



**35 years
Anniversary**

ASHTAR Theatre

in

JUNE & JULY

2026

NEWSLETTER

ART2ACTION WORKSHOP



For two weeks, director Iman Aoun participated in a workshop focused on exchanging experiences and deepening the impact of a group of international directors in Minneapolis, Minnesota. During the workshop, she led a session with the directors on the ASHTAR Liberatorium Technique and delivered a lecture on the work of the ASHTAR Theatre and the role of theatre in confronting genocide. This program was led by Art2Action and Pangea.

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Artistic Director Emile Saba joined the Edinburgh International Children's Festival, building partnerships with theatre professionals and Scottish universities for the Performing Arts Academy. He led two workshops for theatermakers, actors, and acting students in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in collaboration with Imagiante Theater, Disasterplan Theater, and The Citizen Theater in Glasgow.





BEYOND BORDERS AND CHECKPOINTS

ASHTAR Artistic Director, Emile Saba, participated in two events in Portugal that promoted dialogue and exchange around Palestinian theatre and cultural practice.

In Lisbon, he joined the panel "Beyond Borders and Barriers," organized by Teatro do Vestido and theatre-maker Joana Craveiro, alongside fellow Palestinian cultural leaders. The discussion explored the challenges facing Palestinian artists and cultural institutions.



In Amadora, Emile led a two-day workshop, "The Personal is Political," at the Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema (ESTC) with directors, actors, and theatre-makers. Through practical exercises and discussion, participants explored how personal stories can become powerful forms of artistic and political expression.



‘Guernica’Gaza: ...’ Play Screening

A filmed version of ‘Guernica, Gaza: Vision from the Center of the Earth’ theatre play by ASHTAR Theatre, written by Naomi Wallace and Ismail Khalidi, directed by Emile Saba, was presented at the TaPRA Conference this year, contributing to discussions on Palestinian theatre and artistic practice in times of crisis.

Reprising ASHTAR at Mujaawarah at Leeds University - TaPRA

Director Bayan Shbib, ASHTAR Board Member, presented ASHTAR’s new project, The Performing Arts Academy, while Diala Taneeb, ASHTAR researcher-in-residence and TaPRA Fellow, participated in Mujaawarah, a conference organised by TaPRA, showcasing her research on ASHTAR’s archive and the organisational role in social change.





Youth Performances

As part of the psychosocial intervention project at schools and community institutions, and in support of the Palestine Development Fund, ASHTAR trained two groups, one at Star Mountain and the other at The Popular Committee of Birzeit Refugee Camp. At Star Mountain, the group was trained by Tamer Tafesh, who created a play entitled “The Heroes’ Square”.

