

REFLECTIONS

Far beyond Dancing the Hora: Judith Brin Ingber's Workshop

By Ali Littman
Link Correspondent, Albuquerque

We all know the hora. And some of us may even know "Mayim Mayim." Little did I know, however that our repertoire of Jewish folk dances is sorely lacking.

In November, Congregation Nahalat Shalom hosted Judith Brin Ingber, a scholar and dancer who led a seminar on historical Jewish dances. During the two-hour class, and eventually dance party, Ingber introduced me to a number of exotic Jewish dances I never knew existed.

Before I arrived to Ingber's seminar, I mentally scrolled through the list of my favorite Jewish dances. I imagined many circular dances with, perhaps, some clapping and certainly a menagerie of flailing arms and legs. Overly confident, I turned to Adam, my boyfriend-turned-dance-partner and briefed him on what would take place. "Don't worry, this will be really fun," I said. "I used to this all the time at camp. It's going to be fun!"

He smiled, conceding to my exuberance. A scientist by nature, and profession, Adam usually shies away from dancing. I decided I would need enough confidence of my own to carry him through the two-hour seminar. And I had plenty of it. On our way over, I even

showed him a few dance moves in the car and explained to him exactly how to do the hora.

When we arrived at Nahalat Shalom, Ingber was in the middle of a lecture on Jewish dances, emphasizing that weddings, historically, were the most popular times for people to break out in folk dance. She twisted her wrists in smooth circles and mirrored those movements with her hips, as she explained that many traditional dances originate from the Sephardic tradition. With these dances, women sway their hips up and out, spin their wrists in the air, and separate their fingers to exaggerate the flare in their hands. Ingber mimicked these moves with such ease. We were all mesmerized.

Then it was our turn to dance. I couldn't wait. I could almost feel my nostalgia coming on, as I prepared to transport myself back to the days of summer camp. Adam, a good sport so far, stood in a military-like stance, trying to conceal the uncertainty I detected in his eyes.

Suddenly, Ingber appeared in front of us, giving us numerous costumes to wear. Adam donned a lovely blue and glittery scarf, while I fastened a bejeweled band to my head. The next thing I knew, we weren't beginning the hora. Instead, we were learning how to do the Sephardic dances Ingber performed for us.

Sighing, I realized we wouldn't be doing the traditional Israeli dancing I knew.

Confidently ignoring any hesitancy or shyness from her audience, Ingber taught us how to lift and sway our hips. It went something like this: Step with one foot, jut your hip out, step with your other foot, jut your hip out, and continue. We could also swirl our hands to accompany the dance, though that was optional.

Before I knew it, the Klezmer band struck up some music, and we all began doing these movements in a clump, heading in the general direction of the band. I looked over at Adam, and realized he had become one of the best hip swingers in that room. As he swaggered through the line, his hips shot skyward and he had a huge grin on his face. Everyone did.

The rest of the seminar offered even more exotic dances. For the last dance, Ingber designated two people to be "bride" and "groom" and sat them down at the front of the room. She then divided the dancers into three groups. Each group would shuffle up to the bride and groom while mimicking an item the group would give as a gift at the wedding. Once the Klezmer band began playing, our hodgepodge bridal party pretended to act like chickens as we approached the bride. What bride wouldn't need chickens? Next we shuf-

fled toward the bride and pretended to stir a pot. The dance seemed silly at the time, but I could imagine it being a blast at a wedding.

I whispered to Adam that I wish weddings were like that these days. A congregation member overheard me and suggested I invite the entire congregation of Nahalat Shalom to my wedding. That should do the trick, she seemed to suggest as she beamed at me.

By the time the seminar was over, we hadn't done a dance I knew from my childhood. And, actually, I was happy it turned out that way. Ingber infused a sense of mystery and excitement into Jewish dances. No longer were these mechanical movements that I've done hundreds of times since childhood.

Instead, we engaged with Jewish dancing and ultimately our history, by learning something new about it and then immediately interacting with that enticing newness. As for Adam, he said he had a great time, and he's not one to lie. So, next time you join hands with someone to do the hora, remember you're just skimming the surface. To add some excitement to the hora, all you have to do is look in our past.

To learn more about historical Jewish dances, you can pick up Ingber's book *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance*. It's available on Amazon.

67 Years Later, Holocaust Survivor Reunites with Rescuer

By Chavie Lieber

NEWYORK (JTA) -- Even though 67 years had passed since they last saw each other, Wladyslaw Dudziak and Rozia Beiman reunited as if they hadn't missed a moment.

Dudziak, 85, was flown to New York last week from Poland to meet with Beiman, whom she had saved from the Nazis more than a half-century before.

Dudziak lived in Lublin during World War II and asked her family to look after Beiman when Beiman's parents went missing -- presumably sent to the nearby Majdanek concentration camp. Although extremely poor, the family hid Beiman in its home and pretended she was a niece until the city was liberated in 1944.

