators of Israeli dance were in awe of the name, **Karmon**.


In my encounters with him, I came to know a person who has Israeli dance in every part of his body. I had the pleasure of hearing about his worldview of dance, which was also ingrained in me.

Later on we met again, in preparation for the Karmiel Festival. During auditions for the first festival he asked me about the "Rakafot Tivon" troupe: "How did you manage to form a performing dance group that would be so Israeli – both the dances and the dancers?"

His perception and understanding of international and Israeli dance were reflected in the preparations for the festival in 1996, when the annual theme was "Industry – Manufacture and Export". The idea

astonished the choreographers – creating dances for the industry? I invited him to see the dance I created for the textile industry – "The Cotton Dance". He saw it and said: "We'll talk tomorrow".

The next day, he called and asked me to change two things in the dance. One requirement was that I change music – instead of the song "HaPilpel – The Hot Pepper", which is a melody that was adapted [from a Mexican folk tune] by Israelis, we will use an Israeli song, "Tilbeshi Lavan – Wear White". The second requirement was to change the beginning of the dance and add an American motif.

It was done. To my delight, the dance remains in our repertoire to this day, as do most of the dances that Yonatan had set as themes for the festival performances. 



Yitzchak Maayan
Choreographer


Translation:
Ruth Goodman

The Dance Guru

More than 20 years ago, when I founded the representative troupes from Be'er Sheva (for children, youth, adults, veteran dancers), **Yonatan** came to us for a focused Shabbat conversation as part of his relationship with **Eli Malul** who was then the dance person in the Be'er Sheva municipality. Yonatan came to teach all the troupes four elements which were meant for the opening program on the main stage at the first Karmiel Festival.

Yonatan was invited for Friday night dinner. Together with my wife at the time, **Hagit**, we were very

happy to host him. To this day, I remember how he told us that our children's names (my newborn son, named **Dor**, and his older sister, named **Mor**) sound very similar and can cause a problem in daily life. So he suggested that we consider renaming our son – "Yonatan", for example.

I would like to mention that during all of the years in which I had choreographed for the Karmiel Festivals and I worked with him, he had never intervened or commented on my creative work, even though he was the "Guru of Israeli Dance". In his eyes, a man's creative work is his honor. 

To Listen To Everyone



Gadi Bitton

dancer, choreographer,
producer and artistic
director

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

I had a very special relationship with **Yonatan**.

In the beginning of my career as a markid (Israeli folk dance instructor) and even more, during the early years of the Karmiel Festival, it was customary each year before the festival for Yonatan to invite me to his office, and for lunch at a small restaurant that served home-cooked food and he would order osso buco (a veal dish) for himself... I don't, however, recall what I ordered... because at each of these meetings I was paralyzed from my excitement in the presence of Yonatan who had cleared his time and decided to invite me to eat with him.

During the meal, he used to bombard me with the names of people from the dance world, the Ministry of Culture and the world of culture in general and about his conversations and dealings with them... At this stage of my professional life, I still didn't know anyone, and I had no idea who he was talking about ...

Immediately after dinner, we went to the office and there he showed me videos of works and programs he had participated in. At the end of the meeting... just during the last fifteen minutes, he would turn to me and ask: "What would you like to do this year at Karmiel...?"

And I, needless to say, had kept silent during

the previous two hours, and just memorized the information with which I had been bombarded, with the intention of going home and reading about all the people and topics Yonatan had spoken about... I had my 15 minutes of "fame" and would shoot out all the ideas I had from the previous year... and he, in his infinite wisdom, gleaned one thing from everything I had suggested and would say, "That's what we will do this year..."

The few hours with Yonatan taught me so much as I continued on my path in the field. I learned to explore things in depth and get to know the people who are involved with it as well as the entire field of dance in general, in Israel and around the world. To believe that everything is possible, to explore every avenue, to open doors and say that we in the folk dance field, deserve more attention... as Yonatan used to say to me repeatedly: "The resources are there for the taking..."

I learned to listen to everyone, and to learn from everyone, from the smallest to the biggest and in the same breath, to also be a guide to others and give everyone a chance and to believe in him/herself that "they can do it too".

Thank you for paving the way. 🙌

“
The resources
are there for
the taking...”



A Man Of The People

There are moments that remain forever! Heart to heart conversations full of honesty and integrity. Professional guidance and opinions, friendship and the love of creativity.

