

annual report 2013



2013 in brief

What an incredible year 2013 proved to be! Never in the history of The Freedom Theatre have we achieved more or pushed further. This year, we presented five new in-house **theatre productions**, held **hakawati (storytelling)** workshops and performances, and invited other artists to perform in our theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp.

We led a **Drama in Education** course for teachers, graduated a group of psychodrama practitioners with an international certification, gave workshops in **playback theatre** both in the West Bank, and Egypt – and we became registered as the only centre in the Middle East to certify playback theatre practitioners.

We established a **Film Unit** and held filmmaking workshops that resulted in five new **short films**, curated a **photo exhibition** and published two new issues of our **youth magazine**, Voices.

We organized a **Freedom Ride** and several Solidarity Stays in marginalized communities in South Hebron Hills and the Jordan Valley, and **toured all around the West Bank** with the performance Our Sign is the Stone, based on testimonies gathered from Nabi Saleh, a village that has become an inspiration to others in their creative and unrelenting resistance to the occupation.

We received thousands of international guests and reached out to many more through our social media channels, workshops and presentations abroad. Two of our productions, The Island and Suicide Note from Palestine, went on **international tours**. The Island was performed to wide acclaim in the US, Brazil and Sweden, whereas Suicide Note from Palestine participated in a theatre festival in Italy.

Throughout the year, we had a **special focus on children and youth**, improving our methods and our awareness of children's perspectives, in order to become even better at empowering the young in our community.

None of this would have been possible without the contribution of individuals, organisations and foundations all over the world. To all of those who donated, fundraised, spread the word, volunteered their time, we wish to say a heartfelt **THANK YOU** for being the best supporters anyone could wish for! Join us in looking proudly upon some of the main highlights of 2013, and catch a glimpse of what is to come in 2014.

theatre

theatre school and productions

By participating in the Acting School, a three-year educational programme in theatre and drama, students have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to pursue a professional career in theatre. At the same time, the programme encourages students to engage in their communities using drama as a tool for social and political change.

This year, our four Acting School students broke new ground as they dove deeper into the world of performing arts. Along with the theatre's resident actors they participated in several large-scale productions. Altogether The Freedom theatre presented five new in-house productions during 2013; Suicide Note from Palestine, Ouda - Courage, The Island, Lost Land and Our Sign is the Stone.

Two of our productions from the previous year, Stolen Dreams and The Caretaker, were performed to new audiences. With our productions we reached an audience of more than 5500 people, in Jenin and throughout the West Bank.

In addition to our own productions we collaborated with Clowns Without Borders in a tour that reached 3660 people all over the West Bank.

Suicide Note from Palestine and The Island also went on international tours, performing to wide acclaim in Italy, Brazil, Sweden and the US respectively. The tours reached out to approximately 3000 people directly and to many more through media coverage in all the countries we visited.

"I did not want to come to see the show, my teacher was convincing me to come [...], but after I saw the play, I am so happy and it was really amazing to see the guys who were acting, I felt they are real prisoners and I will be back for every show." - Girl, school performance of The Island at The Freedom Theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp

hosting performances

The Freedom Theatre hosted a variety of performances during the year, ranging from Palestinian theatre and circus ensembles such as Al Harah, Ashtar Theatre and the Palestinian Circus School, to the Swedish theatre company Ögonblicksteatern. Altogether we presented nine shows by other performing art groups, including hip-hop and stand-up comedy artists. These performances reached more than 1100 women, men and children.

hakawati

In the Arab and Mediterranean world, the hakawati (storyteller) has traditionally played a central role in a society's culture, reflecting the importance placed on oral histories, improvisation and mythmaking. During 2013, our very own hakawati spellbound the children of Jenin Refugee Camp and beyond with her stories. She held workshops in storytelling with a group of children as well as held performances at The Freedom Theatre and in other venues, reaching a total of more than 1650 children.

stage management

This year we initiated a one-of-a-kind training program in stage management, which is expected to continue for three years. Three participants study stage management in theory and practice, attending to the practical and logistical

requirements of our theatre productions, specifically during the rehearsal and performance process.

applied theatre

drama in education

Throughout 2013, we carried out a Drama in Education program, where eight educators were trained to use drama as a pedagogical tool. This project, which was initiated in 2012, is a very important one as we follow in the footsteps of our foremost source of inspiration, Arna Mer Khamis, who always worked with teachers to introduce an alternative educational system. Ultimately our aim is the same as Arna's: to turn the pyramid of hierarchy in society upside down. The introduction of alternative educational methods is an important step in order to achieve that goal.

