

Rina Schenfeld, *Patiti*, video work

Dance and Choreography: Rina Schenfeld

The humorous video production *Patiti* was created by the icon of Israeli dance, the dancer and choreographer Rina Schenfeld, as a one-time gesture to Dada – Dada in the here and now. For years, Schenfeld has produced works in genres touching upon artistic movements that emerged during different periods. In addition to continuing in the tradition of Martha Graham, Schenfeld turned in new directions and among other things integrated into her work elements of the Bauhaus style, dance theater and contemporary dance. In her work, she created her own unique and original language of dance that uses everyday objects and materials appropriated from their classical and common roles and that emphasizes the human body.

In the *Patiti* video work, Schenfeld dresses up simultaneously as different women wearing masks. The masks enhance the characteristics of the theatrical characters, while the dialogue between them takes place in gibberish – whistles, clicks of the tongue, humming, screaming. Their voices cover each other to produce a verbal cacophony – a phonetic song accompanied by the language of dance and dramatic movement expressed by a range of emotions from laughter through sorrow and weeping. This mischievous human creation is simultaneous, ageless and full of rich humoristic content.

The masks in the video are Victorian masks from 1899, taken from the collection of Madame Tussauds. Many from the Dada movement were involved in creating the masks, among them Sophie Taeuber-Arp, who danced and sang in the Cabaret Voltaire wearing masks.

Through her unique language, Schenfeld combines human voices, singing, references to light and shadow, video, music, drawing and use of objects and materials, where each object is a world unto itself. At a certain point, the artist also made the acquaintance of the Bauhaus tradition and began to investigate the works of Oskar Schlemmer. These gave her additional inspiration to use objects and to integrate all the elements together.

Over the years Schenfeld's curiosity was aroused to investigate how the voice gushes forth through the muscles of the throat, the tongue, the stomach, the chest and the Adam's apple. *"I discovered a complete and fascinating world. All the dogs in the neighborhood joined me when I yowled in attempts to discover my voice and I understood I was on the right track. After that I discovered I could follow alphabetical order and the consonants would create a method for me, which I also teach in my workshops. The spontaneous gibberish and the masks help me express every character in a different language"* (Rina Schenfeld).

Like the Dada artists, Schenfeld's need always stemmed from the desire to be mischievous like a child, to rebel against conventions and to find an individual language. Her development ranges from the material and the concrete to the spiritual and the abstract, from the body to the spirit, while she integrates into her work the foundations of dance theater and contemporary dance and refers to various influences both from within and outside the world of art. All of these merge into her individual accomplishments that make her so special.

Curator: Nurit Tal-Tenne