

# **MUSIC AND DANCE IN TIME**

**Interweaving Realities In Performing Arts**

# עתים למוסיקה ולמחול

פרסום האקדמיה למוסיקה ולמחול בירושלים  
תשע"ד

# MUSIC AND DANCE IN TIME

Interweaving Realities In Performing Arts



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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The title chosen by the journal's editorial board for this edition of "Music and Dance in Time" is "Interweaving Realities in Performing Arts": what constitutes the character of these relations; are they inevitable and how are they reflected in the post-Modernist age of disagreement?

It goes without saying that most of the articles in this journal will deal with the relationship between dance and music. This is due not only to the fact that our Academy trains both musicians and dancers but also to the reciprocity that has always existed between those two art forms, although today it seems that this relationship is subject to doubt, with dance guarding its independence and wishing to remove the burden of music from its shoulders.

As I see it, these introductory remarks require a few words as to the scientific, research-oriented character of some of the articles included here. The policy of this journal is to stand by all the standards of research and science obliging an academic institution of higher learning such as ours. Nonetheless, in their work, our faculty members are occupied and motivated in creating and performing and their own personal-artistic weighing up of issues. Theory and practice and what lies between them are high up in our priorities. And, indeed, it turns out that the title chosen for this edition has encouraged some of the writers to engage in a more personal form of enquiry into these problems and in the description of their own efforts and experiences acquired over years of impressive artistic activity.

It is clear that one single journal cannot do justice to the length and breadth of such a subject. We have only touched on the tip of the iceberg of inter-art relations, these, indeed, requiring discussion on the essence of art and its meaning. And this is taking place at a time when everything is subject to doubt, thus destroying concepts preserved as of a long time ago.

Thus we should be satisfied if we have illuminated some corners of this many-faceted subject.

In this spirit, I wish all our readers enjoyable and thought-provoking perusal.

*The Editor*





# ON “THREE POEMS OF HENRI MICHAUX”

## BY WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI

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Tzvi Avni

It was in the mid-sixties when we first heard Lutoslawski's work 'Trois poèmes d'Henri Michaux' on the radio, a work that made a reputation for its composer in the world of modern music of that time. Musicians in Israel, both young and those older, responded to this striking musical happening with widespread enthusiasm, regarding both its emotional content and from the point of view of its impressive resonant-acoustic innovation.

It all happened before the severing of ties between countries in Eastern Europe and Israel as the result of the Six Days War, and I was pressed to order the score and the record in the official store of Polish culture that existed in Tel Aviv at that time. Many sounds have since flowed into the sea of what might be called “modern” music; many works once considered innovative and revolutionary have been forgotten and have disappeared along with countless other modern works. But I do believe, from repeated listening over the years, that Lutoslawski's work has preserved its freshness and is as moving today as it was when it was composed – in 1963. Like many composers of the same period, Lutoslawski looked for particular ways of notating his work for the purpose of creating a modern and original sound texture; the basic choice of instrumental ensemble was an important element of its design.

The work is written for choir and orchestra and, for its performance, two conductors are required – one for the choral score and the other for the orchestral. The choir requires twenty singers, each singing from an individual part. The orchestra has no stringed instruments; it comprises woodwinds and brass instruments, four players on a large number of percussion instruments as well as harp and two pianos.

Henri Michaux was a poet and a painter; he had an unusual and highly personal world of imagination. His life, replete with adventure, included much travel in the world and extensive life experience, including the use of drugs. The content of the three poems Lutoslawski chose is symbolic and surrealistic, and the contrasts between their subject matters allowed the composer to create a distinctive atmosphere for each movement.

### **First Movement: “Thoughts”**

The first poem “Pensées” embraces the poet's inner world, his “tremulous swimming in the sea of life, swimming which glides over us, between us and from us...” In order to achieve the

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The role of both conductors, i.e. for choir and orchestra, is to control the performers' sense of time via hand gestures marking each second, as opposed to non-conducted sections in which there is an "open" framework of a given number of seconds. The movement's dynamic range moves between piano and pianissimo, and, only here and there, is there a brief deviation of higher sound volume.

## Second Movement: "The Great Struggle"

The second movement "Le grand combat" is immeasurably dramatic. A brutal battle is described here, in which a man is flogged, beaten and humiliated, but we do not know his reaction. The descriptions are not sung, but spoken in a volume that sometimes becomes a kind of gentle question mark, at others, turning into a dramatic shriek, such as in "Fouille, fouille!" (Dig, dig!). Lutoslawski achieves the dramatic effect of the recitative-type speech by notation that indicates the relative rising and falling volume of the voices.

The image shows a musical score for voice parts, likely a choir or soloists, with dynamic markings and lyrics. The score is organized into systems, each with a dynamic marking and a corresponding line of music. The lyrics are: "Le cerceau tom—be qui a tant rou-lé." The dynamic markings are: 42, I, III, S, IV, S, V, A, I, II, A, III, IV, A, V. The score is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign at the end of each line. A large bracket at the top indicates a dynamic range from 42 to a higher level.

(Example no.3)

As to the orchestra, percussion instruments occupy an important place in this movement. In climactic places, the choir describes the cruelty of the situation in fortissimo utterances: his foot stumbled, his arm broke and he bled profusely. Following this, moments of surprise ensue in a whisper: "In the cavity of his stomach there is a secret...astonishment...astonishment...astonishment... We others are also looking for the secret..." The composer's use of the orchestra at climactic moments is startling in its vivid power.



In such an aleatoric texture, coincidence does indeed assume a basic role in the composer's deliberations; however, the choice of registers of the various instruments, rhythmic combinations, volume and figuration characteristic to each instrument still creates a result that is predictable to a large extent.

### Third Movement: Repose in Misfortune

Michaux's third poem, concluding the work, bears the title "Repos dans le malheur". Here the poet speaks through the voice of a person who has not only reconciled himself to the tragedy that has befallen him (he does not elaborate on its nature) he actually acknowledges it, claiming that, in the essence of his tragedy, he has found serenity in his life. (Incidentally, a similar idea appears in a poem by Anna Akhmatova which was translated many years ago by the poetess Rachel). As opposed to the previous songs, both abundant in movement and sound, here a minimalistic atmosphere of delicate lyricism prevails. The singers sing in pianissimo tones for most of the time, for the main part accompanied by the two pianos and harp, with the wind instruments reduced to an implied minimum towards the end.

The image displays a musical score for the third movement, "Repos dans le malheur". It features two orchestral staves at the top, followed by vocal staves for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), and Tenor (T.). The score includes dynamic markings such as *poco f*, *p*, *pp*, and *p (solo)*. There are also performance instructions like "4 (Tutti) ca" and "ar.". The lyrics are: "Le Malheur, mon grand la-bou-reur, Re-po-sons-nous un peu toi et moi, —". The score is marked with numbers 1 through 6 and includes various musical notations like accents and slurs.

(Example no.5)

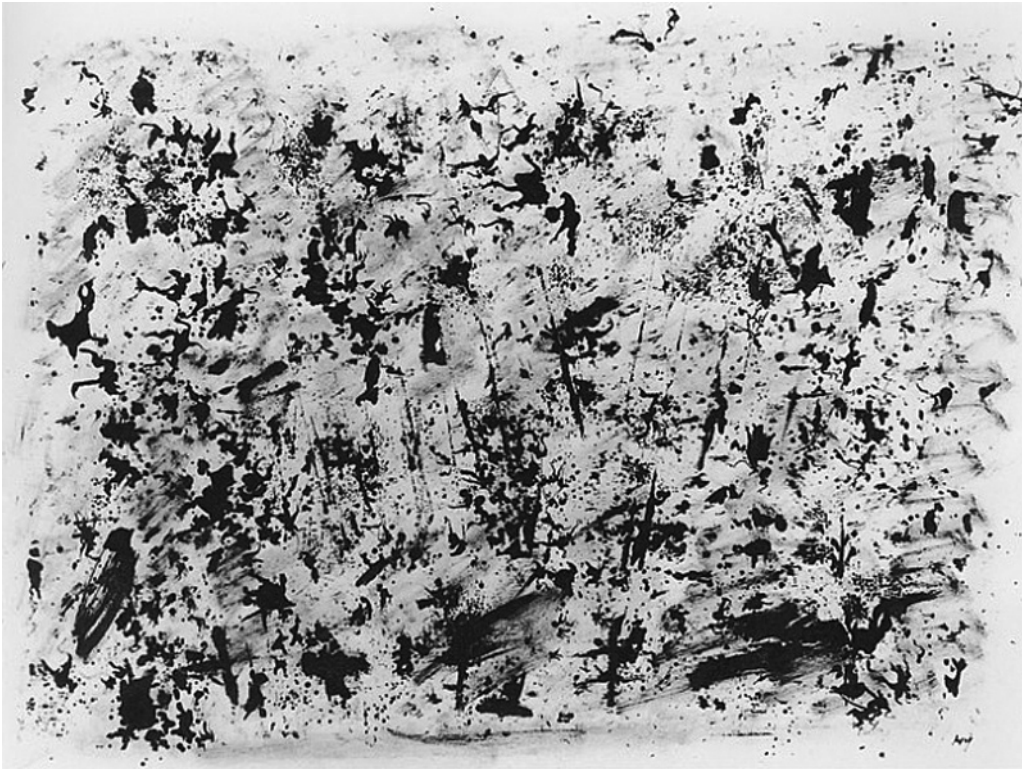
And I will conclude with a personal confession: after an acquaintance of close to sixty years with this superb work, it moves me anew with each hearing and I make a practice of playing it each year in courses I teach.



ON "THREE POEMS OF HENRI MICHAUX" BY WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI

In my opinion, in a fascinating way, it proves that a work can be both free and incredibly organized, both innovative and sonorous, as well as expressive and moving in terms of emotional content, of boundless imagination and in its ability to utilize to the fullest all means of a convincing musical interpretation of the text. Among all the "isms" that still continue to surge into our ears even today, it is good to occasionally listen to such a work and remind ourselves what genuine modern music is, even sixty years after its making.

The work has been much performed, can be heard on professional recordings and also on YouTube.



Painting by Henri Michaux "Without Title" (approx. 1962)

# RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STEPS AND MUSIC IN ISRAELI CIRCLE FOLK DANCES FOR BEGINNERS

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Yosef Goldenberg

This study examines the relationships between movements (mostly steps) and sounds in Israeli circle folk dances for beginners. Its interest is twofold: both a close look at a significant phenomenon of Israeli culture, and a contribution to the general knowledge on the relationships between dances and the music to which they were set. The study focuses on congruence versus non-congruence in the rhythmic organization on all levels—from the beat to the entire song/dance—and on the expression of repetitions, symmetry and balance, as well as the handling of musical and physical pauses. Less systematic observations on other aspects are also included.

The current state of knowledge on the surface relationships between dances and the music that accompanies them is very preliminary. In the two complete monographs devoted to the topic, Paul Hodgins (1992) and Stephanie Jordan (2000) focus on twentieth-century practices as deviations from earlier conventions. In fact, however, the more regular practice of music-dance relationships in classical ballet has never been studied with scrutiny. Hodgins (1992) attempts some close readings, but without technically appropriate data, his descriptions remain inexact. Jordan (2000) studies mainly large-scale structures, and applies close study only to extremely short excerpts from the literature. These close readings use both a musical score and dance Labanotation. Jordan examines excerpts from several pieces, including Balanchine's settings of Tchaikovsky's *Pas de Deux* from the *Nutcracker*. Most recently, Kara You Leaman (2013) analyzed the entire variation 2 from this work of Balanchine. Her analysis presents a simplified movement notation synchronized with a video of Violette Verdi's performance of that piece. Leaman focused on a single dancer, thus eliminating a substantial element of complication specific to art dance. Meredith Little (1991) also performed close analyses, but these were applied to dances by Johann Sebastian Bach, a repertoire in which preexisting fixed court dances were set in various musical realizations.

Some archetypes of Israeli dances were notated in Eshkol-Wachman dance notation (e.g., Eshkol and Seidel 1986), but no specific dances were notated, and no research relating to their interaction with the music has been performed so far. Yet, Israeli folk dances provide an ideal case study for the examination of dance-music surface relationships, due to the combination of simplicity, independence of separate pieces, and easy reference. These dances,

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**Dr. Yosef Goldenberg** - music theorist, teaches at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at the Jerusalem Academy where he also serves as head librarian.

in a folk manner but by known choreographers, are based on a simple set of steps (and, to a limited extent, movements of the hands or other parts of the body). The repertoire studied here is intended for group circle dancing, where all dancers perform the same movements together (Israeli folk dances also include dances for couples, with two distinct roles). The corpus selected for close study is based on circle dances intended for beginners. Each folk dance, especially for beginners, is intended for study by non-professional dancers in a straightforward manner. Yet (with few exceptions) each song has its own dance. While the artistic independence of each dance is admittedly limited, the works are still different with a claim to uniqueness. Each step (or occasionally set of steps) has its own name. This enables reference to precise steps without the use of dance notation.

The current study is based on a limited corpus, and thus must be regarded as preliminary. The first sixteen dances taught by Yaron Meishar in the first DVD teaching folk dances in the series *Rokdim* were transcribed in rhythmic musical notation (or full musical notation for the two tunes not under copyright) with attached step names (mostly as named by the instructor) and occasional remarks concerning the melody. All raw data appears in the Appendix. Repeat signs indicate that both musical rhythm and dance steps are repeated, though not necessarily a melodic repeat. Unlike ordinary practice, repeated measures are counted.

The limitation to sixteen dances was decided upon in advance as a corpus size that is workable yet guarantees sufficient variety. The DVD includes seven more dances, and these were consulted at the final stage of work. Some observations concerning five of these other seven dances are also incorporated into the present study, in particular those concerning features not found in the main corpus. Occasional references to additional Israeli folk dances are also included. It is evident that I look at the dances as a musician, with expertise in Israeli folk tunes but only superficial acquaintance with Israeli folk dances.<sup>1</sup> The corpus includes songs composed by several songwriters over a number of decades, with dances created over an even longer period by a number of different choreographers—sometimes long after the composition of the song. However, due to the limited size of the corpus, conclusions related to stylistic differences among various folk dance creators or periods are impossible at this stage. The differences between the basic dances for beginners and the newer dances often set to newer songs must await further research.

## Data of the Dances in the Studied Corpus

Dates of the melodies are based on personal knowledge. Older songs appear in <http://zemereshet.co.il>. Dates of the dances are based on the information at <http://www.israelidances.com/search.asp> accessed on 12 May 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> I thank my colleague Tali Karshai for several important tips concerning Israeli folk dances.

This is arguably the earliest specific Israeli folk dance. According to the evidence in Kadman [Kaufman] (1946) it was born in Degania, moved to Kiryat Anavim, where it was modified, and became popular at the first gathering of Israeli folk dances in Dalia in 1944.



Here is the list of the dances in the corpus:

Title	Composer	Choreographer	Year of Song	Year of Dance
Nigun Atik	Amitai Ne'eman	Rivka Sturman	1956	1956
Od Lo Ahavti Dai	Naomi Shemer	Yankale Levi	1977	1977
Hora Nirkoda	Marc Lavri	Yoav Ashriel	1947	1958
Hora Hadera	Hassidic	Yankale Levi	traditional (Hassidic)	1972
Hora Medura	Yoel Walbe	Yoav Ashriel	1930s	1963
Tsadik KaTamar	Amitai Ne'eman	Yonatan Gabay	1950s	1965
Hora Habik'a [Elef Zemer Ve'Od Zemer]	Avraham Zigman	Yaankale Levi	1970	1972
Kuma Eha	Shalom Postolsky	Rivka Sturman	1930s	1945
Erev Ba/Ha'Ir Be' Afor	Arieh Levanon/ Naomi Shemer	Yoav Ashriel	1960 / 1966	1960
UShe'avtem Mayim (Mayim Mayim) <sup>1</sup>	Emanuel Amiran	Folk	1944	1944
HaRo'a HaKtana <sup>2</sup>	Moshe Wilensky	Yonatan Carmon	1950s	1959
BeFundak Katan	Benny Berman	Avi Peretz	1960 [1987 recording]	1988
Deror Yikra	Yemenite	Eliyahu Gamliel	traditional (Yemenite)	1970
Mokher HaPerahim	Betsal'el Aloni	David Suisa	1975	unknown
Hora Tov (Sovevuni)	Mordechai Zeira	Yoav Ashriel	1930	1959
Eretz Eretz	Shaike Paikov	Yankale Levy	1974	1974
*Al Kanfei HaKesef	Naomi Shemer	Motti Alfasi	1967	1970
*Rov Berakhot	Matityahu Shelem	Le'a Bergstein	1940-41	1958
*Mal'akh MiSulam Ya'akov/ Minhag Hadash	Nurit Hirsh / Yinon Ne'eman	Yonatan Gabay	1968 /1966	1972
*Ahavat HaHayalim	Sasha Argov	Shmulik Gov-Ari	1963 [danced today to a 1996 recording]	1983
* Yedid Nefesh	Sara Zweig	Yonatan Gabay	1971	1971

## Rhythm

The rhythmic values of the steps themselves are almost always equal (one at a beat; “Grapevine” and “Yemenite” are shortcut terms for four-step combinations); turns may occupy either two or four beats, and in principle do not divide into beats at all. One combination of three steps (sometimes referred to as “cha cha cha,” though not by Yaron Meishar) includes a quicker pace of steps (with a division of the first beat). Very occasionally, a beat remains motionless, with the instruction “stay,” as in *Erev Ba* section A. When this procedure recurs, a rhythmic pattern emerges (especially in *Deror Yikra*). More often, some beats are occupied with hand movements alone (e.g. finger snap in *Nigun Atik* m. 2), and these create uneven foot rhythm. The rhythmic interest of the dances thus lies in their patterns of repeated or symmetrical units rather than in the elementary rhythm.

The vast majority of the songs in the corpus are in quadruple meter. Triple meter occurs only once in the extended corpus, in the last song of the DVD (*Yedid Nefesh*, not transcribed), but one more dance (*Mal'akh MiSulam Ya'akov/Minhag Hadash*) changes its meter, and Israeli folk dances in general quite often include dances in triple meter, and even occasionally in compound meter (e.g. *Isha al HaHof* to a Greek tune by Manos

Hadjidakis in 3+2+2+2 eighth notes). As a rule, the tunes used in the corpus are arranged in phrase lengths of 2<sup>n</sup> on all levels, creating units of 2, 4, 8, 16 and sometimes 32 measures.<sup>2</sup> The square and predictable phrase rhythm fits William Rothstein's remark: "Think of [...] any popular song: [...] In all likelihood, what you are hearing in your mind's ear [...] is a regular and predictable series of melodic statements" (Rothstein 1989, vii). Few songs in the corpus include deviations from that norm, among which only *Deror Yikra* is better conceived in duple rather than quadruple meter. All deviations will be dealt with specifically later.

