

PRIDE

FOR

JUSTICE

FREEDOM

BUS



NINE DAYS THROUGH OCCUPIED PALESTINE

www.freedombus.ps

#FreedomBus

Welcome to the Freedom Bus Ride for Justice

For the next nine days you'll be travelling with us across the West Bank of Occupied Palestine. Included in this booklet is everything you'll need to know for the journey - events itinerary, introductions to the cast and crew, summaries of communities we'll be visiting, and a brief summary of seminars and speakers. But before we get to that, you'd probably like to know a little about us.

The Freedom Bus

From September 23rd to October 1st, people from around the world will join Palestinian artists in a solidarity ride through the West Bank, taking part in interactive theatre and music performances that give voice to life under occupation.

The Freedom Bus project of The Freedom Theatre uses interactive theatre and cultural activism to bear witness, to raise awareness and to create alliances in occupied Palestine. In practice, this will offer a unique opportunity to activists, artists, bloggers, photographers and many others to come together and establish grassroots contact with communities engaged in day to day struggle to survive and resist occupation.

About the Organizers

The Freedom Bus is coordinated by The Freedom Theatre, a Palestinian theatre and multi-media centre based in Jenin Refugee Camp, occupied Palestine. A range of other Palestinian community based organizations and associations are involved in the design, development and delivery of the Freedom Bus initiative.

The Freedom Theatre

The Freedom Theatre is a community-based cultural centre in Jenin Refugee Camp in the northern part of the occupied West Bank. Convinced that the arts have a crucial role to play in building a free and healthy society, The Freedom Theatre offers a unique programme of activities in performing arts and multimedia, including acting, psychodrama, playback theatre, stage design, filmmaking, photography and creative writing.

While emphasising professionalism and innovation, the aim of The Freedom Theatre is also to empower youth and women in the community and to explore the potential of arts as an important catalyst for social change.

Through its work, The Freedom Theatre aims to:

- Raise the quality of performing and visual arts in the area;
- Offer a space in which children and youth can act, create and express themselves freely and equally, imagine new realities and challenge existing social and cultural barriers;
- Empower the young generation to use the arts to promote positive change in their community;
- Break the cultural isolation that separates Jenin from the wider Palestinian and global communities.



ITINERARY

Saturday September 22 - Day 0

1:30pm - 3:00pm - Welcome and Participant Orientation
3:00pm - 5:00pm - Screening Roadmap to Apartheid followed by Q&A
7:30pm - 9:00pm - Playback Performance

Sunday, September 23rd - Day 1

9:30am - 10:30am - Overview of the Freedom Theatre
10:30am - 12:00pm - Guided visit of Jenin Refugee Camp
1:00pm - 1:30pm - Travel to Faquaa
1:30pm - 2:30pm - Guided Visit of Faquaa
3:00pm - 4:30pm - Playback Performance Faquaa
5:00pm - 5:30pm - Travel to Jenin
7:30pm - 9:30pm - Opening night performance of "The Caretaker"

Monday, September 24th - Day 2

8am - 9am - Travel to Nablus
9:30am - 12:00pm - Seminar on Refugees and the Right of Return, An-Najah University
1:00pm - 2:00pm - Guided visit of Old City Nablus
3:00pm - 4:30pm - Playback Performance
5:00pm - 6:00pm Travel to Nabi Saleh
7:30pm - 9:00pm - Playback Performance

Tuesday, September 25th - Day 3

8:00am - 9:00am - Travel to Ramallah
9:50am - 12:00pm - Seminar in Kamal Naser Hall, Birzeit University
2:30pm - 4:00pm - Playback Theatre with Gaza via video link at Jawwal Building, Al-Bireh
7:30pm - 9:00pm - Poetry and and Music Night featuring Awlad Al-Balad Band, Charlie Rishmawi, Tunes for Peace

Wednesday, September 26th - Day 4

8:00am - 9:00am - Travel to Abu Dis
9:00am - 10:30am - Tour of Prisoner Museum
10:30am - 12:00 pm - Playback Theatre - Main Stage, Al-Quds University
1:00pm - 6:00pm - Free Afternoon
7:30pm - 8:00pm - Talk by Abir Kopty, Aida Camp
8:00pm - 9:30pm - Playback Performance, Theme: Stories from Palestinians in Israel/Palestine '48

Thursday, September 27th - Day 5

8:30am - 9:30am - Travel to Beit Omar
9:30am - 10:30am - Talk with Younes Arar
10:30 - 12:00pm - Grape Harvest & Picnic
12:00pm - 1:00pm - Travel to Bethlehem
1:50pm - 4:00pm - Seminar at Furno Hall, Bethlehem University
7:00pm - 7:30pm - Travel to Aida Camp
7:30pm - 9:00pm - Playback Performance

Friday, September 28th - Day 6

8:00am - 11:00am - Free Morning
11:30am - 12:00pm - Travel to Al-Walajah
12:00pm - 1:00pm Lunch in Al-Walajah
1:30pm - 2:30pm - Procession from village mosque to Omar's House
2:30pm - 3:00pm - Playback Performance
3:00pm - 4:30pm - Musical Performance featuring Dar Qandeel, Talha Wise Wolf, Palestine Street, United Struggle Project
6:15pm - 7:30pm Travel to Khan Al Ahmar
7:30pm - 9:00pm Playback Performance

