



King Size
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Showstopper

The Israel Festival, one of the country's premiere arts and culture festivals, bridges past and present for Israel's 70th birthday

■ *By Marissa Shapiro*

THE ISRAEL FESTIVAL CELEBRATES ITS 57TH YEAR AND ISRAEL'S 70TH BIRTHDAY WITH PERFORMANCES THAT PROVOKE, SPARK, AND ENGAGE INTERNATIONAL AND ISRAELI AUDIENCES DURING ITS JERUSALEM RUN THROUGH JUNE 14. How does Israel Festival Artistic Director Itzik Giuli know that he has done a good job with a festival whose reputation precedes it? "We measure success by the energy and response of our audiences," he says. The festival's programming is meant to "open up a different way of seeing things. Things that are challenging, exploratory, and change



[our] way of doing things." Giuli has screened hundreds of submissions and crisscrossed the globe to find contemporary art that expands the Israeli artistic landscape and our exposure to international art. "I try to find things that have a distinctive artistic point of view and a coherent language," Giuli explains. "Things that are different from other materials that you'd see on a daily basis in Israel." This impetus to seek the

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unseen is what's keeping the festival fresh and exciting year after year. The Israel Festival also marks 70 years of Israel-French relations, "an opportunity to create a more thorough and massive cultural exchange" with support from the Ministry of Culture. Here are some of our favorite not-to-be-missed performances of the Israel Festival going on in June.

Music

Nolab, *Digital Landscape Music*

What do you see when you dream? This performance blends live classical music with pseudo-psychedelic visuals from Nolab to offer audiences an immersive sensory experience. By blending dynamic visuals with auditory cues, listeners are able to hear and see music in a way they have not experienced before.

→ June 7, Henry Crown Hall, Jerusalem Theatre

Theater & Performance Art

Amit Drori, *Monkeys*

Twelve beings – three humans and nine monkey robots – join forces in this hour-long performance that explores the central events of life: birth, ageing, and death. Are the monkey robots representing our most primal state or the most advanced? The performance takes us backward and forward in time, pushing us to take a second look at the way we view the world.

→ June 1 & 2, Zik Studio, Beit Nekofa

Monster Truck and The Foot Prints, *SORRY*

This piece explores postcolonialism, managing to discuss a tenuous topic with humor and intricacy in a collaboration between German theater and Nigerian choreographer Segun Adefila. Expect to see contemporary dance that explores past, present, (but, hopefully, not future) issues.

→ June 5, Rebecca Crown Hall, Jerusalem Theatre

Christoph Marthaler, *King Size*

With a wink and a nod to classic vaudeville theater, this performance combines folk, classical, and pop music. Giuli recommends this piece as an interesting way to combine worlds and, according to him, it is full of humor, irony, and humanity.

→ June 7 & 8, Rebecca Crown Hall, Jerusalem Theatre

Soul Doctor

This musical offers a glimpse into the relationship between Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and singer Nina Simone. Despite their surprising decades-long friendship, the performance, starring Josh Young and Nya Trysha, a 23 year-old Kenyan-born actress, singer and dancer, tells the story of two different people whose love of music connected them for years and years.

→ June 7, 8, & 9, Beit Shmuel, Mercas Shimshon

Dance

Gisèle Vienne, *Kindertotenlieder*

Across a winter landscape that blurs fiction and reality, choreographer Gisèle Vienne brings theater, poetry, and music to the audience with grace.

→ June 7, Sherover Hall, Jerusalem Theatre

Special Event

Rimini Protokoll, *Remote Jerusalem*

This very special two-hour guided tour in Jerusalem takes participants to unusual places in the city via a guided audio tour, all the while asking questions and turning all of Jerusalem into a stage.

Various dates throughout the festival, around Jerusalem

→ For a full schedule of the Israel Festival performances, visit israel-festival.org/en