

ISRA-DRAMA 2016

Spotlight on Israeli Drama



המכון למחזאות ישראלית
ע"ש חנוך לוין (ע"ר)

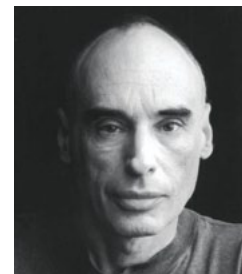
The Hanoch Levin Institute
of Israeli Drama (NPO)

ישראל דרמה
Spotlight on
Israeli Drama
מחזאות ישראלית
זדקוק על
מסדר ע"ש המכון למחזאות
ישראלית ע"ש חנוך לוין

Isra-Drama Events

	Thursday December 1	Friday December 2	Saturday December 3	Sunday December 4	Monday December 5
10:00		The Admission Jaffa Theatre			Perlstein Tmu-na Theatre
10:30				Symposium: Multi-Cultural Textures in Israeli Society Tmu-na Theatre	
11:30			PLAY-DATE Mingling Event Tmu-na Theatre		
12:30				Worst Case Scenario Tmu-na Theatre	Symposium: A Return to Classics The Cameri Theatre
14:00		Jehu Habima National Theatre	Practice Makes Perfect Tmu-na Theatre		
16:00				Symposium: Disability as a Creative Force Nalaga'at Center	
17:30	Welcome Reception				Good Tidings Tel Aviv Museum
18:00			On the Grill Cameri Theatre	Tectonia HaBait Theatre	
20:00	The King David Report Gesher Theatre				To the End of the Land Habima National Theatre
21:00		Ritza Tel Aviv Museum		Nefilim The Cameri Theatre	
21:30			Billy Schwartz Haifa Theatre		

The Hanoch Levin Institute of Israeli Drama



Hanoch Levin, 1943-1999, playwright, author, poet, and director.

Levin is without doubt the most important and prolific playwright in the history of Israeli theatre, an outstanding artist, whose oeuvre stands as one of the basic foundations of Israeli cultural history. He wrote more than 60 plays and published books of poetry and prose. Levin wrote in varied dramatic styles (political satires, comedies, tragicomedies, mythological plays, and tragedies) and directed only his own work. His plays are performed in many theatres in Israel and around the world. For further reading about Hanoch Levin: www.hanochlevin.com

The Hanoch Levin Institute of Israeli Drama was founded in 2000 by Noam Semel, Director General of the Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv, after the death of Hanoch Levin.

The Institute's goal is to promote Israeli drama and raise awareness of its crucial role in the formation of Israeli culture, both in Israel and abroad.

The Institute, in cooperation with the Playwrights Union of Israel, operates in the following fields:

Translation of Contemporary Israeli Drama Enterprise, for the purpose of exposing Israeli drama and encouraging its staging in theatres throughout the world. Ever since the Institute's establishment, Israeli plays are staged in major theatres around the world including: Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, England, Austria, Spain, Romania, Brazil, Sweden, Russia, Argentina, Cyprus, Estonia, Kenya, The Philippines, China, Serbia, Mexico and the United States of America.

Isra-Drama, Tel Aviv - Spotlight on Israeli Drama: Once a year, an event is produced to expose Israeli Drama to the international theatre community: festival directors, theatre directors, stage directors, artistic directors, dramaturges, translators and journalists. During one week in December, we present the best of Israel's original playwriting on stages all over the country, with foreign languages subtitles. Our guests are invited to panels and discussions with Israel's leading theatre creators, and have the opportunity to meet and talk with our playwrights.

Israeli Dramatist Website: dramaisrael.org

Our aims are:

- To make information on plays accessible to production bodies in Israel and abroad, and to encourage the translation of Israeli plays.
- To facilitate open access to texts, based on the premise that this is the appropriate and most efficient distribution method for our time.
- To maintain a central arena to discuss questions with which playwrights engage, to encourage grants, and translation and production possibilities around the world.
- To provide up to date news on Israeli drama: new productions, study days, calls for festivals, development plans.

For further information please contact:

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Welcome Greeting

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Artistic Committee, I am delighted to welcome you to Isra-Drama 2016.

Isra-Drama will provide you, both the first timer and the return participant, with an intensive encounter with interesting and bold Israeli plays, performance works and their artists. Isra-Drama will enable you, in essence, to experience both the on- and off-stage drama of Israeli theatre.

This year's program is composed of 13 full length performances. Many of them, including **Worst Case Scenario**, **Practice Makes Perfect** and **Tectonia**, consciously attempt to offer challenging theatrical languages. Many of the works grapple with myths of Israeli society and explore pockets of collective memory: why, what and how we choose to remember and reflect back on ourselves to ourselves. Some are firmly grounded in the biblical context, like **Jehu** and **The King David Report** and many are situated along the continuum of pre-State (including the Holocaust), 1948 and leading up to contemporary Israel, like **Good Tidings**, **Perlstein**, **Ritza** (Running), **The Admission**, **On The Grill** and **Nephilim** (Giants).

The three Symposia will be interactive thematic sessions on **The Multi-Cultural Textures in Israeli Society**, **Disability as a Creative Force** and **A Return to Classics**. In all three Symposia, scenes from a number of plays will be presented and discussed, along with the artists. Our famed **Play-Date** will provide you an opportunity to meet informally and network with Israeli playwrights and theatre artists.

For the artistic committee, creating the Isra-Drama program evoked many questions. While considering the plays themselves and that many of these works will be experienced by you with accompanying subtitles, one question resonated: what will be lost and found in translation? This question is exemplified in two ostensibly prosaic examples - the translations of two of the works you will see. The original Israeli musical Billy Schwartz translates seemingly straightforwardly as "Billy Schwartz." The title of David Grossman's book, which has been adapted for the stage, which can be translated literally as "A Woman Flees from Tidings," is in fact, translated from Hebrew as **To The End Of The Land**.

