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Seeing Israeli And Jewish Dance (Raphael Patai Series In Jewish Folklore And Anthropology)



Synopsis

In *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance*, choreographer, dancer, and dance scholar Judith Brin Ingber collects wide-ranging essays and many remarkable photographs to explore the evolution of Jewish dance through two thousand years of Diaspora, in communities of amazing variety and amid changing traditions. Ingber and other eminent scholars consider dancers individually and in community, defining Jewish dance broadly to encompass religious ritual, community folk dance, and choreographed performance. Taken together, this wide range of expression illustrates the vitality, necessity, and continuity of dance in Judaism. This volume combines dancers' own views of their art with scholarly examinations of Jewish dance conducted in Europe, Israel, other Middle East areas, Africa, and the Americas. In seven parts, *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* considers Jewish dance artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; the dance of different Jewish communities, including Hasidic, Yemenite, Kurdish, Ethiopian, and European Jews in many epochs; historical and current Israeli folk dance; and the contrast between Israeli and American modern and post-modern theater dance. Along the way, contributors see dance in ancient texts like the Song of Songs, the Talmud, and Renaissance-era illuminated manuscripts, and plumb oral histories, Holocaust sources, and their own unique views of the subject. A selection of 182 illustrations, including photos, paintings, and film stills, round out this lively volume. Many of the illustrations come from private collections and have never before been published, and they represent such varied sources as a program booklet from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and archival photos from the Israel Government Press Office. *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* threads together unique source material and scholarly examinations by authors from Europe, Israel, and America trained in sociology, anthropology, history, cultural studies, Jewish studies, dance studies, as well as art, theater, and dance criticism. Enthusiasts of dance and performance art and a wide range of university students will enjoy this significant volume.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Judith Brin Ingber has assembled in one volume a wealth of information and ideas. She and the seventeen other contributors to *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* probe such diverse, yet profoundly related subjects as dancing in Judaic ceremonies and the creation of folk dances in the newborn nation of Israel. Dancing springs to life on the page illuminating how cultural roots yield new blooms when transplanted into different soil. The reader will be stimulated by conflicting views about such topics as women's participation in traditional Jewish dances throughout history and the ways in which contemporary folk and theatrical dancing in Israel have honored memory and culture, even as they have altered the image of the Jewish body and what it means to be a Jew. --Deborah Jowitt, dance critic and historian, author of *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*

Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance is a work of great originality and importance, not only to the world of dance but to the study of global Jewish culture and the arts. Its scope and depth are remarkable, and its combination of photography and scholarship is nothing short of thrilling. --Riv-Ellen Prell, professor of American Studies at the University of Minnesota and editor of *Women Remaking American Judaism* (Wayne State University Press, 2007)

Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance is at once both cinematic and diasporic. It is part academic travelogue, part historical manifesto, and part home movie, if home was all of Jewish culture across all of history. It intermingles the religious and secular practices of dance into a hybrid and fluid Jewishness: one with porous boundaries and a shifting sense of self, identity, and purpose. In this collection of original and sometimes daring research, dance is framed as celebratory and artistic, decorative and efficacious, a kind of both/and construction which the authors liberally mine for its essential Jewishness and its contribution to the central issues surrounding Jewish identity, as both a part of and apart from the State of Israel. *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* will undoubtedly inspire debate, critique, and hopefully the publication of other texts that further explore dance in the frame of an ever-shifting Jewish identity. --Douglas Rosenberg, professor and director of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts at the University of Wisconsin, Madison

A comprehensive survey of historical and contemporary Jewish dance.

You could not read a more comprehensive history of the dances of the Jewish people. It is great for people who only like the "Oldies" and worthwhile for younger dancers who support the works of amazing choreographers working in the twenty-first century. The illustrations bring the early choreographers to life. One caution. I could only read one chapter at a time and usually needed to go back and read it again. It is worth the time for those of us who love Rikudei Am (folk dance).

My friend is a dancer who has specialized in Israeli style. She has studied with some of those featured in the photos. It brought her to tears. "Best gift ever!" She proclaimed. Thank you.

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