



TERRY **BOULLATA**

Born in 1966, Terry Boullata has lived all her life in Jerusalem – under Israeli occupation, witnessing and suffering from discriminatory policies against the Palestinian people's aspirations for freedom and human dignity. During the first Intifada (1987–1989), she was detained four times. Upon release, she graduated from Birzeit University and pursued the defense of Palestinian human rights, including women's rights. Through her work, she came in touch with the suffering of her people, which she tried to voice through the production of two films. *The Iron Wall* documents the Israeli land-theft policy and segregation of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, and *Jerusalem: The East Side Story* voices the suffering and aspirations of her Jerusalem community.

As a proud mother of two girls and principal of an elementary school and kindergarten in Abu Dis, Jerusalem, for sixteen years (now segregated behind the Israeli Wall), she has sought to provide the new generation with a solid education that helps to nurture healthy growth despite the daily traumas caused by checkpoints and socio-economic deprivations, including those that relate to the right to health services and education. Her goal is to give her students the tools they need in order to become the future defenders of freedom and justice, based on international law.

As a proud Jerusalemite, she has served on the boards of Jerusalem cultural and women's centers (the Palestinian National Theater, Al Hakawati, and the Women's Studies Center) in defense of cultural and women's rights. She remains an active volunteer in conducting activities that aim to encourage the city's development, preserve its rich cultural and tourism resources, and protect its Palestinian national identity. Exposing violations of human, socio-economic, and political rights of Palestinian Jerusalemites remains a haunting mission on which she focuses her efforts.

As is the case for thousands of Jerusalemites, the city holds an important place in her soul. Her eyes twinkle upon reaching Damascus Gate, and the smell of za'atar fills her lungs while she walks through Khan Zeit Street towards her family house in Hussein Hosh at Aqabet Taqiyeh, the oldest neighborhood of the Old City, which has been under her family's guardianship for the last 200 years. She firmly believes that Jerusalem is where peace will make it or break it in the region, and that justice lies in pursuing international law.