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#9



MIGRATORY BIRDS

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ΙΑΡΥΜΑ ΠΟΖΑ ΛΟΥΞΕΜΒΟΥΡΓΚ
ΠΑΡΑΡΤΗΜΑ ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ

MIGRATORY BIRDS The newspaper produced by and for refugee, migrant and Greek youth

The journey continues, from and to new territory

The 9th issue of 'Migratory Birds' heralds the start of its second year of circulation. We carry on undeterred and move forward on our own unique journalistic path.

The significance of the newspaper before you is not only due to the number of issues and articles, nor to its increase in circulation and quality of readership. What really matters is how it functions: 'Migratory Birds' not only serves the freedom of speech, opinion and expression of its contributors, but also provides points of contact between teenagers.

In the past few weeks, we have welcomed new members to our team, from Afghanistan and Syria, who are ready to share their concerns but also their dreams with us. The theme of the present issue is the result of discussions that took place during our meetings last month. It is a rich

anthology of our thoughts and a rare overview of our journey, which you will find within these pages.

Amongst the articles in this 9th issue, you will read about a sad figure that made people laugh and the wheelchair basketball champion of 2018, you will find a ticket to Hollywood and you will see what it means to be a refugee through the eyes of artists that came to speak to members of our team. Finally, we will tell you about our one-year anniversary celebration for 'Migratory Birds' and Radio 'Dandelion' and we will take you on a journey to a country far far away. Happy reading!



Ticket to Hollywood

By **Morteza Rahimi**

Life is full of fun once you know what to do with it. I was living a normal life until I watched something!

It was Sunday evening when I had completed all of my homework and was totally free. Then I decided to watch some TV, even though I was not so interested. As I was changing the channels, I found a Hollywood talk show. It seemed boring at first but later I found myself interested in it. It was about movie stars and celebrities. At the very first moment I knew, I had my aim. The show inspired me so much that the whole day I was stuck in front of the television watching different talk shows and movies.

I decided to be an actor but my parents wanted me to be an engineer. I was still a teenager and completely depended on them, so I had to do

everything sneakily. I joined theatre classes and I sent my portfolio to different casting directors. I attended many auditions and I succeeded at most of them but couldn't carry on because of my parents and my exams.

I knew that my parents and exams would be a big obstacle for my dreams and goals but this wasn't a big problem. I was not worried about that but about the thousands of people trying their luck on the film industry. Most of them come back without making it. These thoughts were driving me crazy. Life was tough but I was tougher. Despite of all the difficulties, I managed to play a role in a commercial. That was not my biggest victory. The happiest thing about it was that my parents were no more against my ambition.

One day I received a call from a casting director, the one I had sent my portfolio and a video clip of my CV. He said he was going to cast me on a historical TV series. The difficult part about it was that my audition was in Los Angeles, California. I was happy and shocked at the same time. How could I go that far? So many things were circling my mind, the most important of them being how could I get ticket to Hollywood?

If you want to find out whether I got my ticket to Hollywood or not... you have to wait for the next issue of **Migratory Birds**.





Art Perspective: A New Beginning

By Elia Sharifi, Sarah Hossaini, Zahra Habibi

This is the first time that three of us “**Young Journalists**” have collaborated, and we are off to meet “**Perspective**”, one of the best art groups in Athens. This multi-faceted, diverse company was started in 2017 by a woman from London. There were only two people in the group at first, but volunteers quickly joined, giving it a boost and allowing for expansion.

The group’s first exhibition took place in a café in Monastiraki Square. The event was so successful that it quickly drew other artists. The group’s activities widened and it became essential to find a larger space that would accommodate everyone in a single studio, where they could work and put on shows with greater ease and vitality.

The company ended up signing a relatively good and cost-effective agreement for the use of a building of COMMUNITISM, and so was able to open its own studio. This became a place where anyone who wanted to explore the direction and method of their own artistic creativity could do so with ease and confidence.

After two months of hard work and effort, the team was finally ready to put on its second exhibition. The third followed five months later.

“**Perspective**” was always successful, always attracting people, so much so that two journalists from our newspaper became members. “**Perspective**” has now created so many partnerships that it is also able to show its artists’ work abroad.

Merhard, from Iran, is one of the earliest members of the team. “When I still lived in the camp at Malakasa, I would pass the time painting, until the lady from London who runs **Perspective** discovered me and I joined the team.”