I remember the long talks with **Yonatan** during the troupe's rehearsals on Fridays at the Performing Arts Center. They enriched my life.

From Yonatan I learned about the aspiration for professionalism, modesty and exceptional humility.

I will never forget that on one of

his short trips to Israel, Yonatan took the trouble to visit me in the hospital after an accident I had experienced. I remember the Shabbat evening meal with us and his loving relationship with my grandchildren!

Yonatan's relationship with the troupe was colored by an extraordinary attitude. He would come to our rehearsals to refine the movements of the dancers, just out of true friendship.

Thank you for being a part of my life. 🙌



Ilana Segev

dancer and
choreographer

Translation:

Ruth Goodman

The Yonatan Karmon Dance Studio



Michal Linenberg

Dancer and Director of the Tel Aviv Center for Stage Arts, "Bikurei Ha'Itim"

Translation:

Dina Matmon

Lehakat Karmon was a significant and integral part of my life. I understood its great contribution to my life in particular and to Israeli dance in general.

Yonatan Karmon greatly influenced me, personally and professionally. Time spent with him was always an enriching and enjoyable experience.

He was a genuine artist who choreographed his dances during rehearsals, and he had an extraordinary eye for the stage. Yonatan was a modest person, pleasant, with explosive creativity and an unusual personality. I took great pride in being a dancer in Lehakat Karmon. Yonatan loved dancers who were happy and were capable of expressing the story they were telling through movement and facial expression.

The dances were very theatrical and full of significance. Yonatan particularly liked strong and masculine male dancers and beautiful, tall and thin female dancers. He always said that you could eat whatever you wanted, provided it was without sugar, carbohydrates and fat.

I once met **Shuki and Yonatan** in Paris and that was a special experience. I felt honored to enjoy Paris with two such charming people.

Yonatan always spoke to me at eye level and made me feel that I was one of the gang. Yonatan had such charisma that those surrounding him related to him with great respect and tried to please him. I did my best to look respectable near him, to be strict about proper nutrition and show him due respect.

Yonathan's partner, Shuki, became part of the family and was an inseparable part of the troupe. He was a tour guide and organized a special tour for us. When it was over, Shuki took me (without Yonatan's knowledge, of course) to the best bakery I've ever been to. I hope Shuki never gave away that secret....

Lehakat Karmon was a significant and integral part of my life. I understood its great contribution to my life in particular and to Israeli dance in general. I had just become the director of the "Bikurei Ha'Itim" Stage Arts Center, in the building across the street from Mifal HaPayis, a building that was torn down and moved to a new location.

I decided to name the different spaces in "Bikurei Ha'Itim" after well known people in the Arts field

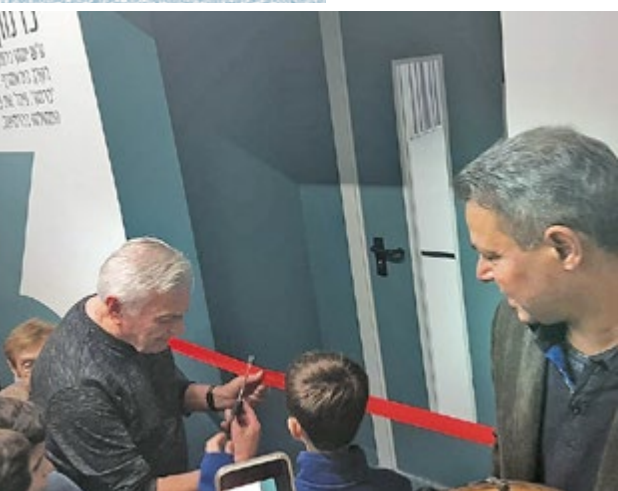


The Yonatan Karmon Dance Studio



Yonatan launching The Yonatan Karmon Dance Studio

Michal Linenberg



together with **Alon Schmidt**, a special evening in honor of this occasion on November 23, 2018. **Yonatan Karmon** himself honored us with his presence. It was a very emotional and enjoyable evening and many generations of troupe alumni attended.


Yonatan remained a modest person and waited patiently with everyone for the beginning

in Israel. One of them was, of course, Yonatan Karmon, the king of Israeli dance, the man who put Israeli folk dance on the stage. I was excited that the "Bikurei Ha'ltim" Center named a dance studio for him. It was even more emotional for me that this happened during his lifetime. I believe in giving a person honor during his lifetime.