### **Non-congruent Square Phrase Rhythm: *Od Lo Ahavti Dai*, Section A**

Even the simplest dances, where all units repeat symmetrically, might include non-congruent organizations of musical units and dancing units.

In *Od Lo Ahavti Dai* (dance no. 2), both song and dance are divided into two distinct and independent 8-measure units. Section A (mm. 1-8) consists of two distinct types of steps: a. grapevine, b. bending forward and backward. The 2-measure units repeat in abab pattern, with each type of step repeating immediately (aabbaabb), and the b element (bendings) includes another level of symmetry.

In the music of mm. 1-8, contrasts are much milder, but two distinct elements nevertheless may be identified. The basic division is abababab (or, considering the melodic variant, ababcdcd). Especially clear is the exact repetition of measure 1 in measure 3. Both abababab and aabbaabb are simple repeat patterns, but when they are imposed simultaneously, non-congruence emerges.

How should such a lack of congruence be evaluated? Cases of non-congruence are often conceived of as special artistic devices that set art works apart from mediocre ones. In this case, however, it seems more like a symptom of lack of choreographic sensitivity to the specificities of the tune beyond its being in quadruple meter.

The music also includes an eighth-note upbeat, and a three eighth-notes upbeat to the B section. The dance disregards these upbeats. The musical transition from the refrain to the next chorus is deleted in the version that accompanies the dance, in order to make a squarer phrase rhythm.

### **Deviations from Square Phrase Rhythm in the Choreography Alone**

Precisely because of the prominence of the square phrase rhythm in the examined repertoire, any deviation from squareness is notable. It is somewhat surprising to notice that the choreography is occasionally less square than the music. After all, the very preference for quadruple meters seems to be directed by the physical duality of directions. We shall deal first with choreographic exceptions set to square music, then with deviations in the music itself.

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2 At the broadest level, the symmetry seems to lack significance. Thus, *Hora Hadera*, a song with three distinct sections of eight measures each (24 measures in total) does not sound asymmetrical.

*HaRo'a HaKtana* is a dance with several versions, some intended for professional groups dancing in folk style (Azoulay 2012).

There are two basic kinds of deviations from square phrase rhythm, generalized as displacement metric dissonance and grouping displacement dissonance (Krebs 1999, esp. 31 and 33). For the simple repertoire discussed here, we may stick to their basic and familiar archetypes: syncopation and hemiolas.

Several dances include units of steps that do not correspond to musical organization. In *BeFundak Katan*, mm. 11–12, the choreographic stock figure grapevine begins on a third beat and continues across the barline; *Eretz Eretz* begins with three-beat units with changing directions; *Sigal* (a dance outside the corpus) has in its B section 6-measure step units against a musical sequential progression of 4-measure units. The dance that goes most extremely against a square musical phrase rhythm is *Erev Ba*. It is danced also to another tune, to a combined recording, *Ha'ir Be'Afor*. The melodies differ in melodic aspects but are similar rhythmically, and neither even hints at any irregularity.

Section B of *Erev Ba* includes two pairs of 3-beat units, crossing from side to side. Each pair occupies beats 3 to 5 and 6 to 8 of a 2-measure (8-beat) unit, and the result bridges over the sectional division. The more extreme metric dissonances in *Erev Ba* occur at section C: the 16 beats of this 4-measure unit are divided 7+7+2. The instructor, Yaron Meishar, not only explains the arithmetic aspect but also deviates from his habit of humming the tune while showing the steps. No doubt, in this excerpt, one must remain oblivious to the music in order not to get confused while dancing. Once again, the deviation is perceived more as a mistake than as a creative device.

The 3+3+2 division might take place on a hypermetrical level (i.e. organization of complete measures). In *HaRo'a HaKtana* B section, the eight measures are divided into 3+3+2, with symmetrical movement in and out between the two triplets of measures. The organization of beats within each measure, however, remains square and conforms to the quadruple meter.

### **Deviations from Square Phrase Rhythm Involving the Music**

At the beat level, deviations from duple division are quite common in the tunes of Israeli folk dances. The Hora, an archetypical folk dance probably of Hassidic origin at least musically (Dobkin 1985), usually involves syncopatic tunes. Of the sixteen closely examined dances, at least nine (*Od Lo Ahavti Dai*, *Hora Nirkoda*, *Hora Hadera*, *Hora Medura*, *Hora HaBik'a*, *Kuma Eha*, *HaRo'a HaKtana*, *BeFundak Katan*, *Hora Tov [Sovevuni]*; arguably also *UShe'avtem Mayim*; also *Ha'ir Be'Afor*, alternative tune for *Erev Ba*) include syncopations, with strong beats occupied with rests or continued notes (*Hora Nirkoda* even includes some complex syncopations). Invariably, the dances include steps on these moments, emphasizing the beats against which the lack of note attack is felt. No “step syncopations” ever appear in the examined corpus. Nevertheless, syncopated tunes occasionally motivate hops in the choreography (e.g. in *Hora HaBik'a*).

Three of the examined songs include phrase expansions:

1. *UShe'avtem Mayim* has one extra measure between its second and third sections (taught by the instructor as part of the following section). The choreographic solution simply fills this measure with running steps moving forward. This neutral action can occupy any amount of beats and does not diminish the fluency of the dance.

2. In *Hora Habik'a*, the expansion takes place within the phrase, near the end of the second section, elongating the last quarter of the phrase into three measures (15–17). The last measure is filled by a single long note. Musically, this is the goal of the tonal motion, and thus internal to the phrase. The choreography, however, repeats in the penultimate measure a fourth time the same steps as in the previous measures, as if completing a symmetrical unit, and saves for the final measure a special scissor movement back on the spot, never repeated in that dance. It is interesting to compare this strategy with other manners of choreographing long notes. Usually (as in *Nigun Atik* and *Tsadik KaTamar*) whole notes are indeed filled with four steps (albeit not as special as in *Hora Habik'a*), but in *Erev Ba* (m. 4), the whole notes are accompanied by a motionless moment (albeit at the last beat only), creating congruent dance-music pauses.
3. A particularly special expansion takes place in *BeFundak Katan*, A section. The consequent of a parallel period is expanded by two memorable beats—a whistle and a tongue click (creating one  $3/2$  measure among  $4/4$  measures). The dance collaborates with two special movements—a brush and hitting the knee. The dance articulates here the musical deviation. Although both media match each other, the asymmetric construction prevents boredom. Any other choreographic approach to such a salient moment would be out of place.

A much subtler collaboration of music and dance in articulating a deviation from symmetry takes place in *Hora Tov (Sovevuni)*, B section. In this 8-measure unit, the second and third pairs of measures are identical in both music and dance. The construction of the section thus creates hypermetrical 1+2+1 syncopation. Unlike *BeFundak Katan*, uninformed listening here would miss the deviation. Whether intentionally or intuitively, Yoav Ashriel's choreography is sensitive to this special feature of the tune, and should be applauded for that.

Normally, folk dances cut out the transitions between verses of the tunes (albeit not the preludes, which help dancers catch the beat; dancers usually stand during such preludes). Two dances in the corpus, however, do include transitions, count them and dance through them: *BeFundak Katan* section B and *Mokher HaPrahim* section B. These cases differ greatly. *BeFundak Katan* section B is a six-measure section, and the counting of the 2-measure transition completes it into a square 8-measure section. *Mokher HaPrahim*, on the contrary, adds one more measure of transition to an otherwise symmetrical 8-measure section. This extra measure comes after changing orientation and facing the center of the circle (preparing for the repeat of section A), but this act has already been performed during the preceding beat. It must be concluded, therefore, that the motivation of dancing to the sound of the musical transition is artistic.<sup>3</sup>

The opposite procedure to including the transition in the dance is avoiding dancing to part of the song. Eliyahu Gamliel, a musician himself, in his artful choreography of *Deror Yikra*, uses this special procedure. The A section of the song recurs twice, but since it includes less exact repetitions, a sense of redundancy might have emerged. Gamliel's solution was to remove the first rotation, making its second half a prelude preparing for the dance. Gamliel also avoids a movement on every beat, perhaps influenced by his acquaintance with the variety of rhythmic values in music. This melody from Aden has several peculiar features. The basic

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3 Yair Ehrlich (2011) found analogous cases of both types of expansions (completing square hypermeter and deviating from square hypermeter) in the keyboard sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti.

section A is 6 duple (or 3 quadruple) measures long. Its second appearance is elongated into 8 duple (or 4 quadruple) measures, with the extension of the last note. Since the long notes are on the even measures, to my ear it is not at all clear which measures should count as strong.<sup>4</sup> Gamliel, however, perceives the entire A section as if it were in quadruple units and even refers to the beginning of the long note (m. 26 in my transcription) as relatively weak (in the middle of a Yemenite 4-beat series of steps). Section B ends with a single 2/4 expansion, which Gamliel uses to close the feet after a Yemenite series of steps.

## Additional Observations Concerning Temporal Organization

### 1. Step Size and Duration

A simple analogy of space and time creates a correspondence between steps size and duration. In practice, however, folk dances occasionally use various sizes of steps—despite using a single rhythmic value. *Yedid Nefesh*, the only dance in the DVD in triple meter, is based on waltz steps (even though it is a circle dance). The strong beat is differentiated from the other beats in its larger size of step. More intricately, in *Kuma Eha* part C, three steps out are countered against more steps that go in. The instruction is tacit on that point, but the steps out are simply larger. The entire balance of the section (musically, symmetrically divided but not an independent unit at all) is asymmetrical, with one measure of entrance against three measures of movement to and fro that in total goes back to the original location.

Turns, too, may be performed through either two beats (as at the end of *Erev Ba*) or four beats (as at the end of *Od Lo Ahavti Dai*). Their pace thus differs relative to the music, and not merely according to the tempo of the music itself.

### 2. Endings

In music, cadences are usually the location for conventionalized harmonic progressions and melodic formulas (Caplin 1998, 11). It seems that this is not the case with the choreography of Israeli folk dances. Some of the most special steps take place precisely at the conclusion: heels forward in *Hora Hadera*, stamps in *Hora Medura* and *Kuma Eha*, scissors back in place in *Hora HaBik'a* and *HaRo'a HaKtana*, kick and brush in *Eretz Eretz*.

Sometimes, independent sections nevertheless end in a similar way. This happens in the tune of *Hora Nirkoda*, but, alas, the dance is not sensitive to that feature. In contrast, in *Tsadik KaTamar*, it is the choreography that ends both sections in a similar way. It might be motivated by the first, open, ending of section 2, which recalls the open endings of both times of section A.

### 3. Changing the Meter

In one case, exceptional in the corpus and probably beyond, the same dance that is set to *Mal'akh MiSulam Ya'akov* in 4/4 (i.e. twice a duple group of beats or sub-beats) is then

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<sup>4</sup> The confusing hierarchy among 2/4 measures might be interpreted differently according to various metrical types, as shown by Rothstein (2008).

danced to *Minhag Hadash* in 6/8 (i.e. twice a triple group of beats or sub-beats). Unlike the other pair of tunes (*Erev Ba/Ha'ir Be'Afor*), the tunes in this pair are not easily compatible for the same dance due to their different surface meter. Every pair of beats in *Mal'akh MiSulam Ya'akov* is mapped onto the first and third beats of a 3/8 group in *Minhag Hadash*, with no steps on the second beat in each group. The much quicker tempo of *Minhag Hadash* and the lack of a shared beat only obscure the relationship, but do not influence its essence. The reference to a triple unit as a group of two unequal beats (as in jazz eighths) is a very different handling of triple meters than the waltz steps in *Yedid Nefesh*.

## Melodic Aspects

While rhythmic considerations are present in both music and dance, choreographic analogies for the melodic aspects are less direct. In principle, ascending and descending contours may be realized in dancing, especially when the steps are accompanied by other movements. In fact, however, this potential is hardly realized in the corpus, and movements such as hands up or low back do not correspond to the melodic contour.<sup>5</sup>

Expressing tonality in dancing is much more problematic. It is instructive to consider the choreography of musical parallel periods, i. e., a pair of parallel phrases the first of which ends in an unstable (or less stable) manner than the consequent. The corpus includes interrupted parallel periods (antecedent ends on half-cadence: *BeFundak Katan* section A; *Nigun Atik* section B, where both phrases begin on III), sectional parallel periods (antecedent ends on an imperfect authentic cadence in the tonic: *HaRo'a HaKtana* section A; *Sovevuni* section A; *Eretz Eretz* section A; *Hora HaBik'a* section A, antecedent ends on scale degree 5),<sup>6</sup> as well as less classical variants: periods where the antecedent ends on a modal VII (*Hora Nirkoda* Section B), or a presumably Russian idiom where the entire antecedent (within an internal section) is in the relative major and only the consequent moves back to the main, minor, tonic (*Od Lo Ahavti Dai* section B, *Hora Hadera* section C, *UShe'avtem Mayim* section B). Also included are variants less clearly tagged as parallel periods: in *Hora Hadera* section B, the antecedent ends on the tonic note but in the higher register; in *Tsadik KaTamar* section B, both phrases begin in IV and the antecedent ends on V/IV.

Of course, the dances are incapable of following the detailed variety of tonal relationships between phrases of the periods. Of the twelve parallel periods, ten are set to exactly repeating steps.<sup>7</sup> In two cases, *Hora Hadera* section C and *UShe'avtem Mayim* section B, the steps of the consequents go in the opposite direction. Thus, the sense of symmetry is preserved, as well as the unification of both phrases into a larger whole; but the opposition of an unstable versus a stable ending is not articulated by the dancing. *Hora Hadera* section C is especially interesting: it includes internal direction changes that accelerate their pace in the third measure. This procedure makes use of both fragmentation and liquidation, resulting in a

5 In *Tsadik KaTamar*, the endings include hands up. These may articulate the ascents at the first endings, but the final, lower, ending, includes hands up as well.

6 For the terminology of periods, see Beach and McClelland 2012, 67.

7 Exactly repeated steps may also match a musical sequence (as in *Kuma Eha*).



sense of continuation. The structure of the complete choreographic phrase turns to be what is known in musical theory of forms as a “sentence” (see Caplin 1998, 35–48). The music does not support this structure but rather changes into longer notes.

Changing directions may also take place with the exact repetition of the music, as happens in *Deror Yikra* section A (and, on a smaller scale, in *Al Kanfei HaKeseif* mm. 9–10 vs. 11–12). This apparently abnormal situation, where the dance changes are more active than the musical changes, reaches its peak in *Rov Berakhot*, a dance with two verses, which repeat the entire song tune with different steps (although the entire dance is danced twice, through a total of four musical verses).

A certain sense of tonic-like stable location exists in sections entering the circle and going out again. The point of departure serves as a stable point of reference. In the corpus, there is a single case where the motions in and out do not take the same amount of time (*Kuma Eha* section C: entering during a single measure, returning during three measures). Strangely enough, however, that section does not begin on a musical tonic at all (nor is it a musically independent section).

The limitations of the dances in expressing tonality are most strongly evident in the setting of those few songs with tonally unusual phrases. In *Nigun Atik*, the dominant of harmonic minor governs the entire A section, and a clear tonic only arrives at the end; in *Hora HaBik'a* the entire A section (of the dance, chorus of the song) is resolved at its very end, with the B section (the verse of the song) starting stable and leading to the dominant; and the sections of *Mokher HaPrahim* are rhythmically symmetrical but divide the descent from scale degree five unequally ( $5^\wedge$  to  $4^\wedge$ ,  $3^\wedge$  to  $1^\wedge$ ). Further research must explore more complex folk dances and especially high-art dancing to see whether it has found ways to convey tonal stability and instability.

## Conclusion

The examination of Israeli folk dances has found that almost every one contains unique artistic devices on the small scale. The relationships between music and dance were found to be inconsistent, with varying degrees of congruence. Throughout this paper, I have incorporated aesthetic evaluations of specific instances of congruent or non-congruent relationships between music and dance, which I not always found to be on the same side. The basic dilemma, i.e. whether and to what extent creative dance-music counterpoint is desired, is also evident in discussions of music-dance relationships in art dance. Different views include Isadora Duncan's striving to “dance the music itself” as a liberation from regularity, Doris Humphrey's claim that “the dance should be related to, but not identical with, the music,” or modern dance's wish to “escape the tyranny of music.”<sup>8</sup> A detailed discussion of Israeli folk dances should contribute to the understanding of specifics in dance-music relationships.

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8 All these approaches are discussed in Jordan 2000. See pp. 16, 21, 56–57.

