

News from **The Freedom Theatre**

November 2010

This autumn The Freedom Theatre has been bustling with activity. Here are some of the highlights:

New Acting School Class

The Acting School has recently welcomed its second class of 10 new students, including 2 girls. Acting School Director Nabeel Al Raei is very excited: "These new students don't have any background in theatre so they are open and thirsty to learn! And each student has his or her own way of learning, which poses an interesting challenge for us as teachers - we can learn from these differences as we try to bring everyone together in a group of equals."



Gaza Monologues in Jenin

At 7pm on October 17, The Freedom Theatre presented its production of *Gaza Monologues*, directed by Nabeel Al Raei and featuring five young acting students from the Jenin area. The project was initiated by Ashtar Theatre in Ramallah which organised a workshop to adapt monologues written by children in Gaza. Presentations of the monologues were performed at the same hour in more than 56 countries around the world.

New Production - Alice in Wonderland

Rehearsals are poised to begin for The Freedom Theatre Acting School's winter production of *Alice in Wonderland*, directed by Juliano Mer Khamis. The production team includes volunteers from Germany, Portugal, Sweden and Great Britain. This will be our most technically advanced production to date, and the entire theatre compound will be transformed into Wonderland. The production will feature both our first and second year Acting School students and will open in mid-January.



Tour in the US

The Freedom Theatre's own Miriam Mahmoud and Mustafa Staiti have had a successful fundraising and advocacy tour in the United States, hosted and coordinated by The Friends of The Jenin Freedom Theatre in New York. Among the events were a symposium featuring Udi Aloni, Slavoj Zizek and Alain Badiou, an Arab Comedy Night, and a screening of The Freedom Theatre's Student Short Films. Mustafa and Miriam also went on a campus road trip and appeared on Democracy Now. President of the Friends association, Dinky Romilly, said that it was "altogether a delightful visit".

Theatre Construction Progresses...

We're continuing to work on the construction of *The New Freedom Theatre* in Jenin City. The exterior structure of the theatre is completed, and we plan to begin construction of the roof in the coming weeks. The current opening date is scheduled for the Spring of 2011.

New York Theater Workshop

The Freedom Theatre has begun an exciting partnership with *New York Theatre Workshop*. Director Stephanie Gilman who teaches physical theatre is the first of several guest artists to volunteer at the theatre. Stephanie explains the importance of this new collaboration: "New York Theatre Workshop (NYTW) wants to send out the best and most qualified teachers. New York is very privileged with regards to the arts and the goal is to share, since Palestine has been so isolated. We admire The Freedom Theatre's work as an organization resisting with culture. We believe in supporting the struggle here to end the occupation and want to help in any way we can."

To learn more about Stephanie's experience in Jenin, you can visit her blog at:
<http://monthinjenin.blogspot.com>