

COPMA

Citizens Opposed To Propaganda Masquerading As Art

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January 15, 2013

Steven A. Rakitt
Executive Vice President and CEO
The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington
6101 Montrose Road
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Mr. Rakitt:

Theater J's production of "Boged: Enemy of the People," as part of the 2012-2013 Voices for a Changing Middle East Festival includes a post-show panel, entitled "*The Israeli Election-- Impact at Home and in a Transforming Region.*" Nathan Guttman is the moderator and Jeremy Ben-Ami, president of J Street, Lucy Kurtzer-Elllenbogen, Senior program Officer at the Center for Conflict Management, US Institute of Peace and James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute and Author of Arab Voices are speakers.

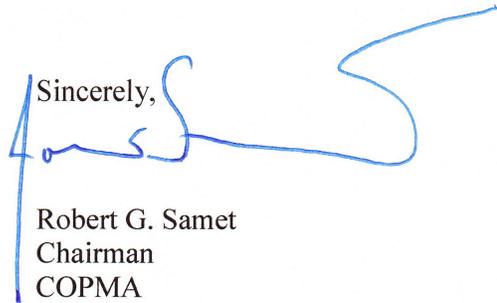
Theater J is a theater group based at the DCJCC, ostensibly with the role of presenting artistic productions with Jewish content, not in representing the DCJCC in political programming. Instead, it is going off campus and using the presentation of a play as a pretext for holding a political forum that has no relevance to the play itself. Clearly, the play is merely a pretext for creating a stage and audience outside the DCJCC for the presentation of director Ari Roth's own political ideology. Furthermore, it is obvious from the makeup of the panel, this forum will be critical of Israel, its current government, and the Israeli mainstream that put this government in office and may soon do so again. There may well be persons who truly believe that the Palestinians want peace and that it is only Israel's intransigence that prevents peace, a position that all three speakers and the moderator espouse. They should not be denied the right to express their views, as mistaken as many believe them to be. But what benefit is it to the Jewish

community or to the Jewish state to promote that view, unopposed, in the outside community on the pretext of offering a cultural attraction? Once again, this panel has nothing to do with the topic of the play, and the play is clearly being used as a pretext for the theater director's political activism. And why should the Federation or the DCJCC, which receives funding from the Federation, sponsor that view or Mr. Roth's political activism?

Once again, we trust that if this panel were being held at the DCJCC and had been arranged by responsible leadership, it would have been balanced. Officials at the DCJCC seem to be failing to provide the proper oversight to prevent Ari Roth from using the theater and the name of the DCJCC to engage inappropriately in political activism against the best interests of the community.

And once again we at COPMA (Citizens Concerned over Propaganda Masquerading as Art) are looking for the Federation to exercise that oversight upon the failure of the DCJCC to do so.

Sincerely,



Robert G. Samet
Chairman
COPMA
Citizens Opposed to Propaganda
Masquerading as Art

RGS:nst
cc: Carole R. Zawatsky