

General information about the festival of performances on the Yiddish literature

“Once you open the pages of the Jewish literature”

The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania initiated a project “Once you open the pages of the Jewish literature” in order to better acquaint Lithuanian students with Yiddish literature and Jewish culture.

The project has been implemented in Lithuania within the years of 2017-2018. During this time, school communities got acquainted with the creative works of Litvaks, who wrote in Yiddish. While reading these works, teachers and students not just learned about the legacy of a very rich Yiddish literature, which was wantonly forgotten in Lithuania, but also understood more about the life, traditions, peculiarities of thinking as well as the way of life of Lithuanian Jews. The Tolerance Centres of six towns of Lithuania have staged performances on these creative works.

The closing event of the project “Once you open the pages of the Jewish literature” will take place on April 11, 2018 - on the eve of the day of YomHashoah. YomHashoah is an abbreviation from Hebrew, meaning a day that commemorates Holocaust martyrs and heroes. This day is officially commemorated in Israel and in other countries, where Jewish communities reside. In addition to other commemoration events, the life of the entire Israel petrifies for a few minutes on that day: sirens go on, all the people and cars on the roads stop for awhile.

Six performances, staged by students, represent the six million of the Holocaust victims. The summer and autumn of 1941 is the most tragic and bloodiest episode in the history of Lithuania. Within a very short time the Nazi occupants, with the help of local collaborators, brutally destroyed Jewish communities, having dwelt here for centuries. The organizers of the project seek to recover from the wanton oblivion, at least in our memory, the Jewish communities, having lived in the settlements and towns of Lithuania, who projected the Lithuanian state and believed it being their home and their future. The performances, arranged by the students, are like six small fragments of a broken mirror, which reflect glimpses of the world in the nonentity, that urge us to think and remind us of the loss of the state of Lithuania during the Holocaust.

The project “Once you open the pages of the Jewish literature” is implemented by the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. It is partially supported by the Goodwill Fund.

