KATLOT

DIARY OF A SCHMATTA REVOLUTIONARY

A darkly comic stage work based on a firsthand prison diary

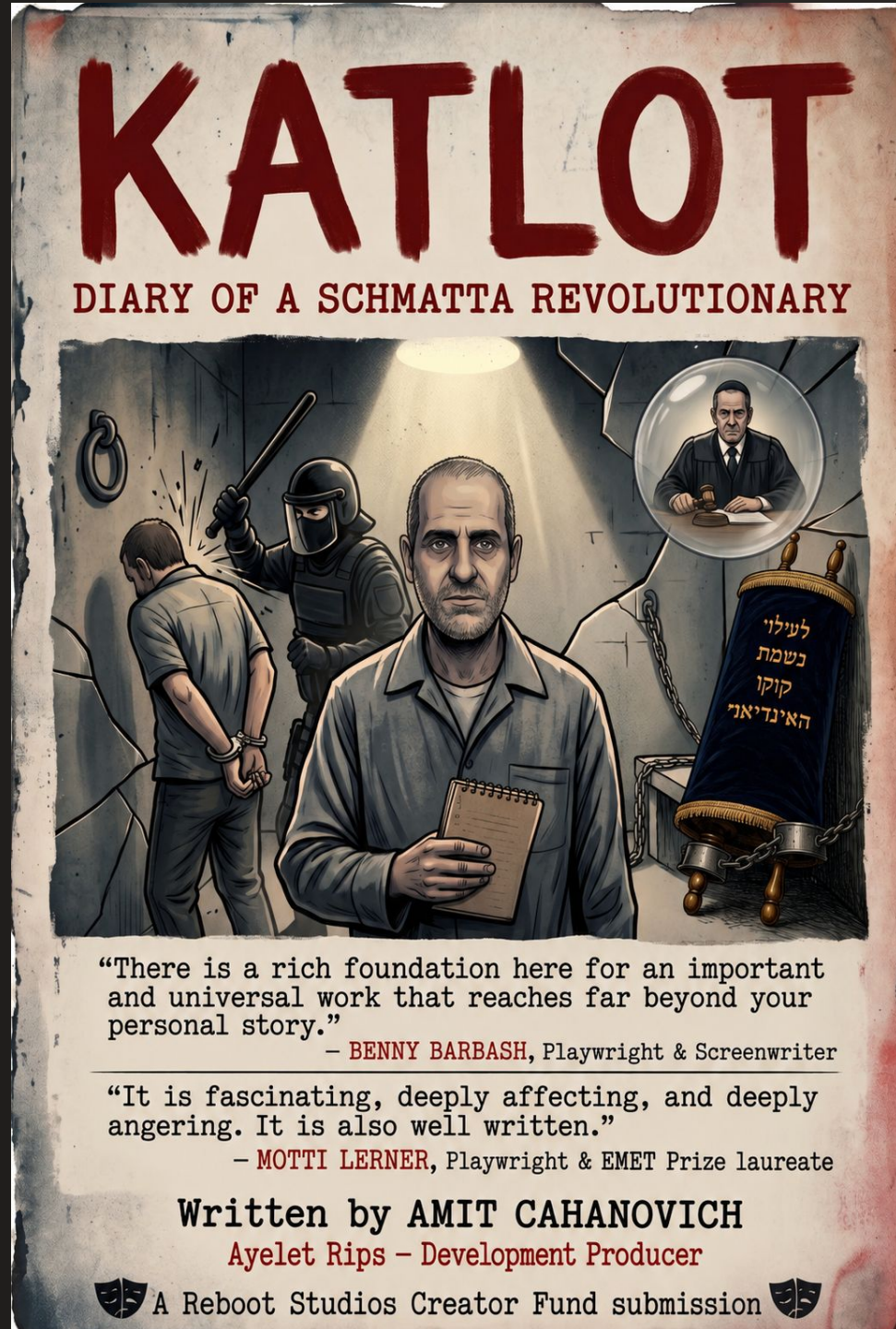
Katlot (kat-LOT)

prison slang for beatings by guards carried out without documentation, beyond the reach of cameras and official records.

STAGE PLAY IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT | SOURCE DIARY COMPLETE

Amit Cahanovich and Ayelet Rips

Reboot Studios Creator Fund submission | August 2026



The Partners Behind the Project

Bringing raw authenticity, dramatic precision, and deep structural understanding of Israeli reality to the stage.

CO-CREATOR

AMIT CAHANOVICH

Writer

Israeli data and AI professional and writer of first-person testimony. Following his 2025 detention after a hostages demonstration, he kept the prison diary that became KATLOT. His writing has appeared in The Forward and Haaretz. He brings the project its firsthand perspective, darkly comic voice, and lived experience.

CO-CREATOR

AYELET RIPS

Development Producer

Serves as CEO of Habira Theatre ("The Capital Theatre").
Established Israeli theatre producer, director, and writer whose current work includes major stage productions such as The Eichmann Trial at Habima.
Her work frequently engages with defining episodes in Israeli and Jewish history. She joins KATLOT at the development stage, bringing both a deep understanding of cultural context and an international theatrical perspective.

