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**POUR QUE LES LARMES
DEVIENNENT DES ÉCLATS DE RIRE**

*FACING THE SEA,
SO THAT THE TEARS
BECOME BURSTS OF LAUGHTER*

*A creation by
Radhouane El Meddeb*

FACING THE SEA, SO THAT THE TEARS BECOME BURSTS OF LAUGHTER

Radhouane El Meddeb creates *Facing the sea, so that the tears become bursts of laughter* with Tunisian artists from different artistic backgrounds (dance, theater and music ...) operating in a country that has made its revolution and which continues to struggle to go through change...

Tunisia is changing, new forms have emerged to artists, multiple wishes and great euphoria arise. Radhouane will confront this new reality, a new country, to free artists now politically engaged and involved in this construction. This creation, a premiere, weaves a link between the personal history of Radhouane and that of these artists currently living in Tunisia.

CRÉATION

JULY 2017

Conception, dramaturgy and choreography : **Radhouane El Meddeb**
Artistic collaborator : **Moustapha Ziane**

Dancers : **Sondos Belhassem, Houcem Bouakroucha, Hichem Chebli**
Youssef Chouibi, Feteh Khiari, Majd Mastoura, Malek Sebai, Malek Zouaidi
Singer : **Mohamed Ali Chebil**
Musician and Composer ; **Jihed Khmiri**

Scenography : **Annie Tolleter**
Light design : **Xavier Lazarini**
Costumes : **Kenza Ben Ghachem**
Technical manager : **Bruno Moinard**
Administrator : **Bruno Viguier**
Production and tour manager : **Gerco de Vroeg**

Production : **La Compagnie de SOI**
Coproduction : **Festival d'Avignon, TANDEM - Scène Nationale / Arras-Douai,**
Scène Nationale d'Albi, Cité Musicale - Metz - Arsenal, La Briqueterie - Centre de
Développement Chorégraphique du Val-de-Marne, Théâtre Jean Vilar - Vitry-sur-
Seine
Accueil studio : **Ballet du Nord / Centre Chorégraphique National de Roubaix Nord-**
Pas de Calais
avec le soutien de l'**Institut Français de Tunis**, du **Groupe Caisse des Dépôts**
et du **Théâtre Export - Institut Français à Paris**

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

RADHOUANE EL MEDDEB

Conception, dramaturgy et choreography

I left my country, Tunisia, in 1996, to move to France, and live my passion, drama, thus escape all forms of authority, and release me. The years pass, with this pain of leaving that persists even though very quickly, I've realized that my place was quite here, in France, this great beautiful country, captivating and complex.

I lost myself in my work, attempted to always learn again and again, to challenge myself and to enjoy every moment here, alone, away from other. Freedom became then a reason to be my fighting here. While this stress persists in my stomach, this thing that hurts and grows.

*Gone are the ones I love,
who helped me to grow,
those of my country !*

In 2008, 10 years after my arrival in France, I get my naturalization. I no longer have limits, I take risks, everything is possible, no boundaries. So very naturally and because the desire is visceral, I decide to challenge my body... I dance. My body finally released, I assume and transcends underway my overwhelming desire to be.

An angel passes... and takes with him my dear father, without warning...
And I, as I am always away, I go bury him.
The pain of leaving is not the same...
I am devastated, this is a huge change that upsets everything in my life....
And the revolution came... I feel like I missed it...
I shook by all means, I cried a lot.
I was afraid for my country, my family and all my friends.
But I was not there.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Another part of me is leaving me, this country, who is also mine, no longer belongs to me. Many changes, upheavals, transformations and turnarounds ; I've expected, hoped, dreamt but I fear them, too! Today I want to stop watching Tunisia this far, I want to find a language to approach it, by my own codes, and with the one I became.

Today I decided to «come back» with my new language, my new human being in this country that changes whom I know that bad. As a reconciliation, this journey is smooth, but it is also a way to exceed and push the limits once again, as we pass the borders, as we play with identities. It's also a consolation, this troubling disturbing gesture to take in arms, to let you stir by others that console.

*I return to my Tunisia to start
a new story, made of what I
will find out and what I do not
know yet.*

As well as few winters ago, when I arrived in the nave of the CentQuatre – Paris Theatre Hall (it was about the performance *Heroes prelude*), I will watch, explore, feel, hear what it is said and work this new material «my Tunisia». While in the Paris area, I saw these young men striving to reproduce dances, exceeding themselves, I'll look at other bodies and other voices.

After dancing the streets of Tunis and the revolution, after exploring the free body of the Arabs, today I want to dig out my home and dig out deep inside, find dancers and performers and offer them to tell, put them in voice, free myself with them, offer them to go with me looking for a new experience.

I'll put myself facing the sea, where tears become bursts of laughter, I'll go into the depths of the country, where I've never ventured. I want to go to meet, melt me, know and meet people who have made history, those who move to the rhythm of Tunisia today, which I feel at once so far and so close. This makes me think of Wim Wenders filming Berlin after reunification, a city he has left for a long time, and directed *Wings of Desire*. I will explore deeply my country, going where I've never been before.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

*I will try to grasp again
my surroundings and find a way to act,
to take my place.
Although I'm French,
I'm still Tunisian.*

Us, artists, can we enlighten, with our insight, our art, the dark paths of the future?
I want to meet that country as a soldier of beauty, of art, as a guardian of the beauty of the real world, like magicians of love. Crossing the lines of the body, thought and emotion...