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# Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

## 1. Nigun Atik

4 times

step step step step    step clap step clap    in snap in snap    out out out out

11  
in snap in snap    out out out out    in snap in snap

14  
out out out out    in step in step    out out out out

## 2. Od Lo Ahavti Dai

grapevine (4 beats)    grapevine (4 beats)    bend forward    bend forward    grapevine (4 beats)

6  
grapevine (4 beats)    bend forward    bend forward    in in in in

10  
out out out out    hop close hop close    turn right (4 beats)    melodic open 1. ending

## 3. Hora Nirkoda

grapevine (4 beats)    grapevine (4 beats)    step hop in    step hop in    out out out out    out out out out

9  
hop hop    turn right (4 beats)    balance right hands up    balance left hands up    walking in place    walking in place

1. modal VII    2. I

Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

4. Hora Hadera

step step step step heel forward step step step step heel step step heel step step  
back back forward back forward back

B

hands on the shoulders through the section

9

in in in in heel forward hassidic hands heel forward hassidic hands out out out out heel forward hassidic hands heel forward hassidic hands

13

in in in in heel forward hassidic hands heel forward hassidic hands out out out out heel forward hassidic hands heel forward hassidic hands

17

C

open right hands on the shoulders to the end save for the turns behind right open close open left behind open close open right close left open close turn right (4 beats)

melody as in 3-4 2. ending

21

open left behind left open close open right behind open close open left close right open close turn left (4 beats)

5. Hora Medura

3-4: melodic variant of 1-2

open right close right open close open close open right close right run in run in run in run in run out run out run out run out

9

grapevine (4 beats) step low back for 3 beats step step step grapevine (4 beats) stamp stamp

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Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

6. Tsadik kaTamar

step step step step balance right balance left balance right balance left open grapevine (4 beats) turn right in 2 beats open cross right

hands up \_\_\_\_\_

back open left cross back balance right balance left balance right balance left balance right left balance right left

hands up \_\_\_\_\_ hands up \_\_\_\_\_

7. Hora HaBik'a  
unstable harmony

cha cha cha cha cha cha open close open close cha cha cha cha cha cha open close open close

in the same place in the same place

cha cha cha cha cha cha open close open close step hop cha cha cha step hop cha cha cha

in the same place cadence right right left right right left

tonic repeats in III

in the same place

arrives at V/IV

open grapevine (4 beats) with jumps open grapevine (4 beats) with jumps open grapevine (4 beats) with jumps open grapevine (4 beats) with jumps scissors back in the place

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STEPS AND MUSIC IN ISRAELI CIRCLE FOLK DANCES FOR BEGINNERS

Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

8. Kuma Echa

in in hop hop out out hop hop grapevine (4 beats) grapevine (4 beats)

5

in in hop hop out out hop hop grapevine (4 beats) grapevine (4 beats) **B** musical sequence

step step step step  
face then then  
to the right turn turn

all steps to the right  
beats 3-4 facing the left  
hands up

C (musical continuation of B)

10

step step step step in in in in stamp out close in stamp out close in stamp out out close

then then  
turn turn

9. Erev ba/Ha-ir be-Afor

open cross back open step step step stay open cross back open step step step stay  
right left right left right left right left right left right left right left

9

turn right turn cross back turn cross back turn right turn cross back turn cross back  
(2 beats) left right left right left right (2 beats) left right left right left right

13

open cross open cross open cross back open cross open cross open cross back turn  
in 7-beat units out (2 beats)



RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STEPS AND MUSIC IN ISRAELI CIRCLE FOLK DANCES FOR BEGINNERS

Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

12. BeFundak Katan

in right in in turn right out left out out turn left balance right balance left bend forward out backward bend in close stay

5

whistle  
in right in in turn right out left out out turn left balance right balance left hit brush the knee bend forward out backward bend in close stay

9 B

open right left behind close half-turn open left right behind close half-turn balance right balance left grapevine out (4 steps)

12

no singing! transition counted and danced  
[end of grapevine out] step cross sway right sway left turn right (4 beats) sway right sway left turn left (four beats)

13. Deror Yikra


beginning of music removed heard, not dancing yet

8

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Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

15




open right left behind step cross step left Yemenite right (4 beats) open left right behind step cross step right behind

25




Yemenite left (4 beats) close right heels hop right in in hop right in Yemenite right out (4 beats)  
hands forward

35




Yemenite left, out (4 beats) close balance right out balance left hop in on right knee snap right snap left

42



snap right snap left Yemenite right out (4 beats) Yemenite left, out (4 beats) turn right (4 beats) snap snap snap snap

14. Mocher HaPrakhim



grapevine (4 beats) grapevine (4 beats) run in place (8 beats)





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Appendix - Israeli folk dances: rhythm and steps

16. Eretz

3-beat units

right left turn left right turn cross left right left open close  
 behind behind right behind behind behind behind in the air out

4

1: IAC  
2: PAC

left right open close right left right stay left right left stay  
 in the air in the air out behind behind look to the left behind look to the right  
 hands on the shoulders

11

balance right balance left right out left in kick brush right left behind right stay  
 right left in & brush look to the left behind look to the left  
 hands on the shoulders

14

left right left balance right balance right right left kick stay  
 behind behind stay right left left out in & brush  
 look to the right

# MUSICAL MEANS FOR COMMUNICATING A MESSAGE AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF WAYS TO PERFORM THEM

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Dudu Sella

The question “What is there in music?” is frequently asked. The most common answers are “expression of feelings” or “a message”. This essay will focus on the message, although the article will not discuss what a message is, rather the means of communicating it.

These means produce (create) a reaction on the part of the listener to music, of the person viewing a work of the plastic arts or in any other art medium. Certainly, when a verbal text is involved – in literature, poetry or the musical setting of a text – fewer elements arousing reactions are needed than in pure music, which is the ultimate in abstract art.

Universal means of arousing reactions exist: surprise, tension and release, direction, violation of expectation and, finally, the use of components that can be interpreted in more than one way (ambiguity).

There are also means of arousing reactions for specific audiences. For example, in the West, mourning is denoted by black, whereas white represents mourning in China. The different colors effect different reactions among different communities.

In music, if we hear a *national anthem*, it will be meaningful to people of the nation to which it belongs, and these people’s reactions will be different from those of people to whom the anthem is not at all familiar. This can find expression, for example, in a movie in which it is common to hear an anthem when seeing a specific camp going into battle.

When we listen to folk songs merged with art music, such as Bartok’s Romanian Folksongs or Dvorak’s Slavonic melodies, listeners familiar with the original melodies will react differently to people who do not know them at all. A march will muster a wider reaction as the rhythm of a military march is identical to different nationalities and lullabies will always be gentle and soothing.

This essay will focus on those same universal components. What is written in this study is very elementary. The writer has no intention of dealing with the different periods of music (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, etc.) or with music centers (such as Germany, France, Italy, England, etc.). The text makes no pretensions of discussing all issues

arousing reactions to music, rather to elicit thoughts on the very “phenomenology” of it.

### Surprise:

Surprise is a component which provokes a reaction on the part of the listener. As the anticipated is violated, the very violation of it produces a reaction. Surprise can arise from the various components of music. The most obvious of them is achieved through means of dynamics. A well-known example of this is Haydn’s “Surprise” Symphony (in which, incidentally, the surprise dynamics were not indicated by the composer but by the publisher).

The introduction is quiet, naïve and calm. And then, when the ‘subito forte’ appears, the listener is surprised ‘perhaps woken’ and it is clear that the surprise has produced a reaction.

"Surprise" Symphony  
Second Movement Theme

Franz Joseph Haydn  
arr. Pat Stevens

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. Above the treble staff, the chords C, Dmin, G, and C are indicated. The bass staff contains a simple accompaniment of eighth and quarter notes. The second system begins with a fermata over a note in the treble staff, followed by a dynamic marking *sf* (subito forte) and a repeat sign. Above the treble staff, the chords Amin, D7, and G are indicated.

The person who took this idea to the extreme, even using it in reverse order – as a surprising “subito piano” – was Beethoven; in the first third of his oeuvre, surprising dynamic elements already appear.

Beethoven, Trio for Piano, clarinet and cello, Op. 11

Allegro con brio.

(Violino.)

Clarinetto in B.

Violoncello.

Allegro con brio.

Pianoforte.

2

Another example of Beethoven's is in the Sonata for Piano and Cello opus 5 no.2.

22

SONATA II.

Adagio sostenuto e espressivo

tenuto

fp

fp

p

2

From the point of view of performance, it is important to understand that any preparation or hint as to an up-coming surprise will take the sting out of the effect and diminish it. This will cancel out the suddenness that is to be created. Thus, the performer must practise creating an effect of surprise that has not been hinted at beforehand.

Surprise can find expression via other musical components, such as a change of rhythm, harmonic surprises, and more.

### Tension and Release:

Harmonic progressions are built on the use of harmonic degrees of differing levels of tension. For example, a simple harmonic progression such as I-IV-V-I offers clear guidance that can be expressed with dynamics (changes in volume), with other means of expression such as speeding up and slowing down or with the use of vibrato on stringed instruments. For example, the Prelude from Bach's Suite no.1 for Unaccompanied 'Cello.

DR. DUDU SELLA

# Suite I in G Major for Cello Solo

## Prélude.

tonica                      sub-dominant                      dominant septacord

quietly                      becoming louder                      climax

tonica

release

Implications on performance are very clear when creating tension and release. These are dictated by the harmonic progression.

### Directions:

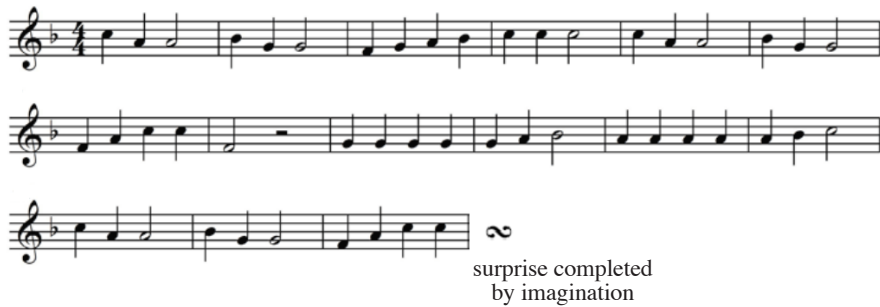
Even in a scale, on condition that it is an ascending scale, its direction leads up to the top note. On the other hand, in a descending scale, the direction is the opposite.

When one reverses the expression, such as in the use of a Diminuendo on an ascending scale, or a Crescendo on a descending scale, we produce a violation of the expected, this being the next element which I will discuss.

<sup>8</sup> Robin Good-Fellow is the 1692 parallel of Shakespeare's Puck.

### Violation of Expectation:

Violation of expectation is also associated with surprise, the difference being in the fact that anticipation is a requirement for there to be an expectation to violate. For example, if we take a simple song, such as the children’s song ‘Hänschen klein’ (in Hebrew - ‘Little Jonathan’) and we omit playing the last note – the solution – whoever is familiar with the song will use his imagination to fill in the missing note.

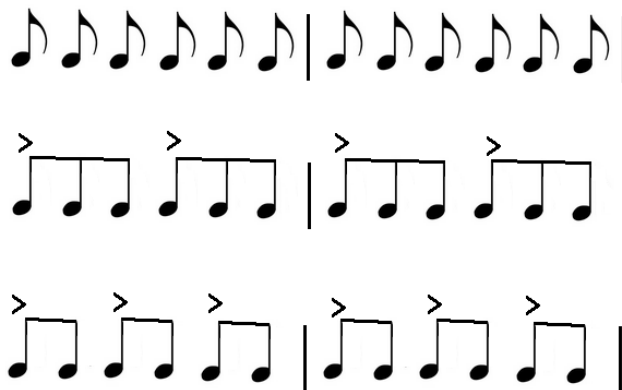


Our imagination is given a very meaningful role in the act of completing the musical picture. It is not uncommon to have composers construct works in a manner giving the background of each listener a decisive role in enlisting his imagination in order to complete the full picture.

### Ambiguity

There are elements in music which can be interpreted in different ways – i.e. ambiguity. I will give an example in the field of rhythm.

The *hemiola* belongs to this category. For example, if we take a group of six following sounds written in the same rhythms, there are a number of different possibilities of accenting them: one can accent two groups, each of three notes, or three groups, each having two notes.



Accenting the first of each three notes or the first of each pair can be interpreted differently by the listener.

One of the most obvious examples of this is the song “America” from Leonard Bernstein’s musical – “West Side Story”.

I like to be in A - mer - i - ca.  
O - kay by me in A - mer - i - ca.

Within this category there is also the Minuet from J.S.Bach’s Suite no.1 in G major for unaccompanied cello.

**Menuetto 2.**

This was pointed out to me by Leonard Bernstein at a personal meeting I had with him at Harvard University in 1974.

The *syncopation* can also be included in the matter discussed here.

The bar-line is an auxiliary tool serving the performer’s need for orientation. However, as the listener does not see the score, syncopation can create a sense of moving the bar-line to another place, as shown by the broken lines in the following example.

On the piano, a strummed- and percussion instrument, the beginning of the sound is its loudest point. On the other hand, in stringed (bowed) instruments, wind instruments and in singing, the volume of a sound can be strengthened after it has begun. One of the most common mistakes of players of the latter group is the even accenting of syncopations according to the accenting in bars that do not have them.

In the next example, we see that with stringed instruments, winds and in singing, one can accent the regular beat, a thing that blurs the creating of new bar-lines.



## Implications on Performance

In this case, and in order to augment the listener’s wonderment, the performer must clearly accent the before-mentioned notes in order to create both possibilities of interpretation.

In the course of years of study, one can acquire much formal knowledge present in the study of harmony, counterpoint, the theory of forms, history of music and the like. This begs the question, “What for?”

I hope that these comments will constitute a clue to answering such questions.

## Suggested topics for further research

I have only mentioned a limited number of issues included in the subject I raised earlier on. Beyond them, it would be advisable to examine all the components of music that can contribute to “emotional topography”, such as vibrato, speeding up (*accelerando*), slowing down (*ritardando*) and phrase length.

Another topic is that of the use of Jewish motifs in art music (in such music as Max Bruch’s “Kol Nidrei” or Ernst Bloch’s “Prayer”) and “Canaanite” music – Mediterranean – in Israeli music.

Regarding the two last issues, western notation cannot give accurate expression to authentic Jewish or Canaanite motifs. Thus, it is important to find where they appear in various works and how they can be kept true to their origins.

The use of new sound effects in music, specifically the new capabilities introduces in the 20<sup>th</sup> century using tools such as electronic instruments.



# OLD AND CONTEMPORARY, FOLK AND PERSONAL

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## A Chronological Survey of the Dialogue between Folk Materials and Contemporary Works in Eitan Steinberg and Etty BenZaken's Collaborations

Etty BenZaken

### 1) Folk Materials as Forms of Childhood

My childhood home was multi-lingual. My father, who had immigrated to Israel from Egypt, spoke Arabic and French with his family. My mother, who had immigrated to Israel from Turkey, spoke Ladino and Turkish. With us, the children, they spoke Hebrew, and the grandmothers told us stories in Hebrew infused with Ladino and Arabic. This multilingualism was but one expression of the open-minded and accepting multi-cultural existence that has become my identity, my world view and my artistic inspiration.

In Eitan's home (composer Eitan Steinberg - my partner in life and in musical work) they spoke German, English and Hebrew. His grandparents spoke Yiddish. Since our first meeting at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance in 1986 – he was finishing his Artist's Diploma in Composition and I was starting out in the Vocal Department – we have been searching for a personal- and contemporary dialogue with the folk materials we absorbed at home. What are 'folk materials'? Folk songs, such as the German folk songs sung to Eitan as a child, imprinted on his memory alongside classical works and pieces of *chazzanut* emanating from his grandfather's record-player; or folk techniques – instrumental and vocal – such as the manner in which my grandmother sang, certainly very different to the 'classical' vocal production I learned at the Academy; or folk tales, like those my Turkish- and Egyptian grandmothers told me; and materials from the culture of fabrics: Eitan's grandfather was a tailor, my mother was a dressmaker and, in their crafts echoed hundreds of years of sewing, embroidery, weaving and the love of textiles. In my parents' apartment, as in that of Eitan's grandparents, fabrics, buttons, pins and threads were part-and-parcel of the home.

### 2) Folk Materials as a Lesson on Life

Both of us have chosen the course that imbibes from folk and the avant-garde, from east and west; each of us has found his 'guide'. For Eitan, lessons with his composition teacher at the Academy – composer Mark Kopytman – opened listening channels to

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**Etty BenZaken** - vocalist, author, interdisciplinary artist, teaches at the Theater Department, University of Haifa.

music of different cultures, channels that continued to advance when he took further studies with composer Luciano Berio. For me, theater studies at the School of Visual Theater in Jerusalem with Michal Govrin and Marit Benisrael, in particular, introduced me to the works of contemporary artists such as Sergei Parajanov, Peter Brook or Ariane Mnouchkine, artists who worked in a dialogue with folk- materials and techniques.

During the first years of our work together, all the works Eitan composed for my voice belonged to one of two groups: (i) works in which the vocal line was based on a folk tune, (ii) multilingual works. In all of these I took part as the singer-performer and, in the private 'voice laboratory' of our home, we would examine different kinds of vocal production. Our library of recordings has supplied us with highly valuable knowledge, such as the Eskimo ritual of rhythmic breathing, Mongolian women's singing using throat tremolo on high notes and also heterophonic improvisation as in Indian music. This meeting with the many and varied worlds of folk culture has enriched our musical knowledge, at the same time offering us a lesson on life: as young people involved with contemporary music with a European/western context aimed at innovation and originality, we were already beginning to understand that several things had already been done in the world before we had 'discovered the wheel' and that most of these things had been done outside of Europe.

### **3) Ritual (authentic or fabricated)**

In 1995, we presented our first work as co-working artists: the music-theater "Princess of Five Faces"<sup>1</sup> to a text that I wrote. This is a free adaptation of excerpts from Milorad Pavic's novel "Dictionary of the Khazars". Combining historical facts with total fantasy, the character of the novel allowed us to move around in the space between ancient ritual and contemporary MonoOpera. The vocal line was performed in 'classical' vocal technique with a smattering of folk-style singing. The instrumental ensemble, which included classical instruments as well as folk percussion instruments, was seated on the stage, within the theatrical space. I walked around in close proximity of them as I changed masks, (picture no.1), pouring many kilograms of salt onto the stage floor in a fictitious ritual. In this first performance, I had defined to myself the theatrical language in which I felt 'at home' as a stage director-designer starting out: the theatrical action is powered by a sequence of scenes (not by storyline narrative) joined to each other in continuous activity carried out by me on the stage, while singing and engaging with the materials/ fabrics/ props, that gradually change the layout of the stage. The creating of stage direction via changes in layout is, in itself, a ritual: before the audience's eyes, the action is being carried out at a slow but steady pace with meticulous attention to detail.

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<sup>1</sup> "Princess of Five Faces"- music-theater for singer-actress and 7 instrumentalists. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text, direction, stage design and masks, performance of the leading role: Ety BenZaken. Premiere: The Upper Galilee Voice of Music Festival, Kfar Blum, 1995.



Picture no.1 from the music-theater “Princess of Five Faces”.

#### 4) The Folk Song in Center Stage

Surprisingly (or perhaps, not) our dialogue with the folk materials to which we had been exposed in our childhood actually gathered in strength when we were living in the USA. From 1994 to 2000, we lived in Berkeley, California, for Eitan to take his doctoral studies; unexpectedly, there, “at the edge of the west”, in the words of the poet Yehuda Halevy, we came to understand to what extent our hearts were in the east. The thrilling encounter with all the cultural variety of the San Francisco Bay Area – among Koreans, Vietnamese, Latin Americans and many others – heightened our sense of Middle Eastern identity. It was there that we began our project of Ladino songs - “The Bride Unfastens Her Braids, The Groom Faints”<sup>2</sup> - folk love songs and wedding songs in Ladino and Haketia (the language spoken by Sephardic Jews in Morocco.) In his musical settings, Eitan chose to keep the folk song as the focus, spinning around it a shell by means of an ensemble integrating early-, classical- and folk instruments. This instrumental shell does not impose major or minor scales: it is mostly modal. Often, as in the settings of the Moroccan wedding songs, for example, the instruments do not in any way create a harmonic shell; rather, through their melody and rhythm, they intensify the song’s rhythmic dimension. The entire ensemble becomes an extension of the percussion instruments, but in defined pitches. As a singer, my choice was to perform the songs using chest voice – vocal production that uses the reverberation spaces of the chest and throat (and not the reverberation spaces in the head used in ‘classical’ singing). This understanding – that I could change my style of vocal production to suit different musical material I was singing – was essential for me, and as a singer of contemporary music using the 20th century extended vocal technique, I added ‘ethnic’ vocal production

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2 “The Bride Unfastens Her Braids, The Groom Faints” (New Albion Records, 1999)

to my palette. The Ladino song project is still continuing. New songs are being added and ensemble settings are changing: in addition to the ensemble setting, Eitan has also added a more intimate version for voice and guitar duo as well as a festive version for voice and orchestra.<sup>3</sup> In all the versions, he has allowed for the folk songs to sound in their original form - words and melody – and to reach the hearts of listeners with the same facility they have done for some hundreds of years.

