

Au temps où les Arabes dansaient...

In the days when the Arabs were dancing...

by Radhouane El Meddeb



Au temps où les Arabes dansaient... / Radhouane El Meddeb - La Compagnie de SOI © Agathe Poupenev / PhotoScene - Mention du copyright obligatoire

16th September 2016

Beethoven Fest - Kammerspiele, Bonn (Germany)

8th November 2016

L'Apostrophe Scène Nationale, Cergy (France)

24th January 2017

Festival Tendance Europe – Maison de la Culture, Amiens (France)

28th March 2017

Biennale du Val de Marne – Théâtre de Cachan (France)

10th, 11th and 12th may 2017

Le Grand T, Nantes (France)

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Choreographer's Note

This piece, is originally a project of cabaret that has, over rehearsals and political events, evolved towards greater radicalism. It was like I could not come to this shape of cabaret, to celebrate this world disappeared.

Arabic people used to live on the magical rhythms, those films of the 40s, 50, 60 and 70 ... with their magic, their cardboard decor and their atmosphere, all made of false and tinsel. The actors used to sing incessantly, to dance, to love each other, on the big screens of cinemas and within the family television shows. Without condemnation, without prohibition, we watched this brilliant world, lacquered and painted of these demigods of comedy, we followed their dramas and their emotions, and we hummed the songs they sang.

Belly dancing arose, it took its place in the climax of the movie or the show, as its centre. The belly and her navel was the place where converged our fascinated eyes.

Today nostalgia itself seems distant, while we look back to the golden age, in those years of glory and false fairness, the dance of the Arab(s) appears as the epicentre of shaking come, navel seems to vibrate and twist, on the precipice, flirting with chaos.

The violence of our world entered the cardboard decor, rammed it, meaning the end, the end of a time that was an illusion, an illusion soft, sweet, round.

Au temps où les Arabes dansaient... In the days when the Arabs were dancing... is a distant echo of these songs and dances, taken in the tenderness of hope and remembrance, in the fervour of hearts and bodies. It is also one of the faces of this cruel time that we are living, dull and stunned.

Radhouane El Meddeb

Artistic team

Au temps où les Arabes dansaient...

Creation 2014

Creation and choreography

Radhouane El Meddeb

Artistic collaborator

Moustapha Ziane

Performers

Youness Aboulakoul, Rémi Leblanc-Messenger, Philippe Lebhar and Arthur Perole

Scenography

Annie Tolleter

Lights

Xavier Lazarini

Sonography

Stéphane Gombert

Video

Cécile Perraut with Ferial Ben Mahmoud

Stage Manager

Bruno Moinard

Administration

Bruno Viguier

Booking

Gerco de Vroeg

Production La Compagnie de SOI

Co-production CENTQUATRE Paris ; Centre Chorégraphique National de Montpellier Languedoc-Roussillon residencies program ; Centre de Développement Chorégraphique Toulouse / Midi-Pyrénées residencies program ; la Filature Scène Nationale Mulhouse ; la Ferme du Buisson Scène Nationale de Marne la Vallée ; le WIP Villette.

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Radhouane el Meddeb is associate artist at CENTQUATRE Paris. La Compagnie de SOI is subsidized by Drac Île-de-france / Ministry of culture and communication.

Biographie

Radhouane El Meddeb – Creation and choreography

Trained at the Higher Institute of Dramatic Art of Tunis, he is recognized as “The young hopeful of the Tunisian theatre” in 1996 by the Tunisian Section of the International Theatre Institute. He is, then, recruited as an actor within the training and research workshop of the National Theatre of Toulouse under the direction of Jacques Rosner. In Tunisia, he works with Fadhel Jaibi, Taoufik Jebali and Mohamed Driss, highly influential artists in the Arab world. In France, he works with the directors Jacques Rosner, Lotfi Achour and Catherine Boskowitz, and he collaborates artistically with contemporary authors such as Natacha de Pontcharra, Adel Hakim and Camille de Toledo. As a movie actor, he appeared in two films by Férid Boughdir, *Un Été à la Goulette / A Summer at La Goulette* and Halfaouine, *l'Enfant des Terrasses / Halfaouine, The child of Terrace Roofs*.

Throughout those years devoted to the theatre, he worked in the same time with Tunisian choreographers, as an interpreter and an artistic collaborator. Being quite fond of dancing, he is equally nurtured by classes directed by Lisa Nelson and Jean Laurent Sasportès in Europe.

