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Industry And Culture That Go Hand In Hand

A Salute to Dov Zeira ז"ל

Dov Zeira, who founded and managed the "HaTaklit-Haifa" Record Company and was an active member of the Israeli Record Federation – IFPI, passed away in January 2021.

Dov, a dear friend of mine, was an industrialist and a man of culture who produced folk dance records and helped to legally arrange the music recordings we produced for folk dance, in the face of the major record companies, music recordings that we use for folk dance to this day. This article is dedicated to him and to his work.



Dov Zeira 3.19.1931 - 1.20.2021

The 1970s and 1980s were years of flourishing and prosperity for the music industry on vinyl records (black plastic records). These are the large records, "long playing", at 33.33 revolutions per minute. Remember? The music from these records was copied to recording devices on magnetic reels and later, on cassette tapes that were used by us in folk dance.

Everyone knew the big record companies "NMC", "Hed Arzi", "Phonokol", "Isradisk", "Eastronics" and others, but there were also smaller companies, including the "HaTaklit-Haifa" company. We, in folk dance, loved the recorded music and the possibility of using songs played on the airwaves; therefore, dances were choreographed to the sounds of these songs.

The dances created then were choreographed to the original music only and not to the musical arrangements. It was therefore necessary to omit the transition passages, beautiful as they were, to arrange a proper introduction to the dance, to adjust the song speed to enable dancing to

its tunes and to have all the dance music edited together on a record or tape designed to work in the dance sessions. This involved different singers, from various record companies. All of this was to suit the needs of the evolving folk dance movement.

These edits were not in line with the rules and policies of the various record companies. They did not understand the need and did not agree to these necessary changes.

These were days of flourishing for "white records" (i.e., records made from the original recordings and sold in workshops abroad) and "workshop tapes" that were also produced in Israel, without licenses and without royalties to ACUM and the record companies but created great momentum for the development of Israeli folk dance.

At first there were a few attempts to release folk dance records by companies - "CBS" (later "NMC"), "Makolit" and possibly others.

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Dov Zeira's HaTaklit Library

records (speed of 45 revolutions per minute) together with **Nahum Heiman** and the **Gilboa Quintet (Amos Aloni**, lead on flute), which were suitable for folk dancing, but it wasn't enough. The company also produced most of the records of Lehakat Ha'Gevatron, many of whose wonderful renditions were for folk dances.

In the 1970s, **Yonatan Gabay** z"l suggested to **Dov Zeira** that he record special arrangements for the folk dance classes that had begun to flourish. Together they produced five special records in the "Hava Nirkoda" series with 67 dances performed by the "Amos Aloni Orchestra" (Musicians: **Amos Aloni** – flute; **Eli Gertler** – bass guitar; **Manolo Kleinez** – guitar; **Yitzhak Gelber** – accordion; **Asa Gavrieli** – drums). These recordings are used by us to this day for many of our basic dances, among them: Hora Nirkoda, Hora Medura, Tzadik Katamar, Al Tira and many others (see attached list).

In the early '80s, when the "Folk Dance Recording Center" (now "Rokdim") was established, I realized that I needed to obtain licenses and signed agreements with ACUM (the copyright holders of the songs) and the record companies that own the soundtrack. After the first groundbreaking agreement with Eastronics (a big thank you to **Mr. Noah Eitan** who was the CEO at the time and created this breakthrough), I started switching

between the CEOs of the various companies, to sign the same agreement with everyone. It was a very difficult and complicated task ...

I first met **Dov Zeira** at "HaTaklit", a large 3 story record store on Bograshov Street in Tel Aviv, where recordings made by all the record companies were sold. I made an appointment by phone with Dov, who in those days divided his time between Tel Aviv and Haifa, and on the appointed day I arrived at his office and presented him with the "exceptional" and special agreement I had signed by then with "Eastronics" and "Hed Arzi".

Dov asked: "What's in it for me? Why agree to something that on the face of it seems not to be in accordance with the usual rules and really has no economic potential for record companies?" And the truth - how many such tapes can you sell?

The core of the rationale I presented was that folk dance is an integral part of our culture that takes place "under the radar" and needs to be allowed to take place in a legal and orderly manner. Dov was convinced and an agreement was signed with the "HaTaklit" Record Company as well.