## 5) Folk Materials as Personal Expression

Like many Israelis completing higher studies overseas, we had considered remaining in the USA. Following the conclusion of Eitan's studies, we stayed in the San Francisco Bay Area for an extra year, where Eitan worked at the University of California at Berkeley as a visiting lecturer. Opportunities for professional achievement seemed easier there than in Israel. However, after deep deliberation, we made the conscious decision to return to reside, create and teach in Israel. We chose to live close to our family, and also to our culture, language and inspiration.

Israeli reality welcomed us with an ironic smile - the second *Intifada* (uprising). On the other hand, it immediately also provided Eitan with the inspiration for a new work: "Rava Deravin"<sup>4</sup> is a work that was a milestone for both of us. The inspiration of the traditional Hassidic niggun and of the ancient text of the Holy ARI (1534-1572) is realized in a contemporary- and personal composition in which Eitan has explored not only the essence of prayer. In the work, he also went deeper into research that has been occupying him till today – the manner of dealing with text in a vocal work. In a unique prayer, for a voice not necessarily 'classical' or 'ethnic', with a vocal line free of tempo and bar lines, I, too, was called upon to research my own vocal ability and, in one section, to improvise freely on the text, as prayer.

The folk- and traditional creation of any one culture is always a form, a framework, a receptacle to contain endless variations, on condition that they retain a shared stylistic outline. As might be expected, "Rava Deravin" deviates from the stylistic outline of the Hassidic niggun, but, paradoxically, it seems that its stable folk origins are actually those which allowed for this deviation. "Rava Deravin" is a work of personal (and feminine) expression – at times in whispering gestures, at others calling out – of the niggun and of the ancient Kabbalist text, a text actually forbidden to be mouthed in certain Hassidic communities, so sacred is its content.

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3 The orchestral version was commissioned by the Israel Chamber Orchestra (2004) and has been performed also by the Israel Camerata Jerusalem (2008, 2013) and by the Haifa Symphony Orchestra (2008).

4 "Rava Deravin" for voice and ensemble was written for Etty BenZaken, the Boston Musica Viva Ensemble and conductor Richard Pittman. The work appears on two CDs:

"Rava Deravin – Chamber works by Eitan Steinberg" (indi., 2002)

"Etty BenZaken sings Steinberg and Bardanashvili" (indi., 2010)

In 2003 Steinberg composed a version for viola and string quartet for violist Kim Kashkashian, recorded on the CD "Neharot, Neharot" (ECM Records, 2006)

## 6) Political Protest in the Guise of a Tale

A musical work can give expression to a political opinion, as in Eitan's composition "Where Did We Go Wrong, Thank You" (2003)<sup>5</sup> using texts by Dan Pagis. This work, using Pagis' poem "The Dead Village" – which, to our minds, is an association with a Jewish village that was destroyed in the Holocaust – is performed in Arabic, thus raising associations with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, Eitan's works rarely refer to politics in such a direct manner. We have come to understand that it is easier to voice political protest in disguise. The two next music-theater works we created together – "The Sultan is Pregnant" (2002)<sup>6</sup> and "Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer" (2004)<sup>7</sup> – are contemporary protests, placed, indeed, in the non-realistic time and space of a fairytale, with its non-obligatory opening – "Once upon a time." In "The Sultan is Pregnant", the metered text was written in Hebrew, Arabic and English in the spirit of an oriental tale and tells of a cruel sultan who, as the result of a spell, becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son. The birth experience changes him beyond recognition, creating huge consequences regarding his fate and that of his kingdom. A small kingdom – that I built from sand and water before entering the stage – literally went and crumbled during the performance. Also in this performance, there was use of richly colored- and textured fabrics, of ritual-like action which then changed the layout of the stage, and of folk techniques such as storytelling and puppetry.

Whereas the contemporary allegory of "The Sultan is Pregnant" gives the appearance of an entertaining folk tale, the text in "Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer" tells of loss and mourning and of the need for forgiveness. The piece moves from the religious Christian myth – described in the Latin hymn "Stabat Mater dolorosa" (The Mother was standing full of sorrow) – to the human experience of a mother's bereavement and the loss of sons in war. The text includes original sections, two short sections of the Latin hymn and two folk songs: a Ladino lament, which was traditionally sung on mourning days, as well as a ballad, based on an Irish folk song, from the American War of Independence. These are performed in Hebrew, Arabic, English, Latin and Ladino. The story is about an expert embroiderer from a far-away kingdom who receives an invitation from the king in person: on selected fabrics he has sent her, she is asked to embroider the journey of life. While still busy with the splendid embroidery, she receives news of her son's death; he had been a soldier in the king's army. The 'journey of life' the bereaved mother cannot complete is there on stage, present as a huge fabric collage 6 meters wide and 4 meters high, a patchwork creation in red and gold. As to the folk songs used, the female craft of

5 "Where Did We Go Wrong, Thank You" for female voice and small instruments. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text: 6 poems by Dan Pagis, in Hebrew and in Arabic translation by Gasan Jamal.

6 "The Sultan is Pregnant" – music-theater for singer-actress and 7 instrumentalists. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text, direction, stage design, performance of the leading role: Ety BenZaken. The work was commissioned by- and premiered at the Upper Galilee Voice of Music Festival, Kfar Blum, in 2002.

7 "Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer" – music-theater for singer-actress and string quartet. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text, direction, stage design, fabric collage, performance of the leading role: Ety BenZaken. The piece, written for Ety BenZaken and the Israel Contemporary String Quartet, was commissioned by- and premiered at the Upper Galilee Voice of Music Festival, Kfar Blum, in 2004. Since then, it has been performed frequently in Israel and overseas. The work appears on the CD "Ety BenZaken Sings Eitan Steinberg and Joseph Bardanashvili" (indi., 2010).

the patchwork creation, the vocal techniques of folk song, my improvisations and those of the instrumentalists and, once again, a fictional ritual happening on stage – all these distance the audience from our own political reality, allowing for empathy towards the expert embroiderer who manages to continue the journey of life only after having chosen forgiveness.



Picture no.2 – From the music-theater “Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer”.

## 7) Folk Materials for Recycling, and a Charm against the Evil Eye.

Parallel to our collaborative work, both as a creator-performer and as a creative team, each of us is also busy with independent work. Eitan has composed many instrumental works, some of them inspired by folk materials, others more abstract. I create literary- and theatrical works, and perform musical works by Israeli composers. Over recent years, I have been creating sound installations and sound-text works both independently and with my vocal duo partner Anat Pick. In the course of all these activities, I have been aware of the fact that there are folk materials rooted so deep within me that, at different times, they reappear, inviting me to engage in dialogue with them, each time in a different context and in a different medium of my work. Such are the stories I heard from my grandmother, Grandmother Ester; some of them have found place in my first novel<sup>8</sup>, some have become amusing anecdotes that I tell in my concerts of Ladino folk songs. Others have found their way into my vocal work with Anat Pick, becoming sound-text works; this is what happened with the charm against the evil eye I learned from my grandmother. Respiratory problems and frequent colds I was predisposed to as a child were interpreted by Grandmother Ester as harm imposed on me by the evil eye. The best thing for such harm would be a little cleansing salt and the whispering of a chant in Ladino<sup>9</sup>:

8 “The Empress Card”, Sifriat Hapoalim, 1988.

9 Here in the *Aki Yerushalayim* Ladino transcript.



“L’ojo malo l’avla mala, Ester bat Margalit  
 Ke sevaya todo l’ojo malo al dip de la mar  
 A los tehomot  
 I Ester bat Margalit ke no tenga dingun mal  
 Ni Dingun ora de sar’  
 Shetihye la refua shlema”<sup>10</sup>

For years I had not understood the meaning of the text she would mumble from above my head, waving a fistful of salt in her hand; I only picked up my name – “Ester bat Margalit”. This folk charm, as a sound ritual, found its way into my work with Anat Pick when we co-created “Ester 1” – a sound-text work based on texts we had heard from both our grandmothers, Anat’s Persian Grandmother Ester and my Sephardic Grandmother Ester. Levels of dialogue – personal/traditional, old/young, ceremony/concert, belief/cynicism – are executed in this short work by means of the pronunciation and intonation of both speakers; and, of course, the work is good against the evil eye!

## 8) Folk Materials as a Bridge between Groups in Conflict

Inspiration from folk materials continues to fire both Eitan and me, producing theatrical- and musical works, among which are “The Fool Who Loved Singing” (2006)<sup>11</sup>, “The Love Medicine” - a new project of settings of folk songs in various languages (2006)<sup>12</sup> - and “Naturale” (2007)<sup>13</sup>, my theatrical interpretation of Luciano Berio’s work of the same name. Over recent years, in the course of my studies on the direct PhD track of the University of Haifa’s Folklore Division, under the guidance of researcher Prof. Haya Bar-Itzhak, I have also become acquainted with the treasury of stories in the Dov Noy Israel Folktale Archive. Familiarity with this archive has unearthed a source of new and exciting inspiration.

Of late, I have created two stage works at the University of Haifa, our place of work (Eitan teaches in the Department of Music, and I, in the Department of Theatre). The

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10 “The evil eye, the evil speech, Ester daughter of Margalit/May all the evil eye go to the depths of the sea/ To the chasms/And there should be no evil for Ester daughter of Margalit/ And not one hour of sorrow/ And she should have a complete recovery”.

11 “The Fool Who Loved Singing” – music-theater for singer-actress, dancer, narrator and 7 instrumentalists. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text, direction, stage design, performance of the leading role: Ety BenZaken. The work was commissioned by- and premiered at the Upper Galilee Voice of Music Festival, Kfar Blum in 2006. A chamber music version, in English only, was commissioned by the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston USA, and premiered in 2007 at the Musiktriennale in Cologne, Germany in a performance featuring Ety BenZaken, Kim Kashkashian (viola) and Robyn Schulkowsky (percussion).

12 The project “The Love Medicine”, premiered in the city of Valletta, Malta, was premiered by BenZaken and guitarist Oded Schub; it has since been performed frequently in Israel and overseas. Songs from the performance have been issued in the CD “I Love My Love” – Folk Songs, (indi., 2010)

13 “Naturale” – Ety BenZaken’s theatrical interpretation of Luciano Berio’s musical work of the same name. It was premiered by Ety BenZaken together with a performance of Berio’s music, by Kim Kashkashian (viola) and Robyn Schulkowsky (percussion) in Cologne, Germany (2007)

works are the music-theater “Fabrics’ Stories” (2011)<sup>14</sup> and the children’s play “The Merry Fishermen’s Island” (2012)<sup>15</sup>. Both originated from within the workshop of folk tale and folk song performance I teach in the Department of Theatre, and have been performed by Jewish- and Arab students in a multi-lingual tapestry of stories in Hebrew and Arabic, with songs in Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, Yiddish, Italian, French, Georgian and Haketia. I will elaborate on the first work.

16 students made up the group of the “Fabrics’ Stories” workshop: eight were Jews (from families of Italian-, German-, Iraqi-, Polish-, Russian- and Tunisian extraction) and eight were Arabs (Moslems, Christians, Druze and one Communist...). For the duration of the workshop, I gave them the task of collecting, documenting, writing and performing stories, firstly, stories learned from adult members of their families; following that, performing stories from the Dov Noy Israel Folktale Archive. Performing the tasks became an empowering experience of encountering identity, community and culture. Sharing the stories with their classmates at the workshop enabled the students to observe differences and similarities between us as groups on both sides of the political conflict. The performance of “Fabrics’ Stories” was the high point of the personal- and group process taking place at the workshop. When writing the text for it, using stories and songs the students had collected, I put it into a story frame about – of course – a group of tailors; throughout the performance, the tailors work on sewing a huge fabric, as they sing and tell each other stories. At the end of the performance, the fabric is spread out and there before us is a splendid quilt: on each piece of it is written one of the stories that has been told as it was being sewn. What is then revealed is that these are no ordinary tailors but angel tailors up in heaven, sitting there and sewing destinies – who will be born to whom and what events will take place in each person’s life. Through the performance, actors/actresses and audience experience the wonders hidden in folk materials: on the one hand, they play a central role in the structuring of our different cultural identities and, on the other, and at the very same time, they bridge over all the differences between us, inviting us, with wisdom, humility and humor, to experience the healing powers of human encounter.

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14 “Fabrics’ Stories” – music-theater for 16 actors and actresses. Text, direction, stage design: Ety BenZaken. Musical guidance and original music: Eitan Steinberg. A production of the Department of Theatre, University of Haifa, 2011.

15 “The Merry Fishermen’s Island” – a children’s play for 7 actors and actresses. Text, direction, stage design: Ety BenZaken. Musical guidance and original music: Eitan Steinberg. A production of the Department of Theatre, University of Haifa, 2012.





Picture no.3 – From the music-theater “Fabrics’ Stories”: sewing and telling stories.



Picture no.4 – From the music-theater “Fabrics’ Stories”: after the fabric has been spread out.

## 9) Memory Dances

Last year, Eitan composed a work for voice and ensemble called “Dancing Memory Fish” (2012)<sup>16</sup>. The work deals with memory and is based on a text from Harold Schimmel’s “Tract on Memory”. In the work, Harold Schimmel’s sequence of reflections on memory takes the form of a series of musical techniques that reflect processes taking place in the evasive regions of our memory – repetitiveness, movement, stillness, chance, order, narrative and the lack of narrative. As in other vocal works Eitan has written, this work also includes transitions from singing to murmuring and the fragmentation of sentences and words. In this instance, these transitions do not merely reflect his musical interest in the components of language and pronunciation, but also the processes occurring in our brains when we are thinking, talking, remembering and forgetting.

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16 “Dancing Memory Fish” for voice and ensemble. Music: Eitan Steinberg. Text: Harold Schimmel together with three folk songs. Composed for Ety BenZaken and the Israel Contemporary Players. Premiere: Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 2012 as part of the “Discoveries” Series. Conductor: Ilan Volkov.

## OLD AND CONTEMPORARY, FOLK AND PERSONAL

Within the tapestry of the musical action of “Dancing Memory Fish”, three sections sung in sudden articulacy stand out, in melodic narrative that is delicate and accessible. These are three quotations from children’s folk songs: one is a song in Ladino and Turkish I had heard in childhood from my mother; the second is a German children’s song that was sung to Eitan when he was a child; the third is a children’s nonsense song in Arabic I learned from my students at the University of Haifa. Our memories store endless information simultaneously, far beyond what one musical work can demonstrate, but I imagine that, even in the greatly tangled complexity of our memories, there sometimes exist clear flashes of gentle tranquility. Perhaps they exist in the glimmers of the mother’s voice we heard in infancy, in the language she spoke to us, or in the language spoken to her, in the lullaby she sang to us, that had also been sung to her.

*Additional information on works mentioned in the article, video-, audio material and pictures can be found on the following site: [www.benzaken-steinberg.com](http://www.benzaken-steinberg.com)*

## **RUSTLES AND WHISPERS FROM THE PAST**

### **A Reflection on Inspiration from Folk Materials in “Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer” and “Rava Deravin”**

Eitan Steinberg

My affinity with folk materials has accompanied my compositional creativity from the start until today. This taste has expressed itself in a number of manners and techniques and on a wide axis of possibilities, from the exact quotation of songs and folk music excerpts to the absolute abstraction of sound material, in fact, no longer recognizable in the work, only remaining as a starting point, a building block or merely as inspiration. An additional manner is the ‘importing’ of folk performance techniques and their application in contemporary musical language. In this article, I wish to address two works which constitute examples of some of these manners and techniques.

#### **“Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer” for voice, string quartet and two percussionists.**

**Text: Ety BenZaken, together with excerpts from the Latin hymn “Stabat Mater” and two folk songs.**

The duration of the work is 30 minutes and it is constructed from nine movements:

1. “A Tale of an Embroiderer”. Text: Ety BenZaken, performed in Hebrew and Arabic.
2. “Malato ‘sta el hijo rey” (The King’s Son is Ill) a Judeo-Spanish lament sung in Ladino.
3. “Ay”, without words.
4. “Filius” (Son) from the Latin hymn “Stabat Mater”, sung in Latin.
5. “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier”, an American folk song, sung in English.
6. “A Tale of an Embroiderer” (continuation)
7. “Eia Mater” (O Mother) from the Latin hymn “Stabat Mater”, sung in Latin.
8. Instrumental interlude
9. “Forgiveness Song”. Text: Ety BenZaken, sung in English.

In various ways, all the movements include elements from folk and/or early music from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance:

Movements 1 and 6 are spoken parts, and contain the story frame, written by Ety BenZaken, told in the folk storytelling technique: addressing the audience directly, using intonation and vocal color, facial expressions and eye contact with the audience, with

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**Prof. Eitan Steinberg** - composer, full professor at the Music Department, University of Haifa, and former head of this Department (2005-2010). Graduate of the Academy,

## RUSTLES AND WHISPERS FROM THE PAST

occasional small gestures - a hand- or body movement. The act of storytelling is carried out over the background of a totally homophonic musical texture constructed from a series of chords/clusters marked on the score as “poco sul ponticello”.

Movement no.2 presents the first folk music material - an early Ladino *romanca* traditionally sung as a lament on mourning days. The lament over the death of the king’s son appears as a quotation of words and melody; I have changed nothing in its melody. Distancing from the folk interpretation was achieved by my performance directions: dynamics and articulation for both singer and quartet are marked *sempre ff* with aggressive bowing articulation in a homophonic texture, emphasizing the tempo of the song (bpm-48) This strong homophonic texture is a fixed texture, within which occasional ‘disturbances’ occur via very fast passages played by the strings in the course of a crescendo (Example no.1)

The image shows a musical score for five parts: Voice, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The voice part has lyrics in Spanish: "ve - nir el de la bar - va en - ve - lu - ta - da... las cam - pa - na... que ya da - van... tris - tes". The instrumental parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) are written in a homophonic texture, with the strings playing a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *pp*, and articulation marks like accents and slurs. A section marked with a 'C' in a circle is indicated.

Example no.1 - from the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement of “Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer”.

