



# ASHTAR THEATRE

## ANNUAL REPORT

2013

*Ramallah, January 2014*



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## ASHTAR THEATRE

ASHTAR for Theatre Productions & Training is a non-governmental theatre organization. ASHTAR Theatre was founded in 1991 by two Palestinian actors, Edward Muallem and Iman Aoun, who worked in the Palestinian theatre since 1977.

ASHTAR began its work in Jerusalem as the first drama training program in Palestine targeting children and youth. The institution soon became a dynamic theatre with a local flavor and international orientation, whose objective is to spread creativity and commitment to change through a unique mix of training and acting programs and professional theatre performances.

ASHTAR Theatre works in three main streams (below) and tries to reach the Palestinian audience in all its localities in East Jerusalem, Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. **“If a marginalized audience is unable to come to our theatre in Ramallah, we take our stage and play to the audience.”**

ASHTAR Theatre specializes in the technique of the **Interactive-Forum Theatre**, which aims to spread effective dialogue and a commitment to change within society. This theatre form pushes the audience to interact with the actors on stage about important social and political issues, transforming the audience from the character of receiver to a role as participator. Using the Forum Theatre methodology, ASHTAR Theatre stands as a lively agent of change in Palestine, brings theatre to all segments of Palestinian society, and engages communities in democratic dialogue on daily issues they face and social taboos. **The program creates a platform for social and cultural change, and gives a voice to the voiceless through its focus on underrepresented groups such as women and youth.**

ASHTAR Theatre annually produces **joint international theatrical production** with theatres and theatre professionals from different countries, presenting new and varied theatre forms in Palestine to enhance the professional development of the actors and the general audience of Palestinian theatre.

ASHTAR Theatre conducts **intensive training programs for youth** aged 12 – 22, all year round, from which many theatrical performances result. These programs offer youth essential skills that reach beyond acting and contribute to raising their level of self-awareness, enhancing their self-confidence and giving them leadership skills and dynamic ways of communicating and working in a group.

ASHTAR Theatre has won many international theatre awards, toured worldwide, and presented its works in numerous international theatre festivals.

## Executive Summary:

ASHTAR Theatre has been able to achieve its 2013 plan efficiently and effectively. The 4th Theatre of the Oppressed Festival was implemented during the spring focusing on the rights of children and women. The Festival was held for the first time in Gaza with the participation of two community groups that have been trained by ASHTAR Theatre. In the West Bank a workshop on "Rainbow of Desire" was implemented by the Theatre of the Oppressed Company of Paris. Furthermore, two professional theatre groups participated along with four community theatre groups.

The professional Forum Theatre play "Station" which has been produced in 2012, and addresses the post Oslo Accord political situation was performed in different areas of the West Bank.

Within the Forum Theatre Program also ASHTAR Theatre has reached youth from the left political parties and formed 2 community Forum Theatre groups from Nablus area and Bethlehem area and trained them on Forum Theatre Techniques. The groups produced two Forum Theatre plays. The first play focused on the problem of unemployment that university graduates face and the issue of "wasta". The second play addresses corruption.

ASHTAR Theatre produced the professional play "Journey of Rida" which represented the suffering of the Arab citizen in his/her search for answers and solutions through the social, religious and official corridors. "Journey of Rida" is an artistic adventure that establishes a political and popular theatre, since it enriches the script with a critique dimension that could not be attained without the esthetic spectacular dimension. The play was performed in WB and Jaffa. Also the play participated in Carthage International Theatre Festival in Tunisia. The play achieved great success and was received with enthusiasm and appreciation by the audience.

The professional play "Richard II" which mixes all the ingredients of a timeless drama: intrigue, murder and betrayal. This play was produced to participate in the Cultural Olympics in London on the side of the athletic Olympics in 2012, was performed in Dubai as part of its tour in Arab and European countries.

Furthermore, The making of this play "Richard II" was produced as a documentary and won the prize of "Best Documentary Film" at Cairo TV Festival. The director was Darwish Abu Al-Rish and the producer was the Palestinian TV.

Also with the professional theatre the play "48 Minutes for Palestine" produced in 2010, which is a compelling drama without words, and explores the relationship between a man and a woman who do not co-exist on an equal basis. It explores inequality in gender relations and is an attempt to talk about historical events and contemporary issues, through images and without words. The play toured in Europe reaching Norway and the U.K.

