



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