Merhard started drawing in pencil, but now uses different styles and techniques. He says that painting calms you down and stops you being so emotional about all the various obstacles and difficulties. It also allows you to come to terms with your own personal psychological anxieties. As a refugee, he always includes some kind of sign of his refugee status in his works.

The works of Vail, known as Liv, from Syria, are bolder and he hopes that colour will allow him to express himself with more intensity. He believes that although art won’t change the world, it can add colour, encourage original thought and awaken conscience. This is because it is a medium rather than a means of transformation. For example, art can express the conditions and situations experienced by refugees but it can also reveal things that they themselves have not spoken about.

Arvin, one of the older members, says that when he first joined there were just five participants, while now there are more than 50. He says that he loves to portray the living conditions of refugees through photographs, especially those of women and children, because their expressions are very vivid.

Jamil, another member of the team, came across “**Perspective**” through acquaintances. He started painting only 10 months ago and has learnt almost everything through the team. He believes that it is only through his work that an artist can express himself, depict his difficulties, his pain, his feelings and anything else that he cannot communicate through language.

Those are just some of the members of the team, but unfortunately, there are very few women. This is not a good thing for such a good, strong group made up of so many people, nationalities and personalities.

By talking to some of the group, we learnt that art is indeed a practical way of expressing the thoughts emotions, beliefs, ideas and inclinations of each artist, because each creation is the means by which he does it.

Regardless of whether the work of art is a refugee’s way of expressing himself, or the result of a painter’s imagination, it is merely a road to an end. It is a means of expression and because this group is so diverse, it really is unique and remarkable.

A Celebration of Peace

By Mahdiah Hossaini

On Wednesday June 20th we celebrated the first anniversary of the newspaper '**Migratory Birds**' and the Web radio '**Dandelion**' in the garden of the **Association of Greek Archaeologists**.

Many dear friends were present, whom we had invited to share the evening with us and take part in our joy.

The first thing that drew everyone's attention was how culturally diverse the party was. There were people from Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Greece, Albania...

We, the '**Young Journalists**', could see before us the first messages of peace and friendship from all those taking part, people from different nationalities and cultures, speaking different languages. We felt very proud that as a result of this past year's teamwork, we have been able to put across those messages so succinctly, with the help of our photographers' cameras.

We began the evening by presenting our newspaper, describing how it began and reporting various aspects of its first year of circulation. There

followed a presentation of Web Radio **Dandelion**. **Dimitris Aggelidis**, a journalist from the newspaper **Efimerida ton Sintakton** spoke, followed by the father of one the "**Young Journalists**". An Arab interpreter from our team also addressed the audience, as did Michalis Papantonopoulos, a social psychologist. Finally, some newcomers to our group explained to the audience what they had learnt as participants in the '**Young Journalists**' programme.

The celebration finished with videos showing four young women, contributors to '**Migratory Birds**', who have flown to other parts. Despite the distance that separates us, they managed to provide us with a few moments of joy with what they showed us and with what they said, proving that our hearts continue to beat as one.

That evening we said goodbye to another contributor who was leaving for Germany, but knowing that we would continue to work together we wished her good luck, much joy and success. In any case, no bird ever forgets how to fly! Our group coordinator and editor-in-chief, **Aristea Protonatoriou**, who taught us everything she knew with much enthusiasm, has also had to leave us in order to fly towards a brighter future. From our part, we welcomed her replacement, the journalist **Sotiris Sideris**, with open arms.

The celebration lasted about three hours and we would like to thank everyone not only for taking part, but for all their support during the past year.

We have embarked on our second year with much enthusiasm, in the hope that we will continue to convey the message of freedom, peace and love throughout the world via our project, and that we will acquire readers in all corners of the earth.



A new personality

By Mahdiah Hossaini

Life in the camp has changed me. I am fed up with my old self, my "egoism" and the words "I want". I now look out for other people and their problems. I have now decided to talk to you about this new personality of mine so that you can see how circumstances change people.

When I feel the warmth on me from the moment I wake up, I know there is nothing that can upset me throughout the course of the day. That is the new "me" that has emerged since I became a refugee.

Despite the various problems and difficulties, this new personality moves, breathes and persists. Its endurance and determination never run out. Unfortunately, this personality is also a bit unstable.

Every evening, this new personality of mine appears to crack, and as

the night falls, the cracks deepen. When the camp is plunged into total darkness, my old personality reappears and I become anxious, restless and fearful until I can no longer function and my heart beats far too quickly.