Saturday, September 29th - Day 7

8:00am - 9:00am - Travel to Hebron
9:30am - 12:00pm - Guided visit of Hebron Old City
1:50pm - 4:00pm - Seminar in Auditorium Number 3, Yasser Arafat Building, Hebron University
7:30pm - 9:00pm - Playback Performance

Sunday, September 30th - Day 8

8:00am - 1:30pm - Surprise event in Hebron
1:50pm - 4:00pm - Seminar in Auditorium Number 3, Yasser Arafat Building, Hebron University
6:30pm - 7:30pm - Travel to Attuwani
7:30pm - 9:30pm - Playback Performance

Saturday, October 1st - Day 9

9:30am - 10:00am - Travel to AIC Cafe
10:00am - 12:30pm - Action planning for participants
1:30pm - 2:30pm - Evaluation with participants
3:00pm - 4:30pm - Playback Performance for Participants
7:30pm - 8:00pm - Travel to Beit Sahour
8:00pm - 10:00pm - Freedom Ride Concert



WEST BANK, PALESTINE



Community Profiles

A brief collection of community profiles and key terms to help you understand the communities along the way.

Al Walajah

Residing in the lush Crimesan Valley, Al Walaja was once the largest village in the West Bank. Atop hillsides full of olive groves and fertile land, the closeness to ample natural resources and proximity to both Jerusalem and Bethlehem has made it a prime area for Israeli land confiscation. The original village was destroyed completely in the 1948 exodus and the village residents were forced to relocate temporarily to a neighbouring hilltop. In 1949 the armistice again took 70 per cent of the village's land. Eighteen years later, in 1967, another half of the land was annexed, taking with it valuable farm lands and water supplies. In 2010, the plans for the Separation Wall had been finalized, annexing further tracts of land from the village. That same year, village land containing many olive groves, was confiscated and declared an Israeli National Park.

Local hero Omar Hajajlah has fought a long and difficult battle with the Israeli government, refusing to surrender his home to demolition. In 2010 the high court of Israel ruled to allow engineers to surround his family home with a four meter high electric fence, effectively cutting off the Hajajlah family from the rest of the world. The only exit, ruled again only months later by a military tribunal, was a 5 million shekel (\$1.3 million) underground tunnel that would connect the family to Al-Walajah.

Beit Omar

Beit Omar is a small town of about 14,000 people located halfway between Bethlehem and Hebron. The Israeli Occupation Forces react to the town's weekly demonstrations against land confiscation with military violence, ongoing night raids, arrests of youth, and unlawful detainment without charges. Farmers from Beit Omar also have their crops regularly destroyed by Settlers from nearby colonies Gush Etzion and Karmi Zur. Beit Omar has responded to Israeli occupation, military aggression and settler violence with a well organized, unarmed popular struggle movement.



Attuwani

At-Tuwani is a village without running water. Despite years of fighting for access to an otherwise ample supply for Jewish settlements only 500 meters away, the people of At-Tuwani have been unable to successfully petition Israel to allow for water access. Existing in Area C, they are under the jurisdiction of the Israeli government, and are thereby barred from constructing anything without permission from Israeli Civil Administration.

Home of the only school in the area, At-Tuwani has children commuting from neighbouring villages Tuba and Maghaer Al Abeed. In 2004 an armed guard from the IDF was issued to walk these children every day to school, due to the extreme violence against them from settlers in nearby Havat Maon.

Along with the school, mosque and homes in the area, the nearest clinic in At-Tuwani is scheduled for demolition. Built and funded by a European NGO in 2005, this clinic struggled to get past the many demolition orders the Civic Administration issued against it at its founding. The clinic houses a media lab for youth as well as a museum commemorating notable non-violent resistance in the region. Present once weekly, the doctor at the clinic faces huge demand from villages south of At-Tuwani. The next nearest hospital is ten kilometers away, separated by a military checkpoint. Most residents who would use this hospital are denied the proper travel documents to enable them passage through the checkpoint

Faquaa

A village most notably affected by the water apartheid system of Israel, Faquaa is a town of 4,000, located in the Jenin Valley. Since a barbed wire barrier was built beside Faquaa Israel has taken control of the water supply located below the village. To add insult to injury, since 2005 those same springs have been left unused by Israelis, having evacuated the settlements Kadin and Ganim, but maintaining them for future Israeli use.

Currently, Faquaa has permission from the Israeli Civil Administration to access 300,000 litres of water per day through Mekorot, the corporation responsible for most of Israel's water supply. With a filling station 6 km away from the village, this still greatly limited water comes at a high price. Divided evenly between the villagers, only 75 litres a day per person is allotted, well below the 100 litre minimum put forward by the World Health Organization. On top of this, the villagers have to hire expensive tankers to collect the water from the filling station and transport it back to the village.

