

Ramallah- In an Israeli interrogation room, two Palestinian artists, Hussein Nakhleh and Valantina Abu Oqsa embark on the rehearsals for their upcoming play “I am free” which sheds light on one of the interrogation sessions where Nakhleh plays the role of the Israeli interrogator while Abu Oqsa plays the role of a Palestinian prisoner. The work offers an insight, albeit only to a small extent as to the Israeli occupation’s practices against the political prisoners in general and women prisoners in particular. The rehearsals take place in Ramallah First Group premises (Sarryet Ramallah) and Valantina sets on her journey from Haifa to Ramallah.

Abu Oqsa wrote the play “I am free” based on her initiative to engage in an in-depth research about the question of political prisoners, especially women, which culminated in the form of a field research and interviews during which she documented live stories and testimonies of many former women political prisoners. The research work was carried out over a period of nearly one year.

In describing his role in this work, the prominent actor Hussein Nakhleh said:

“Undoubtedly, this play poses a highly important and sensitive issue that has not been addressed before through a theatre play and on the stage. As such, it constitutes a precedent. Valantina’s initiative to research the topic, to conduct interviews, and to write about it, required a lot of courage, perseverance, and strong will, that was reflected in the boldness of the play that reaches out to new areas and opens up a new approach of addressing the topic based on the reality to be presented on stage. The aim is to draw the attention of the world to people who should be liberated immediately. The experience constitutes a new territory for me as an actor, the character of the interrogator that I play pushes me towards new aspirations, and new ambitions. My participation in this important work gives me a higher sense of pride in my artistic career.”

A large number of individuals, national companies and institutions from Haifa to Ramallah and abroad are supporting this work which is expected to open in the beginning of January 2011.