Within the Drama Training Program, ASHTAR completed its Drama Training for Teachers, which was funded by the Welfare Association and in cooperation with Yes Theatre, which



was launched in September 2011 for training UNRWA teachers on drama skills. This project was finalized in March 2013. Intensive training was given for 66 teachers from 41 schools.

Eight governorates were reached; Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah, Jericho, Nablus, Tulkarem, Qalqilia, and Jenin.

Also within the Drama Training Program ASHTAR embarked on expanding its target area besides Ramallah and Gaza to reach more youth in the West Bank. Consequently four groups are currently trained on drama, which is a three-year program reaching youth from Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Jericho. The 4 groups involve 120 boys and girls who through drama acquire increased life skills in the area of self-expression and solving their problems, leadership, interpersonal skills, and increased cultural awareness through drama performances.

In the summer of 2013, ASHTAR Theatre re-produced The Gaza Mono-logues, which was produced in 2010 post the Israeli assault on Gaza to express their feelings, hopes and dreams before, after, and during the war on Gaza in 2008-2009. The Mono-logues were produced in two different forms; one with 8 graduates of its Drama Training Program and was presented in Ramallah, and the second with four of these graduates. The production of four participated in the theatre festival (IMPACT 13) in Kitchener – Canada last September. The play was presented six times; four during the festival, one in Waterloo High School and the last was at Brock University in Saint Catherine.

The preparation for “Karama Human Rights Film Festival” in its first edition in Palestine. Karama Human Rights Film Festival in Palestine is an extension of Karama Jordan that has started in December 2010. Palestine was always a target for Ma3mal 612 Think Factory and the festival was not realized until the partnership between Ma3mal 612 and ASHTAR Theatre was established in 2013.

The Festival which was scheduled for December, got postponed to January 2014, due to weather conditions and will take place in 4 different areas in Palestine (Ramallah, Jerusalem, Gaza and Nablus), during the festival 19 films (Palestinian, Arab and international) which tackle human rights issues in its different aspects will be screened.

ASHTAR's Artistic Director, Iman Aoun, won the fellowship of CEC ArtsLink for 2013, alongside 17 other artists from Eastern Europe and the Arab World. Ms. Aoun spent five weeks in Espanola and Santa Fe - New Mexico with Moving Arts Espanola and DNA Works. During which she gave a number of public talks and Theatre of the Oppressed workshops at schools, universities and for professional youth workers in different cities. She also visited and conducted workshops in other states and universities; UCONN, CUNNY, Davidson and Williams.

# ASHTAR ACTIVITIES IN 2013

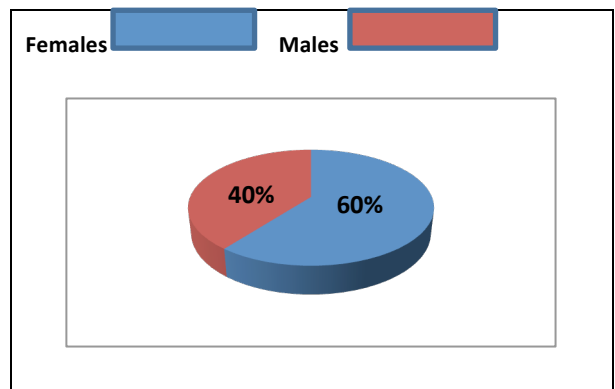
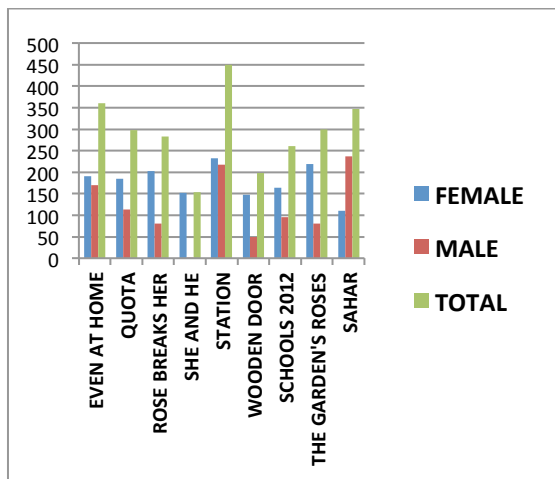
## First: Theatre of the Oppressed Program