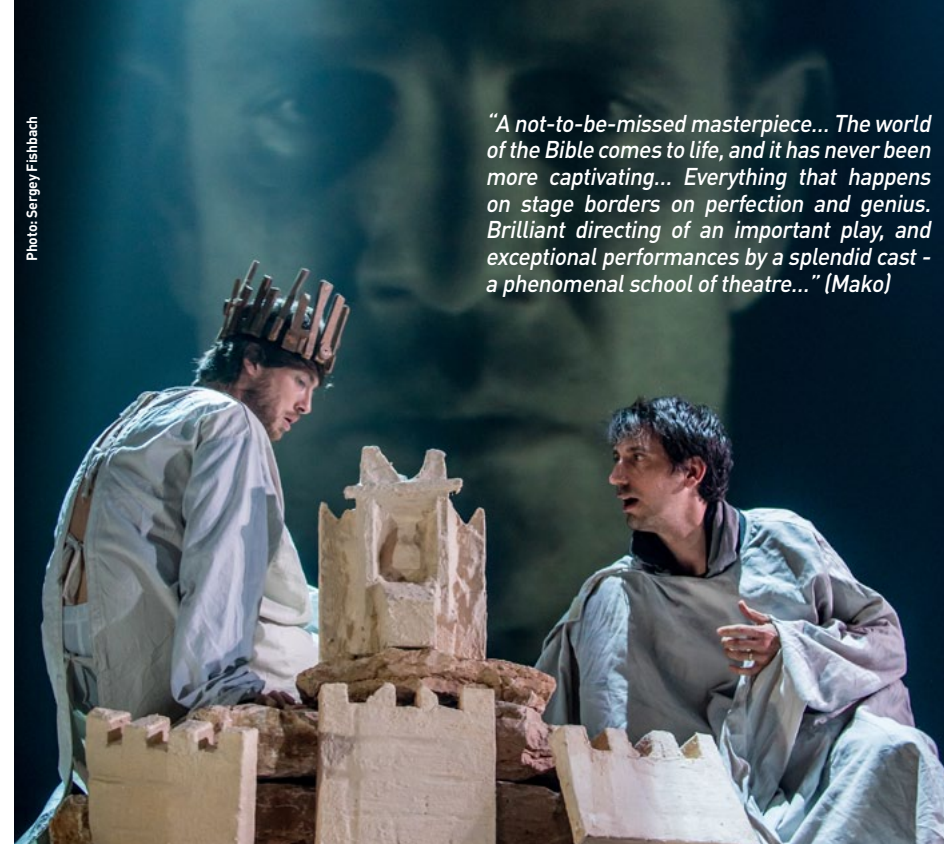
Beyond what the artists have lost and found, and hopefully, you will "find in translation" in experiencing all these works, these plays and their productions play an important role in reminding Israeli audiences that they can't flee from the tidings of Israel's complex and oft-painful historical memories, contentious contemporary events and their ramifications.

Israeli theatre artists and institutions are acutely discovering that they can't flee from a number of off-stage dramas, amid the tidings of recent national cultural policy directives. These are challenging and often dividing artists, theatre companies and various constituencies, raising 'real-time' dilemmas for the artists with regard to their civic, national and artistic responsibilities and ideological sensibilities. They are being compelled to make far reaching decisions regarding, for example, the geographical and political boundaries within which they will create and where they will perform their work.

Isra-Drama is both a festival and a market place, that is a rich and edifying artistic experience and at the same time, a practical vehicle to create more connections and collaborations between and among you and the many local theatre artists whom you'll meet and whose creative work you will experience. Enjoy and join the drama.

Dr. Lee Perlman

Chair, Isra-Drama 2016 Artistic Committee



"A not-to-be-missed masterpiece... The world of the Bible comes to life, and it has never been more captivating... Everything that happens on stage borders on perfection and genius. Brilliant directing of an important play, and exceptional performances by a splendid cast - a phenomenal school of theatre..." (Mako)

THE KING DAVID REPORT

By Roee Chen, after the novel by Stefan Heym >> Directed by Yevgeny Arye

THURSDAY, DEC. 1, 20:00 >> GESHER THEATRE

Who was King David? A shepherd or a gang leader? A criminal or a musician? Following the waves of rumors, his sexual choices, and the blood that flowed around him, his son Solomon demands his father's official biography be written.

King Solomon summons historian Ethan Ben Hoshai to the palace and asks him to write the book. If what he writes finds favor with the king it will be included in an anthology that was collated at the time and reached us under a more familiar name - the Bible.

This is a fascinating encounter between a lone intellectual and a palace brimming with intrigues that raises questions about how we relate our history to ourselves. A brilliant modern reflection on a hero striving for truth in the morass of corrupt government.

"A beautiful, interesting, and well crafted play that stimulates a rethinking of the Biblical story, as well as its modern implications..." (Yedioth Ahronoth)

Roee Chen is an author, playwright, translator and the Head of the Drama Dep. of Gesher Theatre (Tel-Aviv). He has published two books: *The Ink Horses* (2005) and *Tel-Aviv Tales* (2011). His short stories were translated to English, Russian, Ukraine, Yiddish. His original plays and adaptations include *Spirit of the Theatre*, (Gesher, 2016); *I, Don Quixote* (Gesher, 2015), *Alice*, inspired by L. Carroll (Gesher, 2015), *The Odyssey after Homer* (Gesher, 2014), *The Dybbuk*, *Enemies*, *The Jewbird*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *A Pigeon and a Boy*.



THE ADMISSION

By Motti Lerner >> Directed by Sinai Peter

FRIDAY, DEC. 2, 10:00 >> JAFFA THEATRE

The Admission is a play about memory and denial in the context of what Israelis call their "War of Independence" and the Palestinians call their "Nakba." The play portrays two families, one Jewish, one Palestinian. Some of the families' members are trying to reveal the events that took place during the 1948 war between Jews and Palestinians, hoping that a new discourse will heal their wounds. Some of them are trying to deny these events, hoping that peaceful co-existence will heal their wounds.

The play was first performed at Theater J in Washington DC in 2014. It was a nominee for the Helen Hayes award for the Best Play of the Year.

