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## **PRESS RELEASE**

iceandfire present:

# **WELCOME TO RAMALLAH**

Written by Sonja Linden and Adah Kay

Directed by Sue Lefton

## **WORLD PREMIERE**

**Arcola Theatre Studio 2, 23<sup>rd</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

**PRESS NIGHT: FRIDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 8.15PM**

2008 marks both the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Israeli state and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Inspired by the experience of Adah Kay, a British Jew who lived and worked in Ramallah between 2002 and 2006, the play explores an encounter between four people across the Palestine/Israel divide during the course of one dramatic evening. iceandfire's previous productions include the critically acclaimed *Crocodile Seeking Refuge* (Lyric Hammersmith, 2005 and national tour, 2006).

*Welcome to Ramallah* is an intimate exploration of the balance between duty and love which emerged from the desire to understand and convey some of the complexity of the situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Israel/Palestine conflict. Underpinning the play are events that took place in 1948, with the creation of the Jewish State and the consequent dispossession and displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

It's late afternoon when a Jewish woman arrives at her sister's home in the occupied city of Ramallah. Dusk settles and with the call to prayer come neighbours - an uncle and nephew - to greet the new arrival. As night falls an unexpected curfew prompts the sharing of old stories, which threaten to tear apart the fragile harmony of the sisters' memories.

**Adah Kay** is from a staunchly Zionist family. She co-wrote *Stolen Youth*, (Pluto Press, 2004), based on the first hand testimonies of former child prisoners and is preparing another book on movement restrictions. She is Visiting Professor at the Cass Business School, City University. **Sonja Linden** is an award-winning playwright whose plays have been produced on radio, on the London stage, and in regional theatres across the UK and the United States. Sonja's play *A Young Lady from Rwanda* launched iceandfire in 2003 and subsequently went on national tour in the UK and Ireland and has had numerous highly acclaimed productions in the USA, where it was nominated for best playwright in the 2007 NAACP awards.

iceandfire creates compelling theatre that makes real and relevant the impact of human rights issues on our everyday lives. Projects for 2008 include the Protect the Human playwriting competition in partnership with Amnesty International UK and *Palestine Monologues* performed by our network of professional performers, Actors For Human Rights, which will be launched in conjunction with *Welcome to Ramallah*.

Supported by the Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust, The Columbia Foundation, the Royal Victoria Hall Foundation, Arts Council England, Unity Theatre Trust and The Golsoncott Foundation.

**Running Time: 100 minutes (no interval)**

### **Creative Team**

**Designed by** Adrian Linford

**Lighting design by** Jenny Cane

**Sound Design by** Emma Laxton

**Cast:** John Moraitis (Salim), Shuna Snow (Mara), Christopher Simon (Daoud) and Lolly Susi (Nat).

**LISTINGS INFORMATION - SEE OVERLEAF**

### London

<b>Venue:</b>	Arcola Theatre Studio 2
<b>Address:</b>	27 Arcola Street, London E8 2DJ
<b>Dates:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September to 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2008
<b>Times:</b>	8.15pm Mon to Sat
<b>Price:</b>	£15, £10 concs, Tues: "Pay What You Can", no concs Sat
<b>Box Office:</b>	www.arcolatheatre.com, 020 7503 1646
<b>Transport:</b>	Victoria Line to Highbury and Islington, then North London line to Dalston Kingsland. Left out of station and 5 minute walk. Buses 38, 149, 30, 67,76

### York

<b>Venue:</b>	York Theatre Royal
<b>Address:</b>	St Leonard's Place, York, YO1 7HD.
<b>Dates:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> October - 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2008
<b>Times:</b>	7.45pm Mon - Sat, 2pm (23 <sup>rd</sup> ), 2.30pm (25 <sup>th</sup> )
<b>Price:</b>	£10 - £12, £5 concs
<b>Box Office:</b>	<a href="http://www.yorktheatroyal.co.uk">www.yorktheatroyal.co.uk</a> , 01904 623568