

# 60 Years of Israeli Achievements in Culture



## Cinema

### Film: Beaufort (2007)

Director: Yosef Cedar  
Based on Israeli journalist Ron Leshem's bestseller, this film takes place during the country's eventual withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. "Beaufort" portrays the unforgiving reality faced by a group of Israeli soldiers in an isolated outpost at the end of the first Lebanon War. In 2007, it

became the first Israeli film since 1984 to be nominated for an Oscar in the foreign film category.  
**Achievements:**  
• Berlin Film Festival: Silver Bear Award for Best Director  
• Academy Awards: Best Foreign Film nomination

### Film: Walk on Water (*La'lechet Al Ha'maim*) (2004)

Director: Eitan Fox  
One of the most acclaimed Israeli films of all time, "Walk on Water" has had wide international distribution and been screened at prestigious international film festivals around the globe. The film, set between Tel Aviv and Berlin, portrays an

Israeli Mossad agent on an assignment to track down an aging Nazi war criminal, Alfred Himmelman.  
**Achievements:**  
• Berlin Film Festival: Opening film, 2005

### Film: Beyond the Walls (1984)

Director: Uri Barbash  
The story of Jewish and Arab inmates at an Israeli prison who band together to challenge the oppressive prison authority, the film offers a bold critique of Israeli society and government.

**Achievements:**  
• Academy Awards: Best Foreign Film nomination

### Film: Sweet Mud (*Adama Me'shugaat*) (2006)

Director: Dror Shaul  
The story of a *kibbutz* in southern Israel during the 1970s, the film presents a key part of Israeli history through the personal tales of its characters. "Mad Land" has achieved substantial success and been screened at many prestigious international film festivals.

**Achievements:**  
• Sundance Film Festival: Winner of Best International Drama  
• Sundance Film Festival: Nominated for Best Soundtrack and Best Artistic Design

### Actress: Hana Laslo - Free Zone (2004)

Legendary Israeli actress and comedian Hana Laslo is a veteran of local film, television and theater.

**Achievements:**  
• Cannes Film Festival: Best Actor (Female) in a Feature Film for her role in Amos Gitai's

## Television

### Drama Series: In Treatment (*Be'tipul*) (2005)

Director: Chagai Levi  
An Israeli drama series that follows the weekly sessions of a clinical psychologist played by legendary

Israeli actor Asi Dayan. Based on the show's incredible success, HBO purchased the format and developed a version for American television.

## Music

### Hip-Hop Band: Ha'dag Nachash (Snakefish)

A pioneer of the Israeli hip-hop scene, their lyrics cover politics, religion, and ordinary life using brilliant word plays. Theirs is an energy-charged performance backed by a captivating and creative beat. The group's original music appears on the

sound track of Adam Sandler's 2008 film "You Don't Mess with the Zohan."

### The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra is Israel's leading symphony orchestra and dates back to 1936. It enjoys frequent international tours and collaborations with some of the world's greatest

composers and musicians. These have included, among others, Zubin Mehta, Leonard Bernstein and Igor Stravinsky.

### Eurovision Song Contest

Israel's track record of success at the Eurovision Song Contest is a source of national pride.

• *'Chalav U'dvash'* (Milk and Honey) (1979): This Israeli band won Eurovision with its song "Hallelujah".

• Yizhar Cohen (1978): The first Israeli to win at Eurovision, Cohen took first place with the song "Abanibi".

• Dana International (1998): International, an Israeli solo artist won the competition on behalf of her country with her own song, "Diva".

### Violin Virtuoso: Itzhak Perlman

Israeli-born and trained Perlman is undeniably the reigning virtuoso of the violin, enjoying a superstar status rarely afforded a classical musician. Beloved for his charm and humanity as well as his talent, he has come to be recognized by audiences worldwide who respond not only to his flawless technique, but to his irreplaceable joy in making music.

