



Yoni Rechter



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Biography

Composer, pianist, singer and arranger, Yoni Rechter has made a major contribution to Israeli music in a career spanning more than 40 years, and is considered among Israel's most important musicians. In the dozens of songs that Yoni composed, he created a wide variety of styles, incorporating numerous influences, from Sixties pop (mostly Beatles) to Jazz, Israeli to classical, east and west, into a fascinating personal statement. Rechter always composes with originality, great sensitivity to text, and for the best performers. He is considered the mark of quality and integrity in Israeli music. Yoni's music is sophisticated and ever unexpected, constantly shifts tones and beats, and his classical piano training is evident. Many of his compositions have become staples of Israeli music, and one has on several occasions been voted the most popular Israeli song of all times.

Yoni has worked closely with many of Israel's top artists, including Arik Einstein, Gidi Gov, and Yehudit Ravitz. Perhaps his two most well-known collaborations are the legendary Kaueret group (a.k.a. Poogy), and Hakeves Ha-16 (The 16th Sheep), released in 1978 and still Israel's most-popular album of children's songs. A sought-after musical director, producer and arranger, Yoni has worked on numerous musicals, films, dance and albums. Rechter has also written classical music, and the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra performed a concert dedicated to his songs and compositions.

Hebrew University, Honoris causa

Born in Tel Aviv, Yoni started playing piano at the age of 7, and decided to be a musician at age 12 when he discovered the Beatles. He studied classical music, played Jazz and composed songs to the lyrics of his classmate. After high school he started studying at the Music Academy, fulfilled his military service as part of a musical group performing for the troops, and continued studying at the Academy, still debating whether to follow his famous architect father's footsteps, or choose a musical career. When Danny Sanderson offered him to join Kaueret (a.k.a. Poogy) in 1972, Yoni said he would only join for six months and then get back to school, but of course he stayed with the legendary group until its breakup in 1976. Shortly after, Yoni was asked by Arik Einstein, The then top Israeli performer, to collaborate with him, a collaboration that produced some of Israel's most beautiful songs, many of which became classics. In 1978 Rechter musically directed, wrote most of the songs and participated in Hakevus Ha-16, which broke ground as a new standard for children's music in Israel, and in the almost 30 years since, is still the Israel's most all-time popular children's album.

Yoni's musical career continued to flourish; over the years he came out with several solo albums, and collaborated with many of Israel's top performers. A sought-after musical director, producer and arranger, Yoni has worked on numerous musicals, films, dance and albums. His impact and influence on Israeli music is immeasurable. Today, Yoni is as productive and creative as ever. His compositions and arrangements have rare musical depth, yet are beautiful and communicative.

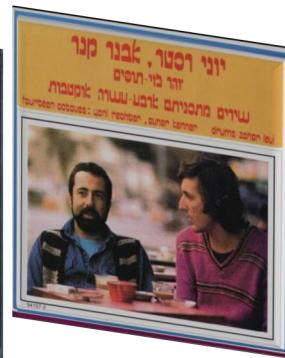
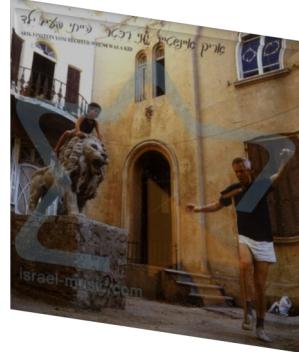
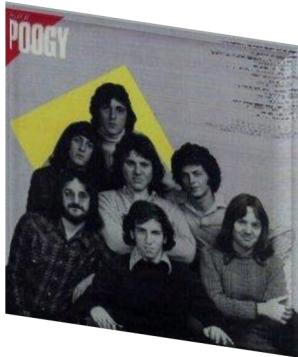
Yoni Rechter was awarded the 2008 EMET Prize, an annual prize given for excellence in professional achievements that have far reaching influence and significant contribution to society. The Prizes are sponsored by the A.M.N. Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Art and Culture in Israel, under the auspices of and in cooperation with the Prime Minister of Israel. In recognition of Yoni Rechter's unique and quality contribution to the shaping of Israeli musical culture, in 2009 the Hebrew University of Jerusalem honored him with the title of Doctor of the Hebrew University, *Honoris causa*

Sample of Line Up



Shir Ahava Standarti	שיר אהבה סטנדרטי
Ad Machar	עד מחר
Lo Makirim	לא מכירים
Shalosh Balayla Ba'ir	שלש בלילה בעיר
Az Ma Im Ben-Adam	از מה אם בנאדם
Kavu HaOrot	כבו האורות
Ma Osot Ha'ayalot	מה עשות האילות
Nama Yafo	נמה יפו
Haretzinut Hi Mimeni Vahal'a	הרצינות היא מימי והלאה
Tel Aviv Bachoref (Ayala)	תל-אביב בחורף (Ayala)
LeOreh Hayam (Ayala)	לאורך הים (Ayala)
Leil Kayitz (Instrumental)	ליל קיץ (אינסטרומנטלי)
Hashir Al Ha'aretz	השיר על הארץ
Shuv Hi Kan	שוב היא כאן
Ten Li Yad	תנ לי יד
Hayalda Hachi Yafa BaGan	הילדה ה כי יפה בגן
Kilafti Tapuz	קילפת תפוז
Shabbat BaBoker/ Gan Sagur	שבת בבוקר- גן סגור
Ha'Ikar Ze Haromantika	העיקר זה הרומנטיקה
Bil'adayich	בלעדיך
Shir Nevuee Cosmi Aliz	שיר נבואי קוימי עלייז
Atur Mitzchech	עטור מצחך
Dmaot Shel Mal'achim	דמויות של מלאכים
Layla Tov	לילה טוב
Ze Kol Ma Sheyesh	זה כל מה שיש

Discography





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Opinion

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Yoni Rechter, Still Profound After All These Years

With the re-issue of a four-record set, it is a joy to experience the brilliance of Rechter's work once again.

