

Al Kamandjati

MUZIEKTHEATER / THÉÂTRE MUSICAL / MUSIC THEATRE

2.12.2008 20.00 — €30/25/20/17

PALEIS VOOR SCHONE KUNSTEN/PALAIS DES BEAUX-ARTS Koningsstraat 10 rue Royale, Brussel/Bruzelles
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IVE STEVENHEYDENS

PALESTINE THROUGH THE EYES OF A MUSICIAN

EN The *Al Kamandjati* multimedia show brings Palestinians and Israelis together onstage. It portrays events in Palestine, in the light of the life story of the violinist Ramzi Aburedwan. Harrowing incidents, hope, and moments of euphoria alternate in texts, music, and images. "It is important to make Palestinians aware of their position and strength."

The young Palestinian musician Ramzi Aburedwan, born in 1979, did not have it easy. He spent his childhood years in the refugee camps of Al Amari in Ramallah, where his family had lived since fleeing its home in 1948. Until the age of puberty his life was marked by the first intifada, violence, and the occupation. "When you grow up in that kind of misery, you think the whole world is actually like that," he told us. "So as a child I thought mine was a normal life. Even though I never got to play music under professional guidance, I felt attracted to the medium from an early age."

In the late 1990s, however, Aburedwan went to study the viola at the conservatory in Angers. Together with some fellow-students, he set up the Dal'Ouna ensemble. These days he plays with, among others, the great Daniel Barenboim and also runs Al Kamandjati (Arabic for "violinist"), an organisation that promotes musical education among young Palestinians, especially children. Aburedwan: "We operate in a number of villages in the Palestinian region and also in Lebanon. We collect material in Europe; each student has his/her own instrument. For local children it is hugely important to realise that they have a voice of their own. The discipline that musical training involves, moreover, leads to greater self-confidence and a more critical attitude. Al Kamandjati has an important effect on a larger scale: in each family there is an enthusiastic student who makes his or her whole intimate



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circle more conscious of their position and their strength. It is important for the Palestinians to think things over properly and to express themselves when they don't feel happy about something. And clear communication with the rest of the world is just as vital."

Checkpoints

Al Kamandjati is also the title of the production being presented at the Centre for Fine Arts on Tuesday, within the framework of the "Masarat" Palestinian cultural season. Based on Aburedwan's life, the work was written by the renowned Israeli

journalist Amira Hass. Her Hebrew text is combined with a selection of Arabic literature presented by the Palestinian actor Mohammed Bacri. The work, explained Aburedwan, is "a mixture of 'history', the events in Palestine, and my own experiences. My viewpoint makes things more human for the spectators and makes it more real for them. But at the same time, the life story of just about any other Palestinian would have done just as well: each of us has exciting, harrowing, and moving stories to tell." The production is packed with images and music. On a screen

we see Aburedwan's life story presented through interviews, intercut with documentary footage shot by Benny Brunner at the checkpoints. The composer Franghiz Ali Zadeh from Azerbaijan came up with a sensitive score, which is performed by Dal'Ouna, the ensemble of which Aburedwan himself is a member. "I play the *bouzouk*, among other instruments. I'm very happy, for the whole Palestinian people, that this story is being presented onstage. In Arabic my first name, Ramzi, means "example". That's true, but, as I said, every other Palestinian's story is worth just as much."

NL Al Kamandjati is de naam van de organisatie geleid door Ramzi Aburedwan, die muziekopleiding aan jonge Palestijnen biedt. Het is ook de naam van de multimediale voorstelling die dinsdag in het Paleis voor Schone Kunsten te zien is en het levensverhaal van Aburedwan vertelt. (Originele Nederlandse tekst: www.brusselnieuws.be/agenda)

FR Al Kamandjati est le nom d'une organisation dirigée par Ramzi Aburedwan qui offre une formation musicale à de jeunes Palestiniens. C'est également le titre du spectacle qui raconte la vie d'Aburedwan en mêlant les films, la musique, les images, les textes et les langues. À découvrir mardi au Palais de Beaux-Arts dans le cadre du festival Masarat.