

... AND NOBODY ELSE

AHMED AYED

HAMZA DAMRA / TIM CLIJSTERS



COLLECTIF ILLICIUM / THEATRE DE LA VIE

...And Nobody Else evokes the search for an identity in constant transformation, a quest for a free “self” within a narrow envelope.

Ahmed Ayed, accompanied by dancer **Hamza Damra** and drummer and singer **Tim Clijsters**, questions the freedom to be oneself beyond the masks we impose on ourselves.

Do we manage to fully achieve our deep identity or do we live from a series of compromises that shape us in spite of ourselves? How can we be ourselves when we only play roles we don't choose?

Through movement, the constant metamorphosis of the body and space and the raw pulsation of a drum, **...And Nobody Else** takes us on an initiatory journey to meet different versions of oneself. A performance with rock accents that explores our plural identities.

...And Nobody Else is the quest for a free "self" in a narrow envelope. An encounter with several versions of oneself through the transformation of the body. The title of the piece is inspired by Peer Gynt, by Henrik Ibsen. It's the main character's motto: "Be yourself... and nobody else". Peer Gynt is an anti-hero, a fascinating loser. He is this wild, misunderstood young man who wants to set this world too narrow on fire.

He embodies the fiery and excessive ambition of youth in the face of pale reality. Peer Gynt is the young man who does not want to choose, because he cannot accept the consequences linked to it and even less assume any responsibilities. He can't bring himself to fit into a box. He will find no rest as long as he is locked into a role. He wants to be the emperor of the world, to achieve absolute freedom. But he cannot achieve his goal without leaving behind those who have been part of his life. He must let go of his weight to be able to go higher.

Peer Gynt was a starting point, an opener towards personal questions. It's been almost eighteen years since I left my native country to create my artistic path in Belgium. Almost half of my life. This new stage in my life raises new questions of identity and freedom, both in my artistic practice and in my personal life. I have often found myself in too narrow boxes, imposed identities, when I would just like to be myself... and nobody else.

Time passes, but are we able to fully achieve our deep identity? Or do we live from a series of compromises that shape an identity that is never ours.

There is an absurdity and an alienation that accompany everyday life when we cannot simply be ourselves, whether it comes from professional choices, cultural origins, our relationships with others...

How can we be ourselves when we only play roles we don't choose? When parts of us disappear for the comfort of others?

...And Nobody Else will play on the real stories of performers Hamza Damra and Tim Clijsters, transforming bodies and identities, having fun meeting several versions of the same person. In front of us, they peel their identities like we peel the skins of an onion.

In this performance, a strangeness will come from the feeling of not belonging, of never having the right role. This constant alienation will give a surreal atmosphere to the work. As if we were constantly looking at ourselves in a distorting mirror that never gives us a true image.

A physicality often out of balance, which seeks to tread on a ground that is slipping beneath our feet.

Palestinian dancer **Hamza Damra** deploys the energy of a body which opens its envelope to show us the inner multiplicity. The body, by being brought to an extreme state, becomes surreal, and allows us to discover it in another light. Surrealism will also come from the way in which the elements of reality will be transformed. Certain elements of the set and costumes will come from reality but will take on another dimension on set.





(c) FX Willems

This project will combine raw choreographic practice and fierce energy of Hamza Damra, with the dreamlike image theater of Ahmed Ayed.

We imagine a performance with Rock accents. The first intuitions led us to the desire to have a live drummer on stage. The drums represent the wild and youthful energy, which will color this absolute quest for the self. A raw pulsation of life that is in an organic dialogue with the performer. Songwriter Timothée Philippe, alias **Tim Clijsters**, best known for being the singer and drummer of the Brussels group BRNS, was the obvious choice for this collaboration.

On stage, it will above all be a question of energy. How to contain this multiplicity and larger than life presence in a single body. The choreographic writing is based a lot on what the body is, and what it would like to be. The fantasized body opens up questions about identity.

The performers are in possession of the space and components of the performance. Like Peer Gynt, they will be the masters of the story. They make the technical and scenographic elements available to create body and identity metamorphoses.

