

## ABOUT

Karen Barak has been described a “consummate performer,” “chanteuse par excellence,” “dazzling” and “magical.” Her performances are sometimes a cross between the crazy antics of Bette Midler, the crystal purity of Barbra Streisand and the comedy of Allen Sherman! Her shows are educational, inspiring and entertaining, dealing with a variety of interesting subjects.

Received by standing ovations everywhere, don't miss this compelling and moving entertainer. Using her classical musical training as a pianist, combined with her powerful vocals and acting, Karen's performances appeal to all ages!

*It will be a performance to remember!*

## BIO

A classically trained pianist, Karen Barak has performed since the age of 7. At the age of 14, she won the Young Peoples Concerto Competition of Ohio and at the age of 16, studied in Israel at the Tel-Aviv Conservatory of Music, winning the Golda Meir Competition of Israel.

At the age of 21, after graduating college, Karen moved to Israel. She recorded a song called “In Beirut.” It was an overnight sensation as one of the first politically artistic statements of protest during a time of censorship and Karen was catapulted onto the Israeli music scene. The song also achieved national recognition as the first song in English to make it to the Israeli top ten and was declared one of the most influential songs of the 80's in Israel.

During that time, Karen was signed on as one of the first three major artists at Helicon Productions. Helicon changed the face of popular Israeli music and made music history.

Karen worked with some of Israel's most acclaimed talents. In 1989, Karen left the music business and returned to the US where she opened businesses, married, had a child and created a completely different life.

Over the years, Karen remained involved in music. She is the preferred performer by the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest for important dignitary ceremonies such as Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Independence Day. She has performed the National Anthems of the United States and Israel for countless organizations.

Karen has created several solo performances, workshops and custom concerts. She has been invited by a myriad of organizations both faith based and otherwise including the Friends of the Israeli Defense Forces, the Jewish United Fund, the Jewish National Fund, Synagogues, Churches, Senior Centers, Retirement Homes, Public Libraries and both public and private schools to share her amazing voice, musical compositions and piano virtuosity.

Karen's greatest pride and joy is her son.

**FOR PRICING AND INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL !**

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## PERFORMANCES

### “THE GIFT AND THE CURSE” - A MUSICAL SOJOURN OF MY LIFE



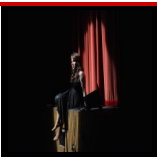
This spellbinding show tells Karen's personal story. As a second & third generation Holocaust survivor, she shares her families' story and how she transformed her legacy of loss through stories, pictures and music. She honors both survivors and "Righteous Ones"—Non-Jews who helped. This powerful piece is uplifting and educational. In these days of intolerance, the message of resilience and remembrance stresses the importance of human connection. All Ages and religions.

### “HOLIDAY HILARITY!”



Did you know that a lot of Christmas music was written by Jewish composers? Come see "Tante Kreindl" and celebrate these contributions and others to modern American music. All ages and religions.

### “STREISAND, SINATRA AND STANDARDS”



Nostalgic show featuring Streisand classics and other loved Standards! All ages and religions.

### “TO ISRAEL AND BACK...”



A concert about life, love and the Land of Israel—Decisions, dilemmas and dreams as Karen made her way from the USA to Israel and back. Enjoy this affirmation of faith and belief that every event and decision, even those we don't understand are always for the good. Sing along or clap with lively medleys of Israeli, Chassidic, Hebrew and English songs!

### “VIRTUOSO—THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CLARA SCHUMANN”



Presented by Karen Barak and "WomanLore, bringing to life influential women in history", this two-women show complete with set and costumes, brings Clara Schumann, the greatest female pianist of the 19th century, to life with her remarkable story and artistry. All ages and religions.

## WORKSHOPS

### “CULTIVATE & CREATE—LYRIC WRITING”



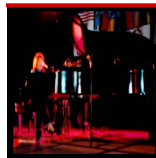
Use your creativity to express yourself by writing lyrics! This one-hour workshop teaches you how to get the right words out of your heart, mind and spirit and onto the page! All ages.