To my delight, I was privileged to organize,

of the event.

Yonatan is no longer with us, but he will remain in my heart forever. His charming smile will remain engraved in my memory as well as his positive influence on my life.

I'm sad that he left us, but I feel very privileged to have known such a person and to have danced in his troupe. 

Much Of What Is In Me I Absorbed From Yonatan

I was sent to Lehakat Karmon by **Dassi Shachar**, who was the director of the dance company I danced with in Herzliya. She told to me, "go, try." I wasn't yet 15 years old, and I came with a friend for the first rehearsal. We went to the Center for the Performing Arts, the Opera House in Tel Aviv. We entered through the artists entrance, already an exciting experience in itself.

We got upstairs, the rehearsal was in progress, we came into the studio and I saw mature, experienced dancers doing very, very complicated things. Retrospectively, I realized that it was a dance called "Arba'at HaYesodot – The Four Elements". Such an abstract idea and choice of dancing... After the first rehearsal, I didn't want to go again. It was difficult, and the people were older and

much more mature than I was. For the friend who came with me, it also didn't work out go to Tel Aviv again, and I thought it wouldn't happen. On the following Friday, **Yonatan** called Dassi to see why I had not come.

I mustered my courage and went alone. In my first year with the Lehaka I was exposed to the richness of the world of dance. Classical ballet lessons that I had never done in my life. Each rehearsal began with an hour and a half classical ballet class followed by two and a half hours of the troupe's repertoire.

During the last six years of Lehakat Karmon in its current format, we have performed at every possible culture hall in Israel. Back and forth. It was a pleasure. I would ride with my army uniform



Lior Tavori

dancer and choreographer

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

Lior Tavori

and change my outfit from a soldier to a dancer. A different being. The most enjoyable job that I could ask for. I learned a lot from the dancers in the Lehaka and of course, from Yonatan.

In the Lehaka, I developed a thick skin. Little by little, I made progress, learned, I took everything in. I looked forward to every meeting on Fridays. Everything I was used to was shattered and it changed my way of thinking. I loved it. At first I did not manage many of the elements, but every time it gave me a new challenge, one that I had to achieve, to learn and to accustom my body.

I loved the way Yonatan explained to us about every dance, and used a key phrase, which I also use with my dancers today: "The leg can be brought forward, sideways and backward, you can't do braids with it. The question is, 'how'?" And he also said to me, more than once, "who do you want to be? Martha Graham – we already have! Baryshnikov – we already have"! And it was a very important motto for me to create and to challenge myself and express myself in a way that makes me unique.

Yonatan taught me how to deal with costumes, how to pre-set all the accessories in place, each accessory, belt, shirt, pants, shoes in its proper place. How to organize it fast, and how to change costumes really quickly.

The first year I danced in the Lehaka, I was surprised how many sets of costumes could be changed during one dance! That too is a skill. I realized that every section of the dance has a specific character, or artistic line that should also be reflected in color changes, or texture, of which the costumes are made.

I feel that the phrases, through the work, the creations, of Yonatan, have influenced and continue to influence me deeply as a creator of Israeli dance today. Like Yonatan, I too went to study classical ballet and modern dance, to bring additional worlds to my dancers that could connect to the world of Israeli folk dance. I learned from Yonatan that good work is not only measured in one performance, but rather in the process. I learned that after a performance, you don't talk to the dancers, meaning not to have a conversation with everyone, but to only give



feedback in the studio, after everything is calm. In the last few years of the Lehaka, I was very close to him. I was in the "demonstration couple". While he was creating, when he said, "I need a 'pas de bourrée', then raising a leg, lifting, turning, such movement and other movement", and I had the privilege to translate or help translate some of his thoughts into movement. I looked closely into his eyes, what is important to him, what remains, what is solid, what can be remembered and what goes into the trash.

After one rehearsal he would say about a section that was built in the previous rehearsal: "You have to build a new piece of couples here, that's not good". He never compromised. He would go over in depth, each and every time, until he was completely satisfied with what he had created.

From Yonatan I learned about the spirit in dancing, about endless jumps, about a happy and fast movement, about structures of boys facing girls, that a male dancer should dance like a man and not be coquettish and dance in a feminine way. His masculine ideal was very strong and prominent in dancing.