It absorbs and negates all the composure that I have acquired during the day and it takes me back, it makes me live once more in my house, the house that no longer exists. My home is made of canvas now.

I go back. I write my dreams down on paper, and then I look at them and smile as if they will come alive at any moment. These days however I don't think of either my dreams or my hopes...

I close my eyes and think of the morning to come. I feel I have become familiar with my new personality these past few months. I have created a far more enduring and patient person than I was, someone who is not brought down by a mountain of problems.

My new personality has coloured the world. My new personality does not worry about Cinderella's lost slipper, it doesn't become sad nor dream about living in a luxury home.

These days my personality worries about the pair of shoes that I would like to offer a compatriot of mine – a barefoot child. In the morning, my new personality is calm. Daytime is lovely; please pray for my nights.

Amen



This was written while Mahdiah lived in the Refugee Camp at Schisto. At the beginning of 2018, she moved to an apartment in the centre of Athens. Meanwhile living conditions at Schisto have improved and the tents have been replaced by containers.





Charlie Chaplin: How an unhappy man brought happiness to the world.

By **Mohammad Alrifai**

Whenever we hear the name **Charlie Chaplin** we always think of his bright side, but have we ever wondered about his unhappy, dark side? His full name was **Charles Spencer Chaplin** and he was born in London in 1889. He wasn't just an actor, as we all know, but also a director, composer and scriptwriter.

Charlie Chaplin's family had no home and had to live in workhouses. His parents separated when he was three. His mother was a singer but lost her job after injuring her vocal cords and so **Charlie** and his half-brother Sidney were forced to work as boot polishers at a very young age. Things became progressively worse for the family and when their mother was no longer able to look after them, the authorities placed both boys in an orphanage. **Chaplin** was nine at the time. When he was thirteen, his father died of alcoholism. His mother caught syphilis, which was largely incurable then, she developed mental problems and was committed to an asylum.

Chaplin did not allow all those obstacles in his life to hinder him. He worked as a music hall performer, and at 19 signed a contract with the Fred Karno troupe, touring the United States with them and learning about film production. At 25, he signed a new contract with Keystone Studios, which is where the character of the Tramp was born and **Chaplin** was finally able to develop his comic talents. He never gave up hope, worked very hard and became one of the most famous people in the world.

Charlie Chaplin was a director, writer, composer and actor in films

that portray social issues in a humorous way. His films were silent and without dialogue, because that was how he felt he could convey the true meaning of his art. **Chaplin** continued to produce silent films even after the introduction of sound to cinema. His most famous films include "Modern Times", "The Great Dictator" and "The Kid".

Chaplin knew that "The Great Dictator", which satirises Adolf Hitler and his dream of dominating Europe, would cause him many problems. This didn't stop him going ahead with the film in 1940. There were many reasons why he wanted to make the film and one of them was the famous speech at the end, which is more than just an epilogue; it is a clear message to all:

"We want to live by each other's happiness - not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world, there is room for everyone. And the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone. The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way.

Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed. We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in...

To those who can hear me, I say - do not despair. The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed - the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress...

Soldiers! Don't give yourselves to brutes - men who despise you - enslave you - who regiment your lives - tell you what to do - what to think and what to feel! Who drill you - diet you - treat you like cattle, use you as cannon fodder. Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men - machine men with machine minds and machine hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle! You are men! You have the love of humanity in your hearts! You don't hate...

You, the people have the power - the power to create machines. The power to create happiness! You, the people, have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure... Let us fight to free the world - to do away with national barriers - to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason..."

4th PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL OF NEA SMYRNI

Concerning the Label Emigrant

As part of our collaboration with the Cultural Program of the 4th highschool of Nea Smyrni, the students of the second grade of the school created the following poster for the Network. Inspired by Bertolt Brecht's poem "Concerning the Label Emigrant," the poster is the comment of students on the refugee crisis, and a call to action to build a new nest for the migratory birds that have left their homes.

We are very grateful to the students who worked together to create the poster and the coordinator of the Cultural Program "Concerning the Label Emigrant," Mrs. Aphrodite Kairaki.



Ας φτιάξουμε
ΜΑΖΙ
τη νέα τους
ΦΩΛΙΑ



4ο Γυμνάσιο Νέας Σμύρνης

Για τον όρο «μετανάστες»

Λαθεμένο μού φαινόταν πάντα τ' όνομα που μας δίνουν:
«Μετανάστες».

Θα πει, κείνοι που αφήσαν την πατρίδα τους.