Gaza

The Gaza Strip has long been the most well-known part of Palestine, owing to its long history of brutal violence and extreme treatment from the Israeli government. The population of the Gaza Strip is about two million people. More than half of them

are considered refugees although a vast majority was born in Gaza, as descendants of Palestinians fleeing from what is today Israel when the state was created in 1948.

Housing the largest city in Palestine with a population of 450,000, Gaza City is over 5,000 years old. The strip was occupied in 1967 and signed over to the Palestinian Authority in 1993. In 2005 Israel withdrew all troops and settlers from Gaza but kept full control over the area.

Gaza has been under siege by Israel and thereby completely blockaded from the rest of the world for several years. In 2008 a coalition of human rights organizations charged the Israeli blockade as responsible for the worst humanitarian condition of the Palestinians since the 1967 war. At the end of that same year Israel commenced a 22-day war on Gaza in response to continued mortars aimed at Israeli towns. Palestinian militants claimed the mortars were in response to the many Israeli military excursions within the Gaza Strip, as well as the blockade. The assault by the Israeli

army killed around 1400 people, destroyed 800 springs, 15 of 27 hospitals, 43 of 110 primary care institutions, 100,000 farms, 186 green houses, left 50,000 Palestinians homeless, half a million people without water, one million without electricity and began an acute food shortage crisis which lasted the better part of 14 months.

“We use the word Freedom very freely, but it is for all of us an aspiration, not a reality. All we know through direct experience its barriers – visible and atrocious or hidden. The journey of the Freedom Bus is an opportunity to renew once again this fundamental human goal ... Every wish to the Bus as it renews its explorations.”

- Peter Brook, Theatre Director



Hebron

Hebron is the largest city in the West Bank. Known for its marble exports that make up one third of the region's GDP, as well as glass blowing, pottery and figs, Hebron is a region that has seen many rulers, as well as many divisions.

As the only city left out of the Oslo Accord, it has had unique struggles to survive. In 1997 Hebron was divided into two sections. H1 consisted of about 120,000 Palestinians at the time, and disallowed any Jewish-Israeli citizens from entering the area. H2, a region of 30,000 Palestinians was created for the 500 Jewish settlers living there, disallowing new Palestinian residents and placing strict rules for those Palestinians unwilling to leave by force. These rules include tight curfews for Palestinians, 16 checkpoints within the area, commercial activity restrictions and a law forbidding any Palestinian to approach a settlement without a special permit issued by the Israeli government. More than half the shops in H2 closed their doors within a year of the division.

The market streets in Hebron are infamous for wire-netting above them, built to help protect the Palestinians from being injured by the settlers living above. Violence, property damage and injuries are daily occurrences for Palestinians in both sectors of Hebron, and the continued expansion of the settlements there give rise to constant tension.

In 1997 an international unarmed civilian observer force, known as the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) was established to create a buffer between the two people until such time as peaceful coexistence can be maintained. TIPH is still a part of the social landscape in Hebron today, along with other groups such as CPT, the Christian Peacemaker Team and EAPPI, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel.

Nablus

The bustling city of Nablus, home to many icons of Palestinian culture, has long been a city won and lost by empires. Most notable in the 2,000 years of Nablus' history are the empires of Rome, Saladin, the Crusaders, Mamluks and Ottomans. During the second Intifada Nablus was one of the strongholds of the Palestinian resistance. In 2000, Nablus was still a city that experienced relative economic prosperity. However with the construction of the Separation Wall, the violence ensuing the second Intifada and a series of Israeli military checkpoints closely encircling the city, unemployment rates skyrocketed from 13.4 per cent in 2000, to upwards of 60 per cent in 2004. Because of the IDF essentially shutting off the city, many of the once thriving businesses have been forced to close or move.

Khan Al Ahmar

Khan al-Ahmar is a Bedouin encampment in the West Bank of occupied Palestine. It sits between the Israeli settlements Ma'ale Adumim and Kfar Adumim. The people of Khan Al-Ahmar are 1951 refugees, originally from Tel Arad in historic Palestine. The Mukhtar refused to sign his men into the Israeli army, thus, in 1951, nine Jahalin were killed by the IDF, 15 tents were burned down and many flocks confiscated. The Jahalin consequently fled to the South Hebron Hills. All the people in Khan el-Ahmar are Jahalin... one whole sub-family or hamulla. The people of Khan Al Ahmar remain in constant threat of forced expulsion, home demolitions, and settler violence. In particular, the Israeli Civil Administration has plans to forcibly relocate 27,000 Jahalin residents from the area. This plan, would allow for the expansion of Jewish settlements and would result in the effective separation of the north and south of the West Bank. This in turn would seriously disrupt economic links between Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem and would also end any possibility of a Two State Solution.

Nabi Saleh

Nabi Saleh is a town where weekly protests are as much a part of life as Friday prayers, and they define this small town only 20 km north of Ramallah. In 2009 an Israeli settlement, now called Halamish, was built in the area, claiming the one spring on which the village relied. Privately owned by Mustafa Tamimi, this was an obvious affront to the sovereignty and rights of the village. Two years later, the first casualty of the demonstrations was logged when the IDF shot a canister of tear gas into Mustafa Tamimi's face, causing severe wounds and eventually death.

