

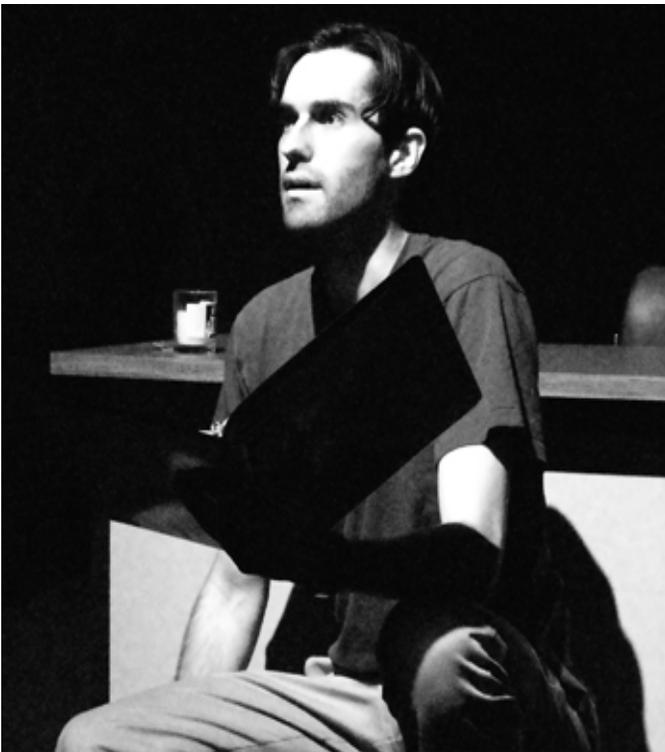
Jewish REVIEW

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Jewish Theatre Collaborative summer program reaches 250+

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This summer, more than 250 people enjoyed Jewish Theatre Collaborative's series of Israeli plays, performed as staged readings by some of Portland's finest actors.

JTC presented three powerful plays on three consecutive Tuesdays at Artists Repertory Theatre.

The plays were "He Walked Through the Fields" by Moshe Shamir, "High Noon" by Shmuel Vilozhny and "Milano" by Shmuel Hasfari.

The three plays were selected to provide windows into formative events that shaped the contemporary Israeli experience. By attending the entire series, theatergoers got a profound sense of the social change

that has taken place in Israel over its short history, as well as the shifts in attitudes about heroism and army service.

From the idealism and self sacrifice of the early Kibbutzim, to the scars and humiliation of the Yom Kippur War to the laughter and tears of secular and diverse Tel Aviv in the wake of the second intifada, JTC and the Israel Onstage selection committee were excited to invite audiences on a historical journey that sparked deep and sometimes difficult but meaningful conversations.

JTC Executive Director Sacha Reich and Dr. Michael Weingrad from Portland State University gathered a committee of respected Jewish community members including Cedar Sinai Park Chief Executive Officer David Fuks, Oregon Children's Theatre founder Sondra Pearlman, Institute for Judaic Studies Acting Director Dr. Sylvia Frankel, and musicians Barbara Slader and Elaine Friedman.

The panel spent a year reading plays and wrestling with how to provide more context for audience members. Out of those efforts was the addition this year of “CliffsNotes” which gave the audience more detailed context and a common glossary of who’s who and what’s what in the plays.

As always, brief talkbacks after the readings gave audiences a chance to begin to unpack the plays together. This year they featured some of Portland’s finest Jewish educators.

Dina and Yaac Feuer joined as special guests after “He Walked Through the Fields.” They shared their early state experiences of life on kibbutzim; they lived on three kibbutzim.

After “High Noon,” David Boussi recalled the confused and urgent mobilization on Yom Kippur in 1973 that ultimately delivered him to the Egyptian front.

Nil Rosenberger, on Shlichut to Portland Jewish Academy as one of Israel’s top educators, and her husband Tzvi stayed after “Milano” to speak about the challenge of raising children during the second intifada, as well as the racial complexity that makes up the tapestry of Israeli society.

Audiences grew in diversity this year. One newcomer was an Israeli student and IDF veteran who saw an ad for “High Noon.” He attended the performance and actively participated in the talkback.

Karin Magaldi, a professor from the PSU Theatre Department, joined JTC as a guest director again this year to stage the reading of “Milano.”

Plans are in the works for the next series that will spotlight Israeli playwright Chanoch Levin. Plans are for PSU to mount a full production of one of his plays produced to be directed by Magaldi in 2012.

Israel Onstage is a partnership with the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at Portland State University.

The program is made possible by the support of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, the Oregon Israel Fund of the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation, the Consulate General of Israel and the Institute for Israeli Drama.