"The Admission boldly explores the opposing versions of calumny that Jews and Palestinians cultivate, competing archives of victimization that minimize the other side's scars and keep the wounds - and mistrust - forever fresh." (The Washington Post)

Motti Lerner, Playwright, often deals with political issues. Among his plays are: *Kastner*, *Pangs of the Messiah*, *Paula*, and *Pollard*, produced by the Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv; *Exile in Jerusalem* and *Passing The Love of Women* at Habima National Theatre, *Autumn* at the Beit Lessin Theatre, *Hard Love* at Haifa Theatre, and *The Hastening of The End* in the Khan Theatre, in Jerusalem.

Among his productions outside of Israel: *The Murder of Isaac* at Heilbronn Theater, Germany, and in Centerstage Theater, Baltimore, *Benedictus* at Golden Thread Theater, San Francisco, and Theater J, Washington, *Paulus* at Silk Road theater, Chicago, *Pangs of the Messiah*, and *The Admission* in Theater J, DC, and *After the War* in Mosaic Theater in DC. He wrote the books *According To Chekhov* and *The Playwright's Purpose*. He is a recipient of the best play award (1985), the Israeli Motion Picture Academy award for the best TV drama in 1995 and in 2004, The Israeli Prime Minister Award (1994) and the Landau prize (2014).

JEHU

By Gilad Evron >> Directed by Ilan Ronen

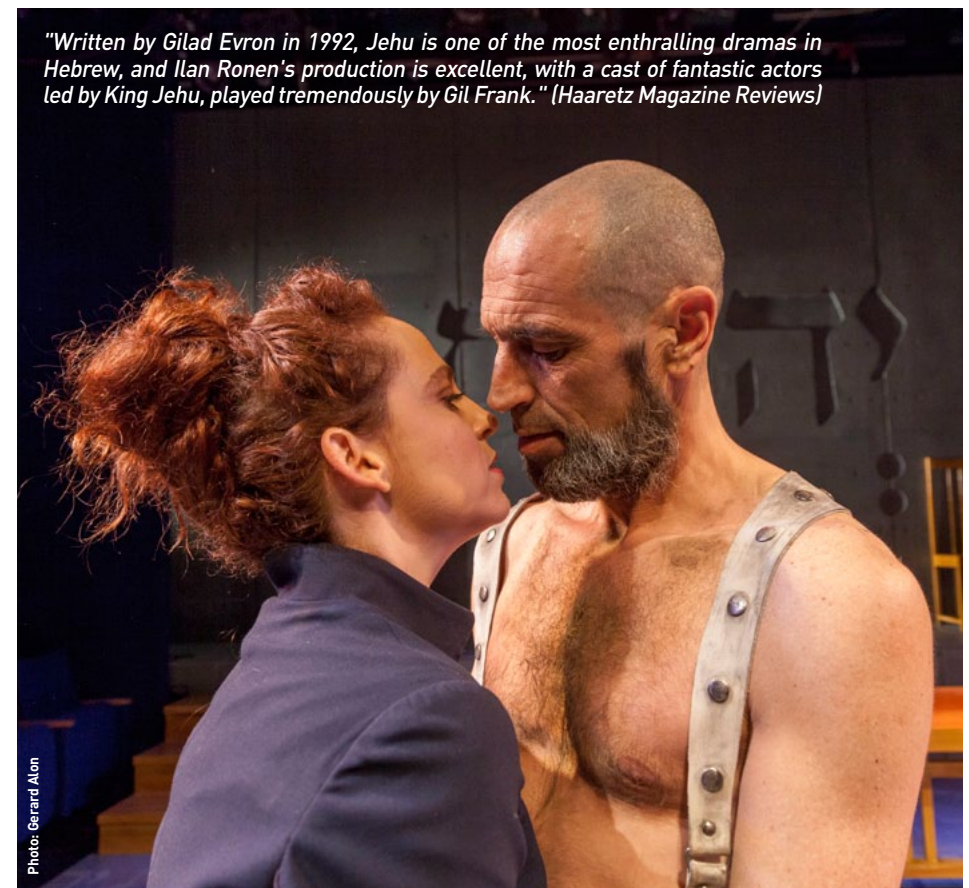
FRIDAY, DEC. 2, 14:00 >> HABIMA NATIONAL THEATRE

Jehu - A biblical morality play about the corruption entailed in the Occupation.

Jehu is set in Israel and is one of its most fascinatingly complex tales, only growing more relevant over time. It tells the story of a sick, power-hungry leader who rules over an occupied territory. Cruelty, violence, and rage triumph over everything, and citizens find refuge only in madness. The show plays with illusions, creating a false reality in which ropes pull the actors here and there, and stunning red paint spills from jars, mimicking the spilled blood of civilians.

Gilad Evron also wrote the plays *A Mountain Does Not Move*, *Sky*, *Staring Eye*, *Kane*, *Don Quixote's Claim*, *Other Places*, a collection of short stories, and *Bread*, a screenplay for television drama. Tel Aviv University has published a selection of Evron's plays. Evron had written *Ulysses on Bottles* prior to the sailing of the Marmara to Gaza.

His sudden death in October has left the Israeli theatrical scene shocked and bewildered.



"Written by Gilad Evron in 1992, Jehu is one of the most enthralling dramas in Hebrew, and Ilan Ronen's production is excellent, with a cast of fantastic actors led by King Jehu, played tremendously by Gil Frank." (Haaretz Magazine Reviews)



Photo: Gerard Alon

RITZA

After *Running by the Sea* by S. Yizhar > For choir, instrumentalists, and actors
Music by Avshalom Ariel >> Directed by Ruth Kanner

FRIDAY, DEC. 2, 21:00 >> TEL AVIV MUSEUM

A group of young people is setting out to Masada to sing facing the sunrise. The journey goes wrong and becomes a whirling struggle with time, wind, and sea. This magnificent story by S. Yizhar is re-deciphered in a musical-theatrical performance. Fourteen singers, musicians, and actors gather to create the sea of words and the whirlwinds of sounds that strive to join the moment in which time stood still around the ancient cliffs of the Dead Sea.