### 1) Theatre of the Oppressed Festival Forth Season:

The fourth edition of the Theater of the Oppressed Festival "Break your Silence... Share your Stories" was held from the 20th of April till the 11th of May 2013. The Festival included 9 theatre groups; 2 professional theatre groups, 6 community theatre groups, and 1 international professional theatre group. The Festival was supported by Sida- as part of Performing Arts Network Program, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, A. M. Qattan Foundation, and Anna Lindh Foundation.



The Festival achieved 31 shows for 9 different plays in various areas in the West Bank and Gaza, (Ramallah, Jerusalem Hebron, Jenin, Nablus and Gaza). The Festival reached a total audience of 2,650. Also, during the Festivals' period, a "Rainbow of Desire" workshop was held by the Theater of the Oppressed Company - Paris, at ASHTAR Theater. For the first time Gaza participated in this Festival with two community groups. One international play from Norway was performed in the West Bank in cooperation with two of ASHTAR's Drama students.



## **Forum Plays took part in the TO Festival:**

### **1. "She and He"**

**Trainer and Director: Edward Muallem- ASHTAR Theatre**

"She and He" is a Forum Theatre play that traces the lives of two students from a Palestinian refugee camp in the suburbs of Jerusalem since their birth until today.

"She" a fifteen years old brilliant student and she is studying in a mixed school. In the mornings she goes to school, in the afternoons she helps her mother with housework.

By the end of the school year she has to face the fact that her brother refuses her to complete her studies and achieve her ambitions. She is trying to defend her point of view, but the customs and traditions make her totally alone against the entire community.

"He" is a student in the same school. After school he goes straight to work in order to financially support his family, as his father is unemployed. We follow him at school and at home, and thus see the difficult moments that he faces.



### **2. "Wooden Door"**

**Trainer and Director: Mohammad Eid – ASHTAR Theatre**



"Wooden Door" a Forum Theatre play that tackles the issue of domestic violence, performed by ASHTAR's second year students and directed by Mohammad Eid, continued its tour after it was performed three times at the 4<sup>th</sup> Theatre of The Oppressed Festival" with the support of UNICEF.

Furthermore, three other performances were conducted; two in October, the first one at the Ramallah Cultural Palace during the International Day of Youth for a large audience of school students, and the second one was at Ramallah Girls Secondary School. Then, in December it was performed during the International Day of Children's Rights in Jericho; attended by Japan Deputy Representative, UNICEF representatives, Jericho Governor and many key figures and a large number of high school students. Total audience reached 1200 persons.

### 3. "Schools 2012"

**Trainer and Director: Ali Abu Yaseen – ASHTAR Theatre - Gaza**

We gathered stories and wrote a play entitled "Schools 2012", but during our research we faced several problems stemming from different causes; including the difficulty in our school curriculum, low salaries, teaching methodology, and the whole educational system that requires reconsideration. Also, we have to address the inherited customs and traditions, as well as the generation-gap. This play aims to reveal many questions and find solutions and answers.



The Teacher: "Whose fault is it? Is it theirs or ours? Is it the Ministry's fault? Is it the system's fault? Is the fault related to the country in general? Maybe we haven't been raised up properly, or maybe they haven't been raised up properly... Definitely something is wrong!"

### 4. "Roses of Gardens"

**Trainer and Director: Ali Abu Yaseen – ASHTAR Theatre - Gaza**

The occupation, politics, customs and traditions, joblessness, and the whole system in general: Who is responsible of the abject poverty within most of Gazan Families?

Is it due to the above-mentioned causes or others?

In the past, in spite of the fact that people were much poorer, we did not witness the youngsters beg and selling different items in the streets.



Today, many of our children roam in the streets; begging and selling. Who is responsible of this situation? What are the solutions for saving our children?

## 5. “Quota”

**Trainer and director: Mohammad Eid – ASHTAR Theatre**

As a part of Anna Lindh Foundation’s program of activating the role of youth, ASHTAR Theatre has trained and produced two forum theater plays in cooperation with the Palestinian Working Women Society for Development and Hiwar Foundation for Development, targeting university students from the north, centre, and south of West Bank.



