

Clowns Without Borders

Burj al Barajneh - Beirut



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The first day of this year's tour saw us returning to Burj al Barajneh, also the first stop on 2016's tour. Originally set up by The Red Cross in 1948, in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war, to house displaced people from Palestine, this camp has never fallen out of use. It currently houses the descendants of those displaced Palestinians, still classed as refugees, as well as newer residents who have arrived with the advent of the Syrian civil war. With an area of only 1 square kilometre, the population of the camp is estimated to be in excess of 20,000 people and rising - a higher population density than either London or New York.

We performed two shows, at Al Markaz Alarabi and Almaraa Fraternity Association, to a total audience of 356 children. These were a mixture of Lebanese Palestinian and Syrian Palestinian and Syrian.

We were warmly rewarded with giggles and gales of laughter during the shows and hugs and high-fives afterwards. The children seemed to love our cheesy disco moves and knocked a lot of craic out of trying to copy them.

Their teachers and carers thanked us for coming and told us the children had really enjoyed and engaged with the shows and it was lovely to see them having so much fun.