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Tamar Sar-Shalom has many years of experience in Movement, Dance and Body-Work; teaches Improvisation, Composition, Experiential Anatomy and Dance History; and is a choreographer of inter-disciplinary productions and with diverse populations. She holds a diploma for Dance and Movement Education from the Kibbutzim College; a B.A. in Dance and Movement (EDDC -The European Dance Development Center, Arnhem, Holland) and an M.A. from the Interdisciplinary Women's Studies and Arts Program (Lesley University). Sar-Shalom studies the meeting point between body and language and is interested in social-cultural aspects of Dance and the body. She is a practitioner of the Ilan Lev Method and is trained as a birthing assistant (Doula), a graduate of the training program in Hakomi studies, and has studied a variety of methods which combine movement, body and the mind-body connection including Body-Mind-Centering (USA) and Voice and Movement among others.

מועדים למחול

אסופת ריקודים במעגל השנה

קומפוזיציה: תרצה ספיר
כתיבה ועריכה: שלומית עופר | תרצה ספיר



Festive Dances: Collection of Dances within the Yearly Cycle

Composition: Tirza Sapir

Writing and editing: Shlomit Ofer and Tirza Sapir

MOFET Institute Publications in collaboration with the Research Center for Movement Notations and Dance, the Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and Arts.

The book "Festive Dances: Collection of Dances within the Yearly Cycle" comprises 19 holiday dances composed by Tirza Sapir over a 50-year period, between 1961-2011. These dances have been performed in holiday ceremonies in Gat and Carmiya kibbutzim. With time, they have become study subject for various dance communities, such as students in dance teaching and theatre dance course in the Kibbutzim College of Education as well as in the dance course in Orot Israel College. The dances are written in accordance with the principles and perception of Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation. A CD is attached to the book with a recording of all the songs which accompany the compositions. The songs are performed by the choir of teachers

at the Kibbutzim College of Education, under the guidance of Shaul Gilad.

Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation is a written language for movement symbolization. The method was developed in Israel by the late Noa Eshkol and the late Avraham Wachman and was published for the first time in 1958. It involves a system of symbols which allow presentation of the human body movements in time and space. Sapir was a disciple and colleague of Eshkol and a member of the Movement Notation Society. She was the head of the School of the Arts of Dance at the Kibbutzim College of Education. At present she continues as a teacher

and coordinator of the movement notation studies and heads the Center for the Study of Movement Notation and Dance Languages. She founded the "RikudNeto" Dance Group and was its choreographer and coordinator. Ofer is a staff member at the School of Dance Arts at the Kibbutzim College of Education, an expert in dance curriculum development, a teacher of Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation as well as coordinator of the final project of the dance and movement course graduates.

For many years, the two writers of the book have applied Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation for the purpose of composing dances and documenting them. Sapir published several books in the past, among them Hanukkah Notebooks (1987), Birds (2005) and Landscapes (2007). Moreover, she has written study and analysis books about dance and movement notation. Ofer's doctoral thesis examined processes of developing movement notations by children.

The Introduction written by Ofer in a fluent and clear language presents all the parts of the book, its aims and uniqueness. According to her, the book aims to accomplish two goals: a. learning goals; b. documentation of the dances composed for ceremonies and holidays throughout the year. Every dance is presented by several ways: the lyrics of the song upon which the dance was composed; movement representation by the manuscript page of the Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation; a general description of the dance and a verbal description of the dance structure, suggestions of learning opportunities; a key of the movement notation signs; and an illustrative symbolization by various means that appears in Ofer's introduction as an "easy notation".

The Introduction includes also two important articles. In the first articles, "Hebrew secularism and kibbutz festivities", Muki Tzur, a writer and historian of the kibbutz movement, reviews the development of the Hebrew secular culture and explains how the culture of the Jewish-secular holidays in the Land of Israel have evolved. The article sheds light on the relation between the kibbutz tradition, the songs and dances in the holiday ceremonies.

The second article was written by Naomi Bahat-Ratzon and is entitled "Dance in the kibbutz movement – a social, educational and artistic affirmation". Bahat-Ratzon is an ethno-musicologist, dance researcher and founder of the dance and movement teacher course at the Kibbutzim College of Education, which she headed during the years 1978-2000. She surveys the development of dance in the kibbutz movement - from a means of social expression, through a central tool in communal-Kibbutz educational system, and up to a dance for stage performance, while mentioning composers, dances and meaningful events in the kibbutz movement history. This article is significant for comprehending the background for composing the dances included in the book; the importance of the educational aspect encompassed in the performance of these dances by children; and the importance of documenting these dances. The Introduction was translated into English by John Harries and appears on the second side of book, read from left to right. The reading follows from the left to the right as is customary in the writing system



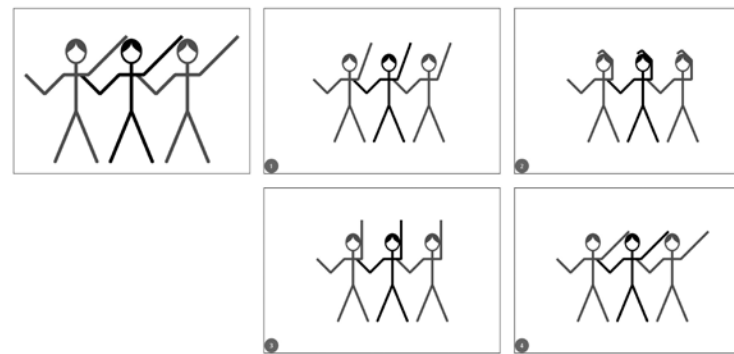
Illustrative symbolization of the dance "The Planters March": the path of transport created on the ground in the course of the movement; the foot represents the direction of the steps.

of Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation. Later on, each page is bi-lingual.