The use of tear gas, rubber-coated steel bullets and skunk guns in Nabi Saleh are a normal occurrence, as it is in all other Palestinian towns and villages that dare to protest against the Israeli occupation. The IDF refuses to allow the villagers their right to demonstrations, regularly making night raids and arresting those involved in the protests. While demonstrations are mostly peaceful, it is also not uncommon to see Palestinian throwing rocks at the IDF in response to their violence. This is also cause for arrest. In July 2, 2012, headlines were remarking about the children of Nabi Saleh being able to approach the spring without the use of dispersement methods such as rubber bullets and tear gas. Here, the newsworthy story is not that children are getting shot at, it is that they are not.

An-Najah University Monday September 25th 9:30am - Noon

Samer Aqrouq – The Nakba and the Zionist movement

Samer Aqrouq is originally from Nablus and has an M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. He has worked extensively around human rights and democracy for Palestinians, including Coordinating the Academic Program for the Involuntary Migration and working as a coordinator for the Office for Care of Disabled. He's interpreted many workshops and conferences, as well as conducted a number of seminars and published more than 100 articles.

Dr. Swalmeh Adaweyah - Experiences From the Diaspora

Dr. Swalmeh Adaweyah is a professor at An-Najah University.

Umar al-Ghubari – Practicalities of Return

Umar al-Ghubari is a Palestinian from Musheirfe village near Nazareth. He works as a group facilitator and political educator at Zochrot Organization in Tel Aviv. He teaches about the Nakba in Hebrew and arranges tours in Palestinian villages and cities occupied since 1948. Umar coordinates the Practical Return Project at Zochrot, which promotes discussion and ideas regarding the return of Palestinian refugees to their historic homeland.

Birzeit University Tuesday September 25th 9:30am - Noon

Dawood Hammoudeh - The Apartheid Wall, History & Future

Dawood Hammoudeh has worked in the Palestinian grassroots anti-Apartheid Wall campaign since 2005. He has written articles about the Wall, settlements, the private sector, foreign aid, foreign state complicity with Israel, and Israel's future economic vision for the West Bank. Dawood holds a B.A. in Mathematics.

Mahmoud Zawahra - Military Aggression and Settler Violence Against the Palestinian Population

Mahmoud Zawahra is a political activist and coordinator of the Al-Ma'sara Popular Committee. He is one of the founders of Popular Struggle Coordination Committee. Zawahra studied at Birzeit University, Harvard University and Coventry University.

Ibrahim Shikaki - Neoliberalism with a Palestinian Flavor

Ibrahim Shikaki is an economic researcher who currently works at the IHL resource center at Diakonia. He also teaches economics at Al-Quds University in Abu Dis. Ibrahim has worked as an associate researcher at the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS). He studied at the universities of Birzeit, Turin, and UC Berkeley, his research interests include Palestinian political economy, international financial institutions, and development in Palestine.

Hana Abudayeh - Apartheid and the New Speech

Hana Abudayeh is employed at the Bisan Center for Research & Development as an Advocacy & Lobbying Program Officer, where she works on social, economic, human rights and political campaigns. Hana has presented at many conferences about democracy, human rights, the role of youth, apartheid against Palestinians, and the BDS campaign. Hana is also a coordinator of the Boycott Your Occupation campaign. Hana holds a B.A. in sociology & anthropology and an M.A. in democracy and human rights from Birzeit University.

"Let those who can, take a seat, physically, on this bus. This might well become the journey of one's life! Those who cannot do this in body can certainly sit on the bus in spirit. For we are assuredly moving out of a history of many terrors that held humanity captive, but into a future in which terrors and horrors are well known to harm us severely but not to break a will to be free that never dies in the human soul."

- Alice Walker,
Author

Bethlehem University
Thursday, September 27th
2:00pm - 4:00pm

Archbishop Theodosius Hanna - Palestinian Christians in the Struggle for Freedom and Justice

Theodosius (Atallah) Hanna attended Clerical Patriarchate School in Jerusalem, Thessalonica University in Greece in the Faculty of Theology and has completed a master's degree and doctorate. He was appointed Head of the Arabic Department for the Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem. A member of the Composition Committee, and an active member of the international ecumenical movement both at local and the regional level, he has enhanced dialogue in bringing various churches together to work towards Christian unification. He is also an active member of Christian Islamic Discussion Forum in Palestine. Theodosius is a well-known author, and has received numerous honors and awards from many Arab and Islamic countries.

Linda Tabar - Normalization and its Pitfalls

Linda Tabar is a member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel. Linda holds a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. She has spoken about the BDS movement in Canada, the UK and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Mazin Qumsiyeh - The Only Durable Solution – The One Democratic State

Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh teaches and does research at three universities in Palestine. He previously served on the faculties of the University of Tennessee, Duke and Yale Universities. He is chairman of the Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People and serves on the board of Al-Rowwad Children's Theater Center in Aida Refugee Camp. He published several books including "Sharing the Land of Canaan: human rights and the Israeli/Palestinian Struggle" and "Popular Resistance in Palestine: A history of Hope and Empowerment."

