

Creation 2025

Premiere 11 June 2025, in KVS (BE)

Badke(remix)

Amir Sabra & Ata Khatab
laGeste | Stereo48



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“For one hour, we depict life, its beauty, its struggles and heaviness. And what holds it all together, despite our tiredness and moments of darkness, is us. It’s a one-hour trip where I feel so much strength and resistance, standing despite all the forces that are trying to silence us.”

Dima Zahran

Badke(remix)

A Belgian-Palestinian dance production.

A remix is an edited version of an existing song. *Badke(remix)* is a remake of the dance performance with 10 Palestinian dancers that toured worldwide between 2013 and 2016, created by Koen Augustijnen, Rosalba Torres and Hildegard De Vuyst. The reissue of *Badke* is now artistically in Palestinian hands, namely [Amir Sabra](#) and [Ata Khatab](#), and becomes *Badke(remix)*.

Their desire for a remix stems from several considerations. There is no denying that the creation in the past was a 'dancers factory', as Amir called it. This creation and its extensive tour, including a remake in 2015, has spawned a generation of Palestinian professional dancers and dance makers, many of whom are still active in various places around the world. Dancing became a real future prospect. It forged a dance community because the dancers came from very different backgrounds. *Badke* united Palestinians from Israel, Jerusalem and the West Bank. Dancers also came from very different contexts socio-economically, from urban elites to black Palestinians from refugee camps. The rehearsal process created a context for exchange and collaboration based on equality. Also in terms of individual expertise, circus stood brotherly next to kickbox, contemporary next to traditional, capoeira next to hip-hop. Amir and Ata also want to cherish this diversity in the future.



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With Amir and Ata at the helm of a reworking, a lot of things come together: the experience of creation and the experience of touring, an older generation and a younger one, those who stayed and those who left, dabke and hip-hop, hierarchical structure and collective creation,.... It creates great expectations of a reworking.

Badke(remix) is not a search for lost authenticity. That is why the makers also integrate globalised forms of popular 'art' such as capoeira, circus, hip-hop and even references to Walt Disney films. *Badke(remix)* thus becomes a vital form of collective 'belonging somewhere' in a globalised context, while also expressing the desire to be part of the world beyond. How much contemporary information can the dabke tolerate? Can you put a different spin on this almost canonised folk dance? How flexible is the tradition? And how can you question folk dance without driving the people away? These are questions that arise.

Culturally and politically, this remix emerges under exceptional circumstances. Within the creative process, power dynamics have shifted: this repertoire now finds itself in Palestinian hands, where it is being reappropriated. At the same time, this rewriting takes place in the context of the

genocide in Gaza, intensified evictions in Jerusalem, the reoccupation of (parts of) the West Bank, settler violence, and many other, less visible forms of violence against Palestinians.

Moreover, under the occupation, togetherness often becomes compulsive while mutual tensions fester under the skin; social control is often crippling to individual aspirations; the profession of dancer is scarcely rated higher than that of sex worker (and there are none!). Not to mention the violence that is the order of the day. Throughout the festive surface of *Badke(remix)*, that other reality permeates, like cold gusts of wind through the chinks of a poorly insulated house. But in the end, the thought still prevails: we're not going to let anyone tell us what to do. We will dance until we drop.

The music

The music is by Nasser Al-Fares, leader of a 'ball orchestra' on the West Bank, notorious for weddings. The 'mijwiz' is an exciting type of dabke music in which the leading role is played by a wind instrument consisting of two (bamboo) pipes blown by one reed. A 15-minute 'mijwiz' that one of the dancers (*Badke* 2013) brought along was stretched to 50 minutes by Sam Serruys. The music is initially irresistible, later unbearable. Here too, pain and pleasure are close together. Between the music, Nasser Al-Fares greets the revellers he knows and, for example, announces that a Mitsubishi jeep is parked incorrectly. Throughout the festivities, sirens, drones and crying children occasionally sound. Or do they only resonate in the minds of the dancers ?



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The title

From dabke to *Badke*

The title is a conscious reversal of dabke, the name of the Palestinian folk dance. Dabke exists in different variants, but broadly speaking there is on the one hand the dabke as a popular social dance of the people at weddings and other festivities, and on the other hand the 'academic' dabke

that requires training and travels the world as a showcase for Palestinian national ambitions. The latter is a stylized cleaned-up version of the former, often injected with stories of the suffering of the Palestinians and symbols of expulsion and displacement.

In *Badke(remix)*, a contemporary version of the vernacular, non-academic variety is chosen, an explosion of joy, a lively physical expression that speaks of connection, an affirmation of belonging somewhere. This kind of collective physicality is hardly encountered in contemporary dance with its emphasis on individuality and reflection. At the heart of the 'social' dabke is something unique that Palestinian dancers can proudly show off to the rest of the world.

CREDITS

Choreography [Amir Sabra](#) and [Ata Khatab](#)

dance en creation [Abdallah Damra](#), [Bresa Ayub](#), [Dima Zahran](#), [Hamza Damra](#), [Marah Haj](#), [Mohammed Al Tayeh](#), [Rebecca Kaoud](#), [Rima Baransa](#), [Samer Raya](#), [Shahd Jabarin](#), [Jassi Murad](#) (understudy)

soundtrack Nasser Al-Fares, bewerking door Sam Serruys

artistic assistant Abdallah Damra

sound Hanne Nuyttens

light Ine Van Bortel

based on Badke 2013 of Koen Augustijnen, Rosalba Torres Guerrero, Hildegard De Vuyst

touring Morgan Verhelle (laGeste)

production [laGeste](#) | [Stereo48](#)

co-production KVS, Viernulvier

with the support of City of Ghent, Flemish Authorities and the Belgian Federal Government's Tax Shelter measure through Flanders Tax Shelter



FLANDERS
TAX
SHELTER

PRACTICAL

duration 1h15 (without break)

language no language

people on tour 14 people touring: 10 cast and 4 crew.

stage size needed 10m / 10m - height 6m - with sprung floor.

set no building day - no set - outdoor location possible.

requirements the organiser provides a working waterdispenser.

audience capacity maximum capacity 1500 spectators.

AGENDA

Premiere 11.06.2025

11 | 12 | 13 June 2025 KVS Bol - Brussels (BE)

Find [here](#) the update of the playlist.

Past touring list from Badke (202-13 - 2016) [here](#).

PERFORMANCE INFO

Updates and additions to the presentation text, credits, biographies, agenda, recent photos, trailer, interviews, press will be available [here](#) in the coming months.

From the premiere, you will be able to download new high-resolution photos and the trailer of the performance [here](#).

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