I loved the original music that Yonatan chose for the dance, music specifically written for him – "Tri kud", "Rhapsody" and "Prachim". I really liked the happy hora dances he created for the Lehaka. I loved reviving his old dances with him and seeing what he sees 20 years after the dance was created. What he feels about it, what he thinks needs to be taken out / changed / updated. He would always say: "It's my dance. I'm allowed everything".

I find that in the way I create today, much of what is in me I absorbed from Yonatan.



He never compromised. He would go over in depth, each and every time, until he was completely satisfied with what he had created.



Alon Schmidt

dancer and manager of
Lehakat Karmon – the
Karmon Troupe

Translation:

Ruth Goodman and
Tzipi Shragai

*His star
grew as
more people
connected
with him. He
left his own
unique mark
with each
one of them
and with his
special talent
he knew how
to bring all of
them together
through the
powerful love
of dance.*

Yonatan And Me

I find it difficult to define the exact time that I met with **Yonatan**, the schedules are obscure, and it seems that he has always been a part of my life....

While in my youth, as a dancer in "Hora Neurim" in Jerusalem, I followed "Lehakat Yerushalyaim". I remember being so impressed with Yonatan's creativity that I used to sneak into the Arlozorov School to watch the Lehaka dancers dancing in the gym, where sparks of pure "harmonious genius" flew.

My first encounter with him was at random, at a time when I was about to enter a year of permanent service in the army. We met with **Bracha Dudai** ז"ל, when Yonatan came to her with **Yossi Tal-Gan**, to finalize things for the first Karmiel Festival. The introduction was brief, but I already felt a closeness to him and a special connection.

During my permanent military service in the Air Force, I taught dancers at the base to dance during transfer of command ceremonies. For the purpose of the show, I decided to contact Yonatan and ask him to lend me a set of costumes. Close associates warned me not to dare to ask and that he would consider it rude. I decided to ask anyway. When Yonatan heard from me that I needed a set of costumes for the army, he immediately agreed: "Of course, the storage is downstairs right beneath the festival headquarters, next to the Chinese restaurant. Go ahead and take whatever you need". I knew exactly what I needed, and this surprised Yonatan. It was the costumes for "Haro'a Haktana...: "Mr. Soldier," he said. "Remind me, what's your name?" And the rest is history.

Over the years I worked alongside him producing shows at the Karmiel Festival. From the performances of dance troupes in the sports arenas to the nighttime performances at Alon Park, and of course at the opening and closing performances on the main stage. For all intents and purposes, I was by his side, and this has continued over the years with the Karmon Association (formerly Amutat Ami), as a dancer and administrative manager of the troupe.

Working as the troupe manager alongside Yonatan led me to work with additional creative people. It

is impossible not to mention Bertha Quartz and Galina, the seamstresses.

Those who did not experience this did not see the teamwork with thought about every detail (ribbon, bead or embroidery) and going to Goldstein in Nahalat Binyamin to together choose the appropriate fabric for each dance.

Unique sketches and patterns were part of these two precious seamstresses. Unfortunately, Bertha was run over and killed when a bus hit her as she crossed the road near the office. It was the day before two performances in Givatayim and after she had prepared everything that was needed for the show. Yonatan went to the funeral and we had our rehearsal, and when we were backstage he had the ironing board standing with a single memorial candle waiting for Bertha's last ironing to be remembered tenderly.

The Gulf War - Nachash Tzefa (Viper Snake alert code)

In January 1991, during the Gulf War, I worked at the television studios in Jerusalem. Suddenly I received a pager message: "When are you coming to town (Tel Aviv)? Call! Yonatan".

I was very surprised. This was not the time that Yonatan used to come to Israel from Paris. I immediately called and arranged to meet with him the next day on Berdichevsky Street, in **Shlomo Maman's** office. At the meeting, the details were all clear to him:



Alon Schmidt



"So, there is an artistic dance festival in Munich and we are flying to perform. We will take 7 couples. We'll perform two Kabbalistic medleys and Rikud Chassidi (Chassidic dance), Magash Hakesef (Silver Platter) and Rhapsody. We will rehearse together. It will be okay. We're going for four days. He issued a printed program with a photo of Lehakat Karmon" from '67.