“Quota”, was produced with a community group from Nablus. This play discusses the role of women in local council’s elections, how women are discriminated against. The PLO has written down quota’s principle in 2005 and since then, women have been treated as a number and not as real active members in the majority of the communities in Palestine.

## 6. “Even at Home”

**Trainer and director: Iman Aoun- ASHTAR Theatre**

“Even at Home!” was produced in Ramallah, as part of Anna Lindh foundation’s program of activating the role of youth, with the participation of university students from Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Hebron.. “Even at Home!” is a legislative theatre play that discusses the issue of “Rape of Maharem” (no mutual consent of having sexual contact with a blood relative such as a parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild) and the current gap between the two terms in the applied laws.

The play talks about Miriam, a young girl who is 17 years old, in her last year at school. Miriam gets raped by her older brother and after the family knows about the incident, the father and the rapist brother decide to kill her. The play also sheds a light on how the law treats such cases. The work has been based on a study of the penal code and therefore it managed to provoke the audience to suggest solutions and new suggestions to draft new legislations.





## 7. "STATION"

**Directed by: Iman Aoun - ASHTAT Theatre**

This play which was produced in 2012 in partnership with Rosa Luxemburg Foundation is about a train-construction team that experiences abrupt changes in its environment, which causes them to get stuck in an endless cycle of rebuilding, but without completing their ultimate goal, building a complete railway for the train.

The play does not attempt to mirror the political situation, but rather it attempts

to capture the **nuances** of the reality that has been enforced on us. The play does not offer any solutions to the current "crisis in strategy/ crisis in leadership", but rather our hope is that Station will inspire a discussion between the audience/ actors/ director and become a means for people to suggest potential solutions.



The Forum Theatre play "Station" was performed 5 times during the 4th Theatre of the Oppressed Festival reaching Hebron, Ramallah, Jenin, and Nablus. The audiences reached were a total of 450 persons.

## 8) "Rose Breaks her Silence"

**Trainer and Director: Edward Muallem – ASHTAR Theatre**

A team of actors and filmmakers are preparing for the making of a documentary film about a girl called Rose. Rose is a sixteen years old girl and member of a family of four people. Rose is the victim of multiple forms of oppression during a short period of time, which makes her think about

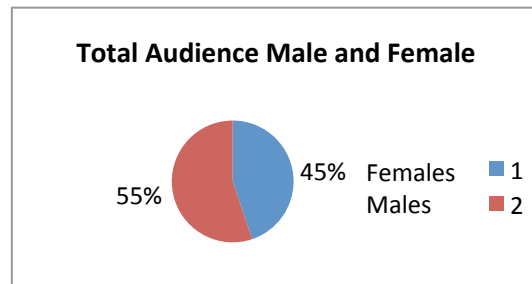


ending her tragic life. Rose is now living in a rehabilitation center. Since Rose is not the first person in the city to go through this tragic and painful experience, she decided to break her silence. An artistic team decides to make a documentary film that portrays some of the most difficult moments in her life. During the show, they ask the audience to intervene and suggest solutions that might help Rose and other youth who are going through similar experiences.

This play is a co-production between ASHTAR Theatre and Charlottenlund Tideregaeede Skole from Trondheim- Norway.

## II) **Leadership for Socio-Political Change**

ASHTAR Theatre embarked on this project in June 2013. Left-wing political parties were informed about the project during 2012, when research for ASHTAR's Forum Theatre play "Station" and high-ranking officials from the parties were interviewed. The team succeeded in training 9 youth in Bethlehem Community Group and 10 youth from Nablus Community Group from different left-wing parties mainly (The Palestinian People's party, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Palestinian Democratic Union).



The training sessions for the two groups were on the Theatre of the Oppressed; the main emphasis was on Forum Theatre techniques. Introductory training on drama skills was given as well as the basic techniques of acting on stage as most of them never acted on stage before. Then, the groups were trained to work in a team, which is essential in theatre work. After introducing the basic acting techniques and team spirit, the groups were introduced to the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) idea and methods. Following that they were introduced to Forum Theatre techniques and in-depth training in Forum Theatre. During the course of the training the groups were asked to start researching for stories that they could build scenes and stories from. After selecting the stories, the process of improvisation both community groups started to build up their play.

