



# Boston's Annual ISRAEL FOLKDANCE FESTIVAL

**Sunday, March 18, 2012 at 3:00 pm *One Show Only!***

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## **ANNOUNCING OUR FESTIVAL HONOREE OF THE YEAR PROGRAM!**

Help us keep our Festival curtains open for decades to come!

### **About the Program**

**Leslie Siegel, 2012 Festival Honoree of the Year**

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### **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

Thank you for your interest in our Festival Honoree of the Year Program! As many of you know, countless details must coalesce, both on the stage and behind the scenes, to make the Israel Folkdance Festival of Boston a success. Our Festival Honoree of the Year Program recognizes individuals who have dedicated significant amounts of time and effort to the Festival. Without their outstanding contributions, the Festival would not be what it is today.

The Festival Honoree of the Year Program also serves another purpose. As we prepare for our 36<sup>th</sup> annual show on Sunday, March 18, 2012, we again face high production costs. Ticket sale revenues will not be enough to keep the Festival running. We hope that you will support our Festival Honoree of the Year Program, not only to recognize a distinguished community leader and contributor to the show, but also to keep the Festival, an institution of Israeli culture and performance art, alive.

We encourage you to read about our 2012 Festival Honoree of the Year, Leslie Siegel, below.

### **LESLIE SIEGEL, 2012 FESTIVAL HONOREE OF THE YEAR**

It is our great privilege to announce that our 2012 Festival Honoree of the Year is Leslie Siegel. For over two decades, Leslie has brought the joy of Israeli dance performance to the Boston Festival stage as a performer, choreographer, teacher and troupe leader. Phyllis Eidelman, one of Leslie's dancers for nearly 20 years, says that "Leslie is a passionate choreographer and dancer. She puts her all into her choreography and expects her dancers to give their all." With her enthusiasm and unique gift for telling stories through dance, Leslie has brought new vision to time-honored traditions, tales and memories, while she builds new memories for dancers and audience members of all ages.



Leslie fell in love with Israeli dancing as a young child in Poughkeepsie, NY. Her synagogue, Temple Beth El, had dancing on Friday nights and as part of its active USY program. Relying on her Israeli and other dance experiences from her childhood, Leslie became an active participant in the Israeli dance sessions at MIT and in Brookline, MA, after she moved to Boston in 1988.

Leslie performed in her first Boston Festival in 1990 as a member of both Hamakor and Ruach Aviv. The next year she became the director/choreographer of Ruach Aviv, a role that she has held since then. With Leslie at the helm, Ruach Aviv has been a Boston Festival favorite for over 20 years. Some of Leslie's most successful pieces are those with Biblical themes.

I really enjoy telling a story with dance. I love when people watch and can understand my interpretation of a story. Sometimes the moves are simpler, sometimes more complex, but the important thing is that the story comes through.

Leslie's Biblical pieces include the stories of Noah, the Golden Calf, Jacob's Brides, Jonah and Ruth. According to Joan Starreveld, Leslie's long-time friend and fellow Ruach Aviv dancer for several years, storytelling through dance is one of Leslie's greatest gifts.

Leslie has always been an enthusiastic dancer, but what is most noteworthy is not only her love of dancing, but her skill at finding great music and creating a thoughtful and high-energy dance to tell a story. Her choreography is well thought out and portrays a story in a way that is both simple and complex simultaneously. She is able to weave music, dance, traditional costumes (which we made ourselves) and props into each piece in a thoughtful way in order to tell a traditional Jewish story.



Ruach Aviv 1991

In addition, Leslie has brought the joy of Israeli dance performance to the next generation. She broke new ground in 2000 by bringing children to the stage with Ruach K'tana. She continued her work with child performers at the Jewish Community Day School with Keshet and Shemesh in 2005, and in 2007 she assumed leadership of Kesheroked, a children's troupe from the Keshet Newton Jewish Community After-School Program in Newton, MA.



Ruach Aviv 1993

Leslie has been teaching Israeli dance to the next generation in the western suburbs of Boston for the past decade. "I love teaching the little ones. They have so much joy and energy, and you can really see that when they dance." Speaking about her young performers, Leslie says, "Not one of my kids gets stage fright. We spend a great deal of time discussing how to be comfortable on stage and what to do if you mess up: smile bigger! I'm so proud of my kids." She also inspired her own children, Adam and Naomi, to become Israeli dance performers. Leslie and her kids have performed together in Ruach Aviv and Sucaria.

Perhaps Leslie's greatest contribution to the Boston Festival is her ability to create a community. Many of the current Ruach Aviv dancers have been with the troupe for years. Giselle (Princz) Wald, a long-time Festival participant and volunteer, says that dancing with Leslie has "been a true life cycle." Leslie's dancers have been together as each of them married, had children, and watched those children grow. Giselle continues:

Leslie is a true leader. People respect her and her dance abilities. Every year I think this is the best choreography and somehow she keeps coming back with another one just as good or better! Her goal from the start is to have fun, while of course looking good too. Leslie also does wonders with the kids' group she brings every year. She brings enthusiasm and joy to her young kids and her adult group.



Ruach Aviv 2008

We hope that you will help us honor Leslie—her talent, passion, enthusiasm and joy —by contributing to the Honoree Program and the continuation of the Boston Festival.

### **MAKING YOUR CONTRIBUTION**

Your contributions to our Festival Honoree of the Year Program will help to ensure that the Festival, about which Leslie and all of us care so passionately, will continue for many years. We know and appreciate that times are tight. We also know that without your donations to the Festival Honoree of the Year Program, we will not be able to continue producing the Festival.

You can make your contributions [here](#), via our website, or by printing out this [donation form](#) and submitting the form and your check via postal mail. Mailing instructions appear on the form itself. Contributions to the Festival Honoree of the Year Program are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

No contribution is too small! We will gratefully acknowledge in our Festival program every donor whose gift we receive by February 17, 2012.

Donation levels:

Chaverim	up to \$35
Mazal	\$36 to \$71
Simcha	\$72 to \$179
Chesed	\$180 to \$359
Hora	\$360 or more

Hora level donors have the option to receive two complimentary tickets to this year's Festival, with the value of the donation diminished by the face value of the tickets, or decline to take the tickets without diminishing the value of the donation.

**Thank you for your contribution!**