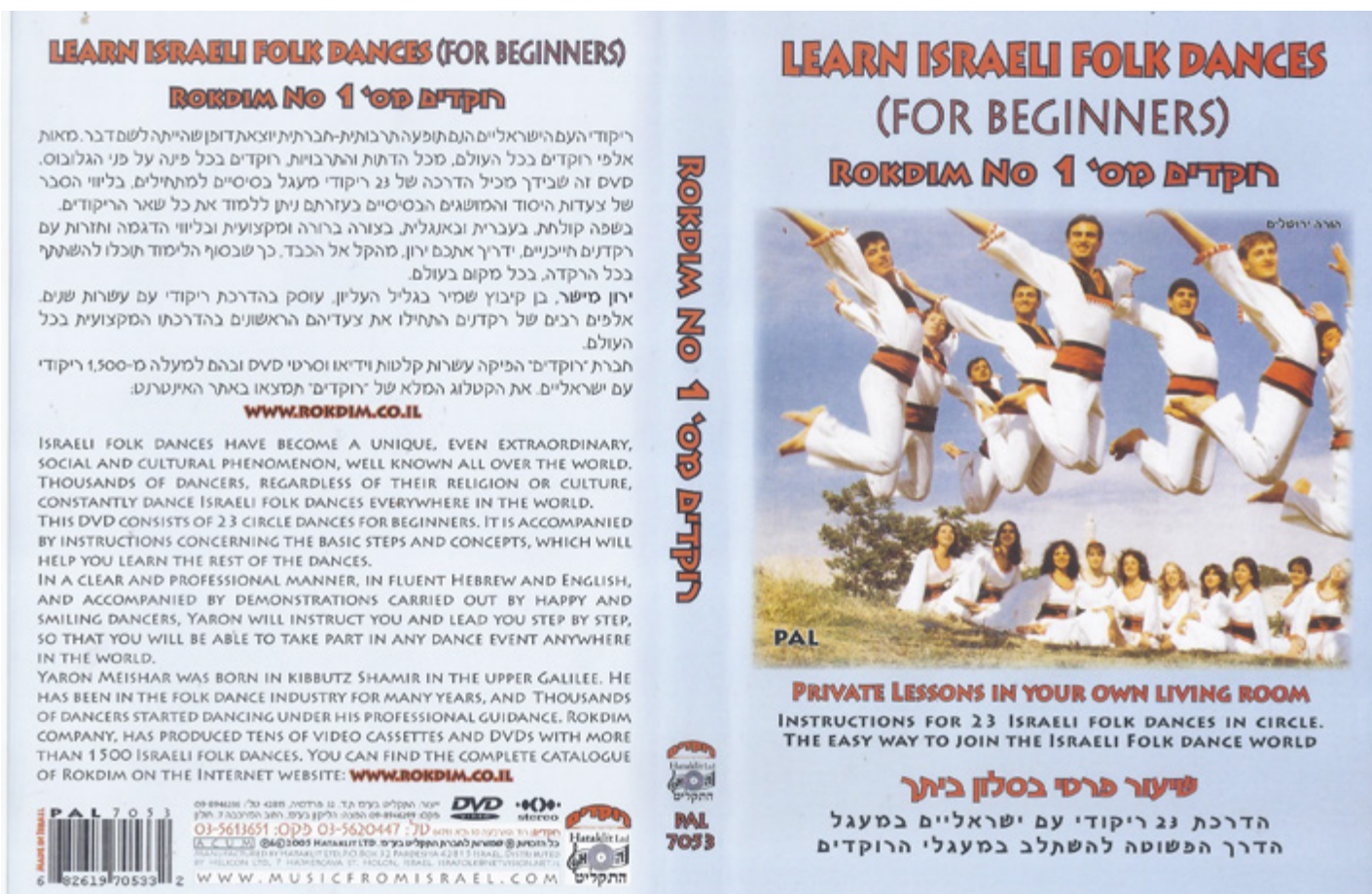
Along the way there were many more bumps and difficulties, especially when we started producing discs (CDs) instead of cassettes and when the record companies desired to make a significant profit from this industry, without a real understanding of the field. This led to the closure of the "Rokdim" store and the discontinuation of dance discs and videos.

To my delight, the break was short. We started discussions to re-regulate the field. The rapid development shifted the center of gravity and



Dov Zeira with Effi Netzer and Ran Eliran

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DVD - Beginner Circle Dances produced by HaTaklit

recordings to the Internet (as they exist today) and new agreements were needed.

Dov wholeheartedly supported a special arrangement for us and tried to convince all his friends in the Israeli Record Federation to approve the agreements. Dov took me to his friend **Itzik Alsich**, the owner of Helicon, to persuade him as well to agree to distribute folk dance music in this way. The approval was given only verbally, because signing such a thing was too complicated (editing of the transition sections, speed changes, etc.). To this day, the "Helicon" company cooperates with us and approves the "Rodkim" videos with its music, to be on YouTube.

Dov loved our field and spoke on behalf of the folk dance movement at IFPI board meetings and with key figures in the music industry, such as **Pnina Edri** from NMC and many others.

The collaboration between us was mutual and together with **Shlomo Maman** we helped him many times in various productions and his activities on the Internet. Dov loved the Land of Israel and its landscapes and liked to include them on the covers of records and CDs he produced; there

were pictures of dance groups in the landscapes of the Jezreel Valley and the whole of the Land of Israel. Dance troupe footage also appeared on DVDs he produced.

Dov received from me the flagship product of "Rokdim" – a DVD and an audio CD of beginner dances ("Rokdim" number 1), so that it could be distributed in stores. The set was indeed sold in stores and I even came across it at the duty-free shop at Ben Gurion Airport.

