Resonances of the Past – a review by Manohar Khushalani

Resonances of the Past (**The Ruth Wieder Magan Show**)
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Ruth Wieder Magan

To commemorate International Womens Day, *Organised with the support of "The Foundation for Independent Artists", Ministry of Culture and Sport, Israel)* the India International Center Screened three films by Ruth Wieder Magan; **Mirror Sky** (50 min), **Come Away Human Child** (6.42 min) and **Kadayil Shabbaso** (10 min)

A Webinar was also conducted at IIC, **The Ecstatic Voice. What is the Female Voice?** Participants were: Ruth Wieder Magan, well-known contemporary voice/body theatre artist from

Israel; **Prof. Michal Govrin**, Prominent Israeli writer, poet and theatre director; **Gabriella Lev**, theatre director, writer, performer, Artistic Director and Co-Founder, Theatre Company Jerusalem; **Michael Shachrur**, prominent body worker, dancer; **Sara Siegel and Yuval Steinberg**, filmmakers. The sentiments echoed what the films resonate with.

Ruth is best known for her pioneering work integrating sacred texts into contemporary voice/body theatre. Her pioneering approach to the transcendental aspect of voice is founded solidly in sacred cantorial Jewish traditions. In Mirror Sky in a backdrop of dimly lit scenes Ruth, swirling, moaning, producing gutrral sound explains the origin of her techniques:

“The process of my voicing goes something like this; a voice arises from the particular presence of present time. I will begin to track the life of the vibration. Where is it sounding in my body?

[As Music Swirls] Is it liver or kidneys or blood or eyelids?

And where in my perception of the cosmos?

is that reverberation, am i feeling angels

or am i sensing the moon or feeling stars shifting?

….and how is that kernel of sound moving out into space?

Does it want to travel forward or travel back into the sides?

and what cultural meaning arises in me

As i hear the sound emitting from my very own voice

…is it ancient America or China or is it atlantis?… or am i hearing an animal? Her investigation continues

Ruth’s source of inspiration, were her own parents, both were Holocaust survivors. Their memories and experiences triggered the melodies and intonations rooted in the barren world of the

yore.

The movies are psychedelic Ruth’s voice and body performance is mesmerizing. Audience connected to so many insights and the things she said ”..a wound is a gateway, a gateway to the universe.

A wind blown image of her own hair swirling over her face like diaphonous clouds punctuated with screams of agony seems to haunt you



Resonances of the Past

THREE FILMS BY RUTH WIEDER MAGAN

COLLABORATION: *The Foundation for Independent Artists, Ministry of Culture and Sport, Israel*

6 to 7 March 2021

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Ruth Wieder Magan

The movies are psychedelic. Ruth's voice and body performance is mesmerising. The audience is connected to so many insights and the things she said, '...a wound is a gateway, a gateway to the universe'.

A wind-blown image of her hair swirling over her face like diaphonous clouds punctuated with screams of agony seems to haunt you.

There was also a webinar, *The Ecstatic Voice. What is the Female Voice?* with participants Ruth Wieder Magan; Michal Govrin; Gabriella Lev; Michael Shachrur; Sara Siegel; and Yuval Steinberg. Their sentiments echoed what the films resonated with.

■ **MANOHAR KHUSHALANI**