



The Israeli Centre of the ITI

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Report of the Israeli ITI Centre – July 2022 – April 2024

Due to the inhuman massacre perpetrated by the terror organization HAMAS, on October 7, 2023, against 1250 Israeli citizens of the Gaza Strip border settlements and nature-party participants (which included murdering children in view of their parents and vice versa, beheading, rape, mutilation, kidnapping of 240 Israelis and foreigners, and so on) – and the ensuing and still ongoing war to annihilate this organization (that uses the Gaza Strip population, as well as schools, mosques and hospitals as shields for the terrorists), as well as the relentless attack of the Hezbollah organization from Lebanon on the Northern part of Israel which led to the evacuation of some 200,000 citizens (together with refugees from Israel's south) – The Israeli Centre, like all cultural institutions in Israel, had to postpone and suspend projects that were unrelated to the situation for several months. In addition, governmental cultural support has been drastically cut.

Hereby our executed and suspended activities:

- **Zoom meetings of the IPF, in collaboration with the Israeli ITI Center:**
Throughout 2022, 2023 and 2024 I – as President of both the Israeli and the IPF – conducted together with Ursula Werdenberg, the Secretary General, a number of Zoom meetings towards, during and after the Fujairah WC. In the World Congress itself we held a live meeting. The updated decisions will be listed in a separate committee report.
- **International Brecht Symposium, December 11-15, 2002:** The Israeli Centre organized and implemented in corporation with The National Scientific Foundation, The International Brecht Society, and the Theatre Departments of Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem (The Hebrew) Universities, an international theoretical-practical symposium on **Bertolt Brecht in Dark Times: Racism, Political Oppression and Dictatorship**, preceded by an introductory seminar with students from the Goethe University in Frankfurt/Main and the UDK Berlin. 80 participants – lecturers, performers, directors -- from Germany, Poland, Australia, USA, Great Britain and Israel (Jewish and Palestinian lecturers and theatre people) took part in this 5-days event that included lectures, panels, practical workshops, *Lehrformances* (a combination of performed lectures and interactive learning events), as well as productions of Brecht's **Fatzer**, **Antigone**, **How to Make a Revolution** (an anti-occupation play) and a students' presentation directed by me of Brecht's poetry.
- **The 49th Brecht Yearbook:** As representative of the initiating and organizing body of the above Symposium, I was the acting guest editor of an English-German compilation of articles derived from this event.
- **International Exposure:** The Israeli Centre of the ITI participated in the Online IsraDrama Festivals 2023 and 2004. A political satire by an Israeli Arab won the first prize.
- **Lecture on Dramaturgy:** At the Fujairah WC (20-27.2.23) I held a keynote lecture on: **“Practicing and Teaching Dramaturgy(ies) in the Age of Aesthetic and Empirical Crises”**.
- **Acco Festival, October 2-4 2023:** The Israeli ITI Centre regards as its major goal to promote young and innovative theatre artists. Hence, I agreed to serve as the Jury's Chairperson of the International Acco Festival for experimental and “other” theatre.

- **A Legend in a Suitcase**, October-November 2023: Right after the October 7th Hamas attack, the local Centre volunteered to provide auspices and artistic advice to a project of the Tel-Aviv University Theatre Department of preparing four traveling performances for the children evacuated from the ravaged and burnt out kibbutzim and townships. The project – conceived, directed, designed and performed by students – met with tremendous success.
- December 2024 - : Israeli ITI and Assitej join forces in issuing a book on: **Children Theatre at War Times**. I was nominated as the editor.
- **Art and War**, December 25 2023: Following the deaths and injuries of thousands of uninvolved Palestinian citizens (still) used by Hamas as a human shield during the War in Gaza, and the physical destruction wreaked upon civilian areas, the Israeli Centre initiated and conducted a panel (broadcast through Facebook and Youtube) on: “**Morality and War in the Theatre**” with the participation, inter alia, of the playwrights and ITI members Maya Arad-Yasur (winner of the IPF award for the best play, 2010, and author of the internationally acclaimed **How to Remain A Humanist after a Massacre in 17 Steps**), and Motti Lerner (author of subversive political Israeli plays).
- **World Theatre Day**, March 27 2024: I translated the message of Jon Fosse for The World Theatre Day from Norwegian into Hebrew, and published it on Facebook, sent it to theatres, acting schools, artists’ unions etc., and read it out on a festive celebration with the Head of the Polish Institute at the Theatre Department, Tel Aviv University, in honour of the Theatre Day and a production of a play by Slavomir Mrozek. I read it again before the participants of the Annual Conference of The Israeli Association for Theatre Research on April 4 2024, followed by an analysis and debate on the practical meaning of the message.
- The Israeli Centre, together with the Institute for Jewish Theatre, planned an **International Festival for Jewish Theatre**. Because of the indefinite military situation, and its financial consequences for the supporting institutions, as well as its traumatic mental repercussions, this plan has to be shelved until better times.
- Another “victim” of the situation are the planned workshop and conference – perhaps in the framework of the IsraDrama –on **New Methods of Teaching and Practicing Dramaturgy**. The playwright Motti Lerner was intended to conduct in Tel-Aviv a workshop on writing political drama. This enterprise had to be shelved until better times.

Prof. Gad Kaynar-Kissinger

President of the ITI Israeli Centre 