



2018 - The Year of ITI



*Original version (submitted by the author)*

**Georgette Gebara** is a world-renowned dancer, choreographer, writer, broadcaster and educator from Lebanon. As a student, she showed early promise when dancing, and landed many leading roles in classical ballets. She used her experience in education to set up the “École Libanaise de Ballet”, a ballet focussed dance school, in Beirut, 1964.

Keeping with education, she has since gone on to act as Professor of dance at the National Institute of Fine Arts (Dramatic Arts Section) of the Lebanese University (1966 to 1984) and has lectured all over the world. She has continued to try and reach the masses and carry-on her educational impulses by giving half-hour radio lectures in Lebanon.

As a choreographer, Georgette has worked for plays, musicals, TV and Film in Arabic, American, French and Armenian productions. For television, she choreographed and danced on a special programme of recitations of Arabic Poems for Jordanian TV, which was the first programme of its kind when it broadcast in 1978. She has since gone on to do further TV work as a jury member for “Studio Al Fan”, the Number One TV-programme for the discovery of new talents in music, song and dance, in Lebanon, from 1974 to 1992.

All of this has helped cement Georgette Gebara as a household name in the dance world. She is seen as an innovator for dance in the Arab region and is a key reason for the enduring popularity of the art form in that part of the world. Examples of her desire to raise the profile of dance in the Arab world are numberless. For instance, she founded, and went on to choreograph for, the “Soirees de Ballets”, the first professional dance company to be based in Lebanon, in 1966. Just two years later, her desire to spread her inventive approach across the Arab Region was realised when she became a founder member of the International Centre of Traditional Music and Dance, based in Carthage (Tunisia), in 1968. She is also a co-founder of the Syndicate of Professional Artists, Lebanon, formed in 1993.

More recently she has turned her attention to writing and dance journalism. She has authored articles on Lebanese Theatre for German and Japanese publications and was twice named ‘Dance Critic of the Year’ by the Daily Star. In November 2017 she published her first book, entitled, “Entre Deux Pas”.

Over the years she has been a stalwart for ITI, seeking to use it as a platform to raise the profile of Lebanese and pan-Arabic dance across the globe. From 1980-2008 she served as a key

member, and later Vice-President, of the Lebanese Centre of ITI. During this time she also worked as the secretary of the International Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), from 1996 to 2008, and served as a member of the organization's Executive Council from 1997-2008. In 2011, her contributions to ITI, and to the wider world of the performing arts, were recognised, when she was made an Honorary Member of ITI.