Dov produced a special CD of folk dances with all the Gevatron songs to which dances had been choreographed. I did the professional edits for these dances for him.

On one occasion I received a request from a client in Japan for the production of 1,000 folk dance CDs, with a fixed dance list. There was no chance I would get licenses for such a thing, so I passed the order to Dov and he obtained all the licenses from the record companies. I edited the music for him and he produced the series and sold it to them.

Many times I helped Dov identify recordings on YouTube that he was not sure if they were from


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his records. (His recordings are recorded in his name on YouTube and the royalties go to him.) Just recently he asked me to identify two complete CDs that were put up for sale on Amazon under the name of another company. I listened to all the songs and found the record numbers on which these recordings had first come out so that he could obtain ownership of them.

In 2011, an article was published in "Rokdim-Nirkoda" titled, "Creating a Culture is Not Trivial". Kol Yisrael's culture reporter, **Miri Krimolovsky**, had interviewed Dov at his home and we gained a beautiful article:

<http://magazines.rokdim.co.il/showartphp?lang=en&artid=146>

May his memory be for a blessing. 

List of dances on HaTaklit's Hava Nirkoda records

Song (Dance) Name	Record Name
Hine Ma Tov	Hava Nirkoda 1
Merkava	Hava Nirkoda 1
Mazurka	Hava Nirkoda 1
Hora Neurim	Hava Nirkoda 1
Ez Va'Keves	Hava Nirkoda 1
Hora Nirkoda	Hava Nirkoda 1
Cherkesiya Kfula	Hava Nirkoda 1
Nigun Atik	Hava Nirkoda 1
Kuma Echa	Hava Nirkoda 1
Debka Harel	Hava Nirkoda 1
Korobushka	Hava Nirkoda 1
Bat Ha'Karnel	Hava Nirkoda 1
Krakoviak	Hava Nirkoda 1
Ha'Macho Ha'Yevani	Hava Nirkoda 1
Aleksandrova	Hava Nirkoda 1
Erev Ba	Hava Nirkoda 1
Ta'am Ha'Man	Hava Nirkoda 2
Al Tira	Hava Nirkoda 2
Ha'Roa'a Ha'Ktana	Hava Nirkoda 2
Simchu Na	Hava Nirkoda 2
Mala'ch Mi'Sulam Ya'akov	Hava Nirkoda 2
Hora Medura	Hava Nirkoda 2
Hava Netze Ba'Machol	Hava Nirkoda 2
Tzadik Ke'Tamar	Hava Nirkoda 2
Rov Berachot	Hava Nirkoda 2
Shalom Al Israel	Hava Nirkoda 2
Simchat He'Amel	Hava Nirkoda 2
Niguno Shel Yosi	Hava Nirkoda 2
Yemin U'Smol	Hava Nirkoda 3
Hine Lanu Nigun Yesh	Hava Nirkoda 3
Ha'Kotzrim	Hava Nirkoda 3
Va'Ynikehu	Hava Nirkoda 3
Yedid Nefesh	Hava Nirkoda 3
Mi Ytneni Of	Hava Nirkoda 3

Song (Dance) Name	Record Name
Nitzanim Nireu Ba'Aretz	Hava Nirkoda 3
Sisu Et Yerushalaeim	Hava Nirkoda 3
Sovevuni	Hava Nirkoda 3
Od Yishama	Hava Nirkoda 3
Sisu Ve'Simchu	Hava Nirkoda 3
Yevarechecha	Hava Nirkoda 3
Kalu Raglaim	Hava Nirkoda 3
Debka Ud	Hava Nirkoda 4
Sham Hari Golan	Hava Nirkoda 4
Aneim Zmirot	Hava Nirkoda 4
Beit Chalomotai	Hava Nirkoda 4
Bat Harim	Hava Nirkoda 4
Gozi Li	Hava Nirkoda 4
Debka Gilboa	Hava Nirkoda 4
Kumi Uri	Hava Nirkoda 4
Har Va'Kar	Hava Nirkoda 4
Hora Ha'Bika'a	Hava Nirkoda 4
Hora Chedera	Hava Nirkoda 4
Koreim Lanu La'Lechet	Hava Nirkoda 4
Mezare israel	Hava Nirkoda 5
Yesh Et La'Amal	Hava Nirkoda 5
Ki Tina,m	Hava Nirkoda 5
Va'Yeven Uziahu	Hava Nirkoda 5
Eim Hupalnu	Hava Nirkoda 5
Eiti Mi'Levanon	Hava Nirkoda 5
Siru Ha'Shir	Hava Nirkoda 5
Shir Sameach	Hava Nirkoda 5
Ve'Shuv Eitchem	Hava Nirkoda 5
Zemer Eikarim	Hava Nirkoda 5
Dodi Li	Hava Nirkoda 5
Me'Emek Le'Giva'a	Hava Nirkoda 5
Zeme Lach	Hava Nirkoda 5
Debka Chamor	Hava Nirkoda 5