### “CULTIVATE & CREATE—MUSIC CREATION”



Learn to play piano even if you have never played before! This one-hour workshop teaches you that if you can count, you can play! All ages.

### “IT'S SO CLASSIC!”



Karen takes us on an explorative journey through the eras of classical music from Renaissance to Modern and how each evolved through stories and plays musical pieces played on the piano! All Ages.

### “BROADWAY BABY”



A nostalgic journey of great American Standards through stories and songs from the 1940's to the 1980's. All ages and religions.

### “MS. CHAVA NAGILA—TOUR GUIDE”



Meet Chava — our hilarious tour guide through Christian, Jewish and Catholic sites of the Holy Land! All ages and religions.

## CUSTOM CONCERTS & MUSIC

### TRIBUTES, SPECIAL EVENTS, GIFTS



From a public rally, to organizational fundraisers and special events like wedding, family dinners or personal tributes, I create personalized songs and experiences that are moving and impactful.

## ANTHEMS & MASTER OF CEREMONIES

### AVAILABLE FOR ANY OCCASION



I can sing any National Anthem for your event either with or without music. I have been the Master of Ceremonies for a variety of events and am available to create excitement at yours!





**22.7.16**

**שוכבת על הכרז**  
הדס בן אהרון מציגה במסגרת הרצאות את מצבת הדיסקים החדשה "אביבית במועצה" / נכד אלזבלטר

**22**  
כחול מורכב על מלחמה, אף אחד לא מדבר על הרגע שהיא עושה / וכמה אוד

**30**  
המושר ליוו מוסקוביץ' מתרחק ממוסמית אביב על הדרך קונסט אל כולם / דוד ריאו בנצח

**טורים**

**8** שמינה סלקטיבית בן שלו

**6** בנות מנוצרות צפי סטר

**9** מרחיבת מדוברת אינס איליאס

**10** רלבנט איל שינא ביאנו

**ביקורת**

**40** תערוכה גליה ייב

**44** טרט אורי קליין

**46** עברי בן שלום

**48** פופ אבי מיטלמן

**50** קלאסי אמרי מנדל

**52** אוכל

**58** חסודה שינא נתן

**צג**

**10** תשבי הניו; סדוקו אמנון בירמן

**כך החמצתי את לבנון**

קרן ברק הייתה מעין "אנון ויט ונוד" ולא שאפילו ה"רלווי" אחד שלו, "In Beirut" 1985-1986, נעמלה לו הרי מזה עשר כמעט שנים רבות אחרי שהתחנקה מחדרת ותקליטים הישראליות וזכה את התאריך מנסה תחנות להיות את הקריירה שנקטעה

מחוללת יצירה המסמלת ב"ש ריאל" בעיני ישראלים רבים, היא ברק הייתה מעין "אנון ויט ונוד" ולא שאפילו ה"רלווי" אחד שלו, "In Beirut" 1985-1986, נעמלה לו הרי מזה עשר כמעט שנים רבות אחרי שהתחנקה מחדרת ותקליטים הישראליות וזכה את התאריך מנסה תחנות להיות את הקריירה שנקטעה

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# 30 years after the hit "In Beirut," Karen Barak tries again

She was a "One Hit Wonder" But even this one major hit of hers was never associated with her. Now, many years after she released herself from Israeli record companies and left the country, Karen Barak is breathing life into an interrupted career

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Bottom of Form

07/21/2016 12:26

[Ben Shalev](#) Haaretz Newspaper



Karen Barak, 1984.

photo: Levin Parent

Singer Karen Barak performed at a Memorial Day ceremony by the Israeli Consulate in Chicago, a few years ago, the city where she lives. Barak has a strong voice, very expressive, soulful. After the service was over, a man approached her, introduced himself as a General in the Israeli Defense Forces, and said to her: "I lost a lot of soldiers and friends in my years in the army, but I was never able to cry for them. "Your voice made me cry for the first time". He thanked her and they embraced, both crying. "It was", said Barak, "one of those moments when I thought: 'OK, so maybe I didn't become the star I could have been or should have been. So what. There are more important things. "