The third movement applies the *sulla corda* (on the string) instrumental technique as the general direction for the whole movement and for all instruments. Inspiration for the special timbre evolving from playing of this kind, comes from violin playing practice in American folk music. The quartet parts appear with no tempo- or rhythm indications, as separate parts on separate pages, and there is no score to describe how they should coordinate. Inspiration for this kind of writing comes from polyphonic manuscripts of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The vocal part is also written separately, in the same way, and its text is simply one syllable – “ay!” With no all-inclusive score for this movement, the performers have no point of reference that can support any sound image of the final result. The individual parts are not dependent on each other and progress in a totally free manner. Nonetheless, I managed to achieve coordination in the final result through a number of unifying elements: the instruments play within the same range, in the Dorian mode on C, occasionally ornamenting the main notes freely – with trills and tremolo – and all are requested to play *sul pont*. The result is a highly flexible, complex and aleatoric texture that changes constantly. To the surprise of all the instrumentalists who have performed the work to date, and each time in a different manner, performance of this movement has always ‘worked’ well. The free playing produces a heterophonic texture, which is complex and delicate, creating itself anew with each performance, yet always producing a similar result.

The 4<sup>th</sup> movement is the first in which the Latin text from the Middle Ages appears, a text that has given inspiration to so many musical works. This is a slow movement, shifting between homophonic- and contrapuntal textures. The strings' melodic lines are defined with bar lines and rhythmic indications, while the vocal line is completely free. However, the movement is constructed in such a way that the voice- and quartet parts will always work well together. This allows the singer maximal freedom as she moves in the space while singing and carrying out the theatrical 'ritual'.

The 5<sup>th</sup> movement is built on an American folk song that has Irish roots – “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier”. The vocal line has remained faithful to the original song, but, in the instrumental accompaniment, a technique I use from time to time has been added: the placing of one folk song over another as contrapuntal content: three of the four stringed instruments produce the harmonic texture that forms a shell for the American song. At the same time, the second violin creates a counterpoint by playing the Judeo-Spanish *romanca* that was performed by the singer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement. This time, the melody is played an octave higher than the original and at a faster tempo. It merges into the texture accompanying the American song, sounding like ornamentation of the homophonic texture being played by the other instruments (Example no.2).

The image shows a musical score for a vocal and string ensemble. The vocal line is at the top, with lyrics: "I'd sell my clock I'd sell my reel like-wise I'd sell my spin-ning wheel to". Below the vocal line are four string parts: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The Violin II part features a fast, rhythmic pattern. The Viola and Violoncello parts also feature rhythmic patterns, with the Violoncello part marked "poco".

Example no.2 – from the 5th movement of “Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer”.

The 7<sup>th</sup> movement constitutes the work's climax. This section is constructed using an aleatoric technique, with vocal-, quartet- and percussion parts not dependent on each other. In the vocal line, the singer is given melodic fragments reminiscent of church chants from the early Middle Ages with a text constructed of phrases from the Latin hymn. The singer is asked to improvise on them for some four minutes. The quartet part is made up of two kinds of musical material, one with pitch indications, and the other with rhythmic indications. The instrumentalists are requested to move together, as a quartet, between performance of the very slow, chorale-like first texture, written as a series of chords with no rhythm indications, and the performance of other material – very fast rhythmic formulas that have no pitch indications; thus, the improvisatory performance of them is dissonant, inducing a nervous feeling. It is the first violinist who indicates when to move from one kind of musical material to the other, and, according to instructions in the score, the quartet is required to allocate approximately one minute to each kind of musical material.

The writing of the two percussion parts was motivated by folk music. Taking inspiration from African music, two djembe drums play a polyrhythmic texture which includes 12/8

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and 5/8 rhythms. This is the only movement in which the percussion instruments take part and, for this reason, it is possible to use a pre-recorded soundtrack, in which both percussionists are heard. In this movement, as in other movements of the work, the instrumentalists are required to take joint responsibility not only in following the score but also in constructing the movement in its entirety, as a form. The percussionists' part gives the singer and string-players the sense of tempo and time, but the material they themselves perform contradicts that very same principle. Indeed, the performers learn to sense the time cycle of approximately one minute and they base their building of the movement's development on this long phrase breath.

The 8<sup>th</sup> movement is an instrumental interlude for the strings, using one of the most commonly used techniques of folk- and early music: a melodic line of an improvisatory nature (in this case, it is the Dorian mode on D) moving against a drone anchored on the tonic or dominant of the mode. In this instance, I composed a melodic line in a folk/early and ornamental vein, played by the first violin against a drone composed of three notes: A3 in the cello, the fourth above it – D4 – played by the viola, with a doubled octave fifth in the second violin (E4+5). My aim was to create an acoustic space in which to support the melody which occurs three consecutive times, with the first violin requested to improvise on the basis of the original melody, producing a more elaborated improvisation with each repeat (Example no.3)

*VIII Interlude*

The musical score for the VIII Interlude is written for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The time signature is 5/8. The tempo and dynamics are marked as *sempre poco a poco crescendo e accelerando* and *mp*. The Violin I part features a complex, ornamental melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts provide a drone accompaniment, with the Viola and Violoncello playing a three-note chord (A3, D4, E4) and the Violin II playing a higher octave of the same notes.

### Example no.3 – from the 8<sup>th</sup> movement of “Stabat Mater- a Human Prayer”

In the 9<sup>th</sup> movement, the “Forgiveness Song” is performed, concluding the work. The text for this was written in English by Ety BenZaken, using a form common to many folk songs: it is composed of six stanzas, each having four lines, each with a rhyme scheme of AABB. The rhythm and intrinsic music of this beautiful text led me to compose a melody in the style of an early English ballad of strophic form. In this way, three pairs of binary, musical forms are created, with three repeats. In the instrumental dimension, there is a cumulative process: the first cycle is performed by the singer who is accompanying herself on a small accordion. In the second cycle, (stanzas 3, 4) the second violin and viola join her. In the last two lines of the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza, the first violin and cello join them on the word “Justice”, opening the quartet spectrum to higher and lower registers. The instrumental texture moves between a static texture and a very slow counterpoint, typical to *Kyrie* movements in Renaissance Masses; the timbre and ornaments, however, parallel in all instruments, call to mind Celtic music. The work ends with improvised ornaments that gradually wane, echoing ornaments heard previously in the course of the work.

**“Rava Deravin” for voice, flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello and piano.**

**Other versions: for viola and string quartet, for voice and string quartet, for voice and string orchestra.**

**Text: the Holy ARI (Rabbi Isaac Luria), performed in Aramaic**

“Rava Deravin” (Aramaic: Favor of Favors) is based on a text by the Holy ARI, that is traditionally read or sung during the third Sabbath meal. I learned the *niggun* for this text– in a version sung by the Belz Hassidic group – from my friend , rabbi and actor Baruch Brenner, while we were working on the theatrical project “Gog and Magog”, created by stage director Michal Govrin. In this project, I was taking part as composer and designer of the musical dimension, this consisting of folk songs performed by the actors, each performing that of his/her own background. This specific *niggun* form is complex, consisting of three sections: the first section is a kind of recitative. This is followed by a kind of refrain formed by short melodic units, then followed by the final section, which is definitely the heart of the *niggun*. In the work, the Hassidic *niggun* appears in all three sections, in the same order, but not in linear/narrative continuum. I divided the first section – the recitative – into fragments, to be sung against the background of the ensemble. Here and there, the singer is required to perform quick repetitions of a syllable of one of the words in the text, a kind of murmur or stutter, an idea contributing to a sense of fragmentation and the lack of linearity. Fast repetitions of syllables, consonants and vowels, and, altogether, the breaking up of a text into its components, are typical characteristics of my vocal works. In “Rava Deravin”, one way of repeating syllables is performed by a technique I have called “jaw tremolo”. This involves a fast quivering movement of the lower jaw while singing a continuous note, thus creating a broken, shaking sound. This first section of the *niggun* is then repeated, this time appearing sequentially, against a fast and dissonant minimalistic background, performed by three of the strings (Example no.4). Between these waves of singing, there are long pauses during which we hear the rising presence of the instrumental texture, to the point where the singing disappears altogether and the sole presence of the accompanying texture becomes the focal aspect.

Example no.4 – from “Rava Deravin”



RUSTLES AND WHISPERS FROM THE PAST

In the next musical section, the second part of the *niggun* appears, ‘interrupted’ by new musical material. The interruptions appear in the vocal line in the form of material not in any way based on the *niggun*. Up to this point, the vocal line has been constructed from units or building blocks taken from the folk material, with the instrumental parts composed in contemporary musical language and syntax. The instruments provide one foreign element and, on the other hand, an accompaniment and the filling out of the folk song line. At this point, in which the voice takes leave from the *niggun* content and joins the contemporary language, in its rhythmic and dynamic complexity, a total break away is created, forming an antithesis to the folk material. The work moves between extremes, like a boat on stormy seas. This section is characterized by dissonances, by a dramatic melodic line, by complex rhythms and by fast-changing dynamics (Example no.5). In addition to these elements, I have used ‘throat tremolo’ made known to me from listening to women’s traditional singing from Mongolia. In this technique, produced in the high vocal register, the singer produces a note, at the same time exerting strong pressure on her throat and vibrating the uvula. These techniques were researched and defined in close collaboration with Ety. This collaboration included searching, discussion and experiencing – a valuable research process that begins anew with each work I compose for her voice.

The image shows a musical score for Example no.5. It consists of seven staves: Voice, A. Fl., B. Cl., Vln, Vla, Vc., and Pno. The Voice staff has lyrics: "da - hi ka - - - di - sha hed - va -". Above the first two notes of the vocal line are triplets. Above the final note is a '7' indicating a seven-measure rest. The instrumental parts (A. Fl., B. Cl., Vln, Vla, Vc., Pno) feature complex rhythmic patterns with dynamic markings such as *mf*, *sfz*, and *sempre mf*. The Pno part is marked *sempre mf* and has a tremolo effect indicated by a wavy line under the notes.

Example no.5 – from “Rava Deravin”.

Throughout the entire work, the vocal line is written with rhythm- and meter indications but without bar lines. This is my way of suggesting that the rhythm indications are merely recommendations, and it is desirable that the singer perform the work in a free- and flexible manner. This freedom reaches its peak in the section prior to the concluding section: the singer is asked to improvise on a text and on a limited group of notes, in a personal prayer



EITAN STEINBERG

of her choice, over a homophonic chorale-type instrumental texture. In Etty's performance, the whispered prayer gradually spirals to becoming ecstatic before fading out into the concluding section.

In the last section of the work, the third- and highly melodic part of the traditional *niggun* appears uninterrupted in complete phrases. Only now and then does the above-mentioned throat tremolo recur (marked as "tth"), shaking the lyrical melodic line (Example no.6), as if to remind us of the cry of prayer, and of our trembling, fragile human existence.

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The musical score for Example no.6 consists of seven staves. The top staff is for the Voice, with lyrics "a - tik yo - min a - tik yo - - min". Above the first measure of the voice line is the number "148". Above the second measure is the marking "tth". The voice line features a melodic line with a tremolo effect. The second staff is for the Alto Flute (A. Fl.), the third for Clarinet (Cl.), the fourth for Violin (Vln), the fifth for Viola (Vla), and the sixth for Violoncello (Vc.). These five instrumental staves show a homophonic texture with long, sustained notes. The seventh staff is for Piano (Pno), which has a rest in the first measure and a short, tremolo passage in the second measure, marked with "pp".

Example no.6 – from “Rava Deravin”.

# THEORY AND PRACTICE IN DANCE

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Rina Schenfeld

“First there was a journey, then doubt and, only after that, dance as a string of prayers”.  
Hadassa Tal.

Dance is a language passed down orally and transmitted from mouth to ear, from generation to generation. The human body is a wonderful machine, a superb orchestra; in order to know how to use it there is a need for living , knowledge and practice.

After 50 years on stage and in creative work I am still looking to arrive at freedom, to allow my dance to evolve naturally. In my 50 years on stage so many theories and practice methods have formed and changed. I began with classical ballet, endeavoring to fly up to the sky. After that, in modern dance, with Martha Graham, I learned to fall down to earth. From being a delicate ballerina, I became a strong woman – a heroic Ariadne, a Herodiade, a Helena, a Medea; and, from there, I went to find a new language of my own, with objects, with Merce Cunningham and with Pina Bausch.

I learned so much at the Juilliard School: classical ballet and modern dance – the Martha Graham technique, Labanotation, choreography with Louis Horst ; then there were all the dances I performed, these being masterpieces by Martha Graham, Jerome Robbins, Glen Tetley, Norman Morrice, John Cranko, Robert Cohan – some of the world’s greatest choreographers. The 90 dances I have created over many years have permeated my body: they run in my blood and have become natural to me. All the rules and forms are instilled in my body, enabling me to create with closed eyes, without planning, allowing the creation to emerge from other natural- and unknown sources.

## What is freedom in dance and how does one achieve it?

“Objects contain within themselves all possibilities” , said Ludwig Wittgenstein and indeed, they have helped me discover new theories and practices, they also taught me to find my own personal language, to learn to create different movements, to relate differently to space and music. they helped me and showed me how to partner, to join, to separate and to connect. I have worked with a variety of objects: geometrical objects, objects from nature, realistic objects, and later on, words, poetry and video. All these have helped me to detach myself from the world of Martha Graham, to create dance without the use of stories, plots and heroes, to achieve clear lines, to discover the world of light and shadow in an illusory, mystical, absurd world, in which one enters to the unknown. Working with video allows me to get closer to my public, at the same time bringing outdoor sceneries to the

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**Rina Schenfeld** - dancer, choreographer, teacher and director of her dance company and dance school, co-founder of the Batsheva Dance Company

theatre. This freedom has shown me the possibility and necessity of recycling, recreating and choreographing one work from another. A trio can become a duet danced once to the music of Chopin, at another time to that of Bach and yet another time to the music of Leonard Cohen. Costumes can be varied as can the order of dances. all of this teaching us how a new and different work is created. We change daily. Our dreams change; changes in weather can influence our dance. We must learn to be flexible, not to stick religiously to old theories and practices, but to open up to new possibilities. to learn and unlearn.

To achieve this freedom I have used several methods:

1. I have created a new technique that integrates classical technique, modern dance, yoga, the Feldenkrais Method and Contact Improvisation.
2. I have discovered improvisation; it has become a part of my technique and of my creative process.
3. I have choreographed using the technique of free association.
4. Turning to geometry in order to seek clear lines and freshness of atmosphere, I discovered the power and meaning of the triangle, the square, the line, the rectangle, the circle and the cross.
5. I have created dance to the music of the body and not to previously existing music. Composers have written music to completed dances of mine, sometimes sent to them on video.
6. I have exited the theatre space to perform in unconventional locations: the street, nature, museums, at the sea.
7. I have learned from Oskar Schlemmer's work associated with the Bauhaus School, taking much inspiration and knowledge from this period.
8. I have worked with voice, words, sound, poetry, with video and with light and shadow.
9. I have used "chance operation" in my work.
10. The major part of my work has been with objects; they have given me much inspiration and knowledge that have helped me find my own personal language.

However, after 15 years of work, I discovered that "her blood (that of Martha Graham) was running through mine and her voice was singing within me". I was discovering that all the rules, the drill and, and in particular, Martha Graham's world were, despite my having rebelled against them, instilled in my body.

In what way is this so?

1. My work is always an inward journey, a journey to the unknown.
2. There is ritual in my dance.
3. It always includes some drama.
4. I use facial expression. (The face is part of the body.)
5. Even my work with objects is a continuation and development of Martha Graham's work.

## **Improvisation**

Up to age 40 I had never improvised; it was not part of the theory and practice of the Juilliard School, that of Martha Graham or classical ballet. Today I very much believe in improvisation and train myself and my pupils to engage in it. I believe every dancer has his own language and that he should learn to devise his own movement and listen to his personal inner voice. My dancers create their own movements; each dancer has his different uniqueness and I make efforts to highlight this.

## **Changes of Theory and Practice**

Great artists change theories over the years and that is how art extends itself. It is good and necessary to have the old theories but also to always be open to new ones in order to breathe new life into our own theories and practice.

**Merce Cunningham** was one of the greatest dance artists to change the world of dance. For me, he opened many doors, bringing much freshness to dance. Merce, a soloist in Martha Graham's company, rebelled against Martha Graham's world of dance. He went on to invent a completely different dance language he is the "**prophet of abstract dance**". When he was asked where center stage was, he would say that there was no center stage and that the whole stage is a center. When Martha Graham was asked where center stage was, her answer was: "It is where I am". Together with John Cage, Cunningham developed "Chance Operation", giving the dancer freedom and enabling us to create dance in a different way. Freedom of creation is a central element and so important to us.

**In order to achieve this freedom, one needs discipline and rigorous daily practice.** Dance is an experience and this allows it to be within it. It is a fresh experiment each time. One must not rely on habit, nor should one give way to monotony; we must not stick to the same rules or the same patterns. It is important to make changes to music, steps and movements, to surprise ourselves and not to stay on the safe side. Merce said: "Instead of sitting and biting my fingernails in the task of looking for the next subject, I allow higher powers than I to make the decision." He would toss a coin in order to let fate decide for him what the next dance would be. Merce Cunningham and John Cage's theory and practice completely changed the relationship between music and dance. At the Juilliard School, we borrowed from theory of music to create dance according to the rules of music – the ABA form, theme and variation. Today we use music differently. We dance to the music of our bodies, then adding music for the dance. The composer, therefore, writes music to our dance. Merce Cunningham's dancers first encounter the music only when on stage, and this works. It results in a fascinating encounter, full of life, tension and freshness. There is no glue holding the music and dance together; one does not control the other. Cunningham's music is changed from performance to performance, as do the order of pieces, the lighting and costumes. His dancers see the order of the program up on a notice board the day of the performance. They receive instructions as to what to wear for each piece just before the performance, and each performance is different. A performance I saw of his in Caesarea looked like "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; the same performance in Tel Aviv was more like "Hamlet". This was due only to changes in the order of pieces, the music and lighting.

**Pina Bausch**, the mother of dance theatre, totally changed the world of dance, extending its possibilities in a completely different direction. She reinvented dance. Her dances include a collage of different styles of music – classical, contemporary, world music, folklore, Greek- and Italian music, popular- and sentimental songs, also music from Hollywood movies and Broadway shows. Her evenings have no narrative content: they are constructed of free associations and have no plot – hers is theatre of movement and communication. She fought against clichés and sweet, artificial and dangerous illusions. Her motto was **“I am not interested in movement but in what moves people”**. She also said “Dance, dance, dance, otherwise we are lost”. She was the first to create “full dance evenings” made up of short sections. Before this, dance programs were organized like a meal: a first course – an appetizer – followed by a main course and then the last – a dessert. Today, as a result of her influence, most of my dance evenings, and those of many others, are also made up of a collage. With no first- or last course, this is a meaningful change, opening up the field of creative work and changing it.

