

A MOMENT & NINE MISSILES AL-MISHAL CULTURAL CENTRE GAZA

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That day we were supposed to show a play at the Al-Mishal Cultural Centre in Gaza.

The performance included 14 girls; it was about their rights.

Suddenly, the United Nations Development Program called and ordered us to cancel without giving any reasons.

We stopped the rehearsals and sent everyone home. It was the first time I had ever postponed a performance.

I went home, and the Israelis began to bomb Gaza, and the rockets started shaking the city.

The bombs were landing near the theatre. I was afraid the cultural centre would be damaged, that the glass would shatter, that the play's set would fall.

I got dressed and went out.

I walked a street the length of 200 meters; it was completely black from smoke and dust, as if it was night, you could not even see your finger.

As I approached, my vision started to become clear.

The theatre was destroyed...complete destruction. Nothing. The features of the place disappeared... the cultural centre had vanished from existence and become a hole... a 6-storey building now turned into a two-story underground crater.

How could this be?

The set from the plays, the costumes that I designed, my hopes and dreams, the effort and the exhaustion collapsing in a second.

I am standing there, and thoughts are clashing in my head like waves, sadness eating my heart, as if when the decor disappeared, so had all the joy.

The faces of the youth I trained passed in front of me, the children's laughter that had now vanished.

Until this moment, I cannot believe that the theatre disappeared along with fourteen years of our work in a moment and nine missiles.

Our theatre had become a theatrical flame, so they shut it down.

Since the bombing, we have held several performances on the rubble.

The theatre is part of us, and we as artists continue whether it is in a building... or not... We will do theatre on the tree, at sea, underwater...

We have created artists, and we will stay to be artists.