**Achievements:**  
• Grammy Awards: 15-time winner  
• Emmy Awards: Four-time winner



# 60 Years of Israeli Achievements in Culture



Inbal Pinto Dance Company



Inbal Pinto Dance Company



Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company



Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company

## Dance Inbal Pinto Dance Company

**Artistic Directors:** Inbal Pinto and Avshalom Pollak  
Inbal Pinto is an award-winning theatrical dance company that creates unique connections between various kinds of performance arts. The troupe has achieved prominence on both the local and international stage.

**Achievements:**  
• New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award: for "Wrapped"  
• Zagreb Dance Festival: Best Performance Award (Croatia)

## KCDC: Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company

**Artistic Director:** Rami Be'er  
KCDC is a modern dance company that performs the original creations of Artistic Director Rami

Be'er. The company was created in Kibbutz Ga'aton. Over the years, KCDC has developed into one of Israel's leading dance companies and in the process gained international renown.

## Bat Sheva Dance Company

**Artistic Director:** Ohad Naharin  
Bat-Sheva Company is known for its innovative modern dance. The Company's remarkable artistry and original style has given the group an international reputation and also has dramatically influenced the Israeli dance scene. The group performs at some of the world's most prominent cultural centers and events.

**Achievements:**  
• New York Best Award: for *Virus*, by Ohad Naharin  
• New York Best Award: for *Anaphaza*, by Ohad Naharin

## Design Industrial Designer/Architect: Ron Arad

Arad is a world-renowned Israeli industrial designer and architect, known mainly for his designs of furniture and various other products. He is considered one of today's most prominent post-

modern designers. His work is characterized by bent metals and a raw appearance combined with a humorous twist. His work is sold and exhibited in prestigious locations around the globe.

## Fashion Alber Elbaz

Elbaz moved to New York in 1987 and since then has worked with the world's top designers and fashion labels including Geoffrey Beene, Yves Saint-Laurent and Gucci. In 2001 he was appointed artistic director of Lanvin in Paris.

**Achievements:**  
• Council of Fashion Designers of America: International Award (2005)  
• Listed among *Time Magazine's* 100 Most Influential People in the World (2007)  
• France: Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur (2007)

## Visual Arts Photographer: Adi Nes

Israeli photographer Nes exposes rarely seen aspects of Israeli life with a bold and artistic perspective. His projects include a series of works that document the Israel Defense Forces soldiers, a portrait of developing towns and a collection of photographs that visually represents the stories of the Bible. Nes' work is exhibited worldwide.

**Achievements:**  
• Constantiner Prize for Photography  
• Sandra Jacobs' Anglo-Israeli Photographic Awards Project Scholarship  
• Solo Exhibition at the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, California, USA

## Caricature Artist: Chanoch Piven

Chanoch Piven's award-winning works are regularly included in the annuals that celebrate the best in illustration, including *American Illustration* and *Communication Arts*. Piven's work can also be seen in the pages of publications such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times* as well as gracing the cover of the book *200 Best Illustrators Worldwide*.

**Achievements:**  
• Winner of the Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators, New York  
• Winner of the Silver Medal from the American Society of Publication Designers

## Visual Artist: Danny Caravan

An Israeli sculptor, set-designer and artist who has achieved incredible international success by taking Israeli art to the world.

**Achievements:**  
• UNESCO Peace Artist title  
• Winner of the Caesar's Ring Award, Germany  
• Winner of the Caesar Award, Japan

## Architecture Tel Aviv's White City

In 2004, UNESCO declared Tel Aviv the "White City", a World Heritage Site for its treasure of Bauhaus architecture. The city's 4,000 or so buildings in this style represent the world's biggest single collection.

Built between 1931 and 1956, the buildings were designed by immigrant architects trained in Europe who adapted this modern style to suit Tel Aviv's culture and climate.

