

ICW 2018 WORKSHOPS, LECTURES, MEETINGS & PERFORMANCES In-Between Dance Cultures

The International Choreographers Week is a platform for meeting and exchange. It offers choreographers from all over the world the opportunity to learn from each other and enrich themselves despite – or perhaps because of – their differing approaches. Over the course of five days, a program of workshops, readings, introductory visits, meetings, meals, presentations and discussions is offered. Together with and presented by people with practical knowledge from the world of dance and other domains.

In this seventh edition, the central theme is 'In Between Dance Cultures'. With reference to exemplary working practices, we will see how anthropological and socio-cultural aspects play a role in the creation of dance and the way we view it, and we will discover, as an exciting undercurrent, the various contemporary dramaturgical perspectives this gives rise to. What does an encounter with dance and choreographic practices in and from other cultures mean for your own practice as a choreographer? What aspects of yourself do you encounter? How do you expand your perspective?

Saturday 3rd of March

16:00

opening doors

16:30

Meet & Greet

17:00

Introduction lecture: A Dramaturgical Perspective.

Guy Cools

Dramaturgs are first and foremost privileged witnesses of the creation process of the artists they accompany. But their ways of seeing are also framed by their own experiences and perspectives, which they activate in the ongoing dialogue with the artists.

19:30

Lecture: Feminine symbols of compassion: Kwan Yin and Mary, the Mother

'The West is losing his capacity to connect with symbolic consciousness', a statement from the Pakistani Jungian psychologist Durre Ahmed. The West is so occupied with 'watching' that the danger exists not to be capable anymore of approaching the 'unseen'. The beautiful icons of the eastern Kwan Yin and the western Mother Mary are demanding another way of 'seeing' and understanding. Countless people in the East have no difficulties to open their hearts to Kwan Yin, because she is 'listening' to their cries. Kwan Yin, the symbol of compassion, overcomes any form of anxiety. Countless people in the West have confidence in the boundless love of Mother Mary. She is the icon of wisdom and listens to the longing for salvation and liberation. Kwan Yin and Mother Mary are archaic twin sisters. A booze to begin a week that deals with twin sisters in different cultures. A short exercise of empathy. How to go beyond 'watching' the realities and can art help us to do so?

20:00

Metta Meditation

Yogacentrum Tilburg

Metta-meditation is an awareness training and is all about developing a friendly attitude. It is an antidote to hate, anger, irritation and self-criticism. We are diving into this form of meditation to prepare ourselves properly for the week. A friendly warm-up that allows us to open ourselves to the listening, discussing, giving and receiving that will be done during the week. More regularly practicing Metta-meditation allows you to train yourself in lovingly responding to what is happening and can help you improve relationships.

Sunday 4th of March

10.00-13.00

Workshop: The genre-less body

Johnny Lloyd

Like a voice or eyes, each individual body has its own tone. Movement is highly personal and etched into our posture, gestures, expression through accumulation of experiences. Yet in dance “forms” exist, templates that we shape our bodies too. These forms get established by culture and politics and often leave other fascinating movement heritages in the shadow. The forms can be as underground as they are ‘avant garde’ (i.e. some forms of Hip Hop are even more defined than ballet).

This workshop looks into the idea of the genre-less body, and argues that dance forms are in the process of dissolving – that personal voice is taking its place. We research both in dialogue and practice the question of dance as a global heritage, and look at sources that can lead the body to move virtuously and interestingly. We will also look into 'taste' and how audience and processes differ because of established forms, and how to create a personal sample. Johnny's workshop will be both practical and theoretical.

14.00-17.30

Choreographic practice as research 1

Guy Cools facilitator

In the afternoon sessions the participants will be stimulated to reflect, research and develop their own choreographic practice. They will be guided in this by dramaturg Guy Cools, who will offer them practical exercises to develop their own dramaturgical reflection. Participants will be also stimulated to develop artistic dialogues with each other, which might result in new collaborative practices.

19.30-22.00

Dramaturgical Perspectives

Two of the evening sessions of ICW 2018 will zoom in on the diversity of dramaturgical perspectives. On Sunday evening, Guy Cools will give an overview of the history of dance dramaturgy and talk about his own perspective in collaboration with choreographers such as Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Akram Khan and Arno Schuitemaker.

Monday 5th of March

10.00-13.00

Workshop: *An in between dance : Maloya and contemporary dance*

Florence Boyer – Artmayage Dance Compagny

After a brief summary of her double career (scientific and artistic) Florence will invite the participants to experiment the rhythmic, sing and sound of Maloya (*PCI Unseco 2009*). This will give the first steps towards the movement of the vernacular dance from her country, la Réunion. She will then share the fundamental movement of Maloya in which we will find a dialogue with contemporary dance. She will also share the process for her new creation '*Kaniki*' in which she makes a deconstruction of this kinetic DNA of the Maloya dance. This will also help to understand why anthropology is imperative in her artistic work.

