



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

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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!