



# Woman to Woman

## Jerusalem Shelter for Battered Women

Newsletter P.O.B. 10403, Jerusalem 9110301 | www.jerusalemshelter.org.il | jshelter@netvision.net.il Winter 2017

### “The Magic Happened Again”

Thanks to everyone who took part in the annual fundraising event

“The magic happened again” – that’s how the volunteers on Woman to Woman’s Events Committee summed up our 15th annual fundraising event on November 30. The forecast for stormy weather that evening didn’t keep our supporters away, and as in the past, hundreds of our friends made their way to the Jerusalem Theater. As always, the event was held in proximity to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, traditionally marked on November 25.

The fundraising event took place in the shadow of the severe fires that had swept through the country the previous week. “We are all too familiar with the tragedy of being forced to flee a burning house,” said Woman to Woman’s chairperson Ofra Ginio. “Every day women and their children come to the Shelter having left everything behind them, fleeing from the violence that threatens to destroy everything. We know just how much effort is needed to rebuild what has been destroyed.” In Ofra’s opening address

**How much effort is needed to rebuild what has been destroyed**

she focused on the welcome presence of a strong rank of volunteers who are integral factors in the ongoing work with the women and children at the Shelter. She also drew the audience’s attention to the photography exhibition whose opening was timed to coincide with our fundraising event – another example of the fruitful cooperation between volunteers and the Shelter (see box). This year’s emcee was Elinor Mordechayev, a former Shelter resident who is now living independently, and safely, in the community (see item). We were also honored by the presence of Professor Rivka Carmi, president of Ben Gurion University of the Negev, who gave the keynote address.

The highlight of the evening, of course, was the marvelous rendition of beloved songs of the “Dudaim” duo performed by consummate entertainers Israel Gurion and Assaf Amdursky. The delighted audience, most of whom were



ישראל גוריון ואסף אמדורסקי מבצעים את שירי הדודאים (צילום: אלי שטיין)  
Entertainers Israel Gurion and Assaf Amdursky (Photo: Eli Stein)

familiar with the lyrics, did not hide their enthusiasm and outright pleasure at the nostalgic production. Remarking on the exuberant atmosphere, Dina Vardi, one of Woman to Woman’s veteran volunteers, said, “Seeing the foyer overflowing with friends enjoying the refreshments, the fantastic photographs, and then the theater hall with every seat taken – it all came together so strongly with what Elinor said [see below]. The choice of artists was perfect, and the audience singing along with them brought back memories of the past, of that characteristic feeling of ‘togetherness.’”

**On the “Dudaim” – memories of the past, of that characteristic feeling of togetherness**

▶▶▶ The event was truly a success, both in terms of the audience’s response and in terms of the income generated for the Shelter – over NIS 250,000. Special thanks to the Events Committee volunteers who devoted months to preparing and supervising every one of the details needed to ensure the success of the evening. Our appreciation also to the institutions who provided sponsorship for the evening: Bank

### “I learned something from everyone, and I accepted it as a gift.”

This year’s event was emceed by Elinor Mordchayev, who was a resident of the Shelter and the Halfway Housing program some five years ago. Her remarks are cited in full below:

“I’m very happy to be the moderator of Woman to Woman’s fundraising event. It’s a great honor for me to be here today on behalf of the facility that gave me so much support and assistance.

A bit about myself: I’m 35 years old, I grew up in the Caucasus in the FSU, and when I was 19 I married a man who seemed very strong and who knew everything, a man who actually managed my life for me, of course with my consent, as unbelievable as it may seem to me today.

The relationship between us made me feel insecure as a mother, as a partner, as a person.

I was socially isolated and cut off from my own family. My husband didn’t allow me to be in contact with my parents or other members of my family. He convinced me that I was to blame for everything – if he was unfaithful to me, it was because I was not good enough, that I was utterly worthless, and anyway, no one cared about me, and no one took any

Hapoalim, the Migdal Group, and the Sherover Foundation. And of course, our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to our supporters – those who were there and those who couldn’t come but donated nonetheless. Your generosity gives us the strength to continue the efforts on behalf of the women and their children in the Shelter.

account of me. And nevertheless, I loved my husband.

I have five wonderful children. At some point everything came together and I decided to leave him. The only way to do it was through the Shelter.