Εμείς, ωστόσο, δε φύγαμε γιατί το θέλαμε,
λείτερα να διαλέξουμε μιαν άλλη γη.

Έτσι, απομένουμε δώ πέρα, ασύχαστοι, όσο μπορούμε πιο κοντά
στα σύνορα.

Μπ. Μπρεχτ, Ποιήματα



A Final Full of Energy

By Abdul Rashed Mohammadi

The **Panhellenic Wheelchair Basketball Tournament** is for people with disabilities, and it is extremely significant and impressive. This year the last match of the Final Four was between **AS Atlas of Athens** and **GS Dodekanisos of Rhodes** and it took place on June 17th in an indoor court at Nea Smyrni.

I had never watched such a match before and it really impressed me. Both teams tried their hardest in a final full of energy. The rules of the game are well known: 4 quarters of ten minutes each and five players per team. What really impressed me was how many women spectators there were.

Even though **Dodekanisos** won by 62 points to 60, the overall winner for the second year running was **Atlas**, because they finished with the highest number of points overall in the Final Four.

When the game was over, I spoke to some of the players.

Giorgos Makris plays for Paska and also for the national side. He may not have reached the final but he was the first scorer in this year's tournament. He is an above the knee amputee as the result of an accident, and has been playing basketball for the past 23 years, since 1996.

What did you think of the final?

The final match was very impressive, very dynamic and was a great advertisement for our sport.

Do you have a special message for refugees with disabilities who

have come to Greece seeking a new life?

We already work with some refugees with disabilities and we happen to have one in our team. We would very much like more to join us, so that they begin to interact with others and learn about sports. We would like to have them as part of our group and include them in our matches.

What do you think of the Paralympic Games?

People with disabilities take part in these. They are equivalent to the Olympic Games and take place 2-3 weeks after them. They represent the ultimate effort of all those who have been training and competing for years, the highlight of all their endeavours. The athletes push themselves beyond their personal limits, and this is what they have been working towards all year.

What do you have to say to our readers?

If they know of a disabled refugee or immigrant they should talk to them, get them to come to our centre and take part in our sports.

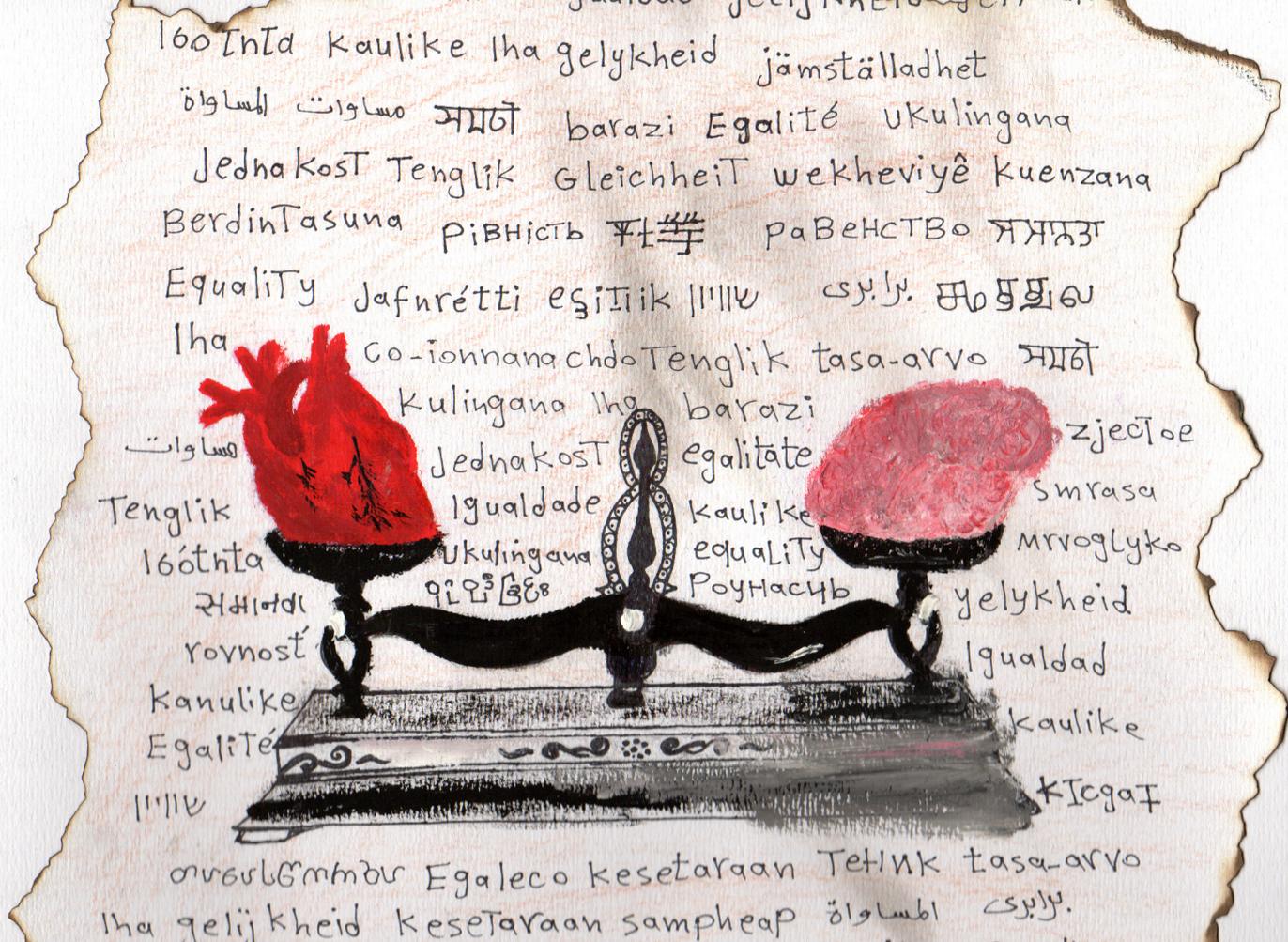
I then spoke with Ioannis Haldaios, who has been playing basketball for the past 17 years, the last five of which have been with AS Atlas of Athens