### **Conclusion - different approaches to the creative process**

In conclusion, I wish to refer to a telephone conversation I had with a friend who is a painter and writer. She complained of the struggle she was having in creating her latest work. When I asked her why, she spoke of her ideal and the problems she was having in achieving it. I told her that after many years of work while looking for my freedom, in the process of creating a new dance, I decided to have no ideal ; I simply go down to my studio and dance, **allowing the ideal to come to me of its own accord**. It does not mean that this way is easier. Both are different approaches to the creative process and both demand time and patience. One method is not easier or more difficult than the other. Every artist has his own way of reaching a goal. ‘It is the body that wanders in the world, collecting threads of light’, ‘Moving until the body no longer dances, only a scream’, Hadassa Tal. There are no rules that suit us all. Choosing one way or the other depends on one’s education, habits, character and personality. The sky is the limit where freedom and openness exist.



# AS, AFTER A LONG SEPARATION, THEY RETURN TO EACH OTHER

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Gaby Aldor

## A few remarks on music and dance

It seems that dance and music came down to earth together, and were always there, remaining unseparated. The development of the art of dance, the art of sound and of modernism were the reason for the two arts to then move away from each other. Dance was no longer required for the meaning the music provided; music always knew how to incorporate dance within it, courting it in the continuum of sound dispersing in the space – time in which one might as well close one's eyes.

We have already experienced all kinds of variations as to the connection between dance and music – firstly with it being natural and obvious that someone is playing, that someone is dancing to the sounds of a melody – a baby, a farmer, a dancer in the market square or dancers on a stage. The titles of pieces in the medley of Baroque dances – the suite – are names of dances, and they preserve their character and names to this very day. Then there was music written specifically for dance, for the great ballets, musical works which are “ballet works”; then the total mixing of all kinds of music for all styles of dance, random experimentation in a meeting between the two, paraded arbitrariness - a return to the Dalcroze concept of music and movement as defining each other.

I would like to take a moment to focus on the richest, modern example of the connection between music and dance – Igor Stravinsky's “Rite of Spring”. Stravinsky's “Rite of Spring” dance has two “parents” – together, the musician and the choreographer produced a work that has become a creation in which most choreographers have tried their luck in solving its stirring, rhythmic riddle. Stravinsky himself dreamed of (or had a vision of) the happening – the outburst of spring after a terrible Russian winter, the intensity of that winter, the awakening of nature and of passions, of re-creation. In 1913, Vaslav Nijinsky choreographed the dance which was the utter negation to what Russian dancers were accustomed to, with a lightning strike of innovativeness and originality, shock in fact, and, from the viewers' point of view and reactions, an affront to good taste, tradition and culture. This shock is, however, one of the identifying marks of what is new in art, of what stirs emotions and of the unexpected.

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**Gaby Aldor** - actress, director, choreographer and dance writer, co-artistic director of the Arab- Hebrew Theater, Jaffa.

What in fact did the composer and the choreographer devise when working together on the piece? Igor Stravinsky, involved with ancient folklore, in Russian folk stories and different musical motifs, knew what he was requesting – the imagined reconstruction of an earth ritual, of pagan ceremonies, of the lording of tribes. A highly celebrated reconstruction was carried out by the research team of Millicent Hodson - who also reconstructed the choreography – and Kenneth Archer - the art historian, who joined her with movement notes and sketches, with details of embroidery and costumes, of the Nicholas Roerich paintings and from the dance notation Nijinsky had devised. The researchers had re-constructed the dance, which was then put together under their guidance by the Joffrey Ballet in New York. The result became the backbone of the possibilities of reconstruction and it granted dance, not just that specific work, with the confidence that reconstruction, or re-creation, was a possibility, that not every dance work that is not classical ballet- being transferred orally from generation to generation – is doomed, providing it can be notated and that it has a defined language.

What actually was so shocking about Nijinsky's dance? Today, from our lofty Google-assisted observation point, and from the abundance of images flooding us on all possible levels, it is very difficult to understand why feet facing each other, awkwardly pointed inwards, intentionally garbled, were so disturbing. But, in comparison to the concept of the ballet-internalized elegant image of outward pointed, stretched feet, that obstinate decision was to reverse the way of the world, or to reduce the inversion of the learned foot and the manner in which the whole sole stepped first on the heel, then on the ball of the foot, and not on the big toe. These movements created a disturbing concept, as if something in the world had gone awry and they served as an alarm or a warning. Group by group, participants have congregated in this pagan ceremony on stage. The moment in hand is the reawakening of spring, of time. It is absolute, creating tension, a calling to the mythical past, to what is familiar even when it is alien, and to the destroyer of serenity. In this ballet there are different roles: young members of the tribe playing and fighting in a ceremonial manner, awe-inspiring elders arousing respect and fear, with the eldest tribe member shaking on his legs, his power, however, uncompromised, as he bends down and his adorned beard rests on the earth as he kisses the ground; this is the blessing after which all chaos breaks loose. And all of this is because it is impossible to break through frozen earth with gentility, with prayers; only with a kind of oath that is both a curse and sanction in one.

The dancers stamp with legs held close together, leaning, taking diagonal leaps that are not aligned. Demure women move in dense groups, cheek to cheek, their eyes looking in the opposite direction, their hands held as in prayer and pressed to one cheek, as they step and move quickly, their arms crossed and joined. The plot unfolds using tribal stories based partially on sportive competitiveness; spirits become agitated, circles burst out; then, everything comes to a halt. As if everything that had happened till then were just preparation - the growing excitement and preparing of the ground - the tension built up is only now able to explode, ending in *one* event that represents total devastation, this that also representing salvation. This destruction always takes the form of a sacrifice; too often it is the sacrifice of a woman, a virgin, of course, and her death is also the loss of her chastity or of its eternal preservation, the symbolic rape of the whole of society, thus saved and promising itself life and rebirth.



The second part opens with a threatening motif played by the orchestra; the groups reorganize, plotting, without knowing exactly what fate has in store for them. Now the division between the groups of men and young women is more distinct, and they dance, grabbing hold of each other. Because one of the young women will be the Chosen One, her role is defined, also in ways other than being the “victim”, as she is often referred to, but as having the role of she whose fate is to die in order to save the whole group from an everlasting winter. The young women move around in the form of a double circle, sometimes in opposing directions. Their movements now speed up, they glance to the sides; tension and fear are inferred by them, but their movement remains consistent until, in a kind of interchanging game whose rules are hidden, a number of the potentially chosen girls leave the central, diminishing circle until only one girl is left. She stumbles for a moment and now her fate is decided, without our knowing what mysterious law it was that left her to be the last, all alone. One of the moments that can still arouse a kind of anxiety in the contemporary viewing audience is the slow moving forward of the tribe elders, now clothed in bear skins. They slowly move towards the circle until they are crouched around it, observing. For a long time, the young woman stands there, petrified before breaking into the last dance of her life.

I have seen different versions of the same extending death dance; that of Nijinsky (on the presumption that this is his version) is the most terrifying. Perhaps it is because of its formality, the repetition of that horrific vertical jump, repeating again and again, a jump that is the summarization of life, of *joie-de-vivre*, of strength. There is no weakness or deliquium in those high leaps, perhaps due to the fact that the air is the only place of refuge from the circle closing in on her. At times her knees bend, close together, her head moves from side to side, her eyes frightened. Between leaps, the gesture is of one hand held tightly to the back of her cheek, her head tilted (as in the unforgettable image of Nijinsky in the role of Petrushka) with the other arm held outwards; but the outside is a limited area and there is no escape. The leaps continue, like some kind of torture, again and again, until the moment when all ceases completely. The music stops. And then there is the final collapse, the falling to the ground which, at this moment, is saved from the curse of everlasting winter. In dying, the chosen one has saved nature from death.

There has been no choreographer who has not tried his hand at re-creating the “The Rite of Spring” dance. Since the Paris scandal of 1913, Igor Stravinsky, himself, preferred to perform the “Rite of Spring” only as a concert piece. But creators of dance are challenged and tempted by it. The most famous choreographies of it are those of Maurice Béjart, who saw the dance as the revelation of sexuality, and who produced a most impressive work; here, at its last moment, the bonding of male and female constitutes the rebirth of nature. Pina Bausch created a “Rite of Spring” which does not deal with the ritual, rather with its human aspect, with the fear of the realization of personal fate, of group fate. Shen Wei created it as a restrained but impressive intellectual puzzle about loneliness. Emanuel Gat devised the possibility of enveloping the whole work with the traditional samba dance, within which the plot takes place as a social- and non-ritual motive. Hillel Kogan added text to its primal savagery, creating a monologue of torn identity and belligerence, in which the victim, in the end, is the nation. The genius of the music, its touching on the depths of human existence, enables each artist to find himself and his own vision in it.



With the progress of modernism, dance then became separated from music; from what seemed to be one entwined, double- and symbiotic body, dance went and declared its independence. It began with the fact that ballet no longer needed the emotional persuasion of music for its plots; music disappeared from the ballet stage, leaving it almost in silence. This separation manifested itself in recurring attempts at dancing to no music at all, to voices and noise, silence and arbitrary radio broadcasts, as with John Cage and Merce Cunningham, who discovered the principle of randomness in which all art exists simultaneously. In the course of the same time on stage, with no pre-planned connection, apart from time durations, random meetings between dance and music were created in Cunningham's dances. Between the soundtrack, written and recorded separately, and the dance performance, what was happening was as if there was a "blind date" there, right in front of the audience. And then there is also dance carried out in total silence or to the ticking of a metronome. Noa Eshkol created tens of dance works without music; the revolutionary Judson Church dance style used voices, industrial sounds, random text readings, noise and silence. The door had been burst open, offering just any kind of connection between both arts. Nevertheless, over recent years, slowly and as if from afar, music has been returning to the dance stage but now assuming a new kind of approach, with a new kind of choice and mindset. Works of Dance-Europa seen this last season at the Suzanne Dellal Center have excelled in their new connection to music, with emphasis not only on a new interpretation of music written for dance, as in the "Rite of Spring", "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun", "Swan Lake", etc., but offering a different angle on their possible connection, or, in Franck Krawczyk's words "Turn the music to body, give it flexibility, listen with biological ears". With his pianist Franck Kravitz, Emio Greco dances to J.S.Bach's "St. Matthew Passion", calling the work a "Passion in Duo" – "Passion" referring both to "desire" and to the suffering and cleansing of sin of Jesus, translated thus by the artist, together with Stephen Schultz, as a personal journey of re-embodiment and also of an extending to worldliness, of the body's path to the spiritual. The familiar "St. Matthew Passion" undergoes re-organization, now lacking in sanctity; it happens on stage, requiring the viewers to take part by identifying through empathy. The well-known motifs are "sung" by the piano, and the work's exalted emotion takes on immediate, sad, whimsical and touching realization.

J.S.Bach's "Goldberg Variations" are much loved by dance creators. William Forsythe created "Vile Bodies" with Glen Gould's famous recording of it; Gould's playing is accompanied by sounds of his voice. Steve Paxton, the movement priest, an improvisation fanatic (inventor of the famous "contact improvisation") uses this music for his work. The revolutionary Swedish dance researcher Marten Spangberg, who recently visited Israel, stood in front of the audience at the Tmuna Theater, presenting the limitations of his body, and the limits of dance altogether, as he tried to dance to those same superb variations, and with a heart-rending conscious lack of success. At the end of his presentation, he stopped moving and listened, together with the audience, to a Bach Partita, with the shared listening process utilizing the music's endless potential better than any dance.

For many years, Emanuel Gat has been alert to great music. From Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" which he chose to turn into a samba, to Schubert's "Winter's Journey", he has now created another work – "Gouldlandbergs" – in which he breaks the continuum of the

AS, AFTER A LONG SEPARATION, THEY RETURN TO EACH OTHER

classical music and weaves sounds from recordings of an esoteric religious community into the soundtrack of the variations. Gat not only makes use of vocal- and noise materials; he imitates something of the atmosphere of a religious community, turns the music into a site of occurrences, to a “location” where dialogue takes place, where a minister preaches, where children’s voices mix; the variations are their island of order, perhaps supreme order, of compassion of a sublime essence.

The Indian dance at Nrityagram also goes back to its own roots: music and song are an inseparable part of dance and of the fabric of movement, where text, story, singing and the playing of music interpret each other in a concentrated and rich form that can also be listened to and watched without in-depth familiarity of the profundity of Indian culture. It is not possible to dance in the way the Chinese in the Taox3 Ensemble (TAO Dance Theatre) do without rigorous training in the movement tradition of Chinese dance and martial arts, in a discipline which is not merely dance discipline, but a manner of existence; the movement thus loses its materiality and gradually assumes the quality of the music.

Avi Kaiser and Sergio Antonino’s dance, performed in a regular room, grants new meaning to sounds: we are now not talking about a work in which the music is simply a part of the dance but about a different- and everyday sound environment, where the audience’s breathing forms part of the soundtrack, the scraping of chairs and the susurrations of the movement of close bodies create an intimate atmosphere. The dancers move among us; their heavy breathing also constitutes an element of the music, of renewed encounter, not on a stage but in our own living room, after we had long forgotten...after a long separation.

The information was kindly supplied by the Suzanne Dellal Center.

# REFLECTIONS ON MUSIC WITH DANCE

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Rena Gluck

## Introduction

My first recollections in dance expression are as a very young child dancing to folk songs played on the mandolin and hummed by my father in Yiddish, and Russian. This was his way of relaxing after a long day's work and my playtime. In the following years I also danced with the music of American folk songs of various origins. In my dance classes from a very early age I was exposed to the classical music tastes of my teacher, Blanche Evan, who taught creative dance with the use of her large record collection of evocative music from the classical repertoire. I grew up in New York during the Second World War and we young dancers expressed our fears and nightmares within the protective walls of our dance studio. We created dances based on the events that we read about in the newspaper, heard about on the radio and in conversations: concentration camps, the Gestapo, coal mine disasters and the attack on Pearl Harbor-these were some of the themes of our dances. Blanche was politically aware and expressed her deep feelings and beliefs together with her young students in her dance creations. After discussing our ideas, Blanche would direct us to sit around the record player listening to different recordings until we made our musical choices for the dance we were about to create. We listened to the music again and again, discussed its potential and relevance for the particular theme, analyzed its form and through improvisation searched for the movement that we desired.

## Choosing music for a new dance

As a young dancer-choreographer, the first dances that I created on my own initiative were inspired by and created with American folk music; the poetry of Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, Richard Wright, the spirituals and militant songs of the great Paul Robeson and Villa-Lobos's *Bachianas Brasileiras #5* sung by the legendary Bidu Sayu with eight cellos. Her haunting voice and the beautiful music inspired me to create *Uprooted*. This dance expresses the loneliness felt by a newcomer to a foreign land and it was created two years before I had thought about immigrating to Israel.

In essence I continued my practice of improvising throughout my life. Improvising was the way I became acquainted with the music I was considering for a new dance work and the way I found the movement. Once I made my choice, I would meet with a musician for assistance in the analysis of the score. I had studied the recorder and piano for many years, and in the

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**Prof. Rena Gluck** - founding, dancer, choreographer, teacher and later director of the Batsheva Dance Company. Former Dean of the Faculty of Dance of the JAMD.

dance division of the Juilliard School, which I graduated in 1954, piano lessons were a part of the curriculum together with L&M (Literature and Materials of Music.)

How do choreographers decide on the music for a new dance? What comes first? The theme, the idea for a dance or is it the music, which is the foremost trigger? What motivates the creative process? The ways are infinitely varied and each choreographer will have different experiences and choices; in the following pages I will relate some of mine.

There were times I would hear music that would excite and inspire me towards a particular theme or possibly throw light on an idea that had been submerged in my unconsciousness. Sometimes after searching in vain for music that would fit with my vision, I was fortunately able to commission a score from a composer. At times I would find an inspiring score, but I would have to compromise my ideas in order to make the dance and music work together, though it was 'almost right', the composition perhaps did not progress the way I needed. And sometimes it was exactly that discrepancy that forced me to comply with the music's direction that helped me overcome a dilemma with the dance idea. During the process of creation, as I worked on the movement for a new dance, my ideas would at times clash with the score and I would need to compromise my plan or create alongside of the score.

It was always a challenge to search and choose music for the dance that I was in the process of conceiving. I would spend endless days in the music library listening to score after score, widening and increasing my knowledge and understanding of musical literature. Once I made my choice the next step was to find a recording that I could take home, not always an easy task in Israel in the 1950's. The selections available in the record stores at the time were insufficient (as yet the internet was not even a dream!) and often one would have to order from abroad, an expensive and time consuming undertaking.

### ***Let the Stranger Come Amongst Us (1956)***

Bela Bartok's Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste was my choice for the first group dance that I created in Israel. The dance was entitled *Let the Stranger Come Amongst Us*, and it was the second time that I chose a score of Bartok; -the first was a solo, *Moods* that I created with Bartok's Six Rumanian Dances for Violin and Piano.

The choice developed into being a major challenge for me. I quickly understood the undertaking I had taken on myself, but by that time I was so totally encompassed and inspired by the music, there was absolutely no possibility of altering my decision. I spent weeks improvising freely to the evocative and inspiring music and concurrently I worked with a musician to analyze its form, and intricate rhythmic structure. I needed to create my own partitura, dividing the score the way I needed to choreograph my dance, creating "the counts" with which I would teach my dancers. The complexity of texture, intensity and structure of the music dictated the direction of the choreography and taxed our abilities.

The theme of the dance was the solitude and loneliness felt by a stranger in a new land, her exclusion and conflict with the society and eventual acceptance.

### ***Women in a Tent (1966)***

The idea for creating the dance *Women in a Tent* was in my thoughts for a long time before I found the music that was amazingly right for it. Actually it was Haim Taub who suggested that I listen to his Tel Aviv String Quartet's performance of the Ricercar, which had a strong impact on me on first hearing. The music had all the elements that I needed for the dance; it was passionate, evocative and dynamic. As Seter wrote - "A dramatic idea is at the core of the work - the life and death of three themes or three dramatic personae, symbolized by the violin, viola and cello - and the string ensemble's response, in the manner of a Greek chorus." My dance was inspired by the biblical story of Sara, Hagar and Abraham as well as a book I had recently read, *A Woman Betrayed*, by Simeon de Beauvoir. I chose Seter's string quartet rendition in place of that of the chamber orchestra, because the intimacy of the quartet was more in keeping with the dance, performed by Galia Gat, Rahamim Ron and me.

As I started working with the music, I had to change many of my ideas in order to fit them within the framework of the score until I felt that the dance organically streamed out of the music and became a part of it. At times I pessimistically felt that it was impossible to fit my dance idea into the Ricercar and then I found the solution by changing the dramatic sequence of events and in a different section where the dance idea conflicted with the music's use of pizzicato, I deliberately created a contrast with flowing adagio movement against the sharpness of the pizzicato effect of the instruments. When one has a set idea beforehand, and the idea is complete within itself, it is extremely difficult to relinquish the idea in order to make it a part of a separate entity- to make it organically work with the music. When I felt ready I met with Mordecai Seter and the set designer Dani Karavan to discuss with them my dance idea - how I planned to relate to the music, what I felt I needed for the decor and how the dance developed. Seter had excellent suggestions and asked questions, which helped me gain a greater insight from a different and fresh point of view. He was interested in seeing how I related to his music and I invited him to rehearsals at various times while I choreographed. His comments and questions were always helpful. Dani created the beautiful and functional décor, which was an integral part of the action. It consisted of three elements: a tent, which was mobile and I was able to change its shape and use to great effect, a podium and a large tree like structure in center stage. . The dance was dramatically powerful and at times I found myself at odds with the direction the music was taking and where I wanted the dance to progress. In finding the solution, which was in effect dictated by the music, the dance was the better for it.

