

Dance of the Month

Mama Sheli – My Mama

Nurit Melamed; Translation: Ruth Goodman



Nurit Melamed was born 57 years ago. She grew up and lives in Jerusalem. She is part of the second generation of Israeli folk dance instructors. Nurit is divorced with one child and two grandchildren. Folk dance was instilled in her through her mother. As a child, Israeli songs and melodies were played which influenced her love of the Land of Israel and the connection between Israeli folk dance and song.

She has been teaching Israeli folk dance for 20 years and choreographic creative work is an inseparable part of her love of movement, music and conveying emotions through dance.

Her great love of folk dance is rooted in her childhood, which was intertwined with Israeli melodies, the experience from different places in Jerusalem, Jewish tradition, the culture of languages and the ingathering of the exiles.

"I get goosebumps, every time," she says, "with the ability of song and dance to excite my soul and identify with the beautiful culture of our people. I am the daughter of **Malka Melamed** z"l, who taught many people to dance and realize the importance of folk dance to our people. The physical activity, the connection between people. I was fortunate to have my mother, Malka, and from her I took the love of the country in general and the unity and joy of folk dance in particular."

Nurit's dances can be viewed on the Rokdim website here: <https://bit.ly/45gBrVq>

Nurit tells us about the dance:

The song is not in the Hebrew language, but I find that it has a moving melody and one sentence that is enough to capture my soul and make me move and create a choreography. "Mama Sheli – My Mama": My mother and I had been together all those years, in both good times and bad, with joy, love and creativity.

Mom and I worked together. My mother is my pride, the crown for my head. As soon as I heard "Mama" and "Mama", over and over again, I knew I would dedicate this song/dance to my mother.

I had the privilege of touring the country with my mother to teach and dance it wherever possible. I was privileged to see my mother smiling happily and loving the dance and the song, the people she met and hugged and who hugged her.

In addition, I experienced hearing personal stories of dancers who told of what this song/





Nurit Melamed and Gadi Bitton



Nurit Melamed dancing in the air

dance did for them and how much it took them into their lives, in front of their own mother, and unlocked the longing for their mother, childhood and memories...

Last year my mother was sick with leukemia. Nobody knew. She didn't know either. And I made a gift for her – a farewell journey. Through the song and the dance, I will always remember her with a smile, joy and gratitude to people and to G-d – the Creator of the world.

Thank you to the dancers and the dance leaders who got excited, danced the dance and shared hugs. Thank you to my mom for introducing me to the world of dance. May we smile throughout our lives. Amen.

The dance can be viewed on the "Rokdim" website: <https://bit.ly/42RFKVG>

Dance notation

Formation: Circle

Meter: 4/4

Part I: Face CCW

- 1-2 Two steps fwd: R,L.
- 3&4 Quick step-tog-step fwd: RLR.
- 5-6 Step L fwd and face center, step R to rt.
- 7&8 Step L behind R, R to rt. side, L across R.
- 9-12 Step R to rt., L across R, R to rt. side, lift L with knee bent while facing left with head tilted to rt., right arm lifted with elbow bent, left arm out to left side.
- 13-16 Repeat counts 9-12 with opposite footwork and direction.
- 17-32 Repeat Part I counts 1-16.

Part II: Face CCW

- 1-8 Repeat Part I, counts 1-8.
- 9-10 Step R fwd, touch L toes next to R.
- 11-12 Step L bwd, touch R toes next to L.
- 13-14 Step R and pivot to rt. to face out of circle, touch L toes next to R.

- 15-16 Step L fwd pivoting to rt. to face center, touch R toes next to L.

- 17-32 Repeat Part II counts 1-16.

Part III: Face Center

- 1-2 Two steps fwd: R,L
- 3&4 Quick step-tog-step fwd: RLR.
- 5-8 Repeat counts 1-4 with opposite footwork continuing to move fwd toward center. (During counts 1-8 hands are raised with bent elbows and sway from side to side.)
- 9-12 Tcherkessia step rocking fwd and bwd starting with R and extending right hip fwd on first step.
- 13-14 Step R fwd, L back in place.
- 15-16 Turn to rt. moving out of center: 1&1/2 turns with R,L and end facing out of circle.
- 17-28 Repeat counts 1-12 moving out of circle.
- 29-30 1/2 turn to rt. with two steps: R,L to end facing center.
- 31-32 Step R bwd, L fwd in place.