14.00-17.30

Choreographic practice as research 2

Guy Cools facilitator

In the afternoon sessions the participants will be stimulated to reflect, research and develop their own choreographic practice. They will be guided in this by dramaturg Guy Cools, who will offer them practical exercises to develop their own dramaturgical reflection. Participants will be also stimulated to develop artistic dialogues with each other, which might result in new collaborative practices.

19.30-21.00

Performance: *Can't Look Trough Your Eyes*

Katja Grässli

"I" is a starting point. "I" as such - that an identity as such - does not exist. It can only exist in relation to others." (Marc Colpaert / Where Two Seas Meet pg 26)

A physical, mystic and poetic dance performance, in which the audience can have a closer look at the inside world of an Asian woman, who struggles with her (intercultural) identity. Synchronic traditional Chinese dance mix with the visual, theatrical and experimental dance language of Swiss choreographer Katja Grässli. The dance solo "Can't look through your eyes" was inspired by readings of the intercultural philosopher Marc Colpaert and his book "Where Two Seas Meet". It is a research about the intercultural dialogue, in which Katja Grässli and the Malaysian dancer Beh Chin Lau explored the boundaries of two identities; not only by sharing experiences how it is to have another cultural background (Europe and Asia) but also by making performances in which they connected the Malaysian traditional dance with an experimental, theatrical dance.

Tuesday 6th of March

10.00-13.00

Workshop: Katja Grässli & Marc Colpaert

During the ICW Katja Grässli is in residency at DansBrabant with Malaysian dancer Beh Chin Lau and Swiss-Brazilian dancer Natalie Wagner and in dialogue with cultural philosopher Marc Colpaert. In this workshop Katja and Marc share their experiences, thoughts and questions about this new exchange project that focuses around the symbolism and significance of the veil. They bring cultures and dance forms together and mingle traditions and actuality.

14.00-17.30

Choreographic practice as research 3

Guy Cools facilitator

In the afternoon sessions the participants will be stimulated to reflect, research and develop their own choreographic practice. They will be guided in this by dramaturg Guy Cools, who will offer them practical exercises to develop their own dramaturgical reflection. Participants will be also stimulated to develop artistic dialogues with each other, which might result in new collaborative practices.

19.30-22.00

Dramaturgical Perspectives

Two of the evening sessions of ICW 2018 zoom in on the diversity of dramaturgical perspectives. On Tuesday evening, Guy Cools will moderate dialogues between dramaturges from different angles.

Wednesday 7th of March

10.00-13.00

Workshop Bárá Sigfúsdóttir

For her performance '*Being*' Bárá Sigfusdottir worked with two dancers from Iran. In her workshop Bárá will share the experiences she had during the creative process, working with cultural differences in constantly changing cultural environments. (*Being* was created in Germany, Iran, The Netherlands, Belgium and Turkey.) She will address topics that she had to deal with during her creation, such as Visa issues, how each space and place influenced the creation or how internal networks and collective spirit really made a difference for her. The workshop will start in a physical way and end in a 'speaking and sharing' form. In the physical part, Bárá will specifically explore different ways of working with presence in performance, the diversity of focal points within movement, the relationship of the body to the space and how these factors affect both the individual and the group. Her teaching is derived from her ongoing research as a dancer and choreographer. Her aim is to support and cultivate the movement capacity and creativity of each individual participant.

14.00-16.00

Group experiment

To finish the week we work together on a final presentation in which we share the individual and common outcomes of the workshops, meetings and talks.

20:30

Performance: being

Bárá Sigfusdottir

Rooted in an ongoing curiosity towards other cultures and the development of movement in different contexts than her own, Icelandic choreographer and dancer Bárá Sigfúsdóttir travelled in 2014 to Teheran (Iran) where she took part in the UNTIMELY Festival. While teaching a workshop, she got intrigued by the skills and presence of two local artists, Masoumeh Jalalieh and SeyedAlireza Mirmohammadi. This experience planted the seed for an ongoing artistic affinity between the three of them, resulting in *being*, Bárá's newest creation where - for the very first time - she will not be performing herself but will rather direct the meeting between the movers on stage.

Every human being has a body. With this body we address the world and each other, it is the most primary thing we share with one another. In *being* the body is the common ground to explore and to put in dialogue the West-European with the Iranian and by extension the Middle-Eastern culture and society. Used as a poetic generator of subtext, the moving body can express different layers of sensations and experiences. The meeting between bodies, between the two people on stage but also between them and the audience, will serve as a sober gesture. A place to explore what we share rather than to underline our differences.

