

DANCE ELIXIR

THIEVES

Leyya Mona Tawil in collaboration with *Muhanad Rasheed's The Lazy Sleepers*
(Choreographer) (Music Composer)

THIEVES paints a raw, alternatively grotesque and tender picture of a shadowy humanity. It asks: *How does one prepare to kill? How does one prepare to die?*

Tawil and Rasheed are cohorts on a shared journey where they measure their personal narratives against three embodied manifestations of inflicted grief and violence: The Bandit, The Wolf, The Killer.

THIEVES draws from a selection of work by 20th Century poets who wrote during periods of societal build-up to war, including American poet Kenneth Patchen:

*"In a world of murder the artist must be the first to die. He must lead.
Otherwise no one's death will have meaning."*

THIEVES is performed by an ensemble of six. DANCE ELIXIR dancers Jeremiah Crank and Roche Janken are joined onstage by Iraqi musicians: Zaid Hassan (guitar), Majed Rasheed (bass), Mustafa Essami (Percussion) and Muhanad Rasheed (guitar).

This interdisciplinary work is approximately 40 minutes in length.

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CAST and TECHNICAL

Concept and Choreography	Leyya Mona Tawil
Music Composition	Muhanad Rasheed and the Lazy Sleepers: Majed Rasheed, Zaid Hassan, Mustafa Essami.
Performers	Jeremiah Crank (Dance) Roche Janken (Dance) Mustafa Essami (Percussion) Zaid Hassan (Guitar) Majed Rasheed (Bass) Muhanad Rasheed (Guitar, Keyboard)
Duration	40 minutes
Research Residencies	3 – 30 Jun 2010: Hotel Pupik (Austria) 1 Nov – 15 Dec 2010: Central City Artist Project (USA)
Creation Residency	9-23 January 2011: Performing Arts Forum (France) 24 January-9 February 2011: MUSYQ Studios Supported by Dance On the Edge Festival (Netherlands)
Preview Presentation	San Francisco International Arts Festival 2011 (USA) 5 June 2011
Touring Company:	9 total-4 performers (Amsterdam) 2 performers (San Francisco) 1 Light Designer (San Francisco) 1 Sound Engineer (Amsterdam) 1 Choreographer/Director (San Francisco)

THIEVES is produced by DANCE ELIXIR, the San Francisco International Arts Festival (US), and the Dancing On the Edge Festival (NL). THIEVES is supported by grants from Theatre Bay Area's CASH Award, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the Clorox Company Foundation and the LEF Foundation.

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Biography of Leyya Mona Tawil

Artistic Director, Choreographer, Performer

Leyya Mona Tawil is the Artistic Director of DANCE ELIXIR, an internationally touring dance company dedicated to multi-disciplinary collaboration and dance research. As a choreographer and collaborator, she has worked with musicians and theatre/film directors worldwide. Ms. Tawil has received numerous recognitions including the University of Michigan Emerging Artist Award 2008 and the 510 Arts-Best of Oakland Award 2010 for her recent dance film “Quieting Heart: Attempt #5”. Ms. Tawil’s choreography for DANCE ELIXIR has enjoyed engagements throughout Europe and the Middle East, including the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival 2010 (Palestine), the Syrian National Opera House (Damascus), Overtoom 301 (Amsterdam), Studio Emad Eddin (Cairo) and Spektrum Theater (Czech Republic). Ms. Tawil’s work was also produced by the Beirut International Platform On Dance 2009 & 2011, the San Francisco International Arts Festival, the Arab American National Museum (Detroit), Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, The Flea/Dance New Amsterdam (NYC), and Yerba Buena Gardens Festival (San Francisco).

Ms. Tawil is a first-generation Syrian-Palestinian-American, born in Detroit, Michigan. She received her BDA in Dance from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, School of Music in 1997, and her MFA in Choreography from Mills College-Oakland in 2003. Her work has been featured on Syrian Drama TV (Damascus), Future TV (Lebanon), FEN Magazine (NYC), and throughout San Francisco print and radio media.