We work on principles of forces, concrete actions such as construction or destruction, dressing and undressing which can operate like changes from one corporeality to another.

The aesthetics of the show reveal the inner chaos of this complex search for identity. A space also in constant motion, which questions its theatricality and its components. The drums, the central element of the space, will be scattered throughout the space, forcing the musician to over-adapt, and giving rise to other possible identities.

A large circular and distorting mirror overlooks the stage, constantly transforming the reflection of the two performers, and including the audience in this quest for identity, making it appear at times.

VIDEOS

...AND NOBODY ELSE Teaser: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z-mv_i22gs&ab_channel=Th%C3%A9%C3%A2tredelaVieLive

Ahmed Ayed

https://youtu.be/Sei2o_5powI Ahmed Ayed Director Showreel

<https://vimeo.com/682858994> Lilith Teaser

<https://youtu.be/GiNRN8VLo2o> ALICE extraits

Hamza Damra

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5TStFr7KAg&ab_channel=HamzaDamra There (solo)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcMWj-G69s0&ab_channel=HamzaDamra Solo. Brest

Tim Clijsters

<https://youtu.be/aivxoLcmHAI> Monolithe Noir & Percussive Ensemble (Botanique Library Session)

<https://youtu.be/xurxVvZXwr0> BRNS - My Head Is Into You - Live Session - Bruxelles Ma Belle

https://youtu.be/ZO_BvpXD8xM BRNS - Mexico - Live Session - Bruxelles Ma Belle



Ahmed Ayed is an artist with diverse and multiple activities. Between theater, dance, directing, set design, and image... he develops his world through different mediums.

He is originally from Sousse, Tunisia. His first connection to the stage was dance, which he practiced from a young age. He left his native country in 2007 to train as an actor at Institut des Arts de Diffusion in Belgium.

Guided by his desire to “create worlds”, he was able, through the creation of his first piece ALICE, to develop acting techniques and a singular visual universe, and thus found Collectif Illicium, with whom he also created RIGOR MORTIS.

Returning to dance, he co-signed the creation of LILITH, a performance with French dancer and choreographer Marion Blondeau.

Behind the camera, he learned to translate music into image, through directing several music videos such as Ain Essouda by Ammar 808, Dawri by Ghoula, Footsteps by Emel Mathlouthi, Allah by Night by Mettani, or Soutbouk and Dima Maak of Jawhar.

CALENDAR

First shows

- April 19th to 27th 2024 at Théâtre de la Vie, Brussels.

Tour:

- June 7th 2024, Major Tom Festival, Centre Wallonie Bruxelles, Paris
- July 4th and 5th 2024 Festival de la Cité, Lausanne
- Décembre 5, 6, 7 2024 at Théâtre des Brigittines, Brussels
- February 1st, 2nd 2025 Festival des Premières Chorégraphiques, Tunis
- March 20th 2025 Klap Maison pour la Danse, Marseille
- March 27th and 28th 2025 Halles de Schaerbeek, Brussels
- April 22nd and 23rd 2025 C'est Central, La Louvière.
- June 2025 Journées Chorégraphiques de Carthage, Tunis.



... AND NOBODY ELSE

Conception, Choreography and Stage Directing	Ahmed Ayed
Dance Performance	Hamza Damra
Musical creation and performance	Tim Clijsters
Artistic Assistant	Amber Kemp
Dramaturgy	Patrick Michel
Light Design	Suzanna Bauer
Set Design	Thomas Delord
Costumes	Aswad Al Masrahi
Choreographic external eye	Soa Rastifandrihana
Sound Ingeneer	Arthur Wouters
Light technician	Suzanna Bauer
Set Construction	Max Van de Weyer
Teasers et photos	Alice Khol
Production and tour management	Théâtre de la Vie (Manon Di Romano)

Co-production Collectif ILLICIUM /Théâtre de la Vie, Bruxelles / Les Brigittines, Bruxelles / Les Halles de Schaerbeek / La Charge du Rhinocéros/ C'est Central, La Louvière/ fédération Wallonie Bruxelles

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