Ritza (Running) dives into the depths of the local essence, peeling away musical layers hidden within the story. Ancient echoes intertwine with howling loudspeakers, the murmur of water and salt whispers and growls from the depths of the lowest point on earth. The performers experiment with various styles of collective singing: travel songs, contemporary pop, trills, lamentations, and sing-alongs, with the participation of the audience.

Ruth Kanner has been the creator of experimental theatre since the early 80's. Ruth Kanner Theatre Group, founded in 1998, is a unique experimental theatre team. The group reexamines hegemonic Israeli narratives, interweaving storytelling, documentary texts, physical theatre, and visual imagery. The group has performed in Israel and worldwide. Along with the productions created with her group, Kanner is a guest director at Theater X-Cai, Tokyo, Japan, and at Penghao Theatre, Beijing. Kanner is a professor in the Department of Theater Arts at Tel Aviv University, and also presents workshops in Israel and worldwide. Kanner's projects have won important Israeli awards.

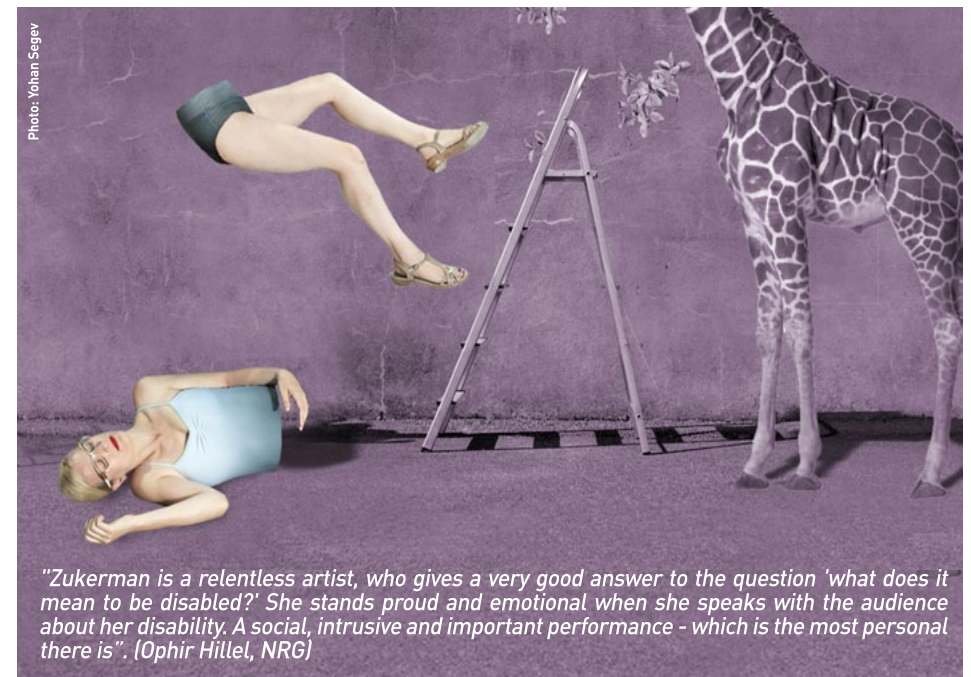
Avshalom Ariel received his BA with distinction from The Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University. He represented the Association of Israeli Composers at the 32nd festival of Asian Composers in Tokyo. Avshalom created original musical works and collaborated with Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Meitar, Musica Nova Group, and "Tzvil Meudcan" Festival. In 2011 he created "The Love Beach Girls' Choir," a full-length rock opera. Avshalom composed music for Ruth Kanner's works *Matka* and *Sakura No Sono Nippon* at the X-Cai Theater, Tokyo and for *Time of Metamorphosis*.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Written and Performed by Nataly Zukerman

SATURDAY, DEC. 3, 14:00 >> TMU-NA THEATRE

Practice Makes Perfect is an autobiographical theatre piece based on Nataly Zukerman's personal story. Nataly suffers from an unseen disability following a childhood accident. In her performance, we see Zukerman invite a running instructor, a professional dancer, her partner, friends, and family onto the stage to give her a series of exercises and lessons. Within the limitations of her disabled body, we witness the performer contend with everyday physical actions like getting up from the floor, falling, and walking. Through these mundane actions she is able to expose the intricate physical processes of our normative body that we take for granted. Winner of the "Golden Porcupine" award for Best Group Work.



"Zukerman is a relentless artist, who gives a very good answer to the question 'what does it mean to be disabled?' She stands proud and emotional when she speaks with the audience about her disability. A social, intrusive and important performance - which is the most personal there is". (Ophir Hillel, NRG)

Nataly Zukerman, a performance artist, has, in the past fifteen years, created various performances and participated in numerous theatre works around the world. Among them: *Practice Makes Perfect*, for which she won Best Performer (Acco Festival of Alternative Israeli Theatre 2015), *A Family Tree* (part of "A Broken Phone" event, Tzavta Theatre, Israel), *The Other Body*, for which she won Best Performer at the Israeli Fringe Awards 2014 (created together with Atalia Branzburg, Tmuna Theatre), *Talking to the Bartender* (performed in various bars, directed together with Lechay Beckerman), *Willo&Robo* (Wrap House, Norway), *Are You Cold?* (The National Review of Live Art, Scotland), *It All Depends On Who Plays The Leading Part* (Tramway Theatre and The Edinburgh Fringe Festival).

She is also a lecturer, a freelance dramaturge, and one of the initiators and artistic directors of "Talooy Bamakom - A Site Specific Festival" in Tel Aviv. She holds a BA in Education and Directing from The Kibbutzim College of Education, and another BA in Performance from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She has just completed her MA in Theatre Studies from Tel Aviv University.