What do you have to say to teenage refugees who have emerged from the war with a disability?

I would like to tell them that if they take up sports they are doing both their mental and physical health a lot of good. They will get stronger, they will travel, compete and train, and they will integrate socially. All this will make it easier for them to overcome their difficulties.

Is life with sport better than life without?

I think that taking part in sports is a good thing because you take on certain responsibilities that you have to honour. You have a schedule and life flows more smoothly. This is especially true in our case: after an accident, when your system starts to atrophy, you find your strength through sport and you are able to carry on.



Dialogue between heart and mind

By **Mirna Aslan**

Mind: Hi there, scaredy-cat!

Brain: Hi there, wise owl!

Mind: How are you today?

Heart: Still beating. And you?

Mind: Still active.

Heart: Poor mind, you are nothing but a tool for thought.

Mind: And you are simply an organ that beats so that I can live. Basically, you work for me.

Heart: I am feelings and senses, pain and joy, poetry and love. For thousands of years people have been writing about me and composing the best poems. Without me there are no feelings, no love, no life.

Mind: I am what makes man a logical being, what separates him from other animals.

The dialogue is long, never-ending... Heart and mind balance on a pair of scales. If the scales lean to one side or the other, then the person becomes unstable. It's as if he can only see with one eye. I don't think anyone wants to live without reason, but neither do they want to be emotionally lifeless.

So, the clash happens over and over again.

Every time I pick up my pen to write an article, my heart begins to object to my words, which it doesn't like. I cross them out and I try to write something more acceptable to my heart.

Then the mind objects, your words aren't reasonable, it tells me, and this is not something I want to talk about. So here I am, all confused, writing words and titles that are more logical, but they are not those that my heart would like.

The harsh conflict between heart and mind continues, because each one has a different angle for looking at things.

The heart wants an article full of emotion; the mind just wants things that are full of logic and wisdom. The result is that I don't write what I want and what I do write often ends up cold and stupid.

Life in society is the same. A clash between duty and desire, because that is how things have always been. For example, you often have to accept an invitation and go to a social gathering, even though you don't want to, thus wasting valuable time, so that people don't say, "what you did was embarrassing, it is not acceptable!" So, you go in order to be polite, even at the cost of your time and personal interests.

Sometimes, when I am invited to such gatherings, I feel heavy-footed. I hesitate and wonder, "Am I wrong? Might they criticise me for behaving arrogantly?"

I don't know whether I am right or wrong, but those that know me understand me. Anyone who is going to criticise me will do so anyway, such is life. Let's live it as we would wish, because it is very hard trying to please other people, even you devote yourself to doing nothing else.

Those are my words and that is how things are. I can feel the conflict inside me and it frightens me.

