

University of Haifa

The Senate of the University of Haifa, by virtue of the authority vested in it by the constitution of the University and in accordance with the recommendations of the President and the Executive Committee

hereby confers upon

Orna Porat

the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa

In recognition of her great contribution to the shaping of Israeli culture, thanks to a rare and unique talent coupled with infinite creativity; on her being one of the cornerstones of theater in Israel for more than seven decades; on her vision and courage in breaking down the boundaries of theater to make it available to children and youth; on her contribution to educating youth to imagination, vision, tolerance and creativity; on being living proof of how mankind can break free of the vistas of childhood and rise to great heights by following universal faith and ethics.

Conferred in 15 Sivan 5775/June 2, 2015
Haifa, Israel



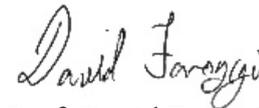
Ami Ayalon

Chairman of the Executive Committee



Amos Shapira

President



Prof. David Faraggi

Rector



ORNA PORAT

Orna Porat was born in 1924 as Irena Klein in Cologne, Germany, to a German non-Jewish family. Following her graduation from high school, with honors, she studied acting at the Cologne Drama School and joined the Schleswig Theater Company in 1942.

During that year, with Germany firmly under Nazi rule, she first became aware of the holocaust of European Jews. In her heart of hearts, she decided that she would not remain in Germany. When the Second World War came to an end she applied to emigrate from Germany to Russia, which involved interrogation by British Military Intelligence. Joseph (Yosef) Proter, the German-speaking Intelligence Officer who interviewed her, was a soldier in the Jewish Brigade of the British Army, and a native of Cologne.

The pair fell in love and Orna (still Irena) decided to link her destiny to that of the Jewish people and to do so in their country. With Joseph, she made aliyah to Eretz Yisrael in 1947. Soon after arriving in the country, Porat converted to Judaism.

The following year Porat joined the Cameri Theater, where she soon became a renowned actor. In addition to the Cameri, Porat has over the years appeared with Habima Theater, Beit Lessin Theater, the Beersheva Theater Company, and theaters abroad.

Porat has become one of the most outstanding actors in Israeli theater. She has played leading roles in many plays, including: Jeanne d'Arc, Mary Stuart, Twelfth Night, The Visit (Der Besuch der alten Dame), Coriolanus, Driving Miss Daisy, Her Final Days, Stolen Water, and others.

As well as her acting career, Porat studied the academic discipline of theater arts for children and young people. In the mid-1960s, alongside the Cameri Theater, she founded a children's theater that she continued to direct for the next five years. A firm believer that children deserve "as much as adults, but more so," she later founded her namesake theater for children and young people, where she now serves as Honorary President. Porat is one of the Founders of ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theater for Children and Young People, and established the Israeli branch of the organization.

Throughout an impressive and distinguished career, Porat has won a wide array of prizes, commendations and awards. She has three times been recipient of the Kinor David Prize, awarded to prominent artists in Israel; the Moshe Halevi Performing Arts Prize from Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality; the EMET Prize; a Special Recognition Prize in the Stage Award for Children and Youth category; three honorary doctorates; and many more. In 1978 Porat was awarded the Israel Prize for Theater, 5739.