The training on Forum Theatre techniques was for a total of 90 hours. Two plays were produced: "People's Wealth" by The Bethlehem community group and "I Don't Know Where to Start" by the Nablus community group. The two plays were performed 11 times reaching a total audience of 995. The issues raised were of high relevance and importance both to the youth sector and the public at large; unemployment of university graduates, nepotism, corruption, and political fragmentation.



## 1) The "People's Wealth"

**Trainer and Director: Mohammad Eid - ASHTAR Theatre**

Through the course of building this project "The Hotel", I've learned a lot about life. This project is similar to our lives; one day it's up and one day it's down. With a blink of an eye, caused by unintelligent selfish decisions, under the so called "everybody's interest", our lives are pulled down. With a group of crucial decisions that are called "appropriate", our lives may fall to pieces and "The Hotel" flourishes. That's why "The Hotel" has been brought down and rebuilt for four times. This project became a bowl of mixed salad served in celebrations and parties.



We Palestinians are very well known for our voluntary and teamwork, our love to help each other, and to work in teams!!!! We tolerate everybody for everybody's interest!!! That's why we are honored to invite everyone from all over the world, to give us their constructive opinions about the construction of our "Hotel"!!!

## 2) I Don't Know Where to Start!"

**Trainer and Director: Edward Muallem - ASHTR theatre**

"Azmi" is a university graduate in the field of Media and Journalism. Since his graduation, he is looking for a job in vain. Because of that, he spends most of his time at home, or volunteering in one of the local NGOs.

"Azmi" rejects any job offer, which has nothing to do with his studies. He carries progressive ideas, and believes in voluntary work. For him voluntary work is very important for building a democratic Palestinian society capable of state building. This renders "Azmi" in a critical situation with his family members and friends alike.



## Second: Professional Theatre

### 1) “Journey of Rida” Production



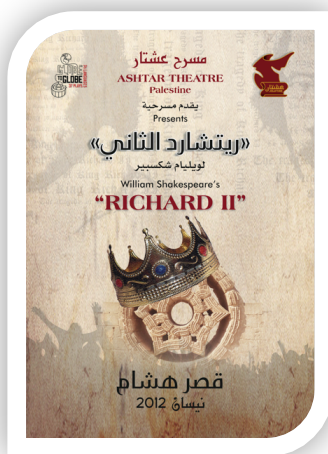
Directed by Mohammad Eid, and funded by the Palestinian Cultural Fund and Sida - as part of Performing Arts Network Program. “Journey of Rida” is an adaptation of Sa’ad Allah Wannous’ “Journey of Handallah.” The production has joined a six young theater graduates from different theatres in the West Bank, who excelled in representing the suffering

of the Arab citizen in his/her search for answers and solutions through the social, religious and official corridors. Over one and a half hour play with one piece of set, six actors embodied the stage with their actions and their active and strong images.

The play was performed 4 times in different cities in Palestine between April and June 2013. Later with a grant from Qattan Foundation it was performed in Nablus, Hebron, and Abu Dies University.

“Journey of Rida” was also performed in Jaffa and participated in Carthage International Theatre Festival in Tunisia. The play was well received and the actors where enthusiastically applauded. In total the play was performed between Palestine and Tunisia, and the total audience reach up to 1,665 (899 women – 766 men).

### 2) “Richard II” in Dubai



Shakespeare’s play “**Richard II**”, was produced by ASHTAR Theatre in Arabic language. This play included several actors from different major theatres around the West Bank. ASHTAR Theatre invited **Conall Morison** an Irish director to direct “Richard II”, and Rajha Shakiry from London to make the costumes of the play. The play was produced to participate in the Cultural Olympics in London on the side of the athletic Olympics. Initially “Richard II” was premiered at Hisham Palace in Jericho in April 2012, it was then performed at the Globe Theatre in London and in Oxford.

“Richard II” was a major success for ASHTAR Theatre on various levels; artistically it was a strong and attractive play, loved by the audience and fully covered by the press.

The fact that ASHTAR Theatre was able to bring together a group of actors to work together for the first time from around the WB different theatres tightened the relations of the professional theatre makers in Palestine.



