

DANCE

Change of direction

Brilliant dancer-choreographer Rina Schenfeld talks with Dora Sowden about a new work that has grown out of the Gulf war.

Rina Schenfeld, our foremost active dancer-choreographer-teacher (praise be) in every one of her fields, has announced a new program – and a new style. She also announces a return visit of the Finnish dance star Tero Saarinen who dazzled audiences during his first visit here and has made time in his crowded schedule to come again. The occasion is therefore so special that the first performance on July 14 at the Suzanne Dellal Center in Tel Aviv will be attended by the Finnish ambassador. There will be two other performances: July 15 and 16.

About her changes in style, Schenfeld explained at her lovely Tel Aviv home that it was really a return to her "Graham sources." She had studied at the Graham School (New York) and danced in Graham works for the Batsheva company, which started her brilliant career. "I felt it was the only way I could express now what I want to convey," she said. "I had the idea for *Azure and Shadow Winter 91* for some time but it came together and took shape during the (Gulf) war. I have set it to the Adagio of the sixth Shostakovich symphony because it was composed in a time of emotional disturbance and stress. I am using no objects to dance with."

Saarinen will also perform a new work: a solo called *Deja Vu* which the American choreographer Murray Louis gave him as a gift after he saw him dance. It consists of five characters (all danced by Saarinen) embodying the Murray Louis wit and humor. Saarinen will also dance *B.12*, choreographed for him by the noted Finnish director-choreographer Jorma Utinen. He was awarded the gold medal when he danced it at the Paris International Festival this year. It is interesting to remember that Schenfeld herself won such a gold medal when she danced in Mirali Sharon's *Transition* with Rahamim Ron (Paris, 1971).

Also in the program will be Schenfeld's *Jacob's Dream*, revised and shortened and to be danced by her with two members of her Dance Theater.

The Gulf war may have inspired her latest work but it also deprived her of something. She had been invited to Austin, Texas, to dance and to teach Graham technique at the university there, but when the war broke out she decided not to go. "I waited till the last minute," she said. She hopes to be able to go next year.



Rina Schenfeld in 'Azure and Shadow Winter 91'

(Eilat Blosski)