As a starting point for this research, I imagine violent monologues, moments of common understanding of the current turmoil times. An electric dramaturgy to tell who we are and what our life looks like, in a new form, with the language, with the languages, the one of my childhood, the language I like, the language I have chosen. Bodies in movement are those which speak with an approach, a fragment, a way that embrace my two countries.

Radhouane El Meddeb

ARTISTIC TEAM

RADHOUANE EL MEDDEB

Conception, dramaturgy et 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 / To finish 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 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).

ARTISTIC TEAM

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 neighborhood 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 Center.

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 feets, 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 / Monuments 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.

ARTISTIC TEAM

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 Center 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 (Compagnie 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.

ANNIE TOLLETER

Scénography

Set designer, artist, teacher, Annie Tolleter builds performance spaces for dance and theater, since 1985. She designed most of the performances of Mathilde Monnier, choreographer and director of the National Choreographic Center of Montpellier. Since 1997, Annie Tolleter leads a contemporary research workshop dealing with the stage space, at the School of Fine Arts in Montpellier and she is involved in the National School of Architecture of Montpellier.

Also, she is a founding member of the collective of artists called *Dehorsérie* centered on experimenting with active image in the public space

ARTISTIC TEAM

XAVIER LAZARINI

Light Design

Xavier has been trained as lighting designer by different classes (ISTS FPTSC, Ecole Nationale Louis Lumière), and has been the wizard of Marie-Christine Soma, Rémi Nicolas and Dominique Bruguère. Between 1991 and 1995, he managed the light department of the Grande Halle de la Villette.

Then he assumed the function of light manager and general manager for the Compagnie of Josef Nadj (National Choreographic Center of Orleans) from 1998 to 2004. He works in different artistic fields: theatre, circus, opera, and more preferentially in the field of contemporary dance, alongside Hela Fattoumi and Eric Lamoureux for ten years, and more Recently with Franck Il Louise, Radhouane El Meddeb, Xavier Lot, Aïcha M'Barek and Hafiz Dhaou.

Since two years, he developed architectural and museum lighting, and he works as lighting designer at the Futuroscope in Poitiers, and at the General Electric Pavilion of the Beijing Olympics. He also participated to the Music Festival in Essaouira Gnawa, the Festival of Casablanca, fashion shows for Givenchy ...

ARTISTIC TEAM

KENZA BEN GHACHEM

Costumes

Kenya Ben Ghachem is a Tunisian designer from the world of haute couture. A graduate of the Faculty of Social Sciences in Toulouse, Kenza launched her professional career by integrating one of the most prestigious Parisian haute couture houses, Azzeddine Alaïa. There, contact with the iconoclastic couturier, Kenza specifies her knowledge by developing a keen sense in the exercise of the association of materials, expertise that will be the red thread of his journey. This experience is also the opportunity to meet the biggest icons of fashion (Mannequins, photographers, Stylists) ...

Definitely formed by 5 years of excellence, Kenza chooses to develop its own projects in Tunis. The first takes the form of a blog, the BCBG «Blog Chic of a Bobo Gourmande» and then becomes a therapy to fill the rarity of the elements of high fashion that constituted the professional universe of Kenza in Paris And which are wanting in Tunis. But very soon, the idea of a more concrete project arrives, more in tune with her creative bulimia : My Little Bagatelle.

It is now in this collaborative adventure that she flourishes. The shop-shop that now occupies its professional daily life is born from its desire to offer the visitors curiosity its own creations. Objects, furniture and small collections could not have seen the light without the know-how of her mother-in-law / partner whom she chose to accompany her in her approach.

She now has her own incubator which offers her the opportunity to associate with her inspirations, the talent of subtly selected artisans. This allowed him, among other things, to launch in association a collection of flax clothes which had a significant success.

CREATION SCHEDULE

For this creation, several trips and working steps in Tunisia are required, so that the performance is true to the artistic obsessions of Radhouane and it becomes a story of real and unwavering bodies. This schedule may be subject to changes.

- 01** **August - October 2016**
Research
- 02** **24 - 28 October 2016**
Casting of Tunisian dancers at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis
- 03** **26 - 30 December 2016**
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis
2 - 6 January 2017
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis
- 04** **9 - 23 February 2017**
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis
- 05** **26 - 30 April 2017**
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis, sound design
2 - 6 May 2017
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis, sound design
- 06** **6 -17 June 2017**
Residency at Ballet du Nord / CCN de Roubaix - Nord pas de Calais
- 07** **12 -22 June 2017**
Residency at TANDEM Scène Nationale - Douai / Arras, light design and scenography
23 June 2017
Avant Première : Hippodrome of Douai (FR) - TANDEM Scène Nationale
- 08** **4 - 8 July 2017**
Residency at Mad'Art Carthage - Tunis
- 09** **21, 22, 24, 25 July 2017**
Festival d'Avignon - Cloître des Carmes