Drama in Education has become very important in my class because before I had difficult children, both shy and aggressive, and my aim was only to teach them how to read and write. I still have the same children but now I have skills also to change their behaviour; I now see the whole child and have discovered that a child has many creative languages. Rula Nazzal, teacher at Qabatia Girls school

playback theatre and the freedom bus

The Freedom Bus project carried out a Freedom Ride to the Jordan Valley and the South Hebron Hills in March 2013. The theme of the ride was 'Resisting Israel's Ethnic Cleansing Campaign in Area C'. Over a period of 13 days, students, artists and activists from across Palestine and abroad joined communities at risk of forced expulsion from a homeland they have inhabited for generations.

The March Freedom Ride included volunteer work, protective presence activity, interactive theatre performances, workshops, live music events, hakawati (storytelling) and a daylong walk on World Water Day. Side by side, armed with mud-bricks and solidarity, participants came together with community members to create art, share stories, build houses and build alliances.

Our Playback Theatre ensemble also toured the West Bank with the production Our Sign is the Stone, based on stories from the village Nabi Saleh. Playback Theatre performances were held in connection with the performances of Our Sign is the Stone, enabling spectators to share their own stories.

The Playback Theatre ensemble made two additional performances in Haifa and in the Golan. In Haifa they participated in the event "Families Interrupted" at Al-Midan Theatre, which brought attention to the Israeli Citizenship Law, one of over 50 laws that discriminate against Palestinians with Israeli citizenship. In occupied Golan, the ensemble took part in the M.A.N – Music Art & Nature festival, which aims to strengthen cultural and artistic exchanges between Palestinians and Syrians in occupied Golan.

"Israel controls us - our water and electricity - and every other aspect of our life. However, they don't control our mind. Even though our lives are very hard, we don't just sit here, being sad and doing nothing. We continue to live - we continue to resist. And even though they build walls between us, we find a way to go under the wall and over the wall. This was my message in the story - that we are all ready to connect and to work together." - Sawsan, community participant in the 2013 March Freedom Ride