Rabab Tamish - Critical Thinking and Popular Education

Dr. Rabab Tamish is the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Bethlehem University which aims at enriching the environment of teaching and learning at the university. Rabab is also a faculty member at the faculty of education and for more than 15 years she has been involved in several community projects and consultancy activities with international, local and regional organizations on issues related community activists, adult education and teachers' thinking. Her approach is emanated from the principles of the critical theory in which she studies the influence of the political social and cultural context on learners' thinking, attitudes and practice.

Hebron University
Saturday September 29th
2:00 -4:00 pm

Mazin Qumsiyeh - History of Palestinian Popular Struggle

Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh teaches and does research at three universities in Palestine. He previously served on the faculties of the University of Tennessee, Duke and Yale Universities. He is chairman of the Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People and serves on the board of Al-Rowwad Children's Theater Center in Aida Refugee Camp. He published several books including "Sharing the Land of Canaan: human rights and the Israeli/Palestinian Struggle" and "Popular Resistance in Palestine: A history of Hope and Empowerment."

Omar Barghouti - BDS Global Solidarity for Comprehensive Palestinian Rights

Omar Barghouti is an independent Palestinian researcher and human rights activist. He is a founding member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) and the Palestinian Civil Society Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. He holds a master's degrees in electrical engineering from Columbia University, and a master's degree in philosophy from Tel Aviv University. He is the author of, BDS: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights. His commentaries and interviews have been featured on CNN, BBC, The Guardian, Aljazeera, Huffington Post, The Nation, AP, Democracy Now!, among others.

Falastine Al-Saleh - BDS Movement In Palestine: Challenges and Success

Falastine Al-Saleh is a writer and activist from Nablus. She's been the coordinator of the Palestinian Campaign for the Cultural and Academic Boycott of Israel since 2009, and ever since she's been active in organizing and mobilizing for the BDS movement, both locally and internationally."

"The freedom ride represents the aspirations of the Palestinian people to be freed from an illegal occupation, to exercise rights of self-determination, and to demand justice after decades of oppression. The freedom ride represents as well the freedom of movement and a movement for freedom. Those who ride for and with Palestinians answer the call for global solidarity, and demand a free Palestine. We all must heed that call.

**– Judith Butler,
 Author and
 Philosopher"**

Hebron University
Sunday, September 30th
2:00pm - 4:00pm

Sam Bahour - Role of the Palestinian Private Sector Under Occupation and Onward

Sam Bahour is a Palestinian-American based in Al-Bireh/Ramallah. He is a freelance business consultant operating as Applied Information Management, specializing in business development with a niche focus on start-ups. Sam was instrumental in the establishment of the Palestine Telecommunications Company and the PLAZA Shopping Center and recently completed a full term as a Board of Trustees member at Birzeit University. He is a Director at the Arab Islamic Bank and serves in various capacities in several community organizations. Sam writes frequently on Palestinian affairs and has been widely published. Sam is co-editor of HOMELAND: Oral History of Palestine and Palestinians.

Khalil Nakhleh - The Destructive Role Of Transnational Money In Occupied Palestine

Khalil Nakhleh is a Palestinian anthropologist from the Galilee, Israel/Palestine, with a Ph.D. from Indiana University, USA. His main academic and applied preoccupations focused on how to transform Palestinian society and people from an occupied, colonized, and fragmented society to a liberated, productive, free and self-generating society, not dependent on external financial aid. In his long career as an academic and applied anthropologist, Dr. Nakhleh authored and published a large number of academic books and articles, in English and Arabic, on Palestinian Society, development, NGOs, and Education. His latest book is titled Globalized Palestine: The National Sell-Out of a Homeland.

Budour Hassan - Role of Israeli and International Activists

Budour Hassan is a Palestinian anarchist from occupied Nazareth who has recently graduated from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Faculty of Law. Budour worked and volunteered with several human rights organisations in Palestine '48 such as the Association for Civil Rights, Rabbis for Human Rights and Al Manara, an association for persons with disability. Budour also co-directed a legal clinic for women empowerment in the eastern part of occupied Jerusalem. Budour is an occasional contributor for the Electronic Intifada, Ma'an News Agency and Beyond Compromise among others.

Playback Theatre

Playback Theatre emerged in North America during the mid-70's with Jonathan Fox's vision of a "grassroots theatre in which ordinary people would make theatre on the spot from the true stories of other ordinary people. This theatre would release drama's magic from the rarefied world of proscenium stages and the finely crafted stories of fictional characters, and return it to its place as an accessible part of ordinary life." [1]

Jo Salas and the original Playback Theatre company also played an instrumental role in developing the form. Today, Playback is used in over 50 countries in a wide variety of settings, including theatres, homeless shelters, refugee camps, arts festivals, community centres, prisons and schools.

