



CHILDREN OF FIRE

Children Of Fire tells the powerful stories of female resistance fighters in the mountains of Kurdistan.

*Photo by Shahrzad Arshadi 2015



**Qandil Mountains - Kurdistan / Photo by Shahrzad Arshadi 2015*

“Freedom needs daring. If you want Freedom you need to have courage to go after Freedom.”

– Medya, Writer, Poet and Freedom Fighter

CHILDREN OF FIRE

Children Of Fire was developed and produced by Nightwood theatre in 2022 and presented first as an outside production to a large audience in the summer of 2022.



Aida Keykhai, Parastoo Amanzadeh and Nyiri Karakas in Children Of Fire. Photo by Dahlia Katz

Later it was programmed by TransAtlantic Aluna Theater's biannual international festival Rutuas Festival, the piece was adapted for a theatre in October 2022 to sold out houses, and we had to add one show.

***JUNE 27 TO JULY 2ND at the CHILDREN'S PEACE THEATRE**

The play is 65 minutes, and features Shahrzad and Anna and a cast of three Canadian-Iranian and Canadian-Armenian actors, directed by Beatriz Pizano. The set is incredibly minimalist and it is adaptable for a multitude of spaces. Accompanying the play is a photography exhibit of Shahrzad's photos of the fighters on fabrics in large format.



***THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6 TO SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2022 at the *Theatre Passe Muraille*
AS PART OF RUTAS FESTIVAL 2022**



**Children of Fire - Rutus Festival 2022 / Photo by Aluna Theatre*

The play is an intimate portrayal of the Kurdish female freedom fighters that hosted Shahrzad and Anna in the mountains of Kurdistan in 2018. Having lived and interviewed the fighters, the playwrights returned home to create a searing piece of theatre that amplifies the voices of these extraordinary women, while simultaneously examining feminism, female courage, and privilege. Co-created with a mix of verbatim theatre and first-person confessional in English, Farsi and Kurdish, the play follows the journey and layered relationship across cultures between Shahrzad and Anna.

CHILDREN OF FIRE explores the complicated and at times fraught process of creative collaborations that cross geographic, cultural, and linguistic borders, both in portraying the relationship between Shahrzad and Anna over the course of their trip and their struggles about how best to represent the voice of the freedom fighters accurately and fairly. It has been their experience that issues of voice, appropriation, representation, and privilege are implicit to the larger question that the play explores; what is at the heart of living bravely as a woman and an activist? The fighters they met hope their stories will inspire viewers to protest against the injustice happening to the Kurdish - Iranian people and women in the Middle East and across the world. They also want to be known and remembered if they are killed during their struggle.



As gentle, soft, tambour musician and songwriter Bermal said:

“We use art as bullets. My Tambour is my weapon.”



One of the four camps Shahrzad and Anna went to in the mountains was the Artist Camp, which had a small group of artists/fighters living there. Freedom fighters who were also artists. Sitting in the shade, surrounded by the natural beauty of the brown mountains, the fighters spoke about the tradition of *Dengbêj*, being a singer and storyteller, going village to village in Kurdistan to bring stories and songs to the villagers. Even now in big cities students do political street performances or in parks to tell their stories, and share their experiences. As Shahrzad translated for Anna, the necessity and value of theatre suddenly felt epic and moving. Living in Canada, sometimes making theatre can feel unimportant. It was refreshing to remember the impact theatre can have on an audience, that theatre can change people's lives.

The fighters spoke about fighting and art and activism all in the same sentence.

“Preview in Toronto Star for Children Of Fire”



Children Of Fire feels more important to share with audiences now than ever, sharing the Kurdish female fighters' slogan "Jin Jian Azadi" (Woman Life Freedom) that is chanted all over the world after the uprising in Iran starting September 2022.

