

`Leah` by Ensemble Passport (Facebook 15.1.19)

"Today, forty-nine years ago, Leah Goldberg died. She wasn't even sixty years old. Two coincidences: One. Tonight, I dreamed that I called a friend and told him, 'Leah is dead,' and he said 'don't say dead,' and I insisted: 'dead.' Two. On Saturday evening I watched the play 'Leah' by Portrait Ensemble, based on fragments from Goldberg's diaries combined with the plot of the novel 'And This is the Light' she wrote. It was a beautiful and good play. No stage, no darkness, no nonsense. Four actors and a single source of light, and an audience that surrounds it all from three sides. The first three sentences that were spoken already left me with tears in my eyes. That was Goldberg's most bitter memory, when she was eight years old and had to escape her home with her parents, and her father was taken, never to return, because he was wearing red boots and was suspected to be a communist. 'We all haven't finished living this childhood dread,' Goldberg wrote in 1938 on behalf of her generation, the children of the bloody 20th century. Goldberg's embodiment-character is played in this play by Yarden Gilboa. Goldberg's mother, who was a central character in her adult life, who lived after her daughter's death and even received Israel Prize on her behalf, was played by Dina Bley. During the most beautiful parts of the play, she walks around, reading her daughter's diary in distress. Goldberg was a brilliant intellectual, who didn't compromise for anything less than the absolute truth, and throughout her entire life struggled for her place and her voice, for staying away from anything she perceived as provincial, for her sanity and for eternal burning of the life of her soul. 'I tell about myself not because I find it pleasant to dwell in memories and think of my life as more important than the lives of others,' she wrote in the only time when she spoke of the terrible events that left her fatherless. 'I tell about myself because I am certain that tens of thousands of people, millions of people my age can speak of such memories. Because I know that they have live all of that and that like me, they cannot forget, because I am certain that they too wake up at times in the middle of the night and hear the echo of their own cries, the cry of a child who found, in the middle of the street of one average-sized nameless town, a leg and a hand of a person who was devoured by a bullet.'

Navit Barel

Poet, literature researcher, book critic, translator, Prime Minister Prize laureate, and in its full name: the prize for creation by Hebraic writers, named after Prime Minister Levi Eshkol for the year 5777-2017.