One last thought: The true challenge is how to control the different situations and clashes between your heart and your mind and how to blend them together. In effect, how to think with your heart and feel with your mind. Try to combine the two, but not to the detriment of one or the other. Live in peace, expect goodness and put your hope in God. He knows.

In a Land Far Far Away [Part II]

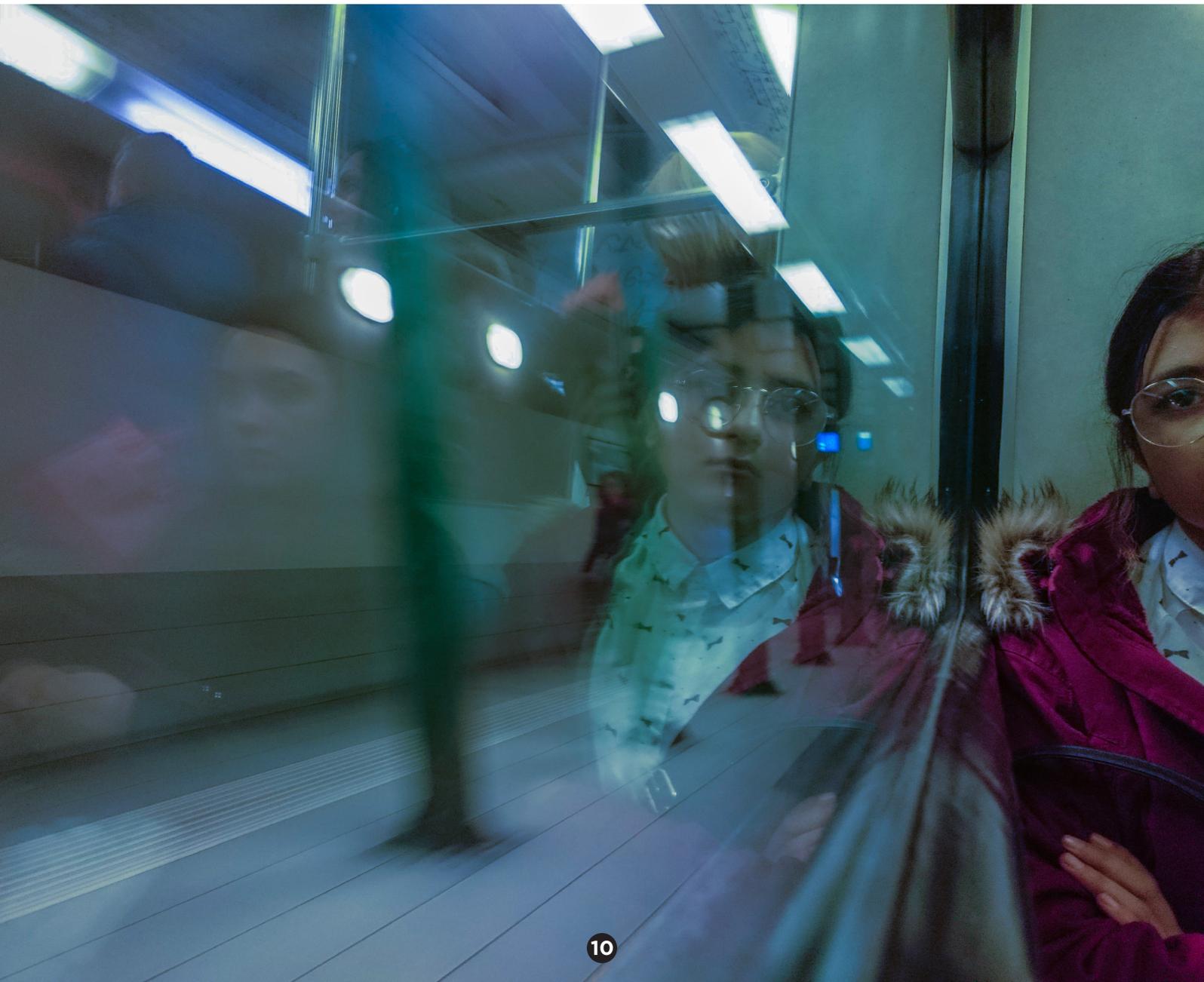
By Elia Sharifi

Get up”, said his mother one morning as she wept. “You have to leave, you are late.” The boy didn’t ask any questions he simply prepared his belongings and got ready quickly. Without knowing why, he waited for his sister. When she too was ready, their parents hugged them, started crying and told them to hurry to a particular address. As soon as they got there, the brother and sister realised exactly what was going on. The smuggler was waiting for them and put them in a van without further delay. The siblings were shaking with fear and worry. After a very long journey they arrived in a land far far away whose name they did not know. There was no question of rest there. The boy had to work from morning till night to cover both their expenses. There was no more peace or tranquillity, no more open horizons. The boy had become very troubled in this unknown place. He, who had never known sadness, had nothing but sad thoughts. If only he had been able to say goodbye to his friends, to know what had brought on this situation, if only there was someone to understand him even a little, if only he could see his friends again and talk with them once more. This is what he wanted, more than anything else. There were so many questions he wanted to ask. One