In Playback Theatre, a facilitator, known as the "conductor", invites members of the audience to share thoughts, feelings, stories and experiences from their own life. When an individual "teller" steps forward, they are welcomed to sit at the side of the stage where the conductor then interviews them. During this interview, the conductor asks questions that help the teller to establish the basic elements of their story (i.e. time, place, characters, emotion, relationship, plot and significance). The teller is also invited to select actors from the ensemble who can play one or two central characters from their story. Once the teller has finished narrating their account, the actors enter the stage area and perform the story as a short piece of improvised theatre using sound, movement and text to portray the central themes of the teller's story. Musicians who sit to the side of the acting space accompany the enactment with improvised sound and music.

At the conclusion of the enactment, the conductor checks in with the teller to see if the enactment resonated with their subjective experience of the events described. If the teller is satisfied, they are thanked and returned to the audience. A new teller is then welcomed to the stage.

The Freedom Bus utilizes playback theatre as a response to the fundamental human need to share one's story and have it heard, acknowledged and honored. The use of Playback also builds solidarity through the communal sharing of stories, knowledge and experiences. In Palestine, communication between towns, villages, refugee camps and Bedouin encampments also helps to overcome the social fragmentation and alienation that results from colonization, apartheid and military occupation.

[1] Salas, J. (2011) Stories in the Moment: Playback Theatre for Community Building and Justice. In Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict. Volume II. Eds. C. Cohen, R.G. Varea, and P.O. Walker.

"Too few people realize that without the Palestinian struggle for freedom, dignity, justice there would be no Arab Spring. Grass roots civil society organizing, non-violent resistance, youth-led revolts, the role of art and music as revolutionary inspiration--all these emerged and incubated in Palestinian society long before the spark of revolution was lit in Tunis and spread to Egypt and throughout the Arab world. In this struggle, the Jenin Freedom Theatre stands out as one of the most profoundly creative, innovative and hopeful expressions of all these trends."
- Mark LeVine, Author & Professor

PLAYBACK THEATRE CAST



Ahmad Rokh - Musician

Originally from Azerka, Jordan, Ahmad Rokh has been working with the Freedom Bus since its inception. Joining the action after his very first audition, Ahmad has transitioned from actor to musician, as well as assisting in coordination of programming. He has loved traveling with the Freedom Bus, with his favourite shows taking place in Jordan, Cairo, Al Wallajeh and a few small Bedouin villages. He aspires to one day be a black comedy director and dreams of working in the Sarajevo Theatre in Bosnia.



Christine Hodali - Actor

Currently a freelance actress and drama teacher with Al-Harah and Pocket Theatre, Christine Hodali is a Beit Jala resident with a BA in Business Administration and Marketing from Bethlehem University, as well as drama training from Inad and Al-Harah theatres. Introduced to playback theatre when she joined the Freedom Bus troupe, she enjoys being involved in a new medium to give voice to Palestinians and allow them to take a positive step forward through expression and theatre. She has performed many plays with Ashtar and Al-Harah theatre, most notably a monodrama for children called 'Mirable.'



Faisal Abu Alhayjaa - Actor

A local from Jenin, Faisal Abu Alhayjaa has studied and performed at the Freedom Theatre for the last three years. Studying now with Ben Rivers, he has received training in Psychodrama, Trauma Healing and Playback Theatre, which was a precursor to him joining the Freedom Bus in November of last year. A staunch supporter of art resistance, Faisal proudly uses his skills as an artist to raise awareness of the occupation of Palestine, feeling a responsibility to help maintain the cultural identity of Palestine and keep it alive.



Hamoudi Dabdoub - Actor

Hamoudi Dabdoub hails from a small village called Judaida in the Galilee. After being involved as a freelance actor in many shows in Nazareth and Haifa, as well as a small personally-produced show for children which he performed at the Freedom Theatre earlier this summer, Hamoudi joined the Freedom Bus. Passionate about being involved in the cultural resistance of Palestine, he feels the Freedom Bus will allow him to help people share their stories, which in turn will grant them more freedom in the future. Having studied Drama Therapy at Haifa university, Hamoudi is very interested in the Freedom Bus not only as a method of cultural resistance, but as a method of relief for those within Palestinian communities.



Hanin Tarabay - Actor

With a Masters of Arts, Theatre and Gender studies from Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Hanin Tarabay has worked with women's social welfare groups in Jerusalem's Palestinian community for the last five years. Taking part in three Forum Theatre plays dealing with Gender issues common among Palestinians, including early marriage, rape and honour killings, Hanin has always been a strong advocate for women in Palestine. She has lead training workshops with Ashtar Theatre, and uses photography, short films, theatre and television as mediums towards her social advocacy. Currently working with Alkasaba Theatre, she facilitates theatre productions to deal with oppression, gender issues, sexuality, and relationships.