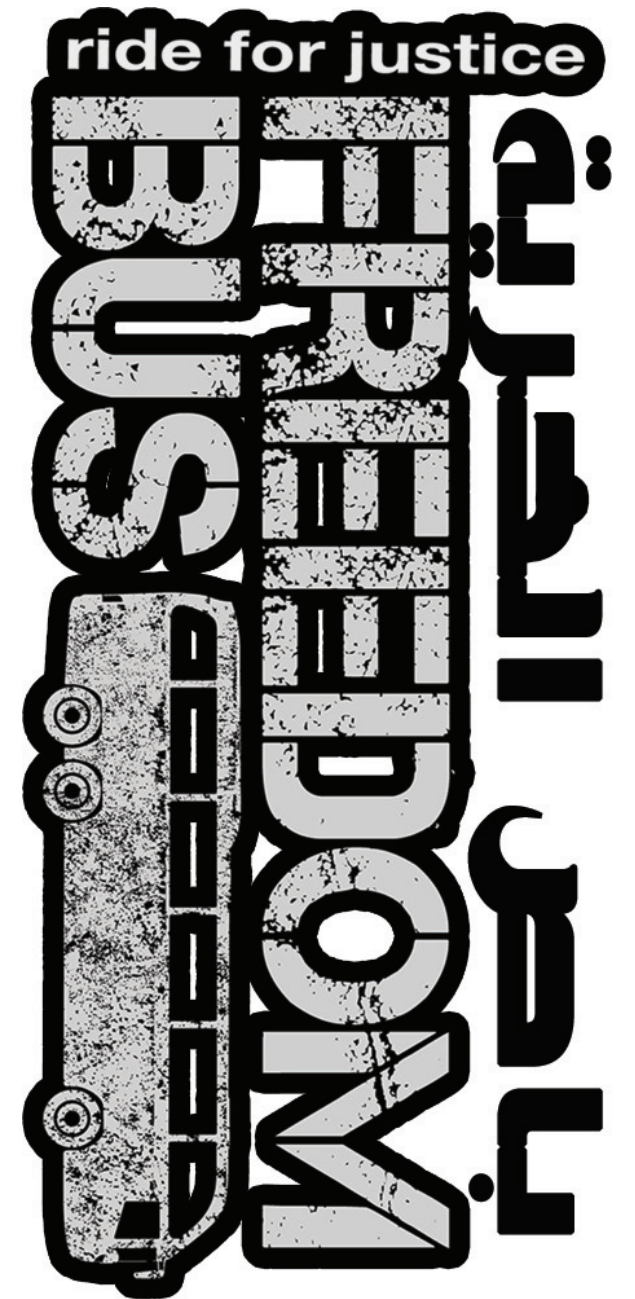
psychodrama

In July 2013, 13 Palestinian mental health workers from the Jenin District graduated from our Trauma Response Training Program – an intensive, 18-month program run by The Freedom Theatre in partnership with the USA-based Therapeutic Spiral Institute.

The Trauma Response Training Program was the first long-term psychodrama-training program to be offered in the West Bank. Program participants included workers from various organizations including YMCA, the Ministry of Education, Arab American School and the Women's Cultural and Heritage Association. The Therapeutic Spiral Institute awarded the graduates with an International Certification in Trauma Therapy using the Therapeutic Spiral Model™.

workshop series in cairo

The Freedom Theatre in partnership with Studio Emad Eddin held a series of workshops in Cairo, Egypt, in various aspects of applied theatre such as Voice and Movement, Playback Theatre, Psychodrama and the Therapeutic Spiral Model (a specific form of Psychodrama used for building strengths and addressing individual and collective trauma). The aim of the workshop series was to prepare psychologists, counsellors, social workers and theatre practitioners for professional practice in the field of drama therapy and playback theatre. Altogether over 120 people attended the workshops, including three from Gaza.



multimedia

filmmaking

In the spring of 2013, we launched a whole new Film Unit that offered eager filmmakers-to-be the chance to produce their own short films. These young women and men travelled all over the West Bank to record the humanity and truth of the Palestinian situation. Five short films, fiction and documentary, were produced.

At the end of 2013 we also ran an intensive training in film pedagogies, which will further improve our trainees' ability to work with children and youth in the community.

In our society, there are many subjects we can't discuss - and even if we could we wouldn't be able to change the way people think. I want to make change and I want people to hear me." Suzan, filmmaking student

film screenings

Throughout the year we offered a variety of films, fiction and documentaries, for children and adults. We screened a series of films in collaboration with Shashat, who showcases the creativity

of Palestinian, Arab and international women filmmakers. More than 1000 people attended our public film screenings.

photography

Throughout 2013, 16 young women and men took part in our photography workshops. The highlight of the year a five-month course where the participants honed their technical and storytelling skills to produce Spectrum, an exhibition that documented the spectrum of their lived experiences.

The exhibition was displayed at The Freedom Theatre as well as at the An Najah University in Nablus and the Cultural Palace in Arrabee. Altogether 4000 people saw the exhibition at these venues, and many more viewed the images and their poem-like captions online.

creative writing

This year, our creative writing workshops moved out of the theatre. At a local girls school, 20 girls learned how to compose articles, short stories and poems that were included in The Freedom Theatre's youth magazine, Voices, which was published in two editions.

Weekly creative writing workshops were also held with 25 youth in the village of Faquaa outside Jenin.

other activities

capacity building

In addition to the on-the-job training that is always an integral part of our work, several members of the artistic section of The Freedom Theatre received further trainings abroad, including our acting students, who joined several trainings and events in European countries.

hosting organisations

Throughout the year, we have made our theatre hall and workshop spaces available to other organisations and institutions, including kindergartens, clowns and circus artists.

hosting visitors

Organisations, groups and individuals from all over the world visited the theatre to learn more about its activities and meet with staff and students. The theatre also arranged overnight stays for visitors who were welcomed in the homes of our staff and friends in Jenin Refugee Camp.

physical exercise

Physical exercise is a vital part of our theatre activities and this year, some of the female staff also started holding weekly workout sessions.