Together with the music the dance expressed the challenges faced by Sara, her acceptance and the conflicts and tensions that arise from the triangle. As in the music, the dance starts with the presentation of the three themes...first with the viola, the second with the cello, and the third with the violin. The relationship between the three characters constantly shifts and changes, with its final reconciliation at the end of the work.

*Women in a Tent* was the first dance that I created for the Batsheva Dance Company.

Seter was pleased with the union... that was very important to me.

It was important for me whenever possible to create my dances with the music of Israeli composers, and so I did, creating to the music of Paul Ben Haim, Theodor Holdheim, Gary Bertini, Mordecai Seter, Noam Sheriff, Oedoen Partos, and Tzvi Avni. Especially when my dances were based on Israeli themes, it was self evident to me that the music I would choose would be composed by an Israeli musician.

### ***The Journey (1972)***

Creating *The Journey* was yet a different experience in collaboration with a composer. This time it was with Fred Kaufman a newly arrived immigrant from the US, guest teacher at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, who asked me to choreograph a dance with his music entitled *The Nothing Ballet*, and his libretto. This was a novel experience for me and I agreed rather hesitatingly to listen to the recording. After hearing the composition and the libretto presented to me, I was intrigued and I happily acquiesced. While Fred had previously been a resident composer at the University of Wisconsin's Electronic Music Laboratories he had created and performed the work, written for pre-recorded tape, flute and percussion, with a resident choreographer at the University. While he was in the Jerusalem Academy Fred revised the score. It consisted of three movements, which he named - Life, Heaven and Purgatory-connected by two transitions and followed by a brief recapitulation of the first theme, Limbo. I followed his scenario and created a "theme and variation of love as it runs its course through passion, spiritual nobility, internal torment and finally to indifference." (as written by Joan Cass, critic of the Jerusalem Post, 1972.)

The dance was originally presented with the Dancers' Stage in Haifa in 1972 and later Zubin Mehta included the dance in the *Musica Viva* series of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, this time performed by the Batsheva dancers.

During the next years I created the following dances with existing scores for the Batsheva Dance Company; *Time For Waiting (1969)* was created to part of the score that Gary Bertini had written for *The Unfound Door*, *Games we Play (1975)* was created with Paul Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis on a Theme by Carl Maria von Weber*, *Images (1979)* was created with the music of Oedoen Partos, and for the UC Berkeley Dance Company I created *Behind The Curtain (1986)* with the music of Zvi Avni and *Visions Fugitives*, (1990) with the music of Sergei Prokofiev.

## **Creating together with a composer**

### **The Unfound Door (1963)**

On the three occasions that I was fortunate to have music written for a new dance, the experience was totally fulfilling and the dance and music worked beautifully with each other.

Perhaps because of the difficulties we experienced creating to Bartok's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste*, I was elated with the opportunity given to me shortly after in 1962, with Bethsabée de Rothschild's funding, which enabled me to commission music for the next dances that I created. This was obviously such a totally different experience. I had been

working on a dance that was based on folk songs, poems and narrative. After preparing a libretto I met with Nechama Handel hoping she would work and perform with me. The idea interested her, but she decided against it, feeling that her performance was sufficient by itself and she did not wish to share the stage. It was at this point that I was given the opportunity to commission two new dances, their music and décor, and asked Gary Bertini to compose a score based on the libretto I had prepared of the narrative. Gary gave a great deal of time and thought to my idea of using the libretto with the folk songs and poems, but in the end decided against incorporating it in his score.

The inspiration for the dance came partly from the book *Look Homeward Angel* by Thomas Wolfe and a very moving poem by the black poet Countee Cullen. Wolfe's book opens with a poem that begins thus: "... a stone, a leaf, an unfound door of a stone, a leaf, a door and of all the forgotten faces"... I asked Gary to base the beginning of his composition on the rhythm of the poem, which he did. During the time he wrote the music, I began to create the dance, trying out different ideas with the dancers, preparing movement material and developing the dramatic ideas of the dance. I began creating the dance before the music was fully composed and Gary came to the studio often to see the progress and movement material. As he composed Gary gave us a piano rendition of the score that Natan Mishori played for us.

When the score was completed and the IPO musicians gathered for rehearsal and the recording sessions, my excitement and anticipation were boundless. The completed final score was everything I had envisioned: exciting, dynamic, expressive and inspiring. Together with the décor, designed by Dani Karavan, which was likewise being readied, the choreographic process continued until completed. Working together with Gary was a very special experience, the climax being the rehearsal with the IPO musicians and hearing the full sound for the first time.

### ***A Man and His Day (1962)***

At the same time, Joel Thome, a guest percussionist with the IPO, was likewise commissioned to compose music for the second dance, *Man and His Day*. His composition, written in the serial mode, was totally different from Gary Bertini. The theme of my dance was of continuity, the cycle of life: birth and renewal. Joel and I decided on seven sections: Awaiting Dawn – Dawn – Celebration - Awareness of Self - Awakening Love -Into Twilight -New Dawn. Like *Unfound Door*, Dani Karavan was commissioned to create the set. The completed score was quite out of the ordinary to our unaccustomed ears and it took a while for all of us to be comfortable with its' dissonance and strangeness. The music score worked extremely well with the dance, after we overcame the challenges in learning to relate with it. One of the challenges was that certain sections were not based on rhythmic patterns in the sense of a set of beats and rests, and the dancers needed to know the music intricately, recognize and move to the changing sounds. With many rehearsals we were able to make it work together. The reviewer's comments about both dances were interesting:

"One can only applaud every endeavor in which there is a merging of the arts (as in music and dance); Rena Gluck's dance evening presented such integration... Joel Thome's work...



suits the atmosphere of the dance *A Man and his Day*, for which the music was written...Its serial technique well reflects the detachment and abstraction inherent in the idea on which the dance is based. In *The Unfound Door*, as the second dance is titled, for which Gary Bertini wrote the music, the wind instruments' sharp and introspective sound is utilized well, giving expression to the mood of detachment and stillness, with the percussion section expressing movement and vitality. This contrast is the equalizer of the work's uniqueness with its specific, characteristic tension. Indeed, the music blended with the atmosphere of the dance concept, creating a framework of unity. It was clear, once again, that today's musical expression is only one part of the general artistic scene."

Michal Smoira Cohn, 1963.

### **Reflections (1967)**

In 1967 I was invited by the Batsheva Dance Company to create a second dance for the company. The theme of the dance was reflections, referring to all the different aspects of the English word: mirrored reflections, reflections on things that happened in the past, giving thought to a subject, and also of different generations meeting: the intermingling of past and present ...what was and what is. After failing in my search for an existing score, in the form of a theme and variations that would inspire and suit me, I asked Noam Sheriff to compose the music for the dance. I shared with him my ideas of the theme and the musical form, which I envisioned.

I knew that I wanted the theme to be from the pre-classic period with contemporary variations. We talked about the different kinds of variations, their moods, dynamics, and the length of the whole work as well as how many variations and what their individual character and length should be. Noam was excited about writing in the particular style and form that I wanted for the dance-the special quality it should have. He felt it opened up many possibilities.

Because of the dance's theme I wanted the music to be a fusion of the "old" and the contemporary – of past and present - of a journey through memory. While Noam worked on the composition he would play a piano reduction of his score for me, telling me which instruments would be playing in the different sections. The development of the work progressed with our continuing dialogue. Only once I needed to ask him to change the order and put the Sarabande in a different place which better suited the progress of the dance. But nothing prepared me for the first time I heard the completed score in rehearsal, I was overwhelmed by the fullness and richness of the sound, that the piano rendition had not prepared me for! Hearing the music had an exhilarating effect on the dancer's performance. For the recording session I asked some of the dancers to join me in the recording studio and make sure the tempi would be right for us. I named the dance *Reflections* - Prologue – Episodes – Epilogue, and included a quote from Proust; "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought I summon up remembrance of things past". Noam's music was entitled "Metamorphoses on a Galliard". It was based on a galliard written centuries past, whereas the variations, like the choreography, are contemporary. The different sections were; Prologue - Galliard, Minuet, Toccata, Aria, Strophe, Siciliano, Saraband, Gigue, and the Epilogue – Galliard.



The dance began with the ten dancers frozen in their places and one by one or in couples they stepped out of the frame and presented their theme. There followed episodes of groups of women, groups of men, duets, solos and the prologue was a return to the beginning. The beautifully designed set was once again created by Dani Karavan.

## **Experiencing music as a dancer**

### **Batsheva Dance Company and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra**

A collaboration, of an entirely different nature followed. Dani Benyamini, violist and a member of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's management, attended a performance of the Batsheva Dance Company and saw a dance I had created, *Games We Play* to the music of Hindemith's *Metamorphosis on a Theme by Carl Maria von Weber*. He enthusiastically suggested that the Batsheva Dance Company perform the dance together with the IPO in its subscription series. It turned out that the Mann Auditorium lacked the stage hangings necessary for this dance, and a different program was chosen for the joint performance: *Trek*, choreographed by Norman Morrice with the music of Francis Poulenc's *Concerto for Organ, Strings, Orchestra and Timpani* and *The Mythical Hunters*, choreographed by Glen Tetley with the music of Oedoen Partos's *Visions*. The performance took place in February 1976 and Shalom Ronly-Riklis was chosen as the conductor for the subscription series. Once again we had the unique and extraordinary opportunity of performing with live musicians, and what musicians! It was so exhilarating and inspiring. True, the tempo was not always what the dancers were accustomed to and many discussions were necessary in order to find a compromise on the joint needs of the musicians and the dancers.

When Tetley created the dance in 1967 he asked Partos to extend the music, he felt he needed more time in the beginning of the dance. Partos replied that he did not have the time to do so but he would have no objection if Glen added percussive sounds in the beginning, before his music started. And so it was that the dance opens in silence, with only the sounds of the sticks and additional percussive instruments accompanying the first entrance of the hunters and the hunted (me) until the music started with the opening sounds of the solo flute. It worked very well and Partos was likewise pleased with the result. When the dance was completed it fitted so well that one thought the music and dance were created together.

## **Moves**

The last dance that I will discuss is *Moves* by Jerome Robbins. In the program notes he writes: "Each ballet is composed upon the web of the music the choreographer has selected. The music not only dictates the form, mood and dynamics of the choreography, but also acts as a deep and prevailing influence on the emotional responses of the audience."

Moves severs that connection and allows the spectator to respond solely to the actions of the dancers and permits the audience to see the curiosities and uniqueness of the language of movement and relationships."

## REFLECTIONS ON MUSIC WITH DANCE

A dance in silence, accompanied solely by the deliberate sounds of the dancers' movements; running, falling, striking the floor, slapping and other sounds made by the dancers themselves. In order to be in unison, when the choreography so demanded, we needed to be extraordinarily sensitive and aware of each other's movements and dynamics. Robbins achieved this by demanding each of us learn all the different parts of the dance, including those we did not perform. We knew each other's moves and used our sight, touch and breath to their fullest.

The dynamics and rhythms were so powerfully instilled in our bodies that it was almost like sound. Indeed once when I was directing a rehearsal I cried out "listen to the music, you are not together!" The music was inside each of us.

Dancing without music gave us a different kind of freedom of expression and certainly gave the choreographer the possibility of creating completely on his own terms. It was a challenging and exciting artistic experience.

# THEORY AND PRACTICE IN DANCE AND MUSIC – TO DANCE, TO READ AND WRITE

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Einya Cohen

This article forms part of a discussion begun at the Dostrovsky Forum for Music and Dance Education. The subject is very broad; this is, therefore, merely a glimpse into it and I would imagine that some of the issues I will raise will have parallels in the world of music.

I will focus on questions which arise from my work with Eshkol-Wachmann Movement Notation [EWMN] in dance composition, dance reconstruction, dance and movement analysis, in teaching and its influence on two aspects of the world of dance. This choice was also influenced by my desire for the world of dance to be more literate.

In the field of dance, the subject can be approached from different points of view:

- The history of dance - a methodical body of knowledge and study of the history of the world of dance
- Dance Science – investigating ways of understanding and enhancing dance practice through a variety of methodological approaches to the learning process, neuro-psychophysical connections, etc.
- Training approaches for the dancer - the dancer as a performer of a specific style, the creative dancer, the dancer as interpreter. Methods for improving the dancer's ability (the Feldenkrais Method, the Alexander Technique, BMC and more).
- The look/appearance of the dancer – depending on style, culture, tradition, fashion, aesthetic ideal.
- Choreography/Composition - choreographers' writings on their work, composition with dance notation, political/social contexts, different cultures, the influence of other art forms, and more.
- Dance education - as a means to general education, for encouraging and developing creativity, as one of the art forms enabling expression of equal opportunities, with the aim of producing a professional dancer or an educated audience.
- Movement- and dance notations – their associations, influence and contribution to all the above-mentioned fields.

In the world of dance, it is rare to talk, read and write in terms of values of the media:

One of the tools for developing literacy in the world of dance is movement notation as a system of notation of a phenomenon not given to describing in spoken language. The learning of notation is reflected in Raphael Nir's maxim "Feeling, knowing, indicating, thinking".

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Nir M, Nir R, *The Analysis of Semantic Patterns and Meaning in Rehabilitative Teaching*, Iyunim Bechinuch (1981).

For most of us, it is difficult to grasp (imperception) movement due to its changing in time and place. In order to comprehend change, we require a point of reference. In the words of the philosopher Henri Bergson, “If we could be present at the actuality of change and if we could be sure to grasp it once again, everything would be simpler”. [H.Bergson “Thinking and Movement, Philosophical Essays”, Mossad Bialik (1953)].

We often tend to posture (body positions) and not to the process of change, i.e. movement. (When we ask the “man in the street” or a dancer to show us a movement, they will usually show us a posture). The holding of one posture over a long time – “Still Act” - is a popular subject today in the world of dance. Emphasis on this can be seen in the works of various choreographers, from Steve Paxton to André Lepecki.

On the subject of the need for dance notation, Noa Eshkol writes:

“When a certain event captures our interest to the point where it becomes desirable to remember it, to describe it, and, above all, to think and calculate or compose within it – in short, to express it – a fitting substitute is required for the actual event: this substitute is a symbol.

Any event which has not been provided with a symbol will remain fortuitous and unrepeatable. The symbol (or set of symbols) must be capable of expressing the chief properties and essence of the event in a practical and possible manner, mainly for the purpose of thinking about- and within this event, i.e. for the purpose of composition.” [N. Eshkol & A. Wachmann, *Movement Notation*, (1958)].

Linda Ashley: “I view graphic notation as rich in potential to dance educators, offering a means of coming to understand dance via analytical, creative, practical and conceptual ways of embodied knowing.” [L.Ashley, *Journal of Movement Arts Literacy*, Vol.1 (2013), Iss.1, Art.1]

Dalia Cohen: “The use of movement notation arises from various needs: understanding, creation, performance, remembering, teaching, preservation and more, and it is essential when dealing with complex matter” – [Professor D. Cohen, *Music Notation*, (2008)].

Human movement and, of course, dance are a complex phenomenon!!

### **I will focus on two issues, these being both theoretical and practical:**

1. Where does literacy stand in the digital world – recording and filming?
2. Issues arising in performance of reconstructing dance from a score.

### **Where does literacy stand in the digital world – recording and filming?**

At the present, when all have video cameras, smart ‘phones, DVD sets of high quality recording and filming, I claim that these possibilities strengthen the more familiar study method of the world of dance – imitation! This means that the latter has returned to the study methods of non-literate societies.

“Literacy is a gauge of the individual’s ability to be involved in the world of culture in its disciplines and roles in the culture of language, written and spoken, read, heard and viewed. This

is the subject learned today in schools, providing the skills of reading and writing, competence in reading, writing, in the world of books and the world of documents”. [Sapir Dictionary].

In an article, William C. Reynolds compares film/video recording with dance notation. I will enumerate some of his observations:

1. A film is an event dependent on time and, from a conceptual and conscious point of view, time is identical to the source of a dance event. Notation free of defined time allows for time for close examination, analysis and reconstruction as required.
2. Basic material – Film and dance both remain as non-processed “raw data”; human understanding appears in forms that are different to original behavior. Notation renders information fixed, allowing for it to be maneuvered and it is accessible and public.
3. Repetitions – Human understanding of dance requires repetition. Here, filming helps the process.
4. Speed – Filming takes place at the pace of the original event; writing takes much longer. The time required for writing is that according to concept and understanding.
5. Filming – If it is not carried out by a number of cameras at different angles, it will often omit information, turning the three-dimensional phenomenon into a two-dimensional representation. Two-dimensional representations/images bring about conceptual errors.
6. Dance is first and foremost a kinesthetic phenomenon; film does not react to kinesthetic stimuli. The kinesthetic component is located through movement experience or an interview and it connects with the notating materials.
7. Dance is created and controlled by the complex nervous system which controls movements, from a simple reflex to the highest level of brain function. Psychological elements can not be seen. They can be perceived through experience or an interview. As an abstract concept, they can be documented only in movement notation.
8. Notating enables relating to human movement in a statistical manner. Filming can not provide and record statistical information. As an abstract concept, this can only be done in writing.
9. Objectiveness – Filming and notating are two ways of preserving dance as a basis on which to be worked and exposed to the public. [W.C.Reynolds. *Film Versus Notation for Dance: Basic Perception and Epistemological Differences* (1990)]

I nonetheless wish to emphasize that however detailed and accurate notating is, the area of dance tradition remains partly free. There will always be elements of dance that will not be written explicitly and will rely on the performer’s knowledge, his ability and taste. This gap will depend on various systems of reference and on different traditions; this brings me to the second subject I wish to raise.

### **Questions Arising When Performing Dance from a Score**

In this article I will touch on a number of points. I hope they will constitute the basis for the continuation of this discussion. An important element of my work with dance notation is learning dance from a score. This allows one to be autodidactic, acquiring a variety of repertoire and movements without needing to depend on a teacher, on previous body memory

or on any specific stylistic movements. An important example of the difference between reconstructing dance from a score and from the memory of dancers who have performed it previously (rote learning) can be seen in the work carried out by Dr. C. Jeschke and Dr. A.H. Guest, in which they compare reconstruction of ‘L’après-midi d’un faune’ from Vaslav Nijinsky’s score and its reconstruction by different ballet groups based on memory. [Guest, Ann Hutchinson, Jeschke, Claudia Nijinsky’s Faune Restored: Vaslav Nijinsky’s 1915 Dance Score Translated into Labnotes. The Language of Dance Series, no.3 (1991)]

The score is a fulcrum for knowledge, understanding, learning and imaging the dance. Our body memory, analogous to physical hearing – is not accurate enough. Returning to the score serves to illuminate and once again arouse one’s attention and accuracy to the performer.