Hassan Taha - Actor

Hassan Taha lives on the opposite side of the Apartheid wall, in 1948 territory. Believing that theatre will help break the wall, as well as unite the people from 1948 and 1967, he has worked with a number of theatres including Al-Miidan Theatre, Fringe Ensemble, Al-Jawal Theatre and others. He was also awarded best actor for his performance in "The Boy", a piece apart of the One Man Theatre Festival in Akka. A graduate of Haifa University, he joined the Freedom Bus earlier this year to encourage Palestinians to reconnect with each other as a unified community. For him, conveying their stories and suffering is a form of worship, one that allows him and his country a greater understanding and community within itself.



Micaela Miranda - Actor

Since an early age Micaela Miranda has been involved in several aspects of theatre, from acting to directing, devising new scripts and producing. With a passion for story telling and improvisation, she has worked in several countries in physical theatre and performances as both a director, actress and clown. She has been with the Freedom Theatre since the founding of the professional acting school in 2008, working as a director, actress, teacher and teaching management since 2009. Her favourite playback performance includes the story of a 7 year-old boy in Cairo who, for the first time, hears that Mubarak is leaving on television and, having never expected such an event, says he is feeling for the first time what freedom means.



Nagam Bsoul - Actor

Nagam Bsoul is an actress from Reine village near Nazareth. She has a degree in Social Theatre and Education from University of Haifa, and is actively involved in playback theatre not only with the Freedom Bus but with Freng, a playback group based in Nazareth. Highly involved in theatre, Nagam also works with children to produce shows with Gbene theatre. Her last major performance was a monodrama called Yaffate, which was featured in the Masrahed Festival.

PRODUCTION CREW



Riham Isaac - Actor

A freelance actress for the past six years, Riham Isaac joined the Freedom Bus troupe by chance after attending a workshop in Amman, April 2012. A native from Bethlehem, she has worked in many theatres, both Palestinian and International. Thrilled to work in a project she considers full of creative challenge, purpose and impact, she considers playback theatre to be one of the best ways to affect a community. Her favourite part of the Freedom Bus is speaking intimately with the audience and learning, growing and being touched by the stories told. After the Freedom Bus Ride, Riham will be moving to London to complete her masters in Performance Arts.



Samer Abu Hantash - Musician

Samer Abu Hantash is a local musician from Tulkarem. Since early childhood Samer has had a talent for music, teaching himself how to play music through listening. He joined the Art Institution of Dar Qandil in 2005, and later joined successful band House Qandil. He has toured Europe several times with this band, participating in a number of festivals and is known for his talent with the Oud. He has worked as a music teacher for children in summer camps across the West Bank, and joined the Freedom Bus to continue his dream of giving voice to Palestinian music, allowing it to take stage on an international level.



Annie Hallat - Giant Puppet Project

Annie Hallat coordinated the Giant Puppet and Political Theatre Project in Al-Walajah. She holds over 20 years of experience as a professional artist and community cultural worker. Annie has trained and worked with the world-renowned Bread and Puppet Theatre and Antenna Theatre. Her choreography lineage is through Odin Theatre, Jerzy Grotowski and Anna Halprin. Hallat has also worked with the Traveling Jewish Theatre creating masks, puppets and moving sets.



Di Trevis - Artistic Consultant & Acting Teacher

Diane Trevis is an English theatre director. The first woman to run a company at Britain's Royal National Theatre, she has worked with many prestigious actors and playwrights, including adapting Proust's Remembrance of Things Past with Harold Pinter, which won an Oliver Award in 2002. She has worked extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company, and often teaches in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. For over a decade her work has also taken her internationally, and she has worked with students at the Freedom Theatre on a number of occasions.



Ben Rivers - Freedom Bus Coordinator

Ben Rivers was born in Scotland and raised in the UK and Australia. He currently lives in Jenin Refugee Camp, Occupied Palestine. Ben specializes in applied theatre initiatives that promote community building, social justice and trauma healing. Over the past 12 years he has worked in several continents with a broad range of populations including marginalized youth, prisoners, migrants, refugees, relatives of forced disappearance and other communities impacted by structural oppression, political violence and collective trauma. Ben coordinates the Freedom Bus initiative and the Trauma Response Training Program, a long-term initiative providing professional-level training in therapeutic and participatory theatre methods to Palestinian mental health workers.



Decca Muldowney - Communications Director

Decca Muldowney is a writer and activist based in London. She grew up in a theatre family, and inherited a rebellious streak from her trailblazing mother. She has been active in pro-Palestinian groups for the last five years, and has also worked with environmental, feminist and free education campaign groups. She is currently studying for a PhD in post-apartheid South African literature at the University of Cambridge. Decca is delighted to have the opportunity to travel with the Freedom Bus.



Beesan Ramadan - Community Organizer

Beesan Ramadan is a committed human rights activist from Nablus, West Bank. She is active with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement to end Israeli Apartheid and many other human rights initiatives. Beesan is an economics major at An-Najah National University and currently works at the Freedom Theatre as a program coordinator. She has volunteered with several human rights organizations including the Right to Education campaign and the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights and Democracy.