In 2010, she was an Artist in Residence at Hotel Pupik (Austria), Studio Emad Eddin (Cairo) and Central City Artist Project (New Orleans) in support of her upcoming work with Iraqi post-rock band, The Lazy Sleepers. She is currently on tour with Detroit-based violinist Mike Khoury as part of her “Quieting Heart” performance and film series.

An enthusiastic educator, Ms. Tawil has held teaching appointments at academic institutions throughout the United States and has taught master classes internationally, including lectures at New York University- Performance Studies and Lebanese University-Theater Department. From 2007-2009 she was the Middlebury College (VT) Artist In Residence in Dance, a full-time research/faculty position.

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Biography of Muhanad Rasheed

Music Composer and Performer

Muhanad Rasheed recently won the 2010 Dutch Dance Days Promising Choreographer award, granted to one artist each year in Holland. His recent work, “Mourning”, commissioned by Dancing On the Edge Festival (NL) and the Internationaal Danstheater Netherlands (IDT), also received the Swan Award for Best Dance Production in Holland 2010.

Mr. Rasheed is an Iraqi choreographer and composer living in the Netherlands, where in 2008 he was offered political asylum after spending months as a refugee in Jordan and Syria. Born in Baghdad, he studied theatre at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and soon thereafter founded Iraqi Bodies, the first contemporary dance company in Iraq. Iraqi Bodies won the Jury Prize at the 2007 Theatre Festival in Jordan. Their first production, “Crying of My Mother”, had its European premiere in the 2007 Dancing on the Edge Festival (NL), followed by tours throughout Europe and the Middle East, including the Kalamata Dance Festival 2009 (GR), Birmingham International Dance 2010 (UK), BIPOD (Beirut International Platform on Dance, LB) 2009. In January 2008, following the successes of “Crying of my Mother”, Mr. Rasheed was interviewed by Deborah Amos for a feature on NPR’s “All Things Considered”.

Mr. Rasheed’s first published musical score was for his solo “Obsession”, which was presented in an art museum in Casablanca, Morocco. He recently scored “dream is a broken mirror of realty”, a site specific performance presented at the Mellemrum Festival, Denmark 2010. Earlier this year, he formed an ensemble of Iraqi musicians, based in Amsterdam. Mr. Rasheed and this ensemble are the collaborating musicians for the original scoring of THIEVES.

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About DANCE ELIXIR

DANCE ELIXIR, a non-profit organization, was founded by Artistic Director Leyya Mona Tawil in order to pursue a collaboration-based vision of contemporary dance creation and performance. The company facilitates programming in the following areas: research and presentation of cutting edge contemporary dance, professional training in dance, and cultivating culturally relevant artistic communities through international and interdisciplinary collaborations. DANCE ELIXIR also performs outreach to senior citizens by offering movement classes, lectures on the arts, and live performances in senior citizen facilities.

DANCE ELIXIR is engaged in a multi-national dialogue addressing identity and contemporary performance aesthetics. Since 2003, they have collaborated with scores of artists from diverse disciplines. Choreographer Tawil's repertory features original music by composers Christopher Keyes (2003-2008) and Mark Gergis (2009-2010). Tawil is also known for her duet concert with musicians working in the genre of free improvisation. She and Detroit-based violinist Mike Khoury have been performing and touring together since 2006.

DANCE ELIXIR has toured ensemble, solo and duet repertory throughout Europe and the Middle East, including engagements in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Netherlands, Austria, Czech Republic, and the United Kingdom. They have an extensive national record of production in New York City, Detroit and San Francisco/Oakland, as well as academic residencies throughout the states.

DANCE ELIXIR is supported by the City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program, the East Bay Community Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the W&F Hewlett Foundation, W A Gerbode Foundation, Dancers Group/Theatre Bay Area's CA\$H, and the Clorox Company Foundation.