ON THE GRILL

Written and Directed by Dror Keren

SATURDAY, DEC 3, 18:00 >> THE CAMERI THEATRE OF TEL AVIV

"It's a holiday," Rochale says to her husband Zvika before everybody arrives, "and I want it to be a lively occasion." And, indeed, in the yard of their house in a kibbutz in the Jezreel Valley, everything is ready for the Independence Day party. The lawn has seen better days. So has the family... Their son, who grew up here and left, is home for the holiday, on a visit from Berlin with a guest his parents didn't expect. And he, who hasn't been here in four years, doesn't expect to see his grandmother so frail and attended by a foreign carer, nor his mythological lover, who will drop in for a surprise visit. On the home front, as on the front, there is tension. The jets flying in the Valley skies and the news broadcasts from the other room "challenge" everyone present... Into the small hours, in the smoke of the barbecue grill and the good old songs, everything will come to the surface. And things will become very "lively"...

In *On the Grill*, Dror Keren, a native of the Jezreel Valley, returns to the landscapes of his childhood, and on one highly charged night, Israel's Independence Day, he brings about a confrontation between parents and children, between the founding generation and the younger generation, between the home we dreamed of and what it is today...



"Polished performances with two magnificent musical comediennes..."
(Michael Handelzalts, Gallery, Haaretz)

"The musical presents a humorous and delightful reflection of effortless modern Israeliness... An Israeli musical experience..." (Nana 10)

Photo: Daniel Kaminski



BILLY SCHWARTZ

By Ohad Hitman and Shirili Deshe >> Directed by Daniel Efrat

SATURDAY, DEC. 3, 21:30 >> HAIFA MUNICIPAL THEATRE

An urban musical-comedy about self-fulfillment and true love.

Billy Schwartz is a lackluster secretary in an accounting firm who dreams of a better life. She spends her time answering phone calls at the office and being oppressed by her mother, who insists on her marrying at any cost. But all this changes when a top celebrity, Jonathan Gur, enters Billy's life and asks her out. Billy falls head over heels for Jonathan, who proposes to her. But on their wedding day she realizes that life is not like a Disney movie. She finds herself at a crossroad, and everything she ever thought about herself and about love suddenly takes on new meaning.

Ohad Hitman Musician, singer, and playwright. He holds an MA in Composition from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. He has released three solo albums, and written hundreds of songs for himself as well as for many other singers; he composes for theatre and dance, and is a senior teacher at several academic institutions. He won first prize in the Festival of Musicals 2013, and the 2015 Israel Theatre Award for best musician for his musical "Billy Schwartz". He is currently developing his second musical, and is due to release his fourth solo album.

Shirili Deshe specializes in physical theatre. For the past twenty years she has been acting, directing and writing for the stage and for TV. She directed the successful International Indian show *Bharati* and *Bharati 2*. Shirili is a graduate of the physical theatre school Jacques Lecoq-Paris.



"International theatre at its best, really!" (Chris Cresswell, Fringe Review)
 "WCS will probably be the new cult theatre show." (Zvi Goren, Habama)

WORST CASE SCENARIO 23 Thoughts about Conflict

By Danielle Cohen Levy and Namer Golan >>
 In conjunction with Gil Lavi and Tomilio Munz

SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 12:30 >> TMU-NA THEATRE

An expert juggler, an acrobat and dancer, a musician and inventor, and a brave warrioress present an archive of 23 thoughts about conflict they collected in the course of one year. Each of them happened in reality. The show brings a unique point of view of personal and daily conflicts on various issues, meaningful or common, from the perspective of life in the Middle East.

Worst Case Scenario premiered at the Acco Fringe Festival 2015, winning three awards: a special award for a distinct artistic signature, best lighting design, and unique soundtrack award. Winner of the "Golden Porcupine" award for Best Group Work. Its international premiere was at the Brighton Fringe Festival 2016.

Danielle Cohen Levy is a director, playwright and performer. She holds an M.F.A in Theatre from the Tel Aviv University and is the winner of several scholarships in directing, writing, and acting. Her works are well received by audiences and critics alike.

Namer Golan is a juggler, performer and director. An autodidact who studied juggling, clowning, and puppet-theatre, and is currently researching the history of circus and the mathematics of juggling.

The collaboration between the two was born out of their mutual interest in creating contemporary circus, and a documentary performance that would deal with real-life issues. In 2014, together with Tomilio Munz and Gil Lavi, they formed the WCS Company and have since performed their show numerous times to critical acclaim and audience popularity.

TECTONIA

Created and directed by Shiri Journo

SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 18:00 >> HAYADIT THEATRE (presented at HaBait Theatre)

Capsules of memory and fragments of life that disintegrate and are then rebuilt, create private and universal worlds in a dynamic stage set. Hierarchies, old orders, and a world of fixed concepts are increasingly undermined, lose their relevance, and change form toward a new possibility. A different kind of multidimensional and thought-provoking viewing experience.

Tectonia has been nominated for four "Golden Porcupine" awards at the Fringe Theatre Awards in 2016 and won the award for Best Theatrical Language.

"Definitely one of the refreshing theatrical experiences we have seen here for some time" (Yuval Ben Ami, Achbar Halr)

"An intriguing theatrical performance that examines disintegration and uncertainty in an original way" (Zvi Goren, Habama website)

"An unconventional, surprising, and interesting artistic expression" (Ruvik Feigin)

Shiri Journo is an actress/creator, teacher, director, and artistic director at Hayadit Theatre, founded in 2002. Member of the Family Table Theatre Lab (1999-2002) and the Shlomi Center for Alternative Theatre since its establishment, she is a graduate in theatre directing from Kibbutzim College of Education and "Hamiklat" in Neve Tzedek (1996-1999). She has participated in the Acco Festival of Alternative Theatre, the Israel Festival, and the Sibiu International Theatre Festival in Romania. She directed the following Hayadit Ensemble productions: *Waiting for a Miracle* (2007); *Where Has the Joy Gone* (2008); *Sunset Hall* (2009); *Tectonia* (2011, and a revival in 2016); *Three Fingers Under the Navel* (2013); *Orphans* (2015); and numerous other productions with graduates of Hayadit Theatre's School for the Actor/Creator.





