

Press Information

5 January 2018

MALALAI – The Afghan Joan of Arc after Friedrich Schiller

A transnational theatre project by Robert Schuster and Julie Paucker
19th – 21st January 2018, 7 pm, Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg

The historical figure of Joan of Arc is a national hero in France. Friedrich Schiller dedicated one of his most well-known dramas to the "Maid of Orléans". A similar story is told about Malalai of Maiwand in Afghanistan, a paramedic in the war of independence against the British colonial power in 1880. When the Afghans had lost all hope in their fight, and fled, she untied her headscarf, made a flag out of it, and ran towards the enemy. The soldiers returned and triumphed. Till today, Malalai of Maiwand is a legendary role model for female courage in a world dominated by men. The political charge of both myths forms the starting point of the theatre project "**MALALAI – The Afghan Joan of Arc**" by Robert Schuster and Julie Paucker, with French, Afghan, German, and Israeli actors. Following its premiere at the Weimar Arts Festival 2017, the transnational theatre project can now be experienced in a guest performance at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin. The joint production by the international troupe of actors KULA Compagnie and the Afghan ensemble AZDAR Theatre from Kabul only became possible in the second attempt, since the Afghan artists had been denied entry to Germany for the preceding production "KULA - nach Europa" ["KULA - to Europe"].

Their personal experience with the consequences of daily occurring violence likewise takes on scenic form here. In December 2014, a premiere of the AZDAR Theatre in Kabul suffered a suicide bombing; two visitors were killed, 40 persons were injured. The play also speaks of the traumatisation of the artists, their reconquest of the stage - and the power of art as a moment of freedom. International artistic cooperation becomes essential in the face of such a background. This is also the theme of the **accompanying programme** which includes the **Berlin premiere of the film *True Warriors*** that documents the consequences of the attack in Kabul in detailed interviews with the concerned persons. Following this, a top-level **panel** will discuss the practice and desired outcomes of German cultural exchange with politically unsafe countries and what barriers still need to be overcome in this respect.

"MALALAI" is a production by the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar, the Weimar Arts Festival, and the KULA Compagnie with the AZDAR Theatre (Afghanistan). In coproduction with the Schauspielhaus Bochum, the Theater Chur (Switzerland), and AZA (France).

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Supported by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, the Goethe Institut, the Institut français Berlin, the Institut français Erfurt, and the Jeune Théâtre National (JNT).

True Warriors is a coproduction of Pantaleon Film with Brot + Zwiebel, and ZDF/ARTE. With the support of Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein (FFHSH), the German Federal Film Board (FFA), and SRF.

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Event dates

Friday, 19th January, and Sunday, 21st January 2018, 7 pm respectively

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin

Theatre performance (DE/EN/FR/HEB/AFG with German supertitles)

"MALALAI – The Afghan Joan of Arc" after Friedrich Schiller

Tickets € 13/7

Saturday, 20th January 2018

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin

6:30 pm

Film

True Warriors (2017, 90 min., OmU, EN/AFG) by Ronja von Wurmb-Seibel, Niklas Schenck. Introduction by directors, moderation Cornelia Klauß. Tickets € 6/4

8.30 pm

Panel discussion

"Cultural exchange with politically unsafe countries"

With Michael Reiffenstuel (Federal Foreign Office), Julia Hanske (Goethe Institut), Julie Paucker, Robert Schuster, Said Edris Fakhri, Homan Wesa (both AZDAR Theatre). Moderation: Claudia Henne

Free admission

Ticket reservations: (030) 200 57-2000 or ticket@adk.de

Ticket purchase at the Webshop under: www.adk.de/tickets

Press photos and Reservation of press tickets under Tel. 030 20057-1514 or presse@adk.de