The Freedom Theatre also hosted a two-day workshop in yoga and acroyoga for three different groups of women and children at The Freedom Theatre and at the Women Centre in Jenin Refugee Camp. 68 people participated in these workshops, which were the start of a long-term project aimed at developing ongoing yoga activities in Jenin with the facilitation of The Freedom Theatre.

reaching out to new communities

The Freedom Bus project has been instrumental in strengthening connections between The Freedom Theatre and community organisations and individuals in other parts of Occupied Palestine. The project has also employed new ways of overcoming the isolation of Palestinian communities and build relations between organisations, artists and activists. Throughout 2013, The Freedom Theatre performed and held workshops in 30 Palestinian communities besides Jenin.

In addition to the international performances and presentations of The Island and Suicide Note from Palestine in Sweden, the United States, Brazil and Italy, and playback theatre and psychodrama workshops in Egypt, The Freedom Theatre also held workshops and presentations in Denmark and Norway.

donors

The Freedom Theatre is grateful for the generous support of the following donors:

Annenberg Foundation
Arab Fund for Art and Culture (AFAC)
Caisse Centrale d'Activités Sociales du personnel des industries électriques et gazières (CCAS)
Consulate General of France in Jerusalem
European Commission
EWASH-Oxfam
Ford Foundation
Kinderpostzegels
Medico International
MECA – Middle East Children's Alliance
Sparkplug Foundation
Svenska PostkodLotteriet (Swedish Postcode Lottery)
Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
Tides Foundation
The British Council
The Roddick Foundation

We also want to thank these individual donors:
Annuschka Wiesemann
Uday Jhunjhunwala
Jessica Harvey-Smith
Fida Qishta
Howard Brenton
Ophelia Otto
Eva Lengquist, Maria Lengquist and Peder Larsson
Jean Churchill
Luisa Morgantini

Mary Davis
Nizar and Valerie Ghoussaini

partners

In 2013, The Freedom Theatre collaborated with the following organisations and institutions:

Al Aroub Refugee Camp, Occupied Palestine
Al-Fakhit community, Occupied Palestine
Al Harah Theatre, Bethlehem, Occupied Palestine
Al Jalameh School, Occupied Palestine
Al Kasaba Theatre, Ramallah, Occupied Palestine
Al Maleh community, Occupied Palestine
Al Midan Theatre, Haifa,
Al Mufaqarah community, Occupied Palestine
Al-Quds Open University, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
An-Najah University, Nablus, Occupied Palestine
Arrabe Cultural Palace, Occupied Palestine
Arrabe Municipality, Occupied Palestine
A-Sfay community, Occupied Palestine
Ashtar Theatre, Ramallah, Occupied Palestine
At-Tuwani community, Occupied Palestine
Balata Camp, Nablus, Occupied Palestine
Bardala community, Occupied Palestine
Barta'a Council, Occupied Palestine
Battir community, Occupied Palestine
Beit Al Mussinein, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Beit Ommar community, Occupied Palestine
Beit Sahour Guesthouse, Occupied Palestine
Budrus community, Occupied Palestine
Burqin Boys School, Occupied Palestine
Cinema Jenin, Jenin, Occupied Palestine

Clowns Without Borders Palestine
DAM, Occupied Palestine
Der Abu Masha'al community, Occupied Palestine
Ein al Hiluwa community, Occupied Palestine
EWASH, Occupied Palestine
Faquaa Library, Occupied Palestine
Fasayil Al-Fauqa community, Occupied Palestine
Hallet Addubah community, Occupied Palestine
Ibrahimiye School, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Jaba' Boys School, Occupied Palestine
Jiftlik community, Occupied Palestine
Jordan Valley Solidarity, Occupied Palestine
Kay La Nansa, Jenin Refugee Camp, Occupied Palestine
Khirbit Samra community, Occupied Palestine
Kufr Qadum community, Occupied Palestine
Maghayir al-Abeed community, Occupied Palestine
Makhul community, Occupied Palestine
Maythloun Girls School, Qabatia, Occupied Palestine
Ministry of Education, Occupied Palestine
Music, Art & Nature Festival, Occupied Golan
Ni'lin community, Occupied Palestine
Palestinian Performing Arts Network, Occupied Palestine
Palestinian Circus School, Birzeit, Occupied Palestine
Palestinian Heritage Center, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Occupied Palestine
Popular Struggle Coordination Committee, Nabi

