

# The everlasting questions of rachel corrie

## by geraldine coughlan, 25 march 2013

The Everlasting Questions of Rachel Corrie

by Geraldine Coughlan, Director, GCC Law & Media, The Hague - 25 March 2013

“I just wanted to tell my Mom that I am really scared and questioning my fundamental belief in the goodness of human nature. I think it is a good idea for us to devote our lives to making this stop. I don’t think it is an extremist thing to do any more.”

These are the words that resound in your mind after seeing *My Name is Rachel Corrie* - a monologue set to music, brought to The Hague by the English Theatre (STET) last weekend.

It was a story that shocked the world. Rachel Corrie, American peace activist and member of the International Solidarity Movement, was killed by an Israeli bulldozer in the Gaza Strip on March 16 2003. Her life has been memorialised in tributes, including this play, based on Rachel’s diaries and emails from Gaza and directed by British actor Alan Rickman in 2005.

Marta Paganelli, as Rachel, does a superb job in becoming the woman in this script who emerges as a larger-than-life character you can’t help but love and admire.

We can all identify with Rachel as she quits her studies, packs her things and heads off - sorry to leave her Mom. She is headstrong, scatterbrained, tender and full of life, hope and questions.

She enlightens us on the complex background to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as its futility starts to erode her faith in humanity.

Her continuing questioning of life, law and reason draws you right into the crisis, bringing you face to face with the most blatant moral conundrums - choices, consciousness, the will to act and the template of time. Her musician mate echoes and reinforces her quandary - which becomes our own.

The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice was set up to continue Rachel’s work. Marta Paganelli was awarded the Anna Pancirolli award in 2012 for *My Name is Rachel Corrie*.

It’s a stunning performance that will leave you asking questions - long after you leave the theatre.

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