Part IV: Face Center

- 1&2 Moving to rt. side: R-tog-R.
 3-6 L behind R, R to rt., L across R, point R toes to rt. side.
 7-8 Step R behind L, L to left.
 9-10 Step R across L, point L toes to left side.
 11-20 Repeat counts 1-10 with opposite footwork and direction.
 21-22 Step R fwd angling slightly to rt., touch L toes fwd.
 23-24 Step L fwd and brush R fwd toward center.
 25-26 Step R across L, step back in place on L beginning to pivot to rt.

- 27-28 Step R out of circle and pivot on R to rt. to face center.
 29-32 Three steps bwd: L,R,L, hold.
 33-64 Repeat Part IV counts 1-32.

Transition

- 1-4 Sway: R-L, step R behind L, L to left and face CW.
 5-8 Step R across L, back on L and face center. Full turn to Rt. on line of circle with R,L.

Repeat Dance

Instructions notated by Honey Goldfein**Mama Sheli**

Music: **Yulduz Usmonova**; Lyrics: **Elena Zakirova and Elena Klimashkina**

Мама, мама мое сердце, я твои целую руки
 Мне с тобой тепло как в детстве, я люблю тебя
 Образ твой года не старят
 Серебро в висках пусть тает
 И усталости не знает век душа твоя
 Как люблю твой голос нежный мама
 Мне молитвы ты Шептала
 Их в разлуке так мне не хватало
 Бог храни тебя
 Как люблю твой голос нежный мама
 Мне молитвы ты читала
 Их в разлуке так мне не хватало
 Бог храни тебя
 Мама, АННЕ, УМу
 Ты родная, нежная моя
 Мама, АННЕ, УМу
 И неповторима моя
 Улыбнешься на удачу, значит сбудутся мечты
 Небеса с тобою плачут, если плачешь ты
 Образ твой года не старят
 Серебро в висках пусть тает

И усталости не знает век душа твоя
 Как люблю твои я мама руки
 Ты обнимешь, прочь все муки
 Лучше мамы не найти подруги
 Бог хранит тебя
 Мама, АННЕ, УМу
 Ты родная, нежная моя
 Мама, АННЕ, УМу



**Transliteration:**

Mama, mama, moyo serdtse,
Ya tvoi tseluyu ruki.
Mne s toboy teplo, kak v detstve,
Ya lyublyu tebya.

Obraz tvoy goda ne staryat,
Srebro v viskakh pust' tayet,
I ustalosti ne znayet
Vek dusha tvoya.

Kak lyublyu tvoy golos nezhnnyy, mama,
Mne molitvy ty sheptala,
Ikh v razluke tak mne ne khvatalo,
Bog khrani tebya!

Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi,
Ty rodnaya, nezhnaya moya.
Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi,
Ty nepovtorimaya moya.

Ulybnyosh'sya na udachu,
Znachit sbudutsya mechty.
Nebesa s tobouy plachut,
Esli plachesh ty.

Obraz tvoy goda ne staryat,
Srebro v viskakh pust' tayet,
I ustalosti ne znayet
Vek dusha tvoya.

Kak lyublyu tvoi ya, mama, ruki,
Ty obnimesh' - proch' vse muki,
Luchshe mamy ne nayti podруги,
Bog khrani tebya!

Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi,
Ty rodnaya, nezhnaya moya.
Mama, Mama, Ima, Ima,
Ty nepovtorimaya moya.
Bog khrani tebya, mama!

Translation:

Mama, Mama, you're my heart,
I kiss your hands.
You make me feel warm, as in my childhood,
I love you.

Years don't age your image,
May the silver at your temples melt away,
And may your soul never, ever
Know fatigue.

How I love your tender voice, Mama
You whispered prayers to me,
I've missed them so much while being apart,
May God keep you safe!

Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi, ("Mama"
in Russian, Hebrew, Turkish, Arabic)
You're my dear and tender one.
Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi, ("Mama"
in Russian, Hebrew, Turkish, Arabic)
You're my one and only.

When you smile, it's for good luck,
Then all dreams will come true.
The sky is weeping together with you,
When you cry.

Years don't age your image,
May the silver at your temples melt away,
And may your soul never, ever
Know fatigue.

How I love your hands, Mama,
When you give a hug, all pain goes away,
There is no better friend in the world
than a mother,
May God keep you safe!

Mama, Ima, Anneh, Ummi,
You're my dear and tender one.
Mama, Mama, Ima, Ima, ("Mama"
in Russian and Hebrew)
You're my one and only.
May God keep you safe, Mama!

[Lyrics reference: <https://lyricstranslate.com>]