Photos: Eli Katz

NEPHILIM

By Yonatan Levy and Boaz Lavi >> Directed by Yonatan Levy

SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 21:00 >> HAZIRA – PERFORMANCE ART ARENA
(presented at the Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv, Cameri 4)

Nephilim (Giants) is a condensed trilogy presenting three Israeli celebrities, representing three consecutive decades, each observing Israel from the outside. The first part shows Menachem Begin's historical visit at Mt. Beaufort, at the onset of the 1982 Lebanon War. The second part, during the 1990s, follows an Israeli judoka striving for a medal in Turkmenistan. The third part worships supermodel Bar Refaeli and the eyewear brand, Carolina Lemke, she partly owns, with its everlasting and imposing campaign at Ben Gurion airport.

Yonatan Levy (1974) is an Israeli writer, director and educator. His works are translated into English, German, Polish, and Czech, and were shown in venues such as the Schaubühne and Teater der Welt festival. Previous Works: *Saddam Hussein: A Mystery Play*; *General Rafal and the Sea*.

PERLSTEIN

Created By Nur Fibak, Jonathan Ron, Hagar Tishman, Gome Fryd, Rotem Blum, Dania Aminof, Noa Wagner, Nathan Ngemba

MONDAY, DEC. 5, 10:00 >> TMU-NA THEATRE

Perlstein is the name of a unique project by Dafni Perlstein, a young, ambitious - and fictional- Israeli artist. She has decided to use the theatrical platform in order to investigate in an artistic manner the Holocaust, which is an integral part of her life as a granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor. In order to do so, she invited a group of young artists from all around the world for a residency of two weeks in Tel Aviv. *Perlstein* is the result of that workshop.

The show starts as planned, but as soon as the artistic numbers get more and more provocative, tasteless or just bizarre - the problems pop out. Technical, social, and artistic issues begin to arise, until Dafni, who cannot take it any longer, stops the show. She is the victim of her own attempt to take the thing that is so important to her, and to abuse it in an artistic way.

Dafni Perlstein is us, the next artistic generation in Israel that is struggling to find its own voice, in a world where everything has already been said and done, and yet many things are still not legitimate. Through Dafni and her attempt to deal with the Holocaust in a creative way, we try to figure out our relationship with the boundaries of art and our society.

The show and the artists are all fictional, and were developed by the group in a communal process, with no role division. All the actors wrote the show and directed it together. That was another decision meant to question the boundaries and titles we usually take for granted. The show premiered in the Acco International Fringe Festival, 2015.



Photo: Arale the sizzling shutter



Photo: Avi Golan

GOOD TIDINGS

A stage work by Naomi Yoeli >> Stage concept: Hadas Ophrat
In collaboration with Ruth Kanner Theatre Group-Actors

MONDAY, DEC. 5, 17:30 >> TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART

It all started with a pile of wet papers written with smeared blue ink, which survived a leak in the water pipes of an apartment in Jerusalem... It turned out that these were family letters, written for over seven years - from 1934 to 1941- and sent from Poland to a family member who emigrated to Palestine.

This body of letters is adapted and performed by Naomi Yoeli, an independent director and performer, and by the actors of the prominent Ruth Kanner Theatre Group. The performance "reads" the letters, decoding the "between the lines" emotions and yearnings of the family members, while offering more than a glimpse into the private history of one family during a critical period in the "big" history, before and at the beginning of WWII.

Born in Jerusalem, **Naomi Yoeli** is an independent theatre-director, performer, and researcher, and has been involved in many aspects of theatre, including dramaturgy and playwriting, as well as puppetry and storytelling. Naomi holds a PhD (Summa cum laude) in Theatre Studies from Tel Aviv University and has been researching and teaching "Ceremonies as Theatrical Phenomena". In her performances Naomi investigates private histories, memories, and traumas vs. the "big histories", collective memory, rituals, and ceremonies.

Selected works: *Aunt Frieda: The Museum* (2006), *Between Calendars* (2008), *The Table: Class Work* (2010), *Explosive: War Tourism* (2011), *My Ex Step Mother in Law* (2015).

Awards: Best performance, *Aunt Frieda: The Museum*, Acco Festival 2006; The Art and Culture Landau Award for Theatrical Excellence, 2008; Best Fringe Actress, Playwright and Performance, *Between Calendars*, 2009; Tel Aviv Rosenblum Award for Theatrical Excellence, 2012; Honorary Fellowship, The Open University of Israel, 2016.



Photo: Gerard Alon

TO THE END OF THE LAND

After the novel by David Grossman >> Written and Directed by Hanan Snir

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 20:00 >> HABIMA NATIONAL THEATRE

This is a great love story between Ora, Avram, and Ilan, who meet in a hospital at the age of 16, in the midst of the Six Day War. This random encounter ties them together and shapes their fate, in light of the fragility and anxiety of Israeli existence.

35 years later, Ora, whose combat soldier son goes off on a military operation, runs away from home in order to avoid the torment of awaiting the tragic news that is bound to arrive: by refusing to accept the news, Ora hopes she might be able to prevent it and save her son. On her way to the Galilee, she almost kidnaps Avram, her childhood sweetheart, and for days and nights she travels with him across the country on foot, doing the only thing she can do to protect her son - she recounts his life story, as if through the power of this story alone she will keep him and herself safe from the dreaded news.

To the End of the Land is a story about love and unrequited love, about friendship and generosity between men, about parenthood and giving, and mostly about "family work" - the almost heroic effort to maintain the delicate fabric of a family, in face of the violence and terror, but also the beauty and warmth, of Israeli reality.



Photos: Eldar Maestro

SYMPOSIUM 1: MULTI-CULTURAL TEXTURES IN ISRAELI SOCIETY

THE MARK OF CAIN

Written and Directed by Moshe Malka >> The Israeli-Ethiopian Hullegeb Theatre

A family of Ethiopian origin attempts to cope with everyday hardships despite the social stain on one of its members. The father decides to abandon the family and return to Ethiopia, leaving the mother and her three children on a slippery slope on which their personal stories intersect until the tragic end. The play consists of realistic materials, and is performed in a minimalist and restrained physical theater style.