Saleh, Occupied Palestine
Qabatia Blind School, Occupied Palestine
Qabatia Girls School, Occupied Palestine
Qabatia Municipality - Education Office, Occupied Palestine
Raba Boys School, Occupied Palestine
Raba Girls School, Occupied Palestine
Rakeez community, Occupied Palestine
Ras Al Ahmar community, Occupied Palestine
Rehabilitation Center, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Red Cross Society, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
South Hebron Hills Popular Committee, Palestine
Tamer Institute, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Thirsting for Justice, Occupied Palestine
Toot Ard, Occupied Palestine
Towra village council, Occupied Palestine
Tuba community, Occupied Palestine
UNRWA Girls School, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
WMCA, Occupied Palestine
Women's Center, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
Women's Cultural and Heritage Association, Jenin, Occupied Palestine
YMCA, Occupied Palestine
Yes Theatre, Bethlehem, Occupied Palestine
Occupied Palestine
USP Theatre Festival, Brazil
FLOW, Denmark
Follow the Women, Denmark
Studio Emad Eddin, Egypt
Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Germany
Teatri di Vita, Italy
Hotel Courage, Netherlands
Nordic Black Theatre, Norway
Tvibit, Norway

Kulta Youth Centre, Norway
Tromsø-Gaza twin city project, Norway
Stiftelsen Ferske Scener, Norway
NUFF, Norway
Hålogaland Teater, Norway
Rådstua, Norway
Filmpedagogerna, Sweden
Folkets Bio, Sweden
Folkteatern, Sweden
Gothenburg University, Sweden
Kultur i Väst, Sweden
Masthuggsteatern, Sweden
Riksteatern, Sweden
Department of Theatre Arts and Performance
Studies, Brown University, USA
Connecticut Repertory Theatre, USA
Georgetown University Davis Performing Arts
Center, USA
GlobalGiving, USA
Middle Eastern Children Alliance, MECA, USA
New York Theatre Workshop, USA
Samuel French, Inc., USA
Therapeutic Spiral Institute, USA
University of Connecticut, USA
Centre for Playback Theatre, USA

friends associations

As every year, The Freedom Theatre's Friends Associations have made an invaluable contribution to our work, through networking, fundraising and representation all over the world.

- Friends of The Freedom Theatre, Germany
- Frihetsteaterns Vänförening, Malmö and

Stockholm, Sweden

- Les Amis du Théâtre de la Liberté de Jénine, France
- Scottish Friends of The Freedom Theatre, Scotland
- The Friends of The Jenin Freedom Theatre, United States
- UK Friends of The Freedom Theatre, United Kingdom

staff

Abbas Momani, Photography Instructor
Adel Massarweh, Theatre Trainee
Adnan Nagnaghiye, Location and Stage Manager
Ahmad Al-Rokh, Actor
Ahmed Mattahen, Theatre Technician
Alan Wright, Production Stage Manager
Alia Alrosan, Applied Theatre Coordinator
Ashish Ghadiali, Film Unit Director
Beesan Ramadan, Project Coordinator
Ben Rivers, Applied Theatre Practitioner
Evleen Amer, Financial Director
Faisal Abu Alheja, Actor
Fidaa Ataya, Drama Instructor and Storyteller
Gary English, Artistic Director (until July)
Jacob Gough, Production Manager
Jameyla Kiswani, Executive Producer
Johanna Wallin, Communications Officer
Jonatan Stanczak, Managing Director
Kat Barclay, Company Administrator
Katja Kumar, Resource Development Coordinator

Lisa Yankowski, Resource Development Coordinator (until April)
Marco Espvall, Communications Assistant
Micaela Miranda, Director of the Acting School and Movement Teacher
Miriya Abu Ateyah, Housekeeper
Mohammad Assaadi, Theatre Technician
Mohammed Moawia, Graphic Designer and Filmmaker, Multimedia Coordinator
Mustafa Staiti, Filmmaker
Nabeel Al-Raei, Artistic Director (from August), Director and Teacher
Omar Kabeya, Accountant
Qaid Asaadi, Drama Instructor
Rania Wasfi, Program Coordinator
Rawand Arqawi, Acting School Coordinator
Rewa Attiyeh, Translator and Interpreter
Sami Saade, Theatre Technician
Suzan Wasfi, Filmmaking Trainee
Taiseer Khatib, Creative Writing Instructor