Artistic Data:

WRITER, TRANSLATOR, CREATOR

Shahrzad Arshadi

WRITER, CREATOR

Anna Chatterton

DIRECTOR

Beatriz Pizano

PERFORMERS:

Parastoo Amanzadeh

Shahrzad Arshadi

Anna Chatterton

Maria Escolan

Aida Keykhaii

SET ADAPTATION AND LIGHTING DESIGN

Trevor Schwellnus

**8 people will be traveling with the show
The set travels in suitcases

Contact info:

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Technical Brief:

Set:

(touring items possible, or locally sourced)
floor treatment or cover to light sand / earth tones
4 stumps or other organic objects for sitting
central fire pit (stones preferred)

Lighting:

full stage warm / cool wash
tops / backs: warm
10-12 specials (lekos)

Video:

TBA

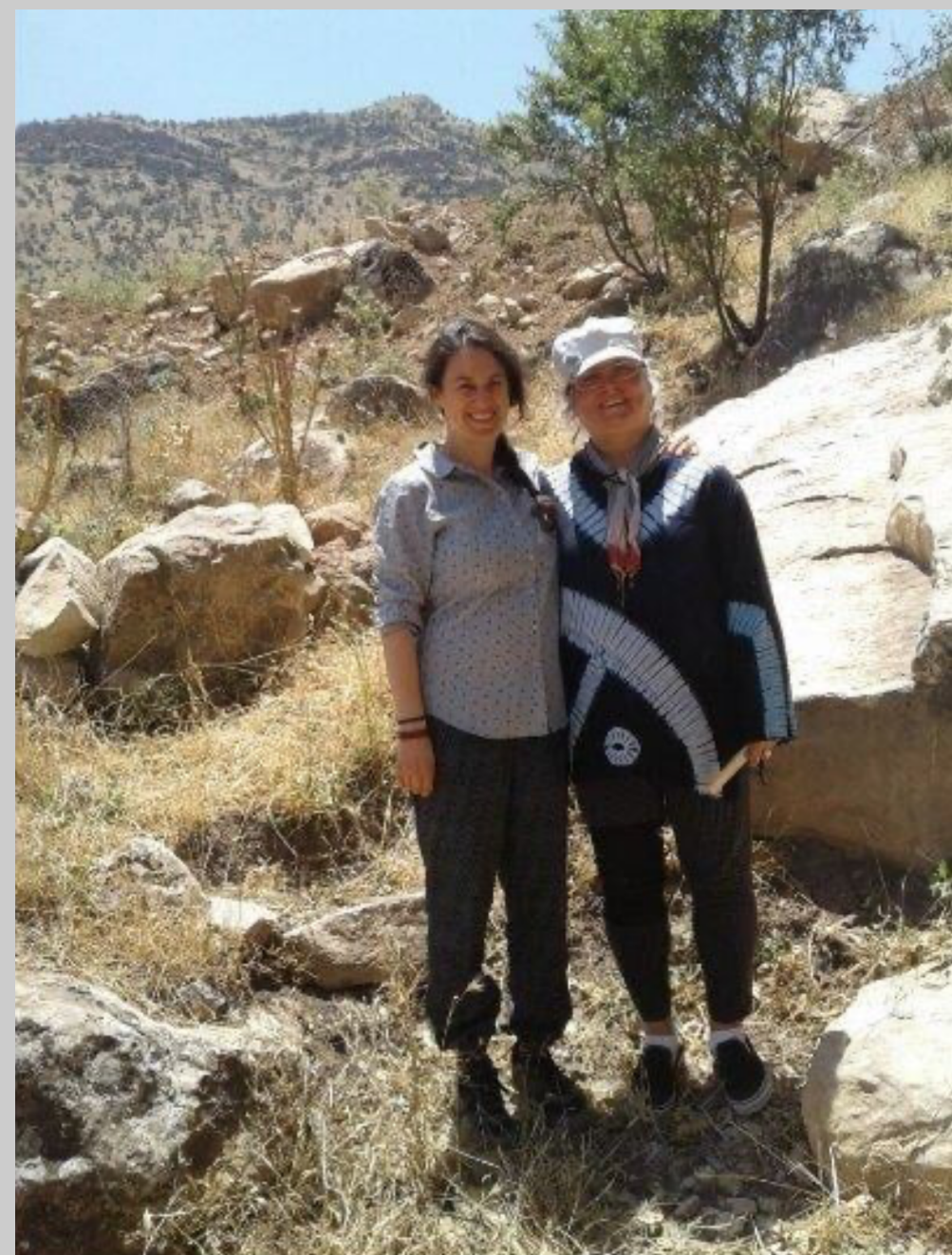


***Photos on Stage by Aluna - Rutus Festival 2022 / Theatre Passe Muraille – Backspace Stage*



Anna Chatterton dances with some of the fighters in Kurdistan.

* Photo by; Shahrzad Arshadi



Anna Chatterton and Shahrzad Arshadi went to the mountains of Kurdistan to research and develop what would eventually become their play, "Children of Fire."

Photo 2018