

Newsletter

Ashtar celebrates Jerusalem as Capital City of Arab Culture 2009.

Ashtar theatre produced a special theatre performance, "I am Jerusalem," to celebrate Jerusalem as the Capital City of Arab Culture 2009. The Ashtar team went to Jordan in February 2009 to join the author and director



of the play, Nasser Omar, in order to rehearse the work. The team rehearsed for one and a half months in the Balad Theatre in Amman, where the first three shows were performed before opening in the Royal Cultural Centre.

A group of Jordanian artists joined the play and it was produced under the umbrella of Jerusalem the Capital City of Arab Culture 2009, with its support as well as support from the Dutch Representative and the Danish Cultural Organization.

The play opened in Palestine among the activities of the Manara Festival in Ramallah, then was shown in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and the work also took part in the first festival of the Arab Theatre Organization in May in Cairo.

The play also represented Palestine in "Carthage Theatre Days" in Tunis, in November 2009, with several additional performances in the West Bank and Galilee.

Second International Theatre of the Oppressed Festival

The second round of the Theatre of the Oppressed Festival took place the year 2009 under the title of "Raise your Voice ... Preserve your Rights" and was gifted to "Jerusalem,

Capital City of Arab Culture" and to all Jerusalemites, who have to keep their voices raised to the world so that they do not disappear inside the sphere forced on them by the occupation.



Six countries, in addition to Palestine, presented during April and May 09, 45 theatre performances through a unified theatrical form, which does not only reach out to people and deal with their issues but opens the door wide to them to display these issues and have their say on them, in search of a solution not merely a release, and to search for a better reality, which is the final aim of art, chiefly the art of theatre.

Ashtar moves Forum Theatre to television

For the first time, Ashtar Theatre moved the idea of Forum Theatre to television, attempting to reach out with Palestinian social issues to every Palestinian home in order to facilitate live participation in solving them.

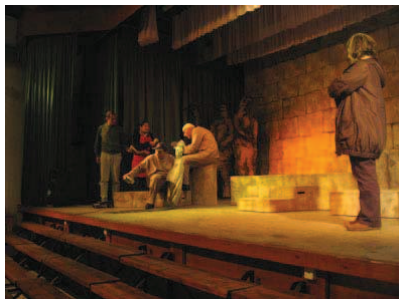


The theatre partnered with the Ma'an News Network which produced the Forum play "The Story of Mona" for television and screened it, following the screenings with discussions involving decision makers and women in influential positions, on the subjects

addressed which deal with the issue of early marriage and “honor” crimes. This work was shown with the discussions on all local stations, and received notable attention. The experiment will continue with other theatre performances in the second half of 2010.

Touring the forum play “Story of Said Al Masoud”

The play was produced, using the Forum Theatre technique, at the start of 2008. It deals with the problem of widespread drug use among youth in Palestine. The play was shown more than 85 times to date, the latest of which was a group of 32 performances, with the support of UNICEF, to school students from all villages and schools in Hebron, Nablus, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah.



Drama Trainers in Clubs

Ashtar led a program to qualify drama trainers for the benefit of a group of youth clubs run by the organizations Ma’an and Tamer, in the villages of Hebron, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nablus and Gaza. 73 trainees took part in this program and were trained by the training staff of Ashtar. Each group trained on the basic techniques of Forum Theatre for 80 hours. These trainees then transferred their skills to the students in the clubs, with whom they produced Forum Theatre scenes that were performed to the local public in the various Palestinian areas.

“Last Supper in Palestine” takes part in Algiers, the Capital

Ashtar Theatre took part in the professional Theatre Festival in Algiers in its round “Jerusalem the Capital City of Arab Culture”

with the play “Last Supper in Palestine”, which was shown in the Metropol Theatre and received great liking and large audiences. In this round, the Artistic Director of Ashtar Theatre, Iman Aoun, was honored for her long theatre work in Palestine.



Ashtar Theatre’s Artistic Director takes part in the International Culture Conference in Johannesburg

The artist Iman Aoun took part in the fourth round of the International Culture and Arts Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa in autumn with two working papers: the first on “Culture and politics in Palestine and the concept of conscripting culture”, which she participated in at the start of the conference, and the second, presented on the second day, on “The role of the theatre in cultural and intellectual development in Palestine.” More than 400 cultural activists attended the conference from various countries around the world, among them workers in official and community organizations.

Ashtar Theatre transfers the experience of the Theatre of the Oppressed to Yemen

The IRD organization contracted Ashtar Theatre to extend its experience in the Forum Theatre to Yemen. A group of actors in the “Hudaida” province will be trained on using the Theatre of the Oppressed methodology to spread theatre techniques as a tool for expression and change, in the local society, and to reach marginalized areas in Yemen. The training program spans a whole year during 2010.

⊗ "Gaza Mono-Logues"

Ashtar Theatre launched an international art initiative entitled "Gaza Mono-Logues" to reach out with the voices of the besieged Gaza children to the world. 36 children from Gaza will take part, who have been the target of direct and indirect aggression during the war on Gaza. The training is led by Ashtar's trainer in Gaza, Ali Abu Yassine, accompanied by the psychologist Nadel Sha'ath. In partnership with Ashtar Theatre in this project is the Qattan Centre for the Child and a large group of worldwide theatres in Arab and foreign countries. This project spans a year in 2010.

⊗ Translation into Arabic of Augusto Boal's "Legislative Theatre"



Continuing with its series of publications on the Theatre of the Oppressed, the Ashtar Centre for Theatre of the Oppressed in Palestine translated Augusto Boal's book, "Legislative

Theatre" into Arabic. The book is currently in print and 4000 copies will be circulated to four Arab countries with the help and support of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This book is dedicated to the spirit of Augusto Boal, founder of the Theatre of the Oppressed technique, who passed away in 2009.

⊗ A year full of movement and colored with new, lively faces

A new group of employees, in addition to current staff, joined Ashtar Theatre in 2009 to enrich the organization and propel it forward:

Edward Muallem, General Manager
Iman Aoun, Artistic Director
Fida Jiryis, Executive Director
Abdallah Musleh, Financial Specialist
Olivia Magnan, "Gaza Mono-Logues" project coordinator
Rabie Abu Dayya, Administrative Assistant
Mohammed Eid, Actor and Trainer
Raed El Ayasa, Actor and Trainer
Riham Isac, Actress
Athar El Hajj, Actress
Rasha Jahshan, Actress
Mohammed Ali, Technician
Atallah Tarazi, Technical Specialist
Nathalie Kashou, Theatre of the Oppressed Festival Coordinator, 2009
Ali Abu Yassine, Trainer for UNICEF program in Gaza
Hassan Daraghmeh, Coordinator of UNICEF project, north and middle areas, and Actor
Akram Obeid, Coordinator of UNICEF program in Gaza
Rami Abu Laban, Coordinator of UNICEF program in Hebron
Kefah Ayyad, Housekeeper

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