The General, whose name Barak cannot remember, probably didn't know that more than thirty years before he heard her, Barak sang one of the most beautiful antiwar songs that came out of Israeli pop out in the eighties (which is still relevant today and still one of the greatest songs from the Synth-Pop Israeli music genre of the 80's released from Israel ever). It was called "In Beirut". "In Beirut life goes on," Barak sang this key phrase in three separate parts, 'In Beirut - life - goes on. " This great song is still preserved in memory even after decades, and you can bet that a lot of Israelis aged 40 and older, who listened to the radio at the time when "In Beirut" was released in 1985, still remember it well, and can probably even hum the tune from the words quoted above. But it is doubtful if more than a handful of people know that the song's singer is named Karen Barak, and judging by my memory of the song, it is doubtful whether most people who remember the song know that the song came out of Israel – and is an Israeli song. I was certain until a few weeks ago that this song came out of America or England.

If Barak had a stable musical career here in Israel, "In Beirut" would have been, unquestionably, identified with her, would have been performed at her concerts and would have had a longer radio life. But although Barak is an excellent singer and good songwriter, and was signed to "Helicon" records, she was not able to build a career here, and left the country after a few years of unsuccessful attempts to get on the map of Israeli music, and was, in fact, completely forgotten. If an alternative version of the concept of "One hit wonder" existed, where the singer sings a hit song (if you can call "In Beirut" that kind of hit) and is not even associated with it, this definition may be suitable for Barak.

But behind "One Hit Wonders", regardless of which version, there are, not only, interesting stories hiding but also good music and this Barak's case. After years of solo performances focused on community events, Barak's musical creations are now receiving greater exposure. Her new music stars in "Aubergine", a show of Israeli dance troupe, the "Angela Dance" company as well as other music which recently went online Barak's website, where you can hear some of the songs she wrote and sang over the years. This is a good time to tell her unknown story, ranging from missed opportunities to successes and spread out along the axis from Ohio, Tel Aviv, Chicago, and of course Beirut.



Karen Barak today. Half-here, Half there

Photo: Oran Hassidim

Barak was born in the early sixties in Ohio to parents who were Holocaust survivors that lived for a while in Israel and left for the United States. She began playing the piano at age seven and dedicated her childhood and youth to playing. It was a combination of choice and necessity. On the one hand, she says that her father woke her every morning at 5am to practice before school while at the same time she says: "my parents had emotional difficulties and this obviously affected my soul. I did not feel complete. I used music to stay sane. " At the age of 16 was sent to live with relatives in Israel. She studied at the Conservatory in Tel Aviv, but even though she won a prestigious piano competition that year, she decided to retire from classical piano. She returned to the United States, studied communications, and after she graduated with a degree, she returned to Israel with the intention to settle here and work in the profession acquired. "I did not know that I was in a country with roughly one radio station," she laughs.

She did not think of herself primarily as a singer, but when she saw a classified ad in the newspaper, "Singers Wanted," she went to the audition. She does not remember where it was held or who auditioned her, only that she sang "Lu Yehi", the Israeli "Let it be" and that several producers were interested and even waved contracts in front of her, which she did not sign because hardly knew Hebrew. One of the producers took her to Amdan Studios owned by Amnon Yalon and Danny Granot in Masaryk Square in Tel Aviv, and that's where she ended up singing "In Beirut". Granot, in the seventies, a successful singer (among his hits: ["Mr. Narkis"](#) and ["love life"](#) ) who recorded the superb album "Songs By Rachel" with Hava Alberstein, left the rat race of pop in the early eighties and focused on studio work at Amdan which he founded with Yalon, recently discharged from the army. They created mostly jingles, but did not entirely give up on art. They wrote "In Beirut" together. The text, written by a Yalon, describes the bleeding city of Beirut in 1983 from the perspective of an Israeli soldier. In the first verse, he sees a car bomb attack (it was shortly after the attacks bases of the multinational force in Beirut that killed hundreds of people). And in the second verse, he enters a cafe in a demolished city where the customers inside are waiting to see what the Israeli soldier will do. "I don't have the answers", he writes in the song, "but they always seem to lose ".