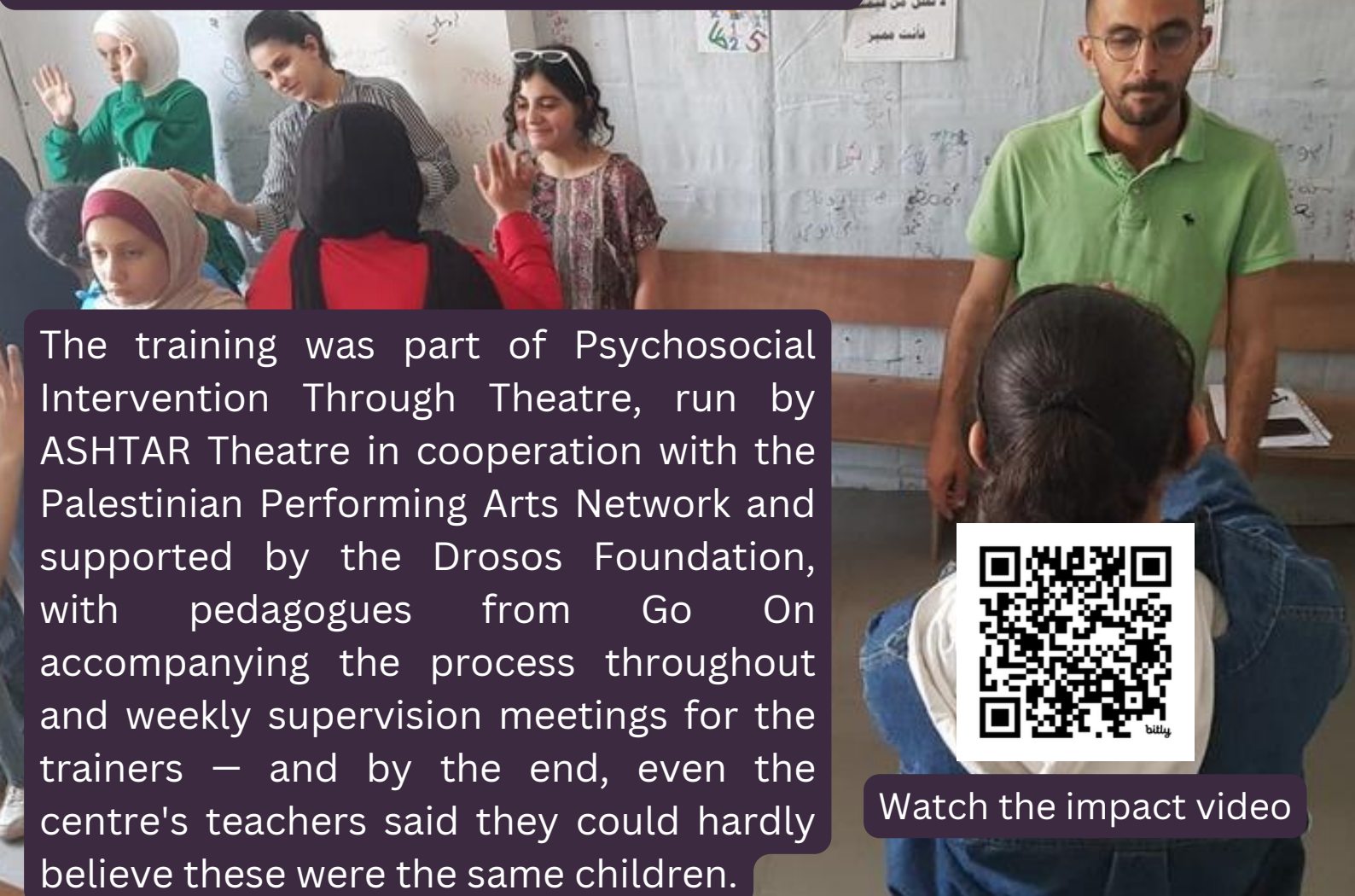


The other group in Birzeit was trained by Norsen Qawasmi, who produced the play “Laila and the Long Road”. Both plays were based on the children’s own stories and presented at ASHTAR in front of their families, teachers, and friends.



Psycho-social support in Gaza

This summer in Gaza, 100 children aged 12 to 15 stepped into a room and, over ten two-hour sessions, slowly stepped back into their childhood. Across ten groups at the Go On Center, in June 2026, they played, moved and laughed together — and something shifted: a girl who had refused to speak began to open up by the sixth session, and a boy too shy to read his own writing stood up on the ninth day and read it loud to everyone.



The training was part of Psychosocial Intervention Through Theatre, run by ASHTAR Theatre in cooperation with the Palestinian Performing Arts Network and supported by the Drosos Foundation, with pedagogues from Go On accompanying the process throughout and weekly supervision meetings for the trainers — and by the end, even the centre's teachers said they could hardly believe these were the same children.



Watch the impact video

ASHTAR Theatre Celebrating 35 Years

ASHTAR organised a special gathering for its partners, friends, and donors to celebrate its 35th anniversary, honouring its artistic journey, at its Ramallah base, which hosted the theatre for 31 years.

The event marked the closing of a chapter and the beginning of a new one in Birzeit, with the establishment of The Performing Arts Academy.

“Oranges and Stones” was performed during the celebration; one of ASHTAR’s most recognised productions, which toured globally and had been presented over 160 performances around the world.







Designing The Future: Architecture for Culture and Community

Wisam Sharabati is an architectural engineer, Founder & CEO of Null Island Engineering Consultancy. Operating between Jerusalem and Ramallah.

With over 11 years of experience, his work focuses on the intersection of architecture, urban design, and spatial systems, with a strong emphasis on socially responsive and context-driven projects.

Through Null Island, he is leading the design and supervision of the new ASHTAR Performing Arts Village & Academy, contributing to the transformation of a historic structure into a dynamic cultural and educational space. His approach integrates technical precision with a broader vision of architecture as a tool for cultural expression and urban resilience.




NULL ISLAND

Where design begins

Welcoming Partners and Friends to Our New Home in Birzeit

Many thanks to our distinguished guests for visiting our new location in Birzeit, which is undergoing rehabilitation. We are both excited and proud that, after 35 years of continued work, our new chapter is meeting such local and international attention.

Most recent guests include representatives of the European Commission, the British Council, the French Institute, and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, international guests of the Contemporary Arts Festival in Ramallah, as well as the Portuguese Representative in Ramallah.



We need help to finish

We are raising \$100,000 through GlobalGiving Platform to complete and equip the building.

Every amount is tied to a real piece of the building: \$50 restores a historic window or door, \$150 lights a training room, \$1,000 pays for acoustic work in a studio, \$5,000 buys the sound and lighting rig for the performance hall. \$10,000 puts your name on the Benefactors' Board inside the building, permanently.



**With thanks from Birzeit
ASHTAR Theatre**

Become a Cultural Investor

Support our initiative

Restore a 1921 Building into a Palestinian Theatre



The Performing Arts Academy



ASHTAR Theatre
2026