



Women, War and Learning

April 6th, 2006

Hart House - University of Toronto

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THE GHOST

A video directed by **Shahrzad Arshadi**

This video is based on the stage production of *The Ghost* by **Rachel Gorman**
30 minutes / Min-DV / 2006

It was September 26, 2004 when I first saw a part of "The Ghost" while participating at an event called "Women Political Prisoners: Memoirs and Resistance" in Toronto. Everything about "The Ghost", from Spirit Synott and Rachel Gorman's performance on the stage to the music and story that inspired Rachel to create this piece, captured my attention. As a choreographer and dancer, Rachel draws on her skills to share the story and memory of a family whose members were active in KOMALA, an organization which is part of Kurdish resistance to Iran's Islamic regime. By creating this piece Rachel captured a different portrait of the women of the Middle East for a western audience and, at the same time, accuses Iran's Islamic Republic of murder.

As an artist, I believe that learning and exchanging knowledge about human beings, their life and history are the most important aspect of art. Making this video enabled me to document and pay tribute to the struggle of Kurdish women during past 26 years in Islamic Republic of Iran. This is simply a memory from the mountains of Kurdistan!

Shahrzad Arshadi is a human rights activist and Montréal - based Canadian/Iranian artist. She came to Canada as a political refugee on December 24, 1983. In the past ten years, Shahrzad has ventured into different fields including photography, painting and video, enabling her focus on issues of memory, culture and human rights.

Rachel Gorman

Rachel has been presenting her work at dance and theatre festivals since 1999, and is a member of the Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists. An activist at heart, Rachel has been a member of the Jewish Women's Committee to End the Occupation since 2000. She has also at various times worked on disability-rights, anti-psychiatry, trade unionist, anti-war, and anti-violence campaigns. Rachel teaches Women's Studies and Equity Studies at the University of Toronto.