"The troupe's name will be "Karmit," he added. "Why Karmit? Ahhh ..., it's a little Karmon..." he said, smiling. "And who will dance"? I asked. "We will recruit dancers" he replied. "You" (Me? I never thought this would be offered to me), "we'll talk to **Amos, Barry** and other dancers and think about girls, too." And so it was. I returned home happy and we started to assemble a group that eventually traveled to Munich, just like that, in the middle of everything and with gas masks.

Thus, between one scud and the next, from "Viper

Snake" to "Heavy Heat Wave" [alert codes], we rehearsed in Givatayim and prepared for a festival in Munich. The rehearsals were meticulously conducted. Every leap, every turn and every pas de bourrée, connected with the movement and emotion that only Yonatan knew how to get out of the dancers and bring them to the precise performance execution. In addition, I remember working on the musical editing in the studio in Jerusalem and traveling with **Odeda and Yonathan** to Karmiel, to bring costumes for the show, while in the background the sunsets and sirens were strangely intertwined.

In Munich, we received a royal welcome at the Kempinski "Four Seasons" hotel. The excitement was great. We spent the days and nights with intensive rehearsals and, all of a sudden, we were on a stage with the greatest artists of that time. It was an unforgettable four days. Seven couples who appeared in two shows with two Tel Aviv air raid sirens that were broadcast on CNN in the background.

Yonatan and my mother Pnina

In December 2002 my mother, Pnina, became ill. In the past, she worked at a ticket office in Jerusalem and had connections with many communities. The troupe planned a performance at "Beit Shmuel" in Jerusalem. One day, as I was helping my mother I talked to Yonatan about the show and ticket sales for the show. Yonatan asked to speak to my mother and told her that the troupe needed to sell tickets to ensure a full house for the show and he was asking for her help. My mother replied that she did not have the strength but would try to help. "I trust you will succeed," he told her.

Alon Schmidt



From right: Lilach, Dganit, Maya and Omri Schmidt with Yonatan in Paris, 2010

The conversation ended and like magic, my mother recovered and began to give me instructions: "Alon, bring the ledger out of the drawer, call everyone I tell you! So we sat for a few hours and called all the Jerusalem elite members, friends and important professionals in Jerusalem. My mother took care of all that without anyone knowing that she was ailing.

The time came for the show. I went to my parents and pleaded for my mother to come. She said: "We'll see, it will be okay." Finally, she got up, got organized, put on makeup, and came to the theater. Yonatan asked her to sit next to him at the command post and watch the show from there. So it was. He was sensitive and considerate and did not leave her while managing the show. The hall was jam-packed. The energy from the show kept her for another two weeks, but soon after, my mother passed away with a sense of achievement as only she knew how to accomplish.

Yonatan and my family

Yonatan had a special relationship with my family – my wife **Deganit** and our children **Lilach, Omri** and **Maya**. **Deganit adds:** Over the years, Yonatan became an integral part of our family. Almost every time he and Shuki arrived in Israel, we would meet. When I was in my ninth month of pregnancy with Lilach, my first born (22 years ago), Lehakat Karmon set rehearsals every Friday. The rehearsals were conducted very seriously and professionally. Only Alon was allowed to have an open cell phone in case I went into labor. At every phone call that Alon received, the rehearsal was stopped and Yonatan was interested in knowing what was going on, and if there was a birth. Thus began his special connection with Lilach and later with my other children.

Only our children were allowed to run around among the dancers during rehearsals. Yonatan's relationship to the children was very special. He showered them with warmth and love, and they loved him back. At one rehearsal, when I came with


Lilach, she started crawling among the dancers and Yonatan said, "Don't let it bother you". "Just keep dancing...". And so he would lift her up and dance with the dancers. He had an amazing connection with the children.

In one of our visits to Paris, Yonatan wanted to spoil the children with the food they liked. Lilach loved sauerkraut, and Omri, hot dogs. Yonatan walked around the markets with us to find what they wanted and invited us to his home to prepare a glorious meal for us with these products. It was very important to him for the children to enjoy themselves and have a good time. He hung out with us in Paris and showed us all the special sites. At the end of the trip, when we boarded the bus that took us to the airport, Omri was really crying, and they both put their palms together from both sides of the bus windows. Yonatan also seemed to have a small tear.

Years have passed since then and the children have grown up. Yonatan was always interested in their well-being and happy to see them when he came with **Shuki** to visit us. He became a family member and the children saw him as their "third grandfather".