I was helpless when I came to the Shelter, I had nothing, nowhere to stay, no confidence, no Hebrew, and no way to make a living.

But at the Shelter I found warmth, understanding, someone willing to listen to me. I found help and support while I studied. I met with women who exuded strength – social workers, directors, volunteers – from each of whom I learned something that I accepted gratefully, like a gift.

I am divorced now, raising my children, working full time as a lighting and furniture sales advisor in a large company, and living in my own apartment. I want to thank everyone who helped me get to this point in my life!”

**I was helpless when I came to the Shelter, I had nothing, nowhere to stay, no confidence, no Hebrew, and no way to make a living**



צילום: ורד שדות (מתוך “רסיסי חיים”)  
Photo: Vered Sadot (From “Fragments of Life”)

### “Fragments of Life”

Photography exhibition opens at the Jerusalem Theater

At the reception for our annual fundraising event this year, a unique photography exhibition opened at the Jerusalem Theater, the product of a cooperative effort between Woman to Woman and five professional photographers working on a volunteer basis. The photographers spent several weeks at the Jerusalem Shelter, soaking up the Shelter’s special atmosphere, mingling with the residents and the staffers, and capturing in their photos moments of their lives.

This issue of the Newsletter highlights several of the photos displayed in the exhibition. More photographs, and the accompanying texts, can be accessed on the Woman to Woman website. The exhibition was on view at the Jerusalem Theater for a month following the opening, during which time several gallery talks were organized in cooperation with the artists and the curator. In the

coming months the exhibit will be shown at a number of other sites in Israel.

We extend our thanks to the photographers who volunteered their time and talents for the benefit of the joint project – Anat Gal, Anat Dizian, Rivka Hillel Lavian, Carmela Keet, Vered Sadot – and to the curator, Noga Arad-Eilon, who took an active role in the project from its very inception. We thank the Ziskind family for sponsoring the exhibition and facilitating its production in memory of the late Tzippi Suesskind z”l, who was a devoted and important member of Woman to Woman’s volunteer force. And, of course, we are grateful to the women and their children; the exhibition brings to the forefront something of their stories and the challenging and courageous path they have chosen to follow toward a new life without violence.

Photo: Anat Gal

צילום: ענת גל

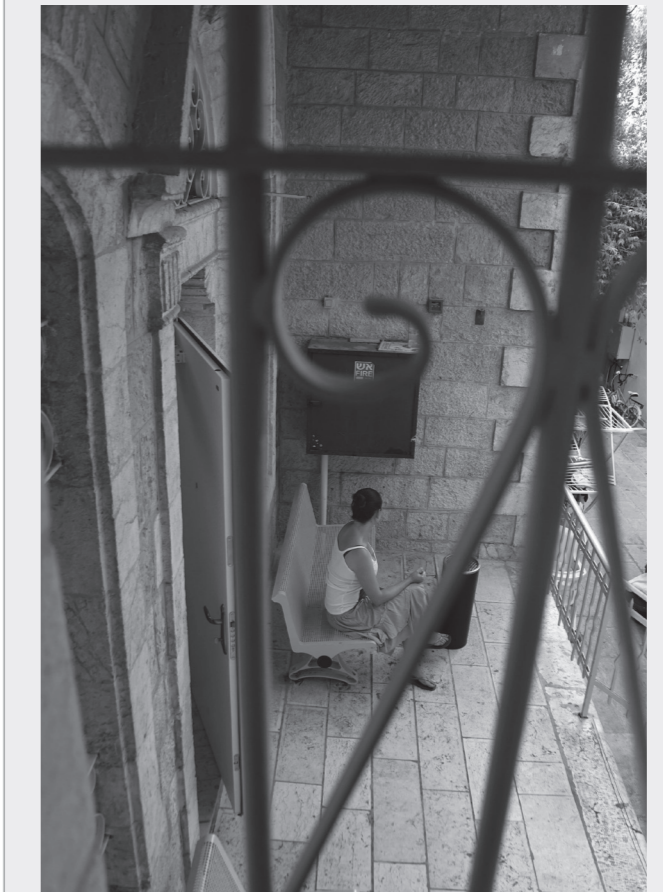


Photo: Rivka Hillel Lavian

צילום: רבקה הלל-לבניאן