Because he felt the need for an artistic experience other than the theatre, he signed for his first creation in 2005, a solo dance entitled *Pour en finir avec MOI / In order to conclude with MY SELF*, as an intimate introspection and a vital experience. A real revelation that will make him go into dancing and become a choreographer-interpreter. Once performed at the Rencontres Chorégraphiques de Carthage / The Choreography festival of Carthage, this show has identified by professionals, a turning point in his career. Then, he signed several creations in France, beginning in the following year, with his solo dance *Huwa, ce lui / Huwa, that one for Montpellier Danse 2006*.

In 2007, he joined the casting of *1000 Départs de Muscles / 1000 Starting Signals of Muscles*, a creation of Héra Fattoumi and Eric Lamoureux.

In 2008, he presented his creation *Quelqu'un va danser... / Someone's going to dance...* at the International Choreography Festival of Seine-Saint-Denis. In the same year, he created *Je danse et je vous en donne à bouffer / I dance and give you food...* at the Centre National de la Danse in Pantin (CND / The National Dance Center).

In 2008 and 2009, Radhouane El Meddeb participated to *Corps produit, corps productif / Produced body, producing body*, held by the International Choreography Festival of Seine-Saint-Denis and to *Mon corps, mon lieu / My body, my place*, supported by the Fondation Culture et Diversité. These workshops attempt to raise awareness of contemporary dancing and to transmit choreographic composition to a large audience, bringing together young people coming from Zones d' Education Prioritaire (Areas of Priority Education), women members of neighbourhood associations and also elderly people.

In 2010, he created his first group show, at the CND, *Ce que nous sommes / What we are*, with five dancers, which has been on tour in France for two years. In December 2010, he collaborated with Stéphane Gombert in *Chant d'amour / Love Song*, a creation about a novel and a film by Jean Genet, which they performed at the Collectif 12, Mantes la Jolie. The creation process begun as early as 2009, at the Babel Theatre in Beirut, with the support of the French Cultural Centre.

Starting from January 2011, Radhouane El Meddeb became an associate artist at the CENTQUATRE-PARIS. *A l'Étroit / In a narrow situation* is created there in March 2011, a creation initiated by the festival concordan(s)e and in collaboration with Philip Adam.

In the same year, he directed the performance *Tunis, January 14 2001* at the Beirut Art Center in Lebanon on the occasion of the Meeting Point 6.

In July 2012, at the Montpellier Danse Festival, he created and danced the solo dance *Sous leurs pieds, le paradis* / Under their feet, the heaven, whose choreographic composition is shared with Thomas Lebrun. In 2012, he is invited by Matias Pilet and Alexandre Fournier to choreograph the nouveau cirque duo *Nos limites* / Our limits, created in 2013 at the CENTQUATRE-PARIS. In parallel with his creations, Radhouane El Meddeb is designated as a reporter for scenography, direction and choreography for the jury in charge of the selection of pensioners of the French Academy in Rome for the years 2012 and 2013.

In 2014, he created a new group show *Au temps où les Arabes dansaient...* / In the days, when the Arabs were dancing... a performance for 4 dancers, within the International Festival CDC Toulouse and Région Midi-Pyrénées and at the CENTQUATRE- PARIS.

In 2015, with the support of the National Monuments Centre and in the frame of the first edition of the event *Monuments en Mouvements* / Landmarks in Movements, Radhouane El Meddeb presented the premiere of *Heroes, prelude*, performance for 10 urban dancers, at Pantheon in Paris, which hosted contemporary dance for the first time. In June 2015, he's invited by the College of Dance Biennale in Venice, he choreographed *Nous sommes tous étrangers* / We are all Foreigners at Campo San Trovaso, with Italian interpreters.

In 2016, Radhouane El Meddeb continues the work with interpreters of *Heroes prelude*. The premiere of this new creation called *Heroes* is presented at the Festival of Marseille - Dance and Arts Multiples 2016. He also creates the solo *A mon père, une dernière danse et un premier baiser* / To my father, one last dance and a first kiss that is presented at Montpellier Danse 2016.

Moustapha Ziane – Artistic Collaborator

Moustapha Ziane multiplies artistic experiences between creation, adaptation, reconstruction, transmission and collaboration with other authors, always eager to open new artistic perspectives and engage innovative adventures in the field of choreography.