After the big success of the play in London ASHTAR theatre was invited to perform the play at Madinat Jumeirah Theatre during the Dubai Shopping Festival in January 2013. The play was very well received by the audience and the press. The tour was organized by Art for All. So far this play has been performed in Palestine, England and Dubai.

### 3) A documentary about the making of “Richard II”:



The making of "Richard II" was produced as a documentary film, and won the prize of "best documentary film" at Cairo TV Festival. The film was directed by Darwish Abu Al Rish and produced by Palestinian TV. The director joined the group and filmed the whole process of the working on the

translation of the text into Arabic, the rehearsals, and the local and international tour of the play. As a result he made the documentary film, which was called “The making of Richard II in Palestine”.

### 4) “48 Minutes for Palestine” - in London

In the first quarter of 2010, ASHTAR Theatre produced the play: “48 Minutes for Palestine”, directed by Mojisola Adebayo from the U.K. The production was funded by the British Council in Palestine, and A.M. Qattan foundation in Ramallah.

After the opening in Ramallah, Palestine in May 2010, the play toured locally in Palestine, with 25 shows in the West Bank, then internationally in Valencia, Spain and the IDEA conference in Brazil, South Africa, Sweden, Norway, Jordan and finally it was performed in the UK.

“48 Minutes for Palestine” is a compelling drama without words, told totally through physical action and original background music, which explores the relationship between a man and a woman who do not co-exist on an equal basis. It explores inequality in gender relations and is an attempt to talk about historical events and contemporary issues, through images and without



words. The play was published in a new drama anthology from Methuen under the title of “Theatre in Pieces: Experimental Theatre from 1968-2010.”

Supported by the British Council both in Palestine and UK, the play “48 Minutes for Palestine” was performed three times at Rich Mix Theatre in London, attended by a large number of audience who praised the show and loved the acting. The play will be touring again in Norway and England in spring 2014.

#### **London Tour Press:**

“The two actors are always in contact, feeding each other at every single moment. Even when the centre of attention is on only one of them, a quick glance confirms: the other is still present, reacting, maintaining the high energy of the performance. Good interaction aside, they have both created believable, engaging characters.”

*(“What’s Been Seen?” reviews, Rich Mix Theatre, September 2013)*



## Third: Drama Training Program

### 1) Drama Teachers' Training program (DTT)

ASHTAR Theatre with funding from Welfare Association and in cooperation with Yes Theatre embarked on this project in September 2011 for training UNRWA teachers on drama skills. This project was finalized in March 2013. Intensive training was given for 66 teachers from 41 schools. Eight governorates were reached; Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah, Jericho, Nablus, Toulkarem, Qalqilia, and Jenin.



The goal of the project was to improve the students' physical, mental, and psychological abilities for educational and creative skills development. The project targeted students through the training of teachers and developed their skills to use drama as a subject and tool inside the classroom. Teachers also formed drama clubs in these schools with 608 students (419 females and 189 males).



The produced plays by the drama clubs were performed in a two-week theatre festival. The festival included 613 male and female students and it took place in four areas in the West Bank (Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron). The festival coroneted the 18 month training program for training UNRWA teachers and produced 44 plays which were presented during the festival from 41 UNRWA Schools.

### 2) Drama Clubs:

#### 1) First, Second and Third year clubs.

In partnership with UNICEF, ASHTAR Theatre expanded its Drama Training Program for the youth in 2013, to cover alongside Ramallah and Gaza, the cities of Jerusalem and Jericho. The number of 1st year students reached 75 boys and girls, and the total number of students in the program both in W.B. and Gaza are 120. This training program runs over 3 years and provides the students with acting techniques and self-development skills.

This program guarantees the possibility of its graduates to apply for the international theatre schools and provides them with self-confidence, ignites their latent talents, and deepens their capabilities and communication skills.

The 2nd year group "A" in Ramallah are working on "Alice... where have you been?" based on "Alice in Wonderland" that will be ready by the end of February 2014. While group "B" are working on scenes from Shakespeare, Chekhov and Brecht.



In Gaza the 3rd year group is working on the play "Sons of Hercules" by Sophocles that will be presented in February 2014, as their graduation project. While the 1st year student are preparing for a theatre-sport performances in Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Jericho.

