

Hi Friends,

This is Jessica Litwak, Team Leader for the Artists & Human Rights Initiative for Theatre Without Borders, a theatre artist and Theatre of the Oppressed practitioner. Sometimes TWB reaches out to share information by and about artists within our network.

I am writing to you today to let you know about some theatre friends of ours who are currently trying desperately to get out of Afghanistan. I am writing on behalf of AHRDO, the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization, based in Kabul. Hjalmar Joffe-Eichhorn is the co-founder of AHRDO and a TWB network artist.

Hjalmar reports that 22 of our friends from AHRDO are now outside the airport in Kabul trying to get in so they can out.

This is an outreach to the world-wide theatre community and the the Theatre of the Oppressed community in particular.

According to Hjalmar AHRDO “was founded in 2009 and is still operating as a local NGO that works mainly with different types of participatory arts, especially theatre and in particular the Theatre of the Oppressed.” However, there are many other activities: advocacy, movement building, organizing. In Hjalmar’s words, “Perhaps more importantly, in 2019, AHRDO set up the Afghanistan Centre for Memory and Dialogue – a War Victims Museum to honor those civilians who have been killed in recent years.” And “to document the massive human rights abuses over the past 40 plus years.

Here is an interview with Hjalmar who is in constant touch with the people at the airport – despite phones being jammed and electricity down. Please read:

<https://www.theleftberlin.com/open-the-airport-put-pressure-on-all-the-governments/>

Here is what you can do if you want to help:

1. *You can donate to this fundraising campaign:*
<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/tosupportsahrdo/backers#start>
2. *You can take a picture with a sign that says “AHRDO we are with you.”* Or anything else you want to say – the morale is very low and when we got a photo of support to one of our friends (an actor trying to get his wife and five children to safety) he broke down weeping with joy to know he was being thought of across the world.
3. *You can contact your representatives.* Apart from the impossibility of getting into the airport (which is being controlled by the Taliban), is the fact that we need to get planes OUT. The U.S. is controlling the airspace. There are several organizations willing to spend the \$500,000 to get a charter plane in an out of Kabul to take only Afghan artists and activists and their families. We need to put pressure on our elected reps to cede the airspace and let those Afghan artists & activists charter flights in. For those in the U.S. you can access your Senators and Representatives here:
<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
<https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

Feel free to reach out to me with any questions or with photos of support. Please put AHRDO is the subject line so I know what it is regarding.

Thanks for your support.

All my best, Jessica

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