day, he turned to God and said, “So you won. You took everything from us. You can have it all, but why don’t you ask me why I am still alive? Do you want to torture me? What have I done? Was it all my fault? Haven’t I suffered enough?”

Life in that far away land got worse by the day. Yet, the boy suddenly fell in love and this gave him great hope. Unfortunately, the girl he fell in love with left him. Those two siblings seemed to be trapped in that far away land. Nothing was going right for them. Both were broken hearted. Yet, his sister always encouraged him, and every defeat strengthened him. He felt that life had nothing positive to offer him. He had suffered and been hurt so often that he attributed anything positive to mere coincidence. His sister always stood by him like a guardian angel and this helped the boy face all their problems, overcome any difficulties and try to find the good and positive in his life. The siblings never saw their family again. They had been forced to march alone on the road to achievement, to attain the impossible, to prosper and climb the ladder of success by themselves.

*A crazy boy
Who learnt so much
Does not live calmly
But walks in the rain
Tired and broken
If only there was someone to stand by him
Someone to understand him
Someone to lessen his pain.
If only he could return to his homeland
To play with his friends at home
If only none of this had happened
If only there was a solution
If only he could find happiness
If only, if only...*





If I were president

By **Fatimah Hosseini**

In some countries, such as Iran and Afghanistan, the role of the President of the Islamic Republic is similar to that of a prime minister and is second only to the Supreme Leader. The people elect the president every four years. He must be a citizen of the country, have appropriate higher education, be a good leader and must faithfully implement the laws of the land.

Without doubt, at some point in our lives, we all imagine what we would do if we held that position. I certainly do. If I were president I would limit the amount of slogans and meaningless promises; instead I would try to put into practice all the things I had already sworn to do, so that they would actually be implemented rather than remain mere words. If I were president I would try to ensure total equality, without discrimination on the grounds of people, gender etc. I would first and foremost try to establish equal educational practice for all, from primary to university level, so that all young people – both men and women - in the country could take whichever educational and cultural direction they choose, with security

and harmony. After all, these young people are the future of the country.

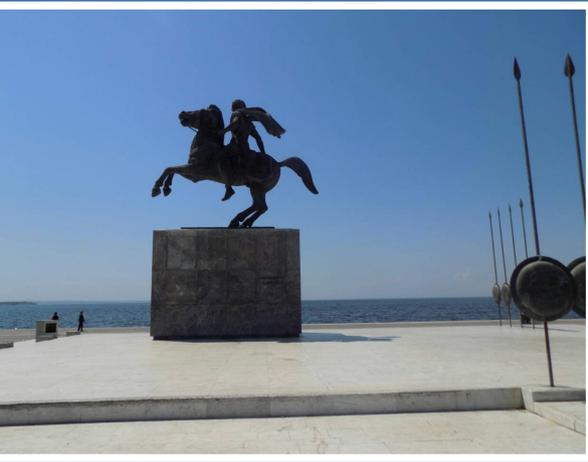
If I were president, I would fight to stop drug addiction in families and societies, given that if each individual family in society improves, then society as a whole advances fittingly and correctly.

If I were president, I would support the poor and the financially weak in order to fully eradicate poverty. I would call all nations of the world my brothers and I would send them messages of love and friendship. I would ask them to avoid calling other nations enemies, and to spend their funds on solidarity, love and friendship between peoples, instead of spending vast amounts of money on arms and the annihilation of any “enemies”.

If I were president, I would guarantee the internal security of my country, and if some fellow men from other countries, either because of conflict or because of social or financial hardship, sought asylum in mine, I would welcome them with open arms and grant them the same rights as my own citizens.

I wish for all nations and all peoples to coexist in harmony and joy, without being attacked by stronger countries, without those strong countries invading or occupying others, without women and children becoming the most innocent unarmed victims of such conflicts.