We loved him very much, not only because of his creativity and his extensive work, because for us he was a close and beloved person, a charming man with a huge heart. We will love you always!

Yonatan was special in his approach to people. He was very special in his creations and his works. "Everyone has his own star in the sky". I say: "Everyone has his own Yonatan". He "touched" every one of us. His star grew as more people connected with him. He left his own unique mark on each one of them and with his special talent, he knew how to bring all of them together through the powerful love of dance.

Yonatan was and still is an object of admiration and a symbol in my eyes of Eretz Yisrael Hayafa Ve'Hatova – the beautiful and good Land of Israel, even today, in times when such a concept sounds like a "cliché". The dance creations were and will remain impressive and unique, not to be imitated but rather to serve as a source of inspiration. Working alongside him was extremely fascinating, thrilling and enriching, in every creation and preparation for a production... He was a spiritual father to me and a source of inspiration in the field. I'm sure it has been so for many others as well. 

Why I Love The Man And His Legacy



Yigal Betzer

researches and documents "the heritage of folk dance and dance for the stage in Israel"

Translation:
Alex Huber

I didn't dance in Lehakat Karmon, but... my connection with **Yonatan Karmon** is that of affection. For five years now, I have been immersed with pleasure in the research and documentation of – "The heritage of folk dance and dance for the stage in Israel".

Much has been written about Yonatan, mainly in research and books by "eye witnesses". Almost everyone points to Yonatan as the supreme dancer, choreographer and director. Pictures and films exist, quite abundantly, that document him and his past dance troupes as well as outstanding Israeli dance troupes performing his legendary dance choreographies.

I feel a personal-dance-cultural deprivation with regard to Karmon, which I endeavor to fill by documenting conversations with his students, his followers and others who were in his social circle. I slowly acquire pieces of the puzzle that make up the overall picture of Yonatan and his contribution to the dance culture in Israel.

Young Yonatan is documented in many videos, in

black and white. He dances on stage, like a frenzied boy, restless, while inspiring his dancers to do the same. I, a simple man, without a degree in theater, can understand and enjoy the performances of Lehakat Karmon because they are high-quality dance theater performances.

Many years ago, when I was younger, I belonged to a "Gar'in Nahal," as an accordionist among other things. I amassed many hours of playing and specifically playing timeless dance music, such as "Haroa Haktana", "Al Tira", "Shibolet Basadeh", and more ...

As an advocate for the language of art and dance, I repeatedly watch the wonderful "Karmonic" creations and every time I am fascinated by new details in the plot, which I had not noticed in the previous viewing which is not due to...problems with my memory.

Focusing on still images from Karmon dance videos allows me to recognize the body language of the



Lehakat Karmon – "Shiru HaShir"

Yigal Betzer

Karmon's stories, in the language of dance, describe with great charm his love for the Israeli world of nature and brings to life the landscapes of the country and its people.



Lehakat
Karmon –
"Shiru HaShir"

dancers and especially Yonatan and his magical mimicking, which together form a dramatic story line.

In the dances that Yonatan created, I notice a constant pattern of "beginning, middle and end" with a beginning of about four to seven minutes, followed by a dramatic story which reaches its conclusion with a dramatic "closing of the plot".

Karmon's stories, in the language of dance, describe with great charm his love for the Israeli world of nature and brings to life the landscapes of the country and its people.

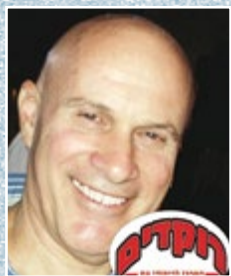
Finished, but not completed, Yonatan Karmon, may he rest in peace, is still in our lives. It is appropriate that we spread and integrate into the public, in all its diversity and age groups, the "Karmonic dance language" and think of it as "classical dance".

For me, Yonatan is still here, he's not leaving us. His magical works – "Rhapsody", "The Four Seasons", "Rehavia", "Haroa Haktana", "Al Tira," and many others, will become the language of the public at large. 🦿



The audience comes to enjoy and not see you sweat and strain ... everything should look effortless.. 🦿

A Movie = A Thousand Pictures = A Million Words



Yaron Meishar
editor

Translation:
Ruth Goodman

Here is a collection of videos, mostly in black and white, from the 1960s and a bit later. Please note some points that I would like to highlight for you: • The choreographer (Yonatan) dances with the troupe in many of the dances • Many dances are "stories", a kind of "dance theater" • Some of the dances are a blend of classical ballet and folklore. Yonatan drew from both classical and folklore and was influenced by contemporary choreographers • Many dances are accompanied by the singing of the dancers during the dance • The films are in black and white with just a few dancers on the stage and yet they are mesmerizing... • The year listed indicates the year that the video was filmed and not the year that the dance was created.