Compositions of the dances are arranged according to their order of appearance in the Hebrew holiday calendar. Two or three dances are devoted to each holiday. Every chapter is accompanied by photos from the personal album of the writers and of members of the "RikudNeto" dance group. Thus, a personal and refreshing aspect is added to the design of the book. Moreover, in the Introduction Ofer enumerates the several common denominators to the dances: all of them have a learning goal designed to improve the dancers' competences; they are all related to the kibbutz community culture and as such they were built as group dances to be performed in the holiday ceremonies; they are based on holiday songs from the Israeli classics and are well known to the wide public. The movement motif of each of the dances is based on illustration of the holiday symbols. Thus, the abstract ideas turn into a movement representation with a symbolic sign in the movement notation. In most dances the movement motif presents an interpretation of the song ideas, allowing the performers to identify with the idea of the dance, assists them to remember the movements and integrate the dances in the holiday traditions.

At first, the writing of the dance appears in the unique manuscript page of Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation. This part is suitable for teachers and dancers who are versed with this system. Then comes a general verbal description of the dance as well as general instructions which relate to the movement of the dancers' body parts or to the movement of dancers in space. Furthermore, there are "learning opportunities" which refer to three aspects: a movement aspect, a coordinative aspects and a writing aspect. They can serve movement teachers or any teachers wishing to stage this dance in a holiday ceremony or use it as a tool or a movement learning opportunity.

An "illustrated symbols" or "easy writing" are attached to each dance, constituting in fact a simple representation of the dancers' movement in space. They are divided into five different symbol types, which graphically present components of the movement and enable those who are not familiar with the movement notation to know and learn some of the dance components. Moreover, the "illustrated symbol" provides the connection between the



Illustrative symbolization of the dance "Flags all over the Country": a sequence of arm movements and holds between a number of performers. The direction of the front of the body is presented by the head.

holiday symbol and its expression in movement. For example, in the "New Year" dance appears the shape of the blooming rose and in "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt" we see the palms which are intertwined without any separation, enhancing the feeling of limitation and burden. In the "Hanukkah Candle" dance appears an illustrated symbol of the head positions course. This representation is so clear that it can serve any movement teacher or kindergarten teacher for young children. This is in fact only a partial representation of the dance but it embodies the relation to the holiday symbol and the candle flame. In the dance "The Planters March" which is designed for "Tu Bishvat" (A day that celebrates nature and environment by planting trees) there is a different choice of the illustrated symbol. It presents the dancers' course of advance which creates a shape of a tree on the ground.

Here again we see a partial representation. Reading the full dance according to the movement notation presents the entire dance and his complexity. In the dance "Flags all over the Country" a clear relation between the essence of the Independence Day and the concept of "togetherness" is manifested by the dancers' held hands throughout the dance. The "Had Gadya" dance based on a song from the Passover Hagadah offers learning the movement difference and the musical difference between a performance of a soloist and that of a choir. It presents various options of leg movements and rhythms. The written notation is easy, simply and clear to everybody.

The book is a meaningful documentation of the dances which Sapir composed. The movement notation symbols make the book unique and facilitate practical acquaintance with Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation. Moreover, the book documents and preserves the dance tradition in Gat and Carmiya kibbutzim, facilitating acquaintance with the kibbutz holiday dances and the understanding thereof. Nevertheless, there are but a few teachers and dancers in Israel and abroad who are capable of reading a text written in Eshkol-Wachman movement notation. Hence, the book is a significant recorded document, albeit problematic. Yet, the simple symbolic representations, the body part movements and the dancers' movement in space are shown in a very clear way which allows even those who are not familiar with the movement notation to learn the dances. In a period whereby we experience numerous ceremonies to commemorate holidays, such a book

can improve the level of the ceremonies and the dance segments included in school ceremonies. It can cause the shape and content of the dances to be more meaningfully interrelated. The instructions of learning opportunities which are attached to every dance offer teachers and kindergarten teachers a possibility to expand the activity beyond composing a dance for a ceremony of some holiday. These opportunities entail a significant movement and coordinative learning.

As far as the "user's experience" with the book is concerned, it takes time to understand the way of reading. Readers in Hebrew are required to finish reading the Introduction and then start reading the book from left to right according to the chapters of the holidays. This fact is mentioned and explained in the Introduction written by Ofer. However, even I (although familiar with the movement notation) need time for thinking in order to understand how I should continue reading the book. Moreover, the different representation ways of every dance require pausing and reflecting. Later on, after decoding one dance or two, the process becomes clearer.

The performance staged on the occasion of launching the book demonstrated an integration of all the components. The dances were performed by students of the dance course at the Kibbutzim College of Education as well as elementary school pupils accompanied by the singing of the college teachers' choir. The performance left me moved and excited, mainly by the accurate and organized quality of the children's movement, something which has not been very common recently. It was obvious that the children managed to maintain a high concentration level combined with pleasure resulting from the nearly meditative movement. As a movement teacher I realized the importance of teaching movement notation. The use of coordination and cognition development capabilities and embody it into the elementary school systems. It would have been worthwhile attaching to the book a recording of the performance which provides an additional visual representation of the dances and intensifies the beauty and learning potential encompassed in them.

Shiri Lilos graduate of the dance course at the "Telma Yellin" high school. Has a B.Ed. in dance teaching and is an M.Ed. student in the visual literacy in education course at the Kibbutzim College of Education. A dance teacher, teaching theoretical subjects towards the matriculation certificate in dance. An instructor of dance supervision in the Ministry of Education in the field of online in-service training courses and computerized exams.