I hope that the day will come when there will be no more wars anywhere in the world and that all nations and peoples will live in peace.



School Trip to Thessaloniki

By Alishba Rahimi

Schools were far different in Afghanistan than in Europe. You had to wear uniforms and the teachers were so strict with the students. You could get beaten by the teachers for not doing your homework or if you failed any test. I assume that the teachers here in Europe are more like your friends. They don't force you to fill up the notebooks and cram them.

It wasn't too long that we came to this school, the second high school of Drapetsona. We were freshmen, so I was really touched when I heard

that the school administration had decided to take me and my brother to Thessaloniki, along with the Greek students, on a four-day trip. It was my first trip with school. I didn't have any idea how it was going to be. Since I am a refugee, it was unexpected! My heart was bouncing with excitement.

I can't say how happy I was back then as we were driving through the bustling city of Thessaloniki. I explored many beautiful and historical places, where I got acquainted with "Alexander the Great" and much more with Greece. The group of our friends translated everything they thought that it would interest us. We had Greek food and a lot of fun. We are grateful to our teachers from the bottom of our hearts for their care and attention. The excitement of the city inflamed me with a passion I had never known before and which I cannot explain to this day.

After three fulfilling and extremely joyful days, on our way back to Athens, we also visited the small city of Veria. It was only for a short time but, in just a couple of hours, our teachers tried to give us a tour of every beautiful place in the city. It was a small city with beautiful rivers and so much greenery, I was just wishing that these moments would last forever.

Theatre of Integration

[part II]

By Najaf Shabir

Young people from different cultures have the opportunity to learn about theatre, to express their ideas and talk about their experiences. That is what the Theatre of Integration is all about and I wrote about it in the newspaper's 7th issue.

Petros Pitsounis had the wonderful idea of creating a project for people from all over the world that would allow young individuals from different countries to communicate with one another and learn about each other's culture.

On May 5th and 6th, the actors of Integration gave their very best in a performance at Argo Theatre, which was considered hugely successful.

At the end of the show, many people came up to us to congratulate us and say how much they had enjoyed it. Many of them wanted to see it again. It was because so many people turned up that we ended up giving a second performance.

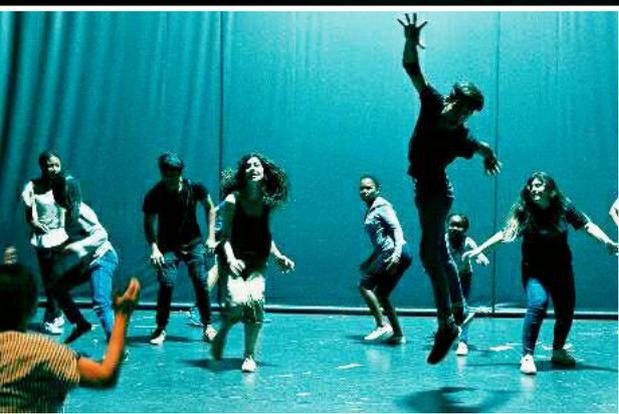
The original director was Giorgos Kaloxilos who taught us much about the theatre. He was obliged to resign for personal reasons at the rehearsal stage, but I still remember his words, which were really encouraging. He told us that an actor becomes an actor from the moment he first steps onto a stage and that an actor can do anything. Even after he left, all the actors thought of him with great fondness.

His place was taken by Zoe Santa, a psychiatrist, actor and stage director, with whom we worked on Aristophanes' "The Birds". There was a lot of interest in the production and at the end, I asked to interview her.

Najaf: Tell us about yourself, how did you become involved in theatre?

Zoe: My parents loved the theatre and because they could not afford a baby-sitter, they took me with them to plays. And so, I saw famous Greek actors who are now part of the history of the theatre and also a large part of Greek culture. For me the theatre is second nature and a second home. I first went on stage when I was nine years old. Becoming a director was for me like discovering an exciting new game and I directed my first play at 11. I went to Delos acting school and in 2004, I got my degree in drama from the Ministry of Culture. In those days, there was no separate theatre academy so that was how I started to act and direct professionally. I have met a lot of people at the Theatre of Integration who are seriously interested in theatre. In fact, I decided to rename it "New Life (Nea Zoe)", a new name of my own!

As the director said, it is natural for someone to want to tell a story, most people need to do it. Theatre allows you to do this through music, dance or any other art form it may include. Finally, language is not a barrier, as can be seen from the fact that people from seven different countries gave two wonderful performances at the Theatre of Integration.



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