SHORT CV'S

Dr. Guy Cools is a dance dramaturg. Recent positions include Associate Research Professor at the research institute Arts in Society of the Fontys School of Fine and Performing Arts in Tilburg, and Postdoctoral Researcher at Ghent University, where he finished a practice-based PhD on the relationship between dance and writing. He has worked as a dance critic, artistic programmer, and policymaker for dance in Flanders. He now dedicates himself to production dramaturgy, contributing to work by choreographers all over Europe and Canada such as: Koen Augustijnen (BE), Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (BE), Danièle Desnoyers (CA), Lia Haraki (CY), Christopher House (CA), Akram Khan (UK), Arno Schuitemaker (NL), and Stephanie Thiersch (DE). He regularly lectures and publishes, and has developed a series of workshops that aim to support artists and choreographers in their creative process. His most recent publications include *The Ethics of Art: ecological turns in the performing arts*, co-edited with Pascal Gielen (Valiz, 2014); *In-between Dance Cultures: on the migratory artistic identity of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan* (Valiz, 2015) and *Imaginative Bodies, dialogues in performance practices* (Valiz, 2016), a series of published, live interviews with major contemporary artists which Cools curated from 2008 till 2013 for Sadler's Wells, London. With the Canadian choreographer, Lin Snelling, he developed an improvised performance practice 'Rewriting Distance' (see also: www.rewritingdistance.com) that focuses on the integration of movement, voice, and writing.

Marc Colpaert (1945) is a Belgian cultural philosopher, journalist, writer and interpreter. He has been studying during the last forty years the relationships between cultures of East and West, North and South. Since his book '*Where two seas meet*', he is convinced that imagination is an essential key to intercultural understanding. Marc is working together with choreographer Katja Grässli. Together they worked out a dance project in Malaysia in 2016 after the success of the solo '*Can't look through your eyes*'. This project will be continued as an intercultural exchange of 'dancing narratives' in the Netherlands and in Belgium in 2018.

Johnny Lloyd has been a student of poetry and music his whole life. He studied creative writing at the University of California Irvine and music at Fullerton College. In 1994, he started to study, practically and anthropologically, the history of African American dance forms.

In 2005 Johnny began creating his own work as well as dancing and co-creating with other contemporary makers and musicians. Like this he has created or co-created over 20 full length pieces as well as music videos, movies and opera. He focuses on interdisciplinary studies, working outside of genre, favouring people and talent over form. Since 2012 Johnny has been dancing for and touring with Eastman/Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Currently he is co-creating the duet 'swan [remix]' with the cellist Jacqueline Hamelink and 'Bullshit no Bullshit' with the hip hopper Shailesh Bahoran.

Katja Grässli studied visual arts in Zurich and attended the dance academy in Tilburg before completing her Master of Choreography in Tilburg. As a choreographer, her perspective always revolves around the relationship we have with our environment, our community and society.

With her 'MoveToMeet-projects' she intends to create a situation for people to meet, exchange and in this way strives to come to mutual understanding between different people, cultures and ways of life from an artistic point of view.

In 2014 Katja started to collaborate with the cultural philosopher Marc Colpaert and the Malaysian dancer Bhe Chin Lau, in a research about impossibilities and possibilities of a intercultural identity. *Can't*

Look Through Your Eyes was the first outcome of their collaboration. In 2016 Katja, Marc and Bhe Chin Lau, realised their second project *Where Two Seas Meet*, in which Katja created the dance piece *In-Between-Us* in collaboration with three Malaysian dancers with different cultural (dance) backgrounds.

Florence Boyer is a choreographer, dancer and researcher in dance anthropology. After her training at the aggregation of EPS and after 6 years of teaching dance and sport and health activities (especially at the University of Paris Sud XI-Orsay), Florence Boyer decided to live her life fully as a choreographic artist. Her passion for studying the history of physical practices led her to question the historiography of the island of Réunion and the need to rewrite the stories and memories of the slavery that happened there. Florence started an introspective dive into the heart of the local cultural practices and local knowledge of the island and the links with neighboring countries Africa, Madagascar, India and China.

Bára Sigfúsdóttir (1984, Iceland) is a dancer and choreographer who studied contemporary dance at the Icelandic Academy of Arts, the Amsterdam school of the Arts and P.A.R.T.S. in Brussels. Bára has worked as a performer but is nowadays mainly focusing on her own choreographic work.

Bára takes the process of improvisation as a point of departure from where she develops musical, multilayered choreographic material. She puts a strong focus on the isolation of body segments, onto which she applies different rhythms. Interwoven with this approach is Bára's focus on the human body and its existence in society. The position of the individual in relation to the other, the society and nature are recurrent themes in her work.

In 2017 Bára created her new performance called *being* in which she collaborates with two Iranian artists, Masoumeh Jalalieh and SeyedAlireza Mirmohammadi. In this performance the body serves as a poetic instrument and common ground to put in dialogue the West-European with the Iranian culture and society.

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