1. "Haro'a Haktana", "Gozi Li", 1963: <https://bit.ly/3dgiCqn>
Drora Alon, Edna Fuchs, Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Chanita Zahavi, Nitza Broide, Yonatan Karmon, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Meir Tepper, Moshe Shine, Memo Jacques.
2. "Ba'a Menucha Layage'a", "Uri Tziyon", "Mechol Hakerem", 1963: <https://bit.ly/33wZ2BC>
Chanita Zahavi, Jenia, Aviva Paz, Yehudit Perry, Naomi Ben-David, Rivka Zuckerman, Yonatan Karmon, Itamar Zuckerman, Memo Jacques, Nissim Harari, Aryeh Katan, Zamir Ziv.
3. Medley: "Mi Yivne Bayit", 1963: <https://bit.ly/3dijSxx>
Drora Alon, Edna Fuchs, Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Chanita Zahavi, Nitza Broide, Yonatan Karmon, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Meir Tepper, Moshe Shine, Memo Jacques.
4. "Ez Vakeves", "Bifat Hakfar", 1963: <https://bit.ly/3aa2cxY>
Chanita Zahavi, Jenia, Aviva Paz, Yehudit Perry, Naomi Ben-David, Rivka Zuckerman, Yonatan Karmon, Itamar Zuckerman, Memo Jacques, Nissim Harari, Aryeh Katan, Zamir Ziv.
5. "Moshe U'vnot Yitro", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2xc6l5T>
Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Edna Fuchs, Chanita Zahavi, Yehudit Perry, Jenia, Yonatan Karmon, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Moshe Shine, Meir Tepper, Itamar Zuckerman.
6. "Hadayagim", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2QyiGlj>
Drora Alon, Edna Fuchs, Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Chanita Zahavi and Nitza Broide, Yonatan Karmon, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Meir Tepper, Moshe Shine, Memo Jacques.
7. "Esh Be'Harim", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2vEoHMh>
8. "Bo V'Eshak Lecha", "Exodus", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2UrLUcU>



Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Edna Fuchs, Chanita Zahavi, Yehudit Perry, Jenia, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Moshe Shine, Meir Tepper, Itamar Zuckerman.

9. "Debka Rafiach", "Nad Ilan", "Hava Netze Bemachol", "Debka Meshuleshet", "Shibolet Basadeh", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2worlkg>
Drora Alon, Edna Fuchs, Ofra Fuchs-Manor, Chanita Zahavi, Nitza Broide, Yonatan Karmon, Yossi Ben Sheetrit, Meir Tepper, Moshe Shine, Memo Jacques.
10. "Basadot", "Ez Vakeves", 1963: <https://bit.ly/2J510Qq>
11. "Bo'i Tama", "Ronu Na", 1963: <https://bit.ly/3dkYnli>
12. "Shiru Hashir", "Bat Tzurim", "Keshoshana Bein Hachochim," 1963: <https://bit.ly/2xXINTN>
13. "Erev Ba", "Anachnu Haro'im": <https://bit.ly/2UuA4iu>
14. From the 1979 "Good Evening" television program in the Netherlands: <https://bit.ly/396JMwD>
Lucy Maman, Ofira and Tuvia Tischler, Ofer Maliach, Yossi Bracha, Shmulik Gov Ari and others.
15. Yoni Carr (Owami) and Danny Beanshtad in "Timna" Dance, 1969: <https://bit.ly/33KA4yT>
16. "Rafsodia" – Reconstructing Karmon's Dance at the 2017 Karmiel Festival: <https://bit.ly/33F1hmw>

In the black and white films from the years 1960-1963, the troupe was comprised of 5-6 couples and in these performances, Yonatan did not appear in the character dances so as not to overshadow his dancers and to enable them to fully express themselves. For example, the dances "Sadot", "Esh Be'Harim", "Exodus".



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SWEET MEMORIES