In work process and observation, we distinguish between the moving body and the description of movements in abstract symbols. We propose relating to dance performance as a dialogue that brings the dancer together with the movements that construct the dance. This is a work method offering “networks” for collecting, discovering, selecting and arranging the materials in the field of media – the world of movement.

Each person’s repertoire of movements is based on his personal history and the skills he has acquired in his profession. In the world of dance, the repertoire of movement of each style is known, such as classical ballet or the Graham Technique, and is based on a limited number of movements. The discovery of- and enquiry into new movements provides an opportunity to experience more deeply by means of building connections between the visual phenomenon and the kinesthetic sensation as well as with the realm of the imagination of the choreographer, the dancer, the performer and the observer.

In the world of dance, we can view the dancer’s body as an “orchestra”; his multi-layered movement creates “chords”. Notation enables us to see any limb as a separate element, with the movement of the whole body being as a well-conducted orchestra. It is worth noting that, at the moment of musical performance, one instrument’s playing does not have an effect on the range of another. With the body, the movement of one limb depends on and influences the extent of movement and location of another.

The study of dance from a score is a discourse between the intangible concept of movement and the sensuous experience it arouses. Once the definition and the image of movements remain fixed, sensations and feelings change frequently as the dance is being performed. These sensations and feelings are influenced by the extent of attentiveness, memory of previous events of the performance, the mood of the moment, what was danced beforehand, the music accompanying it, the location in which it is being danced, fellow dancers and witnesses (viewers). The dance itself also summons a change of sensations, feelings, images, attentiveness and memory and this is a two-way process.

At a certain moment, every dance becomes a “living creature”: the movement content reveals a variety of taste, color, emotion and sensation. I recommend each reader and performer to look for the connections and associations which dance arouses in him and to contend with it so that it becomes his own dance. If a dance has independent existence, and if the reader is active and attentive, the dialogue incorporated in it will come to life.

EINYA COHEN

**Summary:**

I have endeavored to illuminate the importance of movement notation as a tool that should contribute to the discussion of literacy in the field of dance. This discussion appears to me to be one of the focuses offering potential for wider discussion on the question of **theory and practice in dance and music**.

# JUST A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE MEANING OF ART AND ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARTS

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Michal Smoira Cohn\*\*

I will open by saying that any thought on the meaning of art will, at best, and in the light of the uncertainty that exists on it nowadays, cover only a minor part of the correct answer. And as to inter-art relationships, they are at times coincidental; at other times they exist but in passing and sometimes they do not exist at all. Also, the actual composition of artistic totality, meaning what is considered to be art and what the point of departure is from this composition, is often found to be difficult to understand and unreliable.

But, first of all, a few thoughts on language or, as it might be more correct to say, to call it thus: deliberations on the words that, over the years, have been used as terminology in art in general and in music, in particular.

The poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), a language genius, claimed that the “analogy of the origin of a specific word will lead us to its correct meaning, will return the word’s original value, will clear it of distortions that have accompanied it for much of the time and will return it to its previous standing”<sup>1</sup>.

In spite of Goethe’s correct utterances, I cannot but voice concern that the meaning of words does not exist for ever. Words not only become distorted in time, but their orientation becomes more negative. Take, for example, the German word “Dirne”, which originally served as a term for a “young country girl” (from which the term “Dirndl” approximately meaning “a dress worn by a country girl”.) But, over many years, the word’s meaning has changed to “prostitute”. Or take the word “Zionism”. Would it be erroneous to determine that this word has been changing its meaning to the extreme since the days of Theodor Herzl? And has the word “beautiful” not totally reversed? And what is happening to the much reassuring term נפש נאה (“gentle soul”)/“bleeding heart” which has, especially in the Hebrew language, turned into a derogatory name? And these examples are only the tip of the iceberg.

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\* A chapter from her hebrew book now in print “Inside and beyond music” to be published in 2015 by “Dvir publications”

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1 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe from ‘Sprüche in Versen und Prosa’ (Proverbs in Verse and Prose), Deutsche Bibliothek, Berlin.



And regarding the meaning of language, more complex than its words, I have learned from my learned friend Menachem Brinker that the language of words is considered a language only because it possesses the “indicating” and the “indicated”. Having said “table”, all know that we are talking about a flat board placed on legs, at which one can sit. This is as opposed to music, for example, which cannot, according to Brinker, be considered a language as it is lacking in the “indicating” and the “indicated”, thus not producing clear understanding.

Despite all my good intentions, I fail to agree with Brinker’s claim, for the reason described above: if the same word changes its meaning over many years, can it still be considered an “indicating” word?

Unintentionally, my thoughts lead me to a letter of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy to his friend Marc-André Soucha, in which he answer’s his friend’s question as to the meaning of “Songs without Words” that the composer had composed shortly before that, and how it was possible to understand songs without words. Mendelssohn answered thus: ‘People talk so much about music and say so little. As far as I am concerned, words do not manage to clarify the aim of the musical work. If they could achieve this, I would not write music at all. People complain that music is overloaded with meaning, causing the listener to cast doubt on how he is supposed to understand it, whereas all can understand words. I feel the exact opposite is correct, not only regarding complete sentences but also about single words. They, and not music, appear overloaded in meaning, lacking in precision and being ambiguous if you compare them to good music, music which fills the soul with thousands of things that are good and far more accurate than words’<sup>2</sup>.

These words of Mendelssohn’s seem to me to be saying: ‘Emotion cries out to a language different to the language of words. Words are too precise. They do indeed reveal a small fraction, but together with that, they hide more than they reveal and change their appearance. In which case, the language of words reaches the degree of multi-aspect expressions and the most fragile symbols of emotion. That is the role of art and of all that concerns me – mostly music.’

I have, indeed, digressed somewhat from the subject, however for the sake of the meaning of art and enquiry into it through linguistics.

And so it is that “art” in Greek is teknoy; its origin comes from two different roots: tekton, meaning to “to do” or “to work”, from which we get “technique” of all kinds, the “Technion” and “architecture”, this being the “main activity” – and teknon, meaning “to give birth”.

It turns out, therefore, that the term art in Greek combines both the creative technique and the work itself.

Latin, on the contrary, uses the term ars for art, from which we get art in English. The origin of ars, according to experts, is in the ancient root of two letters ar, meaning “connecting things together” or “to assemble”, very similar to the English verb to compose and composer, the name given to a person writing music. And from here, composition, the term for a written work common to most languages and most arts, whereas composer remains specific to musical composition.

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2 Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy an Marc André Souchay, am 15 Oktober 1842. Briefe aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1847, Leipzig, Hermann Mendelssohn 1899, Band 2, 229

Let us go to the Latin *Ars*. According to Cicero, this *Ars* is of two kinds: one, according to him, in the first, these things exist only in the realm of thought and in the second, from his words, things are produced in practice. He refers geometry, for example, as being the first, with playing the lyre as belonging to the second<sup>3</sup>.

In the Middle Ages, two different groups constituted the seven “*Artes Liberales*”, from which the study material was introduced at the first universities. (The term “*liberales*” or “*freedom*” was given to those “*artes*” not because of freedom of the “*artes*”, but because they were engaged in by the free man, as opposed to the activities of slaves. The seven were divided into three in the “*Trivium*” and four in the “*Quadrivium*”. The “*artes*” of language belonged to the *Trivium*, i.e. grammar, dialectics and rhetoric; the “*artes*” of numbers belonged to the *Quadrivium*, i.e. arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and...music.

Soon, that is, as of the first centuries of the second thousand A.D., *Ars* was changed with *Scientia*. from which the word “*science*” comes and it is used to denote music, despite the fact that this term does not indicate even one of the other aspects nowadays belonging to the arts. That is inasmuch as the “*ars*” did not refer to them.

Two are the major terms that served music in those times and they contradict each other. One sees music as “*scientia qua numeris loquitor*”, i.e. a “*science using numbers*”. The other views music as “*scientia bene modulandi*”, i.e. the “*science of good rhythm*”. The first term finds the ratio and a thought process in music, ascribing to it the science that speaks through numbers; the second mostly finds the “*sensus*” (sense) in it, ascribing to it the sensuous-rhythmic phenomenon. Both, however, unite to see music as a science and a discipline of calculation and thought process.

Incidentally, the German word *Kunst* (art) comes from the word *Können*, meaning “*can*” or “*to be able to*”, and there are those who claim that this verb has its origins in a verb that is no longer in use, but that a trace of its influence is found in *Kind* (child). The form *Ich kann* (I can) is constructed according to this information; also, “*I create*” or “*I produce*”.

Art in the creative sense does not appear, except for in the new era, when it ceased to serve religion or thought or science, having become a work serving beauty: *Fine Arts*, *les beaux arts*, *die schöne Künste*. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) declared that art was “*the medium of creating aesthetic pleasure*” and that “*its essence*” was “*for the sake of joy itself and in pleasure from the beautiful product*”.

Only, this statement, which was firm and valid for the west in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, dissipated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, towards the end of that century, a time that saw terrible tragedies and world wars, the ugly and distorted became the slogan of art, the test of “*beauty*” being “*in the eye of the beholder*”.

What, in which case, do we learn from behind these utterances and aesthetics? We learn that the tendency of music, as the tendency of words, of the concept of the world and of thinking, changes and passes on; music, on the basis of its expression, all implied in numbers, has not always been considered as enjoyment or for the development of the soul, for it was preferred to be seen as a science and as such it was taught at universities from the 11<sup>th</sup> century and later.

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3 *Academica* II,7

We still deduce that music, and, indeed, all the other arts, did not combine as partners in one single artistic expression, but only when those were called upon to serve and promote “beauty” (the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) and, although this tendency has dissipated, the question arises yet again as to the relevance of the arts to each other: should all the arts be seen as belonging to one unit? Would it not be more correct to connect music, indeed, all the arts, or at least the stage arts, to language? And, perhaps, to religions which, it seems, functioned as the framework for creating them? Or could it be that music still constitutes a whole world, different to the other arts, a world standing alone in itself, as claimed by Schopenhauer? This will be discussed subsequently.

As previously mentioned, the word for “art” in Latin is **ar** or **ars**, originally defining the three disciplines of language and the four disciplines of numbers, those making up the “seven liberal arts”; in other words, the seven “arts” the free human being sees fit to engage in and that constituted the study material at the first universities (in the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D). Not one of the arts today defined as arts is included in them, apart from music, which is counted among the disciplines of numbers. And also, some centuries later, when **ars** changed to be termed as **scientia** (a science), this, once again, included music and only music.

In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the renowned philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) enumerated five arts: poetry, drawing, sculpture, architecture and music. Neither dance nor theater are included in Kant’s reckoning and thinking regarding art<sup>4</sup>.

In his article “The Artwork of the Future”, written some decades later, the composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) claims that ‘the complete man’s main three artistic abilities are music, the art of dance and drama, designed, as if of their own accord, so that the independent expression could unify the three original human arts. On this matter, Wagner does not differentiate between **lyrics** and drama, both originating in the “word”. The art of dance, of music and the art of poetry are the three ancient siblings joining together in one dance-existence’<sup>5</sup>.

Wagner favors quite different arts to those enumerated by Kant. He adds dance, drama and, most importantly, poetry (referred to by him as “lyrics”) to music, maintains the close relationship between them and raises them to the top of his priorities regarding all the arts.

It is appropriate to note that, in this combination, Wagner sees not just the art itself but also ‘original, human art’.

Today, indeed, one would not describe the body of the arts without including dance and theatre, yet poetry is still not considered a field belonging to the body of the arts, whereas literature, despite Wagner, was never included in that body.

I admit I have not found an answer to my question, of why literature and mainly poetry have been left out of the arts. Could it be that the reason for this is that Art is still considered a non-essential game of the emotions, not having the same importance attributed to the sciences and to intellectual activity - an activity that still does not include the arts? And, as poetry and

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4 Immanuel Kant: “Kritik der Urteilskraft”, 1790, paragraph 56

5 Wagner’s words cited here come from different sections of his article “Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft”. Also see my book “Music: Mission and Message”, Dvir Publishing House, 2007, p.77.

literature are still considered to be an intellectual activity, should they not be considered as arts? Very strange!

A renewed approach to the essence of the arts, in particular to the connection between them, was created as a result of the influence of “Aesthetica” - a book (written in Latin) by the German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762). The book deals with issues to do with the arts and their approach to “beauty”, determining that the discipline of aesthetics is separate from that of general philosophy and particular to the arts and to the general concept of the senses. Baumgarten distanced himself from the accepted opinion of the time according to which the arts were designated to describe nature and he was convinced that the artist should change nature by infusing the element of emotion into the reality surrounding us. Thus, as mentioned before painting, sculpture, architecture, music, dance and drama joined to become one group responsible for describing “beauty” conceived through our senses; their collective name was now **The Fine Arts, Les beaux arts, Die schönen Künste**.

From this world view, Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) wrote, for instance, that ‘color and sound are as two rivers gushing from the same mountain, but they flow under different circumstances and to opposite places.’

And the painter Vassily Kandinsky (1896-1944) compares painting to music, saying that color is the keyboard, the eyes are harmonies, the soul is a piano of many strings, the artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another to arouse trembling in the soul.

I must admit that I have never felt comfortable with the establishment of that same “family of arts”. As if all were siblings in a homogeneous family, practicing principles of aesthetics common to all, different only in the medium with which each is realized: one with colors upon paper, one in stone, one via the human body and yet another through the moving of sounds. All this closeness, in my opinion, seems artificial, not necessarily always in keeping with the very different nature of the various arts. This is all the more so with the passing of Modernism, a time when the artist began turning his back on “beauty”, assuming that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder”, when the need to establish that family simply disappeared.

I did find what I was looking for in the writings of the German Romantic philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). In his lengthy and detailed article ‘Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik’ (The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music) Nietzsche writes: ‘Under the influence of Schopenhauer, in his “Beethoven” article, Richard Wagner declares that music should be gauged according to very different principles from those of the visual arts and from the category of “beauty”...The question we should be asking ourselves will therefore be: in what manner does music address the picture and the concept? In his book “Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung” (The World as Will and Representation, Volume 1, page 309) Schopenhauer has already answered this question in saying that ‘we can see the phenomenon of the world or of nature and the phenomenon of music as two different expressions of the same matter...If one views music as an expression of the world, it is therefore a general language and this is, in accordance with the highest virtue, related to general concepts somewhat as a question relates to single items’<sup>6</sup>.

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6 Loosely translated from German. Nietzsches Gesammelte Werke, Musarion Verlag, Munich, vol.3, pp. 108,109

‘The song of the people’ in Nietzsche’s words ‘constitutes for us, first and foremost, a kind of musical mirror, a kind of original melody now searching the phenomenon of the parallel dream, finding it in poetry. Melody is, therefore, the first and most general...It is melody because of the poetry, each time anew...In the writing of a folk song, we see how language seeks to imitate music...and it may, in which case, see lyrical poetry as an imitation of music in images and concepts, to ask in what manner music appears in the mirror of the image and concept. And to respond, in the spirit of Schopenhauer: it appears as will and that is in contrast to the aesthetic atmosphere of observation, and that is it...for, indeed, will is, in itself, not an aesthetic approach. And, indeed, in order to express the phenomenon of will in images, the poet will need the whole gamut of emotional expressions, starting from a whisper and ending with a deafening scream...All of this can be summarized in the fact that poetry is dependent on the spirit of music. However, music, despite its limitlessness and, thus, its need of an image and concept, is, even so, not dependent on poetry, rather only suffering it along with it. The poetry of a poet cannot express anything that has not previously existed in music.’<sup>7</sup>

So far, Nietzsche. I went back to reading his writings in the original German and, in doing so, strengthened my opinion that, in the field of the arts, there is no proximity more obvious than that between poetry and music. The source of both is in the emotional senses, their strength in transferring experiences and in their ability to arouse involvement in the heart of listeners. There are no two arts so awe-inspiring as to complement each other and delegate the other with so suitable and fitting a dimension of depth and elaboration. Music gives depth to words, creating a platform to elevate them, whereas words clarify musical intention with precision, encouraging the listener to experience certain feelings and, thus, a discerning team.

And, truly, what would the early days of Israel have been without the folk song that so amazingly helped it to survive existing hardships and not lose faith in its justification? And what would the fate of America have been in its consolidation if it were not for the spirituals? And how poor Modernism would have been without the art song, without the great poets whose poems composers enveloped in some of the most beautiful music ever written? And here, in fact, the greater part of the music played today on the radio, in large halls, palaces and stadiums, all the various kinds of Blues, pop and rock, all are made of words and music to the point that neither element can be described without the other.

And while I have been pondering these things and the very close connection between words and music, I have encountered Hana Amichai’s article<sup>8</sup>, in which she reports on a meeting that took place between the poets Paul Celan and Yehuda Amichai at Amichai’s home in October 1969. From this same meeting, the heading quotes Celan in an astonishing sentence in which he says: “Poetic integration is the perpetuation of oscillating between the “not yet” and the “no longer”!

Is it not possible to say those very same things about music and all the more so? Is music not, in the essence of that space, or the meaningful oscillating, as it were, between the note just sounded and that which is about to be sounded?

And beyond Celan’s clever and such pertinent simile, the same “between...and” appears

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7 Ibid, pp. 49,50, as translated from German

8 Haaretz newspaper, Passover edition 6.4.2012

JUST A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE MEANING OF ART AND ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARTS

and arises here, which, for its part, is the identifying mark of music: between that which is not yet and that which is no more; between a note just sounded and a note about to be sounded; here, so accurately and clearly, Paul Celan has presented the existing identifying mark of poetry. And perhaps, in this way, here is the secret of the same very close connection between the two arts of the senses.

So here it has been determined that music is quite as the profoundness of words and as their transference to such heights that the threshold of their emotion is above the effect of the words themselves. And this is still before their being in the framework of an art form: a cry, a sigh, a plea, rejoicing, weeping and laughing, expressed in words, becoming, as if unaided, sounds emanating from the heart and entering the heart.

As far as I am concerned, music is indeed a voicing of the word which sometimes exists in a musical work and, at others, is absent from it, but it is still present via the musical image.

Whether we like it or not, music and words are the language of the heart and of warm emotions. What is true is that they are not always expressed but, all the same, the emotion surging within us has no other way of being expressed besides through the arts, and first and foremost, through poetry and music.

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