

One year after Juliano's death, five graduates from Freedom Theatre create a new musical album

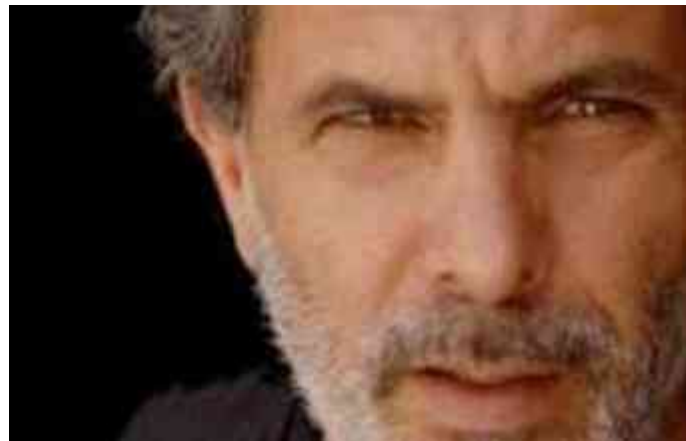


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In a rather plush recording studio in Al-Masion Ramallah, The Juliano Student Group, five talented graduates from The Freedom Theatre, gathered to record an album. The album is in preparation for an event in commemoration of Juliano Mer Khamis', the late Director of the Freedom Theatre who was murdered one year ago. I spoke to one of these performers Momeen swaTaT about the role of the group in the wake of the Freedom Theatre's Director

Nelly: Can you tell me what you're recording today?



Momeen: We are recording for the memorial that will take place on 4th April. We are recording two things one with DAM and a new album with a special song for Juliano. We are currently creating a 20 minute musical for Juliano that will be a mixture of Animal Farm, Alice in Wonderland and Fragment of Palestine. They will be three plays in one that will be performed in Jaffa Theatre and at the same time a performance will take place in Haifa with Jenny, Juliano's wife and the actress Salwa Nakara.

Nelly: What other activities will follow for the memorial of Juliano?

Momeen: There will be a demonstration outside Al-Muqata and a meeting with [President of PNA] Abu Mazim. It is important to note that they still haven't found the killer [of Juliano] The event will be a special day. After one year no responsibility has been taken from Palestine or Israel. Somebody died during the day at 3 o'clock, there is something wrong. A person has been killed and any one of us can be killed at any time. This is affecting our identity and our task is to remove this by creating music and theatre for many people to ask questions. We are continuing in the same way as Juliano, to ask and work for the freedom of Palestinian women and the Palestinian young generation from communities under the Israeli occupation. The big question is 'who killed Juliano?' We are Palestinian artists who are sending a message to the outside. Art is telling the reality. Art away from reality is not art anymore. We create art everywhere and with it bring questions. This is the first time since the first intifada that they have killed an artist. Juliano never held a grudge. He was not Hamas and not an Israeli soldier. He was an artist with a message.

I spoke to Marwan Asad, a producer and DJ who is supporting the group in producing their first album.

Nelly: Can you tell me about the studio and what you're doing here today?

Marwan: This is my 4th studio. I have a passion for music production and films so I studied music production and film making in Cairo University and in 2004 I set up my first production company in Ramallah. I produce both underground and commercial music with Palestinian artists and have also produced music in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. I produced the first electronic music album [in Palestine] as there is no electronic music in Palestine or the Middle East.

Nelly: How is the music scene changing in Palestine?

Marwan: There is a new generation of artists in Palestine making a difference in music, modern music and people now listen, see art and appreciate it. Palestinian modern art sends the world a message.

Nelly: How are you supporting this group of artists today?

Marwan: I have a personal respect with the theatre, and artists who are sending messages that are buried within the Palestinian youth. Five artists from the theatre chose against it being buried. The Palestinian youth do what normal people are afraid to say because of culture of fear built up in the society. It's about art allowing us to let out what's inside. I am not doing this for Juliano, but for five Palestinian artists for their future.

The performance will take place on Wednesday 4th April, 8pm Jaffa Theatre, Mifratz Shlomo St. 10, Yafa. The event will be in commemoration of the one year anniversary of Juliano Mer Khamis' death. It will be hosted by Salwa Nakara and will feature the work of graduates from the Freedom Theatre Batoul Taleb, Mariam Abu Khaled, Rami Hwayel, Mo'min Switat, and Rabeer Turkman alongside short films by Mustafa Staiti, Firas Khoury and more, and performances by Adi Khalifa, DAM, and Itamar Ziegler

Friends will also be welcome to share memories of Juliano.

Tickets are by "pay what you can" donation with proceeds going to fund a grant for the graduate students of Juliano, to continue the spirit of the Freedom Theatre.

To reserve tickets or for more information please contact: Natalie Hassian: 03-5187539

One year after the murder of our beloved cultural freedom fighter, we will gather to honor the memory of the artist

