

# My Yonatan



**Nira Paz**  
dancer

Translation:  
**Alex Huber**

**M**y 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".***