"I still feel like she's my sister, even though

I haven't seen her in so long," Beiman told JTA. "I think about her all the time. I trusted their family wholeheartedly during the war. I knew they wouldn't give me up because they loved my parents."

On Nov. 21, at Kennedy Airport, Beiman greeted Dudziak and her daughter with flowers. Dudziak, who had never been on a plane before, cried when she saw Beiman.

The reunion was arranged by the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, a New York organization that provides financial support to hundreds of non-Jews who saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

Speaking in Polish, Dudziak said though she felt too old to travel, she wanted to see Beiman and give her one last hug. She said it was dangerous to hide Jews during the war, but that her

mother insisted they keep Beiman safe.

In 1945, Beiman immigrated to Israel with a group of orphaned children and changed her name to Shoshana Golan after meeting her husband, Micha, in the army. The couple married in 1955 and live on Kibbutz Gal On, in the northern Negev.

"When we met in 1953, Shoshana never told me about her past, even though I knew she lost her whole family," Micha Golan said. "But I remember she used to have nightmares, and only later did she tell me how a Polish family hid her. It's hard to describe how grateful I am, but I want Wladyslaw to know that our family, our four children, would not be here if it weren't for them."

Beiman said that even though she was only 6 when she was hidden, she understood the

dangers faced by the Dudziak family in keeping her alive. After she moved to Israel, she kept in contact with the family, sending them packages with basic foods such as coffee, sugar and fruit.

The easiest way to remember the Dudziak family during their time apart was to go to church, Beiman said, since the family taught her Catholic prayers and regularly attended services.

"My mother reminded me to never forget that I was Jewish, and it was difficult to live with that since I was pretending to be Catholic," Beiman said. "I struggled with understanding God, and still do, but church was a comforting place for me at the time, and still is."

Along with her husband and a son, Beiman will spend 10 days in the United States with Dudziak and her daughter before they again go their separate ways.

The Shifrin Family Circle

By Rich Lieberman
Link Correspondent, Albuquerque

My family and I belong to one of the oldest family circles in America. I am the seventh generation, my children the eighth and grandchildren the ninth.

My father's family came to America around 1906, from Zemin and Minsk, now part of Belarus. One by one they came to the shores of liberty to make their way in the new world. The new world was Brooklyn, where most of the family settled.

I can remember my father telling stories about boarders who were either new relatives to this country, or someone who knew someone that had a sofa to sleep on. Of course, everyone was required to pitch in money to keep up with rent and food. Seems strange now to charge a relative or even have a boarder, but times were different, and so were circumstances.

As the family grew, their thoughts turned to cemetery plots and other financial situations, thus the idea of making a "farhrein" (family organization, or family circle).

My great-grandfather's mother was a Shifrin, and he was one of the founding members of the Shifrin Family Circle, which started in 1912. This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the organization. I don't have any idea how many members there are now, however a number of years ago, a cousin took on the task of making a family tree that traces how we are all related.

The organization is always seeking to find new family members. At times, people write in to find out if they are related and how they are related. The organization found a method to check DNA of the family and one can submit to a test to determine results. I frankly don't have any

idea how it's done, however, according to the information given, a match to the DNA profile would be an infallible identification of any person who is genetically connected to our branch of the family.

One of the most interesting facts of the family tree is one can search starting from your name, and go all the way back through the generations of their part of the tree. Dates of birth and death, and place of birth are recorded. In some instances, there are more details, like when a person arrived in America, and the boat they arrived on. There are also pictures, not only of family members, but the headstones. I have seen the pictures of the headstones of my great-grandparents and grandparents.

Not all of the family came to America. There are Shifrin related cousins in quite a few different counties around the world. Most left before the Holocaust, but sadly not all.

Some notable cousins include Lalo Shifrin, Hollywood music composer, pianist and conductor. Some of his works are Dirty Harry, Cool Hand Luke, Mission Impossible, Jaws, and Magnum Force, and many more. David Shifrin, clarinetist, artistic director of Lincoln Center NYC, faculty member of Juilliard School of Music, Julian Kranin, producer, director and writer of motion pictures, also he is an Oscar winner. Roy Shifrin is a sculptor. Zvi Shifrin is the director of Hebrew University in Israel, and Geoff Shifrin is an author.

I believe the saying is in the Talmud: "One can not know where they are going if they do not know from where they came." I may not have this exactly correct, but the meaning is there.

Looking into one's past and present can be very interesting and enlightening.

Any Shifrin family members out there?

Kirtan Rabbi

A Performance to Benefit Hillel at the University of New Mexico



HEBREW MYSTICAL CHANT

Saturday, December 8 • 7:00 pm

Location:
Temple Beth Shalom, Santa Fe
205 East Barcelona Road Santa Fe, NM 87505

Cost:
\$36 per person
\$10 for students at the door with valid ID

Tickets are available at (505) 821-3214 or brownpapertickets.com

