

Newton Theatre Company
and the Parents Circle -
Families Forum Presents



Our Tears Are the Same Color

Parallel Narratives of Bereaved

Palestinian and Israeli Women

March 25 - April 3

Saint John's Episcopal Church



Based on the Oral Histories of
Bushra Awwad
Meytal Ofer
Iris Segev
Ikhlal Ishtaya

Cast & Crew

Bushra and Iris - Linda Goetz
Meytal and Ikhlas - Sarah Brooke Vanaman

Creator and Director - Melissa Bernstein
Technical Director - Bernie Bernstein
Stage Manager/Lighting Designer - Ken Fang
Videographer - Max Goldberg

Special Thanks

The Parents Circle
Shiri Ourian
St. John's Episcopal Church

*This production was made possible
with generous support from:*

The Harmony Foundation, Mass Cultural Council, Newton Cultural Council, and Newton Community Pride.

Slideshow Song

"Look at Me"

Written and Performed by Noa for The Parents Circle

*With gratitude to Bushra, Iris, Meytal and Ikhlas
for sharing their stories.*

Director's Note

Thank you so much for being here with us for “Our Tears are the Same Color: Parallel Narratives of Bereaved Palestinian and Israeli Women.”

We wanted to share with you the stories told to us directly from Bushra, Iris, Ikhlas and Meytal.

These are difficult, important, and beautiful stories.

We are not in this space to debate historical narratives. The play won't give you the context needed to understand the political goings on in the region.

We simply want to share with you four personal stories. Our two Newton Theatre Company actors, Linda and Sarah, are here as storytellers. If Bushra, Iris, Ikhlas and Meytal were here, they'd be telling you their stories themselves.

How did this play come about? Bernie and I have been supporting The Parents Circle's mission for many years. The Parents Circle is an organization made up of over 600 bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost someone in the conflict. Instead of choosing to continue the cycle of hatred and violence through revenge, these courageous families have chosen to be peacemakers, working toward reconciliation and hope.

In 2020, I interviewed four members of the Parents Circle. This play is a collage of the stories they told me.

Our hope is that you leave this space feeling like you know these women. Perhaps you'll be inspired by their decision to work towards peace, and the way they are able to see the humanity of the other.

We have cards and pens on the back table. We encourage you to write down any thoughts you may have after watching the show. We also would like to encourage you to stay in the space as long as you wish after the production.

Thank you, again, for being here.

About This Production

"Our Tears are the Same Color: Parallel Narratives of Bereaved Palestinian and Israeli Women" came about because of a unique partnership between Newton Theatre Company and the Parents Circle - Families Forum.

The Parents Circle-Families Forum is an organization made up of over 600 bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost someone in the conflict.

Instead of choosing to continue the cycle of hatred and violence through revenge, these courageous families have instead chosen to be peacemakers, working toward reconciliation and hope.

The reality of the decades-long stalled peace process and the daily indignities of the Occupation have many Palestinians and Israelis hopeless. Bereaved Israelis and Palestinians have paid the highest price to this conflict over land and yet their unique collaboration demonstrates that the impossible is possible through the unprecedented example of having two "enemies" work together. Despite the asymmetrical nature of the conflict, there are those who are willing to work with one another to break the cycles of violence.

"Our Tears are the Same Color: Parallel Narratives of Bereaved Palestinian and Israeli Women" is an original piece of theatre based on the interviews of four members of the Parents Circle-Families Forum. Artistic Director Melissa Bernstein interviewed four women who have lost family members to the conflict in the region, and the play is a collage of these monologues, performed by two NTC actors.

In this play, four women, two Palestinian and two Israeli, share stories from their childhoods, memories of their families, and the moments they learned of their loved ones' deaths.

The women describe the grief that has shaped the rest of their lives and the meaning and reconciliation they experienced in joining The Parents Circle. Somehow, they find a joint mission in their bereavement.

Their stories, woven together, call for deeper understanding of shared pain and suffering as a way forward. Two Newton Theatre Company performers act as storytellers, sharing these deeply personal accounts of the precariousness of life during the ongoing conflict.

The Work Continues

Learn more about the organization that made today possible.

[The Parents Circle Website](#)

[Donate to the Parents Circle](#)

Recommended Reading from the Parents Circle

[Our Power is our Pain \(video\)](#)

[We Lost Our Children, We Hold Onto Our Hope: Dialogue Meeting with Robi Hirshenson and George Sa'adeh \(webinar\)](#)

['The cycle of violence must stop' \(interview\)](#)

[Middle East Crisis Through 2 Parents' Eyes: 1 Israeli, 1 Palestinian \(article\)](#)

[As Violence Escalates In Israel, Parents Circle Becomes A Catalyst For Change \(article\)](#)

[On a Quest for Peace and Reconciliation Parent's Circle Interview With Parents Circle's Layla and Robi \(interview\)](#)

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that's what theatre is all about!"

— Chita Rivera



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innovative and thought-provoking shows.

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