## II) A Theatre Summer Camp – July 2013

In partnership by UNICEF, ASHTAR Theatre trainers Edward Muallem, Iman Aoun, Muhammad Eid and Emile Saba in Ramallah with Ali Abu Yaseen in Gaza, have met with 26 students from the 1st and 2nd year drama/theatre groups for 10 days and trained them on puppets creating and mask making utilizing them in performances. The students in Ramallah worked on two plays: "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Kalila Wa Dumna"; while in Gaza they presented scenes from Shakespeare, Chekhov and Harold Pinter.



## III) "The Gaza Monologues"

"Gaza Mono-Logues" project which involved 55 youngsters (60% females) from which 33 were from Gaza and 22 from Ramallah in intensive drama training. "The Gaza Monologues" project, which has initially worked with 33 female and male youth in Gaza to express their feelings, hopes and dreams before, after, and during the war on Gaza in 2008-2009.

The Gaza Mono-logues that are personal stories of a group of children from Gaza were sent out to the world and performed simultaneously on October 17th 2010 by over 1500 youngsters in more than 50 cities in 36 countries all over the world. The week before the

"International Day of Solidarity with the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People" on November 29th 2010, the Gaza Mono-logues reached the harbor of the UN headquarters in New York and were performed twice in its venues. Ever since, ASHTAR Theatre and its partners and friends world-wide have continued to re-perform the Gaza Mono-logues and new participants and theatres are always welcome to join our global initiative.



In summer 2013, ASHTAR re-produced The Gaza Mono-logues in two different forms; one with 8 graduates of its Drama Training Programme and the second with four of these graduates. The group of four participated in the theatre festival (IMPACT 13) in Kitchener – Canada last September. Emile Saba, Rana Burqan, Yazan Makhoul, and Jenin Mari. They presented six performances of the play; four during the festival, one in Waterloo High School and the last at Brock University in Saint Catherine. The performances were very well received and the actors were enthusiastically applauded. During the festival, the Artistic Director, Iman Aoun, also participated in a panel on theatre and occupation.



In October, the piece was performed again in Palestine as part of the PAN Joint Cultural Event at the University of Khadoury in Tulkarem.

#### **IV) Theatre training with intellectually disabled students**

Commissioned by the Swedish Organization for Individual Relief (SOIR), Edward Muallem and Munira Zureiqi, started training a group of 16 intellectually disabled youth and 4 teachers from a number of specialized participating schools, on Theatre of the Oppressed techniques and will be producing a forum play with them that will raise the rights of the disabled children especially their right for educational integration.





## Other activities:

### 1) Karama Human Rights Film Festival – 1st edition in Palestine

With financial support from the UNDP, Movies that Matter, and A. M. Qattan Foundation, “Karama Human Rights Film Festival” in its first edition in Palestine will be implemented between the 14th and the 19th of January 2014. The festival was supposed to be held in December 2013, but it got postponed due to weather conditions. The Festival will take place in 4 different areas in Palestine (Ramallah, Jerusalem, Gaza and Nablus), during the Festival 19 films (Palestinian, Arab and international) which tackle human rights issues in its different aspects will be screened.

Karama Human Rights Film Festival in Palestine is an extension of Karama Jordan that has started in December 2010. Palestine was always a target for Ma3mal 612 Think Factory and the festival was not realized until the partnership between Ma3mal 612 and ASHTAR Theatre was established in 2013.



### 2) Training the teachers of special education

With the support of Swedish Organization for Individual Relief, Iman Aoun the Artistic Director of ASHTAR Theatre has supervised and trained 82 teachers from the Ministry of Education. The program focused on using drama games into the classroom sessions for children with special needs, in order to help in activating their comprehension abilities and to optimize their involvement and concentration. The program consisted of 20 training hours for each group, with 3 groups over a period of 3 weeks in Ramallah, Nablus and Halhul.

### 3) Elections of a New Board of Directors

ASHTAR’s General Assembly held its annual meeting during the month of May. The annual reports were presented to the existing board members and all the attendees. Following that, a new Board of Directors was elected. The new Board of Directors consists from: Mr. Wafa Mar'i – Chairperson, Mr. Fayz Dmiri – Deputy, Mr. Omar Al-Jalad – Treasurer, Mr. Yousef Aoun - General Secretary. Members are: Mrs. Diana Safyeh, Mrs. Maha Khoury Meo, and Mr. Ziad Jayousy.