Bree Gardner - Digital and Social Media Specialist

A freelance visual journalist, Bree Gardner has been working within the Non-Profit sector internationally for many years. She founded a micro-finance NGO in Sierra Leone, has worked with water sanitation technology in rural Ecuador, and has been involved in musical theatre as cast and crew for the last seven years. She has been an assistant editor at SocialFinance.ca, and now works at the Freedom Theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp. Her passion for human rights advocacy, drama therapy and youth development have found their home in the Freedom Bus Project.

KEY TERMS & PHRASES

IOF - Israeli Occupation Forces, the Israeli Army, including navy, ground and air forces.

1948 – The first of many Arab-Israeli wars, including the exodus of more than 700 000 Palestinians to the West Bank, Jordan, Syria, Gaza and Lebanon and the destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages. The war concluded with the 1949 Armistice Agreements, which established armistice demarcation lines between Israeli and Arab military forces, commonly known as the Green Line.

1967 – Known as the Six-day war, Israel began this war by launching surprise missiles on June 5, 1967. The conclusion was Israel seizing the Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Sinai Peninsula, making Israel's land three times as large as before this war.

Oslo Accords – Accords written in 1993 with the intention of being the framework for future negotiations and relations between the Israeli government and the Palestinians, within which all outstanding "final status issues" between the two sides would be addressed and resolved. The Oslo Accords called for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the majority of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, affirming the Palestinian right for self-government within those regions and allowing for an interim government to take control in phases. This interim government was to last five years while permanent status negotiations took place; a final decision was to be reached no later than 1996.

The Oslo Accords resulted in the division of the West Bank into three main areas:

Area A - 18% of the West Bank, formally under full control of the Palestinian Authority. In practice, this is still an area with significant IDF presence.

Area B – 21% of the West Bank, formally under partial control of the Palestinian Authority, shared with the Israeli Civil Administration.

Area C – 61% of the West Bank, under full control of the Israel Civil Administration.

Civil Administration – the Israeli governing body that operates in the West Bank. Established by Israel in 1981, it carries out bureaucratic functions within the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967.

Al Nakba – Nakba, when translated into english, means "catastrophe." This refers to the 1948 mass exodus of the Palestinian people during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Around 725,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled from their homes.

Intifada – An arabic word (which literally means "shaking off") used to describe the popular resistance or uprisings against the Israeli Army. There are two major Intifadas in Palestinian history, the first taking place in 1987-1991, and the second taking place from 2000-2005.

Occupation – The use of military force to control a piece of land, and it's people. Palestinians under Israeli occupation have experienced a loss of sovereignty, self-determination, ability to move freely, removal or partial control of local government and, in the case with the West Bank, a significant loss of land due to illegal settlements.

The Separation Wall – A physical barrier encircling Palestinian cities and towns to separate the West Bank from Israel. The wall creates a barrier that disallows Palestinians to travel across it without special permit from Israel. 8.5% of the Wall is sleighted to be constructed on Palestinian land inside the Green Line. 9.5% of the West Bank will therefore be annexed to "Israel".

Israeli Settlements – A Jewish colony that is built within the occupied West Bank. They are considered illegal by the international community, and often take fertile land, springs, and other natural resources from surrounding Palestinian communities.

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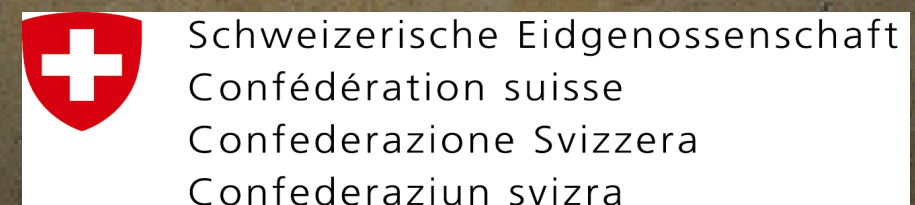
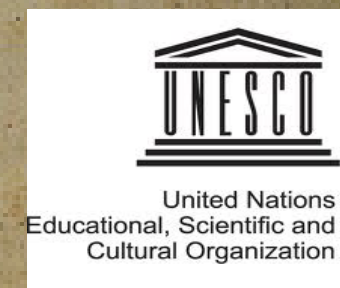
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THANK YOU!



Endorsers of the Freedom Bus include: Ali Abunimah, Maya Angelou, Omar Barghouti, John Berger, Peter Brook, Judith Butler, Noam Chomsky, Angela Davis, Ramy Essam, Mairead Maguire and Alice Walker. Organizations endorsing the Freedom Bus include Jewish Voice for Peace, International Solidarity Movement, Palestinian Boycott Divestment and Sanctions National Committee, Palestinian Campaign for Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel and The Highlander Research and Education Center. For a full list of endorsers, please visit <http://www.freedombus.ps/endorsements/>

The following donors helped fund Playback Theatre activities at The Freedom Theatre:



I will travel with you 'in spirit' on the Freedom Bus, and continue with my brothers and sisters everywhere, to pray and work for the day that the walls of injustice and fear will fall down and be replaced with trust, love and friendship, and that the Holy Land may one day soon, fulfill its rightful destiny as the spiritual home and heart of the human family, and be a light of hope and peace to the world.

- Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate