

Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz
Kurfürstendamm 153
10709 Berlin

Berlin, May 2nd, 2011

Open Letter
Something is rotten in the Apartheid state Israel
Open Letter to the Schaubühne
No staging for the Apartheid state!

Dear Mr. Ostermeier,
dear Dr. Barner,
dear Mr. Veit,
dear ladies and gentlemen,

After our meeting on March 31st, we now ask you to cancel your participation with the staging of 'Hamlet' at the 50. anniversary of the Israel-Festival.

With your participation in this propaganda-event of the Israeli government ¹ you support effectively Israeli policy of apartheid, colonisation and occupation against the indigenous Palestinian population. ²

This will be the signal you give to the Palestinian, Israeli and international public

Considering the fact that by now all international media realise that the Israeli government uses every international staging to bluff the veneer of normality and to hide its permanent violation of human rights and international law. With your staging in Jerusalem you are part of this policy. ³

The municipality of Jerusalem, which decided in 1982 to adopt the festival as its own, is part of the occupying power and therefore part of its policy. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory / Special Focus East Jerusalem wrote in its report of March 23, 2011 that the restrictive politics of the occupying power undermines in the long-term the presence of the indigenous Palestinian population. ⁴

¹ <http://www.israel-festival.org.il/2010/index.asp?module=Israel-Festival&page=21>

² <http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ha/cspca/cspca.html>

³ Yuval Ben Ami „About face “ Haaretz, 20.09.2005

Nathaniel Popper „Israel Aims To Improve Its Public Image , FORWARD, The Jewish Daily 14. 10. 2005

Eitan Bronner “After Gaza, Israel Grapples with Crisis of Isolation” NYT, 18. 03.2009

Ben White “ Behind Brand Israel: Israel's recent propaganda efforts”, The Electronic Intifada, 23.02.2010

⁴ http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_jerusalem_report_2011_03_23_web_english.pdf

Your planned visits at the Freedom Theatre in Jenin ⁵ and at the Al Kasaba Theatre in Ramallah ⁶ do not undo your staging at the Israel-Festival. They show instead, that you do not realise that you are not welcome if you allow to get exploited by Israeli cultural policy

In your description of "Hamlet" you write

..."With its central paradox of the incapacitated protagonist, Hamlet remains today a valid analysis of the intellectual dilemma between complex thinking and political action. Shakespeare serves up over twenty characters, allowing a political biosphere to arise out of differing interests and intrigue. In Ostermeier's production, just six actors will play all these characters, constantly changing roles. Hamlet's progressive loss of touch with reality, his disorientation, the manipulation of reality and identity are mirrored in the acting style, which takes pretence and disguise as its basic principle..."⁷

But you are not Hamlet: As those who are responsible for the Berlin Schaubühne you are as well as your actors not imprisoned in the paradox of incapable agents

The solution of the intellectual dilemma between complex thinking and political action is not an irreconcilable contradiction.

In the contrary to Hamlet you have the choice:

On the one hand you can ignore all the systematic violations of human rights of the governmental sponsors and become a tool of Israeli Hasbara-policy.

On the other hand you are able to decide to follow the call the Palestinian civil society together with over 170 NGO published in 2005:

No institutional visits in Israel until Israel fully complies with the precepts of international law

More and more artist and intellectuals have done so (e.g. Roger Waters ⁸) with a clear confession to the universal human rights, compliance with the international law and an open solidarity with the call of the Palestinian civil society 2005. ⁹

Berlin Academic Boycott
BDS Gruppe Berlin
Kritische Juden und Israelis

Contact: redaktion@bds-kampagne.de

⁵ <http://www.thefreedomtheatre.org/>

⁶ <http://www.alkasaba.org/english.php>

⁷ http://schaubuehne.de/en_EN/program/repertoire/351755

⁸ <http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=1495> / <http://pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=315>

⁹ <http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>

This open letter was first supported by the following organisations and individuals
(May 1st, 2011):

AK Nahost Berlin (Working Group Middle East, Berlin)

AK Nahost Hagen (Working Group Middle East, Hagen)

The Alternative Information Center, www.alternativenews.org/english/

Arbeiterfotografie Bundesverband (Workers' Photography Federal Association)

Berliner Bündnis für Gaza (Berlin alliance for Gaza)

Collectif Judéo-arabe et citoyen pour la paix, www.pplateforme-palestine.org/Collectif-judeo-arabe-et-citoyen_143

Coordination de l'Appel de Strasbourg pour une Paix juste au Proche Orient,
www.eutopic.lautre.net/coordination/

Deutsch-Palästinensische Gesellschaft e.V. (German-Palestinian Association)

FRAUEN IN SCHWARZ, München (Women in Black, Munich)

Frauen in Schwarz, Wien (Women in Black, Vienna)

Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods, UK (J-BIG)

www.sites.google.com/site/jewsagainstracisizionism/jews-for-boycotting-israeli-goods---sboycott-divestment-sanctions-against-apartheid-israel

Kritische Jüdische Stimme, Österreich (Critical Jewish Voice, Austria)

Mütter gegen den Krieg Berlin-Brandenburg (Mothers against war Berlin-Brandenburg)

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Andreas Neumann

David Nir, Israeli citizen, Tel Aviv

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Ellen Rohlf, Leer, Mitglied von Gush Shalom

Prof. Dr. Werner Ruf

Angelika Schneider

Angelica Seyfrid, Berlin

Hanja Van Dyck

Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi, London

followed by further signatories

Aachener Friedenspreis e.V.

Palästinakomitee Stuttgart

Erhard Arendt (Das Palästina Portal, Dortmund)

Galit Altshuler (member of Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East)
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www.bds-kampagne.de / translation)