The Mark of Cain was created under the influence of the turbulent events the Ethiopian community underwent in the past year. The protest, the rage, and the pain that erupted due to the status of Ethiopians in Israel, and the police's violent attitude toward them, greatly influenced the creation and writing of the play. It was also influenced by the story of the young Ethiopian Yosef Salamsa, the circumstances of whose death remain a mystery. This is a parable about Ethiopian society attempting to establish its life in Israel, but repeatedly forced to contend with prejudices that place numerous obstacles on its path.

The work process on the project, from the idea and writing stage up to formulating the play, lasted about eight months. The cast, all drama school graduates yearning for recognition and work in theatre, found a home in the Hullegeb Theatre in Confederation House. It is actually the only theatre in Israel that enables actors of Ethiopian origin to be who they are without stereotyping and predictable casting.

The Israeli-Ethiopian Hullegeb Theatre is a social identity laboratory where materials are examined during rehearsals, such as connection with the Jewish people, social status, and belonging.



HEELA – THIRD PART OF THE TRILOGY *ACCO MY LOVE*

Created by Smadar Yaaron >> Co-creators: Dr. Nataly Turjeman, Maisara Masri

The third and last part in the trilogy *Acco My Love* (based on *Um Mohammed* and *Nawal Zini*) encounters the artist with a group of young Palestinians, residents of Acco, who study theatre with Maisara Masri, a member of Acco Theatre Ensemble and one of the founders of the theatre. Heela, a popular word among the Arab fishermen, means "forward."

The work that came out of this meeting raises many questions and complex feelings. A deep frustration as a result of the need to feel a part of this land, fear of the future due to the situation in the present, criticism and a strong connection to the place, the landscape, the Palestinian heritage and history, and an open perspective to accept the other.

This bond is just as powerful as the connection of the Jews to the Land of Israel.

Some of the relatives of the children live in Gaza and in the West Bank. The children, just like adult Palestinian society in Israel, often find themselves in paradoxical situations.



Smadar Yaaron is a multidisciplinary creator, one of the founders of the Acco Theatre Center (1985), who has significantly contributed to the unique nature of the Center and to its methodology. She engages in the development of artistic encounters between extended genres of the performing arts such as music, dance, and intercultural exchange.

She is the artistic director of the Dance Greenhouse, and the Acco Theatre Center's Arabic Monologue Masrahid Festival, and was a co-director of the Acco Festival of Alternative Israeli Theatre together with Moni Yosef (2008-2012) and artistic director of the Tools Testing Festival 2013.

She teaches at Western Galilee College and at the Academy of Performing Arts, and frequently performs her works. She is a recipient of numerous awards, to name a few, the Mifal Hapayis Michael Landau's Performing Arts Actress Award, Best Play Award at the Du Oman Festival (Habima), and the Actress Award (Zurich Festival).

Maisara Masri was born in Acco. He joined the Acco Theatre Center in 1987, he has been acting and directing in different shows produced by the theatre. In addition, he teaches acting in several schools, and has a busy career in television and cinema.

Nataly Turjeman (PhD) was born in Acco, Israel. A lecturer in Haifa University's Graduate School of Creative Arts Therapies. She is a drama therapist and a stage director.

THE PARASITE

Written and Directed by Vera Berzak Schneider

In 1964, in Soviet Russia, the Nobel Prize-winning poet Joseph Brodsky was tried on a charge of "parasitism" because his work was considered an insufficient contribution to the Communist state.

The show consists of different scenes from the lives of Soviet citizens between the 1930s and the 1960s, based on documentary, literary, and personal materials.

These scenes raise questions regarding relations between the citizen and the state, and freedom of speech and thought – issues that are as relevant today as they were in the past.

The show was created by the actors Yoav Sadowsky, Dorin Mendel, Orianne Gliksberg Partem, and Racheli Ankor, and designed by Adi Brodsky. The theatre language combines elements of puppetry, performance, and animation.

Born in Russia in 1987, **Vera Berzak Schneider** now lives and creates in Israel. She graduated from the School of Visual Theatre in 2012, and from Bamat Meizag, where she studied performance, in 2013. A multidisciplinary artist who works as a writer, director, and performer, she is a member of Performance Ensemble Miklat 209.

Among her works: *A Stranger Guest* (Acco Theatre Festival 2013), *False Awakening* (ClippaAduma Festival 2013), *Killing Time* (Gerard Bechar, 2014), *Kaleidoscope* (Haifa Art Museum, 2016), and *Breathing Backwards* (premiere in December 2016).



A STORY YET UNTOLD

Written and performed by Raheeq Haj Yehia Suleiman >>

Directed and Designed by Hisham Suleiman



She was still a child and felt like a grown woman... Adult males had abused her body and made her feel dirty and in sin... Today, after she has "locked up" the past, cruel and brutal memories have captured her in torture and trauma. The only safe corner she could ever find was being with her therapist – Nadia; there she speaks out her "truth"; without shame, lies, feelings of stupidity or guilt... here, she copes with fears, hesitation, crisis and anxieties, turning her inner darkness into light. The play is based on a true story of an Arab sexually-abused victim.

The play won best directing and best play prizes in Morocco's Alcázar Alcbir, as well as an honorable mention at Theatrenetto Festival 2016 in Tel Aviv. Winner of the "Golden Porcupine" award for Best Performance in a One-Person Show.

This production of the Ensemble Fringe Theater of Nazareth is in collaboration with The Multi Services Center for Treatment of Sexual Assault Victims in Nazareth.

Hisham Suleiman is an actor and director, as well as an acting coach and a writer. Graduate of the Yoram Levinstein Drama Studio, he is the founder and the artistic director of the Ensemble Fringe Theatre of Nazareth. He appeared in numerous films, TV series and theatre productions.