## Chocolate Max Brenner

The world renowned Max Brenner chocolate empire was established in Israel in 1996 based on a desire to create a new chocolate culture. These gourmet products are stocked by premium retailers worldwide

including Harrods and Dean and DeLuca. Max Brenner Chocolate is now considered to be one of the world's finest chocolate makers.



Adi Nes



Chanoch Piven



Chanoch Piven



Danny Caravan



Tel Aviv's White City

# 60 Years of Israeli Achievements in Culture



## Sport

### Basketball: Maccabi 'Elite' Tel Aviv

Maccabi Elite has been one of Israel's most accomplished sports teams for many years and is also one of the leading basketball teams in Europe.

- Achievements:**
- European Cup for Basketball: Competition winners (1997)
  - Euro league Championships: Competition winners (2004, 2005)

### Judo: Yael Arad

Yael Arad is an Israeli Judo champion and was the first Israeli to win an Olympic medal when she took the Silver medal at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

- Achievements:**
- Barcelona Olympics: Silver medal (1992)
  - Europe Championships: Competition winner (1993)
  - World Championships: Silver medal (1993)

### Disabled Athletes

Israel takes pride in the achievements of its disabled athletes at both the Special Olympics and other international competitions.

- Achievements:**
- First Olympic Medal in basketball, North Carolina (1999)
  - Olympic Gold Medal winner for swimming, won by Elinor Linik-Shatleh (1999)
  - First place winner at European Championship for basketball (2006)

### Windsurfing: Gal Friedman

Gal Friedman is an Olympic medalist in windsurfing. Friedman has twice been world champion and is the first and only Israeli athlete to win an Olympic gold medal.

- Achievements:**
- World Championship: Gold medal for wind surfing (1999)
  - Mistral World Championship: Gold medal (2002)
  - Athens Olympics: Gold medal for wind surfing (2004)

## Theater

### Theater Company: Gesher Theater

Gesher Theater (*Bridge Theater* in English) was founded in Israel in 1991 by Russian Jews. It is one of the world's very few bilingual theaters and combines the tradition of the Russian theater with a contemporary flare. The company has won many

awards and has also represented Israel in numerous festivals, events and venues around the world, including Broadway in New York.

## Theater

### Theater Company: The Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv

Throughout its 65 years of existence, the Cameris 519 productions have attracted more than 20 million spectators, both in Israel and abroad. The Cameri is one of the most famous and important

theaters in the country, known for productions that reflect both the conscience and the mood of the nation.

### Theater Company: Nephesh Theater

Playwrights: Yossi Vassa and Shay Ben-Attar

representations of Ethiopian-Jewish culture worldwide and now a major Israeli cultural institution. The play has won several national children's theater awards and, in May 2008, was featured at the famous Victory Theater on Broadway.

"One of a Kind - And Argay" is a theatrical account of Ethiopian Jewry's 450-mile journey by foot from Africa to Israel. The theater ensemble featured in this production is one of the very few authentic

### Theater Company: Habima

Habima (*The Stage* in English) was first established in Poland before eventually moving to its modern-day home in Israel, where it has become the country's national theater. Through the years, Habima has received support from some of Russia's

leading theatrical figures, including Constantin Stanislavski. Today, Habima is considered by many to be the most important theater in Israel.

## Literature and Poetry

### Author: Shmuel Yosef (Shai) Agnon (1888-1970)

Shai Agnon was one of the central figures in the world of Modern Hebrew fiction. His works deal with the conflict between the modern world and traditional Jewish life and language. At one point, Agnon's fame was such that a complaint to the municipality about disturbing noise near his home resulted in the street being closed. The sign read: "No entry to vehicles, writer at work!"

- Achievements:**
- Nobel Prize for Literature (1966)

### Poet: Yehuda Amichai (1924-2000)

This renowned Israeli writer has published a variety of works, including poetry compilations, novels, stories, children's books and plays. His compositions have been translated into 40 languages.

- Achievements:**
- The New York Lion Literary Award
  - Winner of the Brenner Prize
  - Winner of the Malraux Prize (France)