The single cover. Played incessantly

When asked if "In Beirut" was a protest song, Yalon says: "It was in the early eighties, in these times, a song was not written if it wasn't a protest, not in my book anyway." Even though Yalon was not in Lebanon, he knew the situation he described the song. "Most of my military service was in the territories," he says. "I was in Rafiah, Gaza, Jenin. What I saw there mingled with what I saw on TV from Lebanon".

Danny Granot says the sentence "In Beirut Life Goes On" was his idea (Yalon doesn't remember it that way, "but it was so long ago I could be wrong"). And what about the song's melody and magnificent production, both stylish and minimalist, based on the synthesized sound that dominated global pop at the time? Granot refused to make it a big deal. "The heart of the song is the lyrics, the music took it further, everything flowed naturally without too much comparison of who we were "like". Amnon brought the drum machine, Adi Degani played keyboards. It all meshed well. We created the thing itself, we didn't think too much – we created". Granot adds that he does not consider "In Beirut," a pop song. "There is an infinite rhythm, endless," he says. "I would not describe it as pop." Yalon and Granot thought that "In Beirut" had a chance in the international market, and for that they needed a good singer without an Israeli accent. Karen Barak, then aged 21, was the ideal choice. "Karen is an amazing performer. She's got "it"," says Granot. According to Barak, she recorded the song in one take. "I was not familiar with the situation in Lebanon," she says, "but I knew about the attacks, I knew that there was an attack that killed 241 Americans (this is the number of American troops killed in a truck bomb explosion in Beirut's airport in October 1983), and like every song I sing, I put myself into the story, I put myself into the character's shoes."

The first media personality who was truly enthusiastic about "In Beirut" was, not surprisingly, Abie Nathan from The Voice of Peace, an offshore radio station that served the Middle East for 20 years from the former Dutch cargo vessel *MV Peace* anchored outside of Tel Aviv. The song was played incessantly on the Voice of Peace. Israel's Army Radio, Galei Tzahal, also frequently broadcast it. Barak says the because of the great interest by the Israeli press, people approached her in the street after seeing her picture in the paper. "But at that time, I was hardly paying my bills," she adds. "It was a bizarre situation. I had no money. And all this while, the song was becoming a smash hit. "



## KAREN BARAK IN BEIRUT

### IN BEIRUT LIFE GOES ON

I sat at my post  
As the truck approached  
The driver looked ahead  
His eyelids were closed  
He was tied to the wheel  
As he crunched through the m  
He was tied to the wheel  
When the truck exploded.

In Beirut life goes on  
In Beirut life goes on

In a local cafe  
As the locals play checkers  
I step into the room  
And they wait for my move.  
I don't have the answer  
To the growing frustration,  
They search for solutions  
But they always seem to lose.

In Beirut life goes on  
In Beirut life goes on

Salina leaves to sea  
People just wait  
Buildings crumble to dust  
In Beirut.

Lyrics by Karen Barak

Music by Roni Zuckerman  
Produced by Roni Zuckerman  
Recorded at the studio of Roni Zuckerman  
Beirut, Lebanon

Barak continued to work with Granot and Yalon, and said Granot says he still has recordings by her from that period. "She is a phenomenal singer," says Granot. At that time, says Barak, "the possibility was raised that I could be signed by CBS". Ronnie Braun, vice president of CBS, wanted to sign her. "I really liked "In Beirut, and Karen had a very special voice and an interesting, challenging personality," says Braun. But CBS's management refused to sign her. According to Barak, the reason they refused was her identification with a political song (Braun remembers only that management did not want to sign Barak. "they did not want Rami and Rita either," he adds). "I was devastated," says Barak. "It was ridiculous. I didn't even write the song. I basically only sang it. "

After a few weeks, the way was paved for Barak to sign with CBS but she had already signed a contract with Granot and Yalon. Ronnie Braun did not give up. He told Barak that he was about to open a new record label called Helicon, and according to her, he going to establish the company on three singers Rita, Rami Kleinstein and her. Barak was convinced, "I felt my future with him,". She says that Granot and Yalon were angry. "When there's nest with birds that live together and create together, you need to nurture it, not tear it apart," says Granot.

