

Talking angles' body language

For about 40 years, almost all of Israel's existence, Rina Schenfeld is in the center of the artistic activity of dance. First as a dancer, and later, as a choreographer and a teacher who grants the artistic dance values to the next generations.

As a dancer, there hasn't been anyone who was compared to her in her technical nobility, her clear performances, her emotional depth, skills of expression and her relaxed punctuality.

As the soloist of Bat Sheva Dance Company, which she is one of its founders, Rina Schenfeld was the greatest and most important interpreter, in Israel and the whole world, of Martha Graham (the great priests of modern dance).

As a leader dancer of Bat Sheva dance company, she won a remarkable acclaim for her unforgettable performances in the great roles of the mythology heroines in Graham's work, and in dances of 30 other choreographers, of the greatest creators of the 2nd half of our century.

As a choreographer, she created, in the past three decades, over 60 works, most of which became classics of Israel's dance.

She invented and developed a unique dance language, which uses objects and materials, which emphasize the human body. In this aspect, she was influenced by the Bauhaus tradition, and was considered pretty fast one of the main interpreters of this center European tradition. Her development moved from the material and concrete to the spiritual and abstract. From body to spirit, from objects that emphasize the human body, she reached words, which may be the body language of angels.

The distinction of Rina Schenfeld in the Israeli and international dance map is in her enigmatic and diverse use of objects.

In her work you can distinct five periods. It should be referred as floors and not just periods, because of the simple fact that every period leans on its former. It doesn't deny it, but is built on it.

The Geometric period - a use in clean, cold, geometrical objects, which immense the dramas that are born as a result of the union with the human body.

The nature period - the dancing partners are now objects from nature: tree branches, water, sea shells, sand and wind. Part of which are objects from Israeli landscape.

The Light and shadow period - from physical object, Rina Schenfeld gets to light and shadow, to "no object" which acts like an object, with all its implications.

The Video period - the light and shadow now wear a more figurative form, through characters that are reflected in the projection.

The Poetic period - word and sound are now objects, which the dancer refers to. Poems - words, create an encounter between voice and movement.

As one can see, these periods are not detached from each other, but one period is resulting from her former.

Rina Schenfeld is striving with her work beyond the narrativeness - to primary depths, and uses stage metaphors, which turn to symbols and create a theatrical artistic existence. her works present a personal side that emphasizes the female subject and the different aspects and struggles of a woman.

As a choreographer she built a bridge between artists from different fields (and by that helped the research and development of the multimedia art. painters and sculptures asked to sculpt, paint and photograph the characters she played in her works); during the years she cooperated with the best artists in Israel.

Rina Schenfeld established a dance theater in which she is both a choreographer and a dancer. The theater operates a school, a company and dance workshop.

In her theater she raised generations of dancers and choreographers.

From this point of view also, she was a pioneer and serves as an example to young dancers and choreographers until today.

Section from an article by Chaim Nagid, July 1999