Ben Shalev | Nov 15, 2013 1:22 PM



A particularly productive period? A burst of creativity? An artistic and musical flourishing? These words don't begin to describe what happened to the young man whose photograph appears on the cover of this CD set, with a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth. The photo was apparently taken some time in the late 1970s. Yoni Rechter burst forth back then, albeit in a rather restrained explosion, from the back benches of the disbanding Kaveret band. Within three to four years, he began to create, thanks to his brain and his fingers, a breathtakingly beautiful body of work: "Love Has Many Faces," with Arik Einstein in 1976; Gidi Gov's first record (1978); "The Sixteenth Lamb" (also in 1978); the solo album "Intending" (1979), and "Once and Forever" with Yehudit Ravitz (1979).

All these albums are totally familiar and beloved, but during those golden years, Rechter was responsible for another, far less familiar musical endeavor. He wrote the music for the dance performance "A Legend in the Sands," which was staged by the Inbal Dance Theater in 1979. The album featuring the soundtrack of the performance came out in 1980, but it never came out on CD, and therefore disappeared into oblivion. Everyone knows Rechter's "Jaffa is Sleeping," composed for the Inbal performance (and which was included, in a later rendition, in the album "Eretz Shemesh"), as well as another two songs from the dance program – "Yaldei Hahefker" and "Hayeled Nissim" – which are also familiar in their later versions.

But what about the instrumental music that featured most prominently in "A Legend in the Sands?" Occasionally someone wonders about it in one of the Internet forums devoted to Israeli music, but it seems that very few music lovers, including Rechter's most enthusiastic fans, have been able to get hold of it.



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IDF Refines Orders: Soldiers Not to Fire at Fleeing Palestinian Attackers

But what about the instrumental music that featured most prominently in "A Legend in the Sands?" Occasionally someone wonders about it in one of the Internet forums devoted to Israeli music, but it seems that very few music lovers, including Rechter's most enthusiastic fans, have been able to get hold of it.

Now they can do so, and they will be happy (even if they're not surprised) to discover that it is nothing short of a musical treasure: NMC recently issued a set with four of Rechter's recordings as part of its "Original Albums" series. "A Legend in the Sands" is the star of the set, which also includes the jazz album "Right Now – Yoni Rechter Is Playing" (1991), which was also impossible to find for many years, and more accessible albums: "Thoughts and Options" (with Eli Mohar, 1995), and "Another Story" (Rechter's most recent studio album, from 2002).

There are two possible obstacles when it comes to listening to "A Legend in the Sands" today. One is the functionality of the music. It was written as an accompaniment to a dance performance, a ballet suite. Will it maintain its beauty when on its own? The other problem is related to historical and chronological aspects of this work. It was performed in the late 1970s, but was about the early days of Tel Aviv – in other words, 70 years prior to that – and therefore, faces the potential risk of sounding like forced, artificial "period music."

There is also, of course, the 35-year gap between the composition of the music and today, when we are listening to it.

How very wonderful, then, it is to discover that most of these potential obstacles are swept aside by the power of Rechter's rare creative momentum during all those years. The issue of the functionality of the music arises only infrequently, and even then it is not disturbing. And the fact that most of the tracks are short (some of them really brief) deepens the modest beauty of the music. Even "Jaffa Sleeps," a magnificent song that could have been developed and adorned with trills, goes on for less than two minutes. This is not music with pretensions to greatness. Its beauty is profound, although small in dimension – almost neighborly, like Tel Aviv was a century ago.



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As opposed to Rechter's other works of the same period, in which he composed a lovely soundtrack of "his" Tel Aviv – namely, the central and northern parts of the city where he lived and worked in the 1970s (in that sense, his work on Gov's first album stands out) – in "Legend in the Sands," the songwriter was actually asked to create the soundtrack of a different city, which constitutes the core from which "his" Tel Aviv grew, but looks and behaves and sounds entirely different. The result sounds more Oriental, for example. However, Rechter's (fortunately few) attempts to express that essence in "Legend in the Sands" aren't a major, integral part of it. Indeed, in those years, Shlomo Gronich and Shem Tov Levy did a better job with such music.

It is not surprising to discover that the most beautiful instrumental selections on this reissued album are those with generic names of objects, such as "Sea" or "Sands" – as opposed to "Immigrants" or "The Market," which are human and specific. Rechter is at his best in these wonderful impressionistic selections. It is very clear who influenced him (the floating and shimmering sound of Chick Corea and his band Return to Forever, alongside harmonies of Sasha Argov, are evident), but it's even clearer that from these influences, he distills wonderful music that is his alone.

The album ends with a captivating smile: a short musical sketch describing Purim celebrations in Tel Aviv, with three sections. The first, "Masked Ball," is a stormy hora that includes a surprising melodic twist of advanced rock and a flickering of avant-garde improvisation. The second, "Japanese Princess," is based on synthesizer games with sounds that remind one of the 2004 work of brilliant indie musician Adi Gelbart. And the last vignette, "The Clowns," sounds as though one of the people starring in it, who is wearing makeup and a silly hat, is the father of the "lady with the baskets" in the familiar Israeli song by that name, who would board Rechter's musical bus 10 years later.



Ben Shalev
Haaretz Contributor

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