Raheeq Haj Yehia Suleiman is a graduate of Haifa University in Art Therapy. She is also a qualified therapist in psychodrama, and holds a B.A. from Jerusalem University in Theatre Studies and in Arab Literature. As a therapist she works with drug addicts, victims of physical abuse, and more.

SYMPOSIUM 2: DISABILITY AS A CREATIVE FORCE

THROUGH THE SPIRIT

Written and Directed by Moshe Malka

A new show with an ensemble of deaf-blind actors (with dual disability).

The government has decided to conduct a scientific study that examines the capabilities of people with disabilities. Are they fit for a job that is not especially optimized for them? Can they integrate into the economy and increase productivity?

During their attempts to join the workforce, we are slowly exposed to the desires, dreams, struggles, and compromises of people with disabilities.

In its new original production, Nalaga'at Theatre reveals the complex processes that occur on stage. It uses an alternative approach that combines visual and physical theatre with circus arts and tactile sign language. This theatrical language puts the deaf-blind in the center and along with their interpreters and seeing-hearing actors, enables them to become a communicative work of art.

Moshe Malka is the creator of "Zitz", a visual-physical theatre language that breaks the artist's rational boundaries and enables him to create from the subconscious. Malka is the founder of the Israeli-Ethiopian Hullegeb Theatre Ensemble, and is its current artistic director and writer. He has vast experience as an actor and director in Israeli theaters, receiving many awards for his groundbreaking art, especially in the field of street art.



THE DISABLED

By Gur Koren >> Directed by Gilad Kimhi | Beit Lessin Theatre

A theater group of people with disabilities does not manage to raise the funds it requires to represent Israel at a theater festival for the disabled in Macedonia. Help comes from an unlikely quarter in the form of a crime family with drug smuggling interests that has to ship an especially large consignment to... Macedonia. The impossible partnership between the criminals and the disabled actors – who are in the middle of rehearsing "Romeo and Juliet" – leads to some zany and absurd situations, with the criminals looking for a way to smuggle the drugs while 'the disabled' are convinced that they've met the kindest people in the world.

The plot takes an awkward turn when the crime boss's son falls in love with the beautiful actress playing Juliet. A surprising comedy packed with thrills, imagination, and love of man.

The Disabled received two Israeli Theatre Academy Awards in 2015: Best Comedy of the Year and Gur Koren was nominated as Best Playwright of the Year.

"A surprising, witty, thought-provoking, and exciting play... Gur Koren tells a stage story with sharp and surprising turns between out-and-out farce and touching moments of beauty and poetry..." (Haaretz)

"A funny, brilliant, human, and clever play..." (London Net)

Gur Koren also wrote *The Actress* (Beit Lessin Theatre), and wrote and acted in *Five Kgs of Sugar* (Gesher Theater), which participated in the New Writing Festival in London and was staged in Poland. Writing and directing: *Shoot in the Head*, *Sharon Semo the Killer*, *Me and My Soul*, *A Play for Family Day*, *Perjury*. Adaptation of the plays: *The Morality of Mrs. Dulska*, *Captains Courageous*, *The Seagull*, *Trees Die Standing*, *The Belgrade Trilogy*, *The Robbers*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Today's a Holiday*, *The Lower Depths*. Directing at drama schools includes: *The French Quarter*, *The Crucible*, *The Shadow*, *Stars in the Morning Sky*, and others. He also Directed *A Winter Wedding* by Hanoch Levin, a special project for drama students with people from the Center for the Blind and Vision-impaired.



SYMPOSIUM 3: A RETURN TO CLASSICS: EARLY ISRAELI DRAMA REVISITED

An Encounter with Playwrights of Early Israeli Dramas currently appearing on the Israeli stage, along with video clippings from a number of these productions.

Plays for discussion include, among others:

Requiem and *Labour of Life* by Hanoch Levin

The American Princess by Nissim Aloni

Ghetto by Joshua Sobol

The Banality of Love by Savion Liebrecht

Good Ending and *Oh! God* by Anat Gov

IT'S NOT ABOUT EBISU

Ebisu Sign Language Theatre Laboratory >> Directed by Atay Citron

Ebisu Sign Language Theatre Laboratory is part of the Grammar of the Body (GRAMBY) Research Project led by University of Haifa Linguistics Professor Wendy Sandler. Most of the nine Lab actors are Deaf, and all use Israeli Sign Language (ISL) on a daily basis. We use ISL combined with expressive gestures and physical theatre in order to develop a form of visual theatre that is aimed at both deaf and hearing spectators (with no interpreting during the show). Our work is based on improvisation. We play with the mimetic component of ISL, highlighting facial expressions and body language, and experimenting with gestures that are normally performed and understood by hearing and deaf people alike. The theatrical material we devise is poetic rather than literary, humorous and physical. We draw our inspiration from Deaf Culture and from the work of 20th century theatre-experimentalists who were searching for a theatrical language that does not depend entirely on dialogue and spoken word.

Ebisu is one of the Seven Gods of Fortune in Japanese Shinto belief and the only deaf god in world religions and mythologies.

Our first show, *It's Not About Ebisu*, opened in Tel Aviv and Haifa in February 2016 and had a successful New York tour in September. It's a fantasy about a hero that was born in the forest and raised by animals. As a young man, he sets off on a journey that eventually brings him to the city, where he encounters alienation and violence, confronts the embodiment of evil, and wins over it thanks to special powers given to him by a shaman. The piece was conceived and directed by Atay Citron, in collaboration with the actors.

Atay Citron, director of *Ebisu*, is associate professor at the Department of Theatre, the University of Haifa, and the Department's former chair. He is the founding director of the Department's full-time academic training program for medical clowns. He studied the work of clown doctors, ritual clowns, and shamans around the world. He is a co-editor of *Performance Studies in Motion* (Bloomsbury, 2014), and served as artistic director of the Bat-Yam International Street Theatre Festival, the Acco Festival of Alternative Israeli Theatre, and the School of Visual Theatre, Jerusalem.



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SPOTLIGHT ON ISRAELI DRAMA, 2016**

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Your Notes...



**The Hanoch Levin Institute
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