

London: Bestürzung über die Einladung des israelischen Nationaltheaters „Habima“

„The Guardian“, March 29, 2012

In einem Offenen Brief in der britischen Tageszeitung „The Guardian“ drücken führende britische Künstler aus Theater und Film ihre Bestürzung und ihr Bedauern darüber aus, dass das israelische Nationaltheater „Habima“ („Die Bühne“) mit der Aufführung „Der Kaufmann von Venedig“ zum Shakespeare-Festival eingeladen worden ist. Sie werfen dem Theater vor, dass es sich in einem „beschämenden Ausmaß an den illegalen israelischen Siedlungen beteiligt“ habe, während eine Reihe anderer prominenter Theaterleute und Autoren der Einladung aus London nicht gefolgt seien. Die Unterzeichner fordern die Veranstalter auf, die Einladung rückgängig zu machen.

„Haaretz“ berichtet am 01. April 2012, dass sich der „Habima“-Direktor Ilan Ronen gegen die Vorwürfe mit dem Argument verwahrt habe, dass die Initiative, Stücke, „in ganz Israel“ aufzuführen, nicht von seinem Theater ausgehe, sondern Ergebnis des gesetzlichen Auftrags sei, dem alle öffentlichen Kultureinrichtungen unterworfen seien.

We notice with dismay and regret that Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London invited Israel's National Theatre, Habima, to perform The Merchant of Venice in its Globe to Globe festival this coming May. The general manager of Habima has declared the invitation "an honourable accomplishment for the State of Israel". But Habima has a shameful record of involvement with illegal Israeli settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territory. Last year, two large Israeli settlements established "halls of culture" and asked Israeli theatre groups to perform there. A number of Israeli theatre professionals – actors, stage directors, playwrights – declared they would not take part.

Habima, however, accepted the invitation with alacrity, and promised the Israeli minister of culture that it would "deal with any problems hindering such performances". By inviting Habima, Shakespeare's Globe is undermining the conscientious Israeli actors and playwrights who have refused to break international law.

The Globe says it wants to "include" the Hebrew language in its festival – we have no problem with that. "Inclusiveness" is a core value of arts policy in Britain, and we support it. But by inviting Habima, the Globe is associating itself with policies of exclusion practised by the Israeli state and endorsed by its national theatre company. We ask the Globe to withdraw the invitation so that the festival is not complicit with human rights violations and the illegal colonisation of occupied land.

David Aukin *producer*

Poppy Burton-Morgan *artistic director, Metta Theatre*

Leo Butler *playwright*

Niall Buggy *actor*

David Calder *actor*

Jonathan Chadwick *director*

Caryl Churchill *playwright*

Michael Darlow *writer, director*

John Graham Davies *actor, writer*

Trevor Griffiths *playwright*

Annie Firbank *actor*

Paul Freeman *actor*

Matyelok Gibbs *actor*

Tony Graham *director*

Janet Henfrey *actor*

James Ivens *artistic director, Flood Theatre*

Andrew Jarvis *actor, director, teacher*

Neville Jason *actor*

Ursula Jones *actor*

Professor Adah Kay *academic, playwright*

Mike Leigh *film-maker, dramatist*

Sonja Linden *playwright, iceandfire theatre*

Roger Lloyd Pack *actor*

Cherie Lunghi *actor*

Miriam Margolyes *actor*

Kika Markham *actor*

Jonathan Miller *director, author and broadcaster*

Frances Rifkin *director*

Mark Rylance *actor*

Alexei Sayle *comedian, writer*

Farhana Sheikh *writer*

Emma Thompson *actor, screenwriter*

Andy de la Tour *actor, director*

Harriet Walter *actor*

Hilary Westlake *director*

Richard Wilson *actor, director*

Susan Wooldridge *actor, writer*

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