playback theatre troupe

Christin Hodali
Hanin Tarabeh
Hassan Taha
Hamoudi Dabdoub
Nagam Bsoul
Fidaa Ataya
Samer Abu Hantash

acting school students

Alaa Shehada
Anas Arqawi
Motaz Malhees
Saber Shreim

stage management trainees

Mohammed Yousef
Habeeb Al-Raei
Ibraheem Nagnaghiye

volunteers

The Freedom Theatre is fortunate to benefit from a large number of volunteers who contribute greatly to the theatre's work with their knowledge and inspiration. During 2013, the following people joined The Freedom Theatre:

Sayda Trujillo, USA
Agneta Regell, Sweden
Di Trevis, UK
Decca Muldowney, UK
Dominic Mudlowney, UK
Linn Reinius, Sweden
Gunnar Bergsten, Sweden
Habeeb AlRaei, Palestine
Jenny Skivens, UK
Laura Betancur, Colombia
Laura Wilson, USA

Louie Whitmore, UK
Zoe Lafferty, UK
Jessica Litwak, USA
Josh Perlstein, USA
Helga Edvindsen, Norway
Agne Regell, Sweden
Paulina Almeida, Portugal
Emily Smith, USA
Patricia Schneidewind, Germany
Peder Larsson, Sweden
Eva Lengquist, Sweden
Bex Tyrer, UK
Ashley Bond, UK
Kathy Gade, USA
Rosie Bryant, UK
Armando Da Rita, UK
Mairie Maguire, UK
Tamar Maya, USA
Felicity Wentzel, UK
Agnes Dudler, Germany
Stefan Flegelskamp, Germany
Ahmed Tobasi, Palestine
Ophelia Otto, Germany

board of directors

The Freedom Theatre's Board:

Abdelrahman Zubeidi
Ahed Abu Al Rob
Bahaa Abu AlHejah
Bilal Al-Saadi

Ghassan Jaber
Ibrahim Abu Khalifa
Imad Abu Hantash
Omar Nazzal
Reem Odeh

The Freedom Theatre Foundation Executive Board:

Avraham Oz
Dror Feiler
Henry Ascher
Judith Butler
Khulood Badawi, Chairperson
Luisa Morgantini
Salwa Nakkara
Suzanne Osten

The Freedom Theatre Foundation Honorary Board:

Abeer Kopty
Elias Khoury
Etienne Balibar
Howard Brenton
Michel Khleifi
Noam Chomsky
Salim Daw
Sana'a Badawi

looking ahead

In 2014:

Next year, we will work on several new productions; the children's play Magic Note and a Commedia Dell'Arte performance, among others.

Our current Theatre School students will graduate in April 2014.

We are also thrilled to welcome our new class of theatre students in 2014, who will embark on their three-year educational program in the performing arts.

Next year, we want to get on the road again with the Freedom Bus. The 2014 March Freedom Ride will join residents of the Jordan Valley and South Hebron Hills who are at risk of forced expulsion from their ancestral homelands.

In 2014 we will produce a playback theatre-inspired play that will grow out of stories from At-Tuwani in the South Hebron Hills.

Next year, we will publish new issues of Voices as well as a book of novels by our creative writing students.

5 new in-house theatre productions

12 000+ audience members

International tours and workshops reached **4000+**

Film screenings for **1000+**

Photography exhibition reached **4000+**

Voices youth magazine published **12 000** copies

Performances and workshops in **31** Palestinian communities

Workshops and trainings reached **180+**

34 volunteers at The Freedom Theatre, many more around the world

16 000+ on our mailing list

3900+ people liked our facebook page

60+ media channels featured The Freedom Theatre

7000+ visitors to the theatre



the freedom theatre

Generating a Cultural Resistance

The Freedom Theatre is a theatre and cultural centre in Jenin Refugee Camp, occupied Palestine. For the oppressed, the arts have always been a powerful tool against the oppressors. For the Palestinian people, artistic expression is an integrated part of the struggle for justice, equality and freedom. The Freedom Theatre contributes to this struggle by creating a platform for cultural resistance. We offer a unique programme of activities in performing arts and multimedia, including acting, psychodrama, playback theatre, filmmaking, photography and creative writing.

the freedom theatre
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