THE STORY

A prison world governed by its own logic

The collision between official law and unofficial power becomes the dramatic engine.

LOGLINE

After an Israeli is jailed for 33 days following an anti-government protest, he enters a surreal prison world where mob figures keep the peace, guards operate beyond the cameras, and judges use elaborate legal reasoning to justify his detention.

Survival, he discovers, depends on seeing the comedy inside the machinery meant to break him.

INSIDE THE CELL

- Mob figures become unlikely peacemakers
- Deals are negotiated through cell bars
- Humor becomes a means of survival
- Katlot happen where cameras do not see

OUTSIDE THE CELL

Judges invoke pilpul - intricate legal reasoning - to classify a citizen with no criminal background as a danger to the public.

THE WORLD & CHARACTERS

The Banality of Amusement: Absurdity as Survival

The unofficial system run by criminals is explicit and human; the official system wraps power, coercion, and punishment in the language of procedure



EXAMPLE 01

ISRAEL

The Unlikely Sovereign

A 28-year-old gangster's son who cooks gourmet meals on a hotplate and runs the cell with quiet authority—the most competent branch of government in the building.



EXAMPLE 02

HAIM

The Mattress Salesman

Accused of stabbing his ex-wife—though he insists incompetent paramedics are to blame for her death—Haim spends his days hanging off the cell bars, frantically closing high-volume retail mattress deals over the prison phone, proving that the mattress business never sleeps.



EXAMPLE 03

THE SOCIAL WORKER

The Complicit Bureaucrat

A welfare professional who ignores the detainee's obvious distress to pitch the political genius of Benjamin Netanyahu "off the record" — then asks whether he would vote for him in exchange for release.

Inside KATLOT, the line between tragedy, bureaucracy, and business as usual completely dissolves.

A specifically Jewish story with universal reach

What happens when a society shaped by Jewish historical memory, traditions of argument, and suspicion of arbitrary power begins using the machinery of the state against dissent from within?

01

MEMORY

The work is rooted in a society whose political imagination is inseparable from Jewish experiences of persecution, state power, and vulnerability.

02

ARGUMENT

Pilpul - the culture of close argument and legal interpretation - becomes both dramatic language and a source of dark irony.

03

SELF-DETERMINATION

The play tests the Zionist promise of Jewish democratic self-rule against the treatment of political dissent from within.

The Jewishness is not decorative. It is embedded in the project's central contradiction: historical memory versus contemporary power.

FORM & TONE

Intimate theater. Documentary roots. Dark comedy.

Designed for a high-tension, actor-led production.

TWO-ACTOR INTERROGATION PLAY

An interrogator and detainee become the frame through which the prison, courtroom, and wider political system are reconstructed.

THE HUMOR IS ESSENTIAL

KATLOT does not present prison only through brutality and despair. Satire and absurdity sharpen the violence, expose the bureaucracy, and humanize the people trapped inside it.

Authority
Complicity
Fear
Masculinity
Survival

EARLY PROFESSIONAL RESPONSE

The material has already prompted two distinct theatrical visions

> **There is a rich foundation here for an important and universal work that reaches far beyond your personal story.**

BENNY BARBASH

Israeli playwright and screenwriter

> **The material is fascinating, deeply affecting, and deeply angering... well suited to a one-person show. I am convinced that the right playwright will be able to create a dramatic work from this material.**

MOTTI LERNER

Israeli playwright and screenwriter | EMET Prize laureate

AUTHOR / SOURCE MATERIAL

Amit Cahanovich is an Israeli data professional, husband, and father of three. Following his 2025 arrest, he spent 33 days incarcerated and subsequent months under house arrest. During his incarceration, he kept the diary that became KATLOT. His first-person account was recently published by The Forward.

Note: English quote translations should be used only after final approval by the quoted writers.

DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN

$25,000 to move from diary to workshop-ready play

A focused first round designed to create the artistic assets needed for professional presentation.

1

ADAPT

Commission dramatic adaptation from completed source diary

2

DEVELOP

Dramaturgy, structure, character, and prison/courtroom tension

3

TRANSLATE

Professional English-language adaptation for US audiences

4

WORKSHOP

Director, actors, rehearsal space, and staged developmental reading

5

PACKAGE

Production materials for theaters, festivals, producers, and partners

$25K

REBOOT CREATOR FUND REQUEST

Primary use of funds

Playwright / adaptation | Dramaturgy | English adaptation | Workshop reading | Presentation materials

The development budget is designed around direct third-party artistic and production costs.

WHAT THIS ROUND CREATES

A production-ready English-language script and a professionally directed workshop reading.

Ready to present to theaters, festivals, producers, and cultural organizations in the United States and internationally.

The stage at which a private diary becomes a theatrical property.

AMIT CAHANOVICH

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READ THE FIRST-PERSON ACCOUNT

The Forward

Translated Haaretz op-ed

KATLOT

Diary of a Schmatta Revolutionary

Animated Trailer