Contrary to the Barak's hope, her signing at Helicon did not place her on the path of success. Most of the new company's resources were directed toward Rita's career. Barak wrote for other artists, mainly English versions of existing songs, but work on her own material was stuck. The right match for Barak in terms of musical production could not be found. She worked with several producers but with no results. According to Braun, the songs she wrote were not interesting or exciting enough to him.

. Finally, she started working with Tamir Kaliski and Yoad Nevo. "After five years with Helicon, Ronnie told me, 'Now it's your turn,' she says ( "I felt it coming," confirms Braun). "But I did not feel comfortable with the demos that we did. I felt that they had taken my very personal songs and made them very commercial. I felt terrible. I was a girl of 26, with a troubled childhood, with confidence that maybe looked good on the outside but was shaken on the inside, without work, without enough money that the company backing me was supposed to pay. I was even after a divorce. I felt that if I had to stand on a stage and really believe in those songs as they were produced, I was in psychological danger. I know that sounds dramatic, but that's how I felt. " Then she met a new partner and told Braun that she was going with him for a few weeks in the United States to introduce him to her parents. "Ronnie said, 'You have 30 days, Don't you dare not come back,'". "He knew what he was saying," says Barak. "I already did it once. And I did it again. The guy with whom I went to America wanted to stay, and we had an opportunity to open a coffee shop, and I had to choose. I could not imagine my life without this guy and I decided to leave everything behind. Some people say I was faithful to my music and other people say I was stupid. I myself do not know. Sometimes I think I was stupid. So the first album might not have been to my taste, but by the third album, I could have done what I wanted. On the other hand, I would not have my son. "

For 15 years in the US she was completely cut off from the music. Around the age of 40, she returned to play and write. One of the first songs she wrote then, she considers her best, is called "Half here, Half there." "When you leave your home country and live in Israel, you are never the same but you are also never completely Israeli, and when you live outside of Israel you are also never completely part of that country either - you are never not Israeli," she says." there are many such people, who live with their hearts split in two ". In recent years, Barak created several solo performances, one-woman shows, she calls them. One of the most recent , "The Gift and The Curse", tells of her life as a second and third generation Holocaust survivor through music, pictures and song. More recently, she and her music starred on the Israeli stage with "Aubergine" with the Angela Dance Company. The collaboration with choreographer Miriam Engel, became a close friendship and joint creation. Working in this new genre of stage and space allowed Barak to create outside of the boundaries of commercial song form. One of the pieces written for "Aubergine" lasts nine minutes and includes her playing a piece by Rachmaninoff in the middle. Another section, "Alone", is based entirely on three syllables - Uh, ,אָלנו. "This is what comes out of peoples' mouths when they get traumatic news," said Barak, who was informed five years ago that she had cancer. "Without this collaboration, I would not have had the opportunity to express these feelings, this grief, without words- it is outside of commercial music. Miriam (Engel, choreographer) and Sergey (Shamota, Engel's partner, who founded you the" Angela Dance Company") were so excited by the piece, they chose it as their solo. What I wrote in response to trauma they dance as a song of love. " Alongside the music and dance performances, Barack dreams of producing an album, her first album, which will include songs written over the years but never recorded properly. Its 16 songs, in demo versions, are on her website [www.karenberkbarak.com](http://www.karenberkbarak.com) [the site raised a few days ago](#) . "I'd appreciate it if people would listen to the songs," said Barak, "and if there are those who can and want to contribute so that I can record them properly, that would be great. But I'm not naive. I don't have dreams of success or profit. What I'm trying to do is to record the songs the way I always imagined them and to share them with the world, or whoever wants to listen".