#### 4) Artistic Director Iman Aoun in USA

ASHTAR's Artistic Director, Iman Aoun, won the fellowship of CEC ArtsLink for 2013, alongside 17 other artists from Eastern Europe and the Arab World. Iman Aoun, has spent five weeks in Espanola and Santa Fe - New Mexico with Moving Arts Espanola and DNA Works. During which she gave a number of public talks, and Theatre of the Oppressed workshops at schools, universities and for professional youth workers in different cities.



She also visited and conducted workshops in other states and universities; UCONN, CUNNY, Davidson and Williams.

#### Artistic plan for 2014

**Ashtar's artistic plan for 2014 includes the following programs and activities, pending the availability of funding for them:**

- Touring with the professional play "Sinbad and the Monster".
- Organizing the Second Edition of "ASHTAR Theatre International Youth Festival in June.
- International tours of the play: "48 Minutes for Palestine" in Europe.
- International tours of the Gaza Mono-logues in Germany and Austria, and a local tour.
- Drama Training for Youth in Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Jericho.
- Drama Teachers Training in 32 public schools in the West Bank.
- The production of a Forum Theatre play on agricultural development.
- The presentation of the produced plays under the Drama Training Program for Youth in West Bank and Gaza.
- Co-production of a professional play with the British theater "Border Crossings" and presentations.
- Producing a Street theatre Play in Partnership with Goethe institute.
- Leading a workshop in Tromso - Norway with the participation of students from Ramallah and Tromso.

## ASHTAR team in 2013

- **Full time employees:**

1. Edward Muallem – General Director
2. Iman Aoun – Artistic Director
3. Rula Giacaman – Executive Director
4. Nael Bisharia – Accountant
5. Mohammad Eid – Actor and Trainer
6. Emile Saba – Projects Coordinator and actor
7. Lamis Shalaldeh – Administrative Assistant
8. Mohammad Ali – Technician

- **Part time employees:**

1. Rana Burqan – Trainer

- **ASHTAR's Gaza Team:**

1. Wael Afana – Projects Coordinator
2. Ali Abu Yaseen – Trainer

- **ASHTAR Theatre Board Members:**

1. Wafa Marai – President
2. Fayez Al-Dumeiri – Secretary
3. Omar Al-Jallad – Treasurer
4. Dina Safia – Member
5. Maha Mayo – Member
6. Yousef Aoun – Member
7. Ziad Jayousi – Member

- **Networks:**

- Palestinian Performing Arts Network (PAN),
- Anna Lindh foundation

## **PARTNERS and DONORS**

### **ASHTAR Main Partners in 2013**

1. British Council- East Jerusalem
2. British Council - London
3. UNRWA- East Jerusalem
4. UNICEF
5. Theatre of the Oppressed Centre- Paris
6. French Consulate – East Jerusalem
7. Municipality of Ramallah
8. Municipality of Hebron
9. Municipality of Nablus
10. Tomorrow’s Youth Organization – Nablus
11. Al-Quds Open university – Hebron and Jericho
12. Bir Zait University
13. Al- Tira Collage- Ramallah
14. Technical Collage - Ramallah
15. Ministry of Education- Jericho
16. Palestinian Medical Relief Society – Ramallah
17. Yabous Cultural centre- Jerusalem
18. PPAN - Palestinian Performing Arts Network
19. Palestine TV
20. Women Working Society for Development
21. Women’s Centre- Shu’afat camp
22. Hiwar Organization
23. Al Nashir Advertising- Ramallah
24. Ramallah Private schools

### **ASHTAR's Main Donors in 2013**

- ✓ UNICEF
- ✓ Rosa Luxemburg
- ✓ Sida - Swedish International Development Agency
- ✓ Anna Lindh Foundation
- ✓ Swedish Organization for Individual Relief
- ✓ UNDP
- ✓ Welfare Association
- ✓ M. Qattan Foundation
- ✓ British Council
- ✓ Emerezian Est. Jerusalem



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