Together with Mohamed Ahamada (functional analysis of body in the dance movement) and Christine Roquet (work study through analysis movement, University Paris 8), and in partnership with the CND Pantin and CCN of Caen, he developed a pedagogy of the warming up and the construction of the body in the dance movement, around the idea of vigilant body.

After studying five years of classical dance at the conservatory in Grenoble where he has obtained a gold medal, he joined the formation of national contemporary Dance centre of Angers, directed by Joel Bouvier Regis Obadia and choreographers from 1996 to 1998. At the end of this training, he met the choreographers Hela Fattoumi and Eric Lamoureux, currently directors of Belfort CCN, with whom he collaborated on many projects (creations, performances).

He also works with other choreographers in France and abroad, such as Bouvier / Obadia (Ccompagnie sketch), Carolyn Carlson, Claudio Bernardo, Silenda ... in 2013, he met the choreographer Radhouane El Meddeb with whom he collaborated to the creation of many artistic projects.

Youness Aboulakoul – Performer

Born in Casablanca, Youness began to dance (Hip Hop) from the age of 7 years at Moulay Rachid Cultural Complex, and then, he practiced ballet and dances of the Moroccan folklore in the Municipal Conservatory. At 16 he met the choreographer Khalid Benghrib (La Cie 2K_far) whom he followed the contemporary dance training and for who he has performed, later, all his projects until today: *Western palace*, *La smala BB Marrakech Toys*, *Sol -Os* and his latest creation 2015: *The Black Table* ... Youness worked, in the same time, for the choreographers Ramon Baeza, Rosa Sanchez and Alain Baumann, La Compagnie Macadam and Meryem Jazuli. He also participated in workshops with international choreographers of contemporary dance and hip hop in the United States and Europe. He moved to France in 2010, and teaches dance in Hip Hop dance schools in Paris. Currently he works with Olivier Dubois, Radhouane El Meddeb, Filipe Lourenco and the director Arnaud Saury...

Rémi Leblanc-Messenger – Performer

Remi Leblanc- Messenger was born in Rennes. He discovered contemporary dance in 2006 in the dance group of the University of Rennes, where he was studying Art History and Archaeology. In this time, he met Fabrice Dasse, dancer for Catherine Diverres, who incited him to go further in the practice of this art. After studying at Montpellier, he has participated in several projects : with Stéphane Fratti and La Compagnie Bissextile on *Mur-Mur*, with la Compagnie Étant Donn  in *Les Noces et Partition(s)*, with La Compagnie de SOI and Radhouane EL Meddeb in *Au temps o  les Arabes dansaient...*, with Nans Martin in *Parcelles et D'Œil et d'oubli*, he was part of *Les Laboratoires Anim s*, with La Compagnie Act2 (young audience) of Catherine Dreyfus in *Miravella*, with la Compagnie La D bordante (street performances), in *Rassemblement* and *Dispersion*, and with Christian and Fran ois Ben A im in *O mon fr re* and in *Homo Furen* of la Compagnie Plan-K of Filipe Louren o.

Philippe Lebhar – Performer

Philippe Lebhar began dancing at the age of 9 years. After graduating from C.N.S.M. Lyon in 1998, he performed for the Red Notes Compagny led by Andy Degroat, where he has the opportunity to participate in the work of Bob Wilson for *La Fl te Enchant e* at the Opera Bastille. Then he joined the Skandesdansteater Compagny in Sweden where he danced for Jossefson Lena and Jo Stromgren. Subsequently, he worked with various choreographers in Belgium, Spain and Switzerland. When he came back to France, he performed for J.C. Galotta, Angelin Preljocaj, Philippe Jamet , Radhouane el Meddeb , B atrice Massin ...

Arthur Perole – Performer

Arthur joined the contemporary section of the National Conservatory of Music and Dance in Paris, in 2007. This training course enabled him to work with big names in dance as Peter Goss, Andr  Lafonta, Susan Alexander, Dominique Mercy, Francoise Dupuy Christine Gerard, Cristiana Morganti, Joanne Leighton, Edmond Russo / Shlomi Tuizer ... In 2011, he participated to the Junior Ballet of the Paris Conservatoire and performed *Noces* by Angelin Preljocaj, *Uprising* by Shechter and a creation of Thomas Lebrun: *Quatre Ciels de Novembre*. Since 2012, he performed for several choreographers such as Tatiana Julien, Annabelle Pulcinie and Joanne Leighton. Meanwhile, it established La Compagnie F, in 2010 and developed his work as a choreographer.