



Kamal Aljafari, *A Fidai Film* (2024), film still

***TOWARDS DOCUMENTARY CHOREOGRAPHY
ENCOUNTER #2 - ATTENDING TO BODIES***

28-30 April 2025

@Beursschouwburg, @Les Grands Carmes & @KVS BOL, Brussels (BE)

“Towards Documentary Choreography - Encounter #2” is the second in a series of symposiums linked to the doctoral research of choreographer Arkadi Zaides. This event brings together scholars, activists, artists, dance and performance practitioners to explore the multifaceted meanings of “documentary choreography” and to assess its potential engagement with sociopolitical issues as well as medium-specific concerns.

This edition places the act of attending to bodies at its core, emphasizing the body as a critical site of knowledge, memory, and agency. As such, the symposium invites participants to consider how physical gestures, movements, and embodied acts act as repositories of lived experience, capable of reflecting on and responding to sociopolitical realities. Attending to

bodies means not only observing their actions but also recognizing the ways they embody histories of struggle, resilience, and transformation.

The symposium delves into the intersection of documentary materials and corporealities, revealing how bodies can disrupt dominant narratives, amplify silenced stories, and confront pressing crises such as warfare, migration, inequality, and ecological breakdown. How can choreography, by centering on bodies, navigate these crises and uncover new ways of engaging with the world? Through this perspective, the symposium aims to demonstrate how choreography and related arts, when intertwined with documentary practices, can address urgent contemporary issues while critically examining the processes, ethics, and sustainability of artistic practices.

This event is organized in cooperation between: the Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA); Counterpoint (KU Leuven); the Flemish Government; the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of Ghent University; the Faculty of Arts (Department of Literature) of the University of Antwerp; CoDa | Cultures of Dance – Research Network for Dance Studies (funded by the Research Foundation Flanders - FWO), Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin (HZT), S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media) at Ghent University; CORPoREAL (research group at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp); the Necropolis United research project (funded by the Research Foundation Flanders - FWO); Beursschouwburg.

Production assistance: Emma Meerschaert (PhD researcher, KU Leuven)

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Monday, 28 April 2025

- 13:30-14:00 ***Gathering*** @Beursschouwburg
- 14:00-14:15 ***Introduction*** @Beursschouwburg
- 14:15-15:00 ***Notes on Documentary Choreography***, Arkadi Zaides (choreographer, PhD researcher UAntwerp, UGhent, Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, KASK) @Beursschouwburg
- 15:00-17:00 ***Hyphen-ated***, Leticia Assemien, Geert Ates, Aïsta (Aissata) Bah, Thierno Dia, Mamadou Taslim Diallo, Henriette Essami-Khaullot, Fran Kourouma, Pierre Marchand, Milady Renoir, Christel Stalpaert, Alberto Isifin Tchama, Arkadi Zaides, Martín Zicari (members of the Necropolis United research group) @Beursschouwburg
- 17:00-17:30 ***Break***

- 17:30-18:15 *epistemic invention*, Irit Rogoff (Professor Emerita of Visual Culture, Goldsmiths, London University) @Beursschouwburg
- 18:15-18:45 A Conversation with Irit Rogoff, moderated by Igor Dobričić (dramaturg) @Beursschouwburg

Tuesday, 29 April 2025

- 10:00-10:30 *Gathering* @Les Grands Carmes
- 10:30-10:45 *Introduction to the day* @Les Grands Carmes
- 10:45-11:30 *The Loss of Loss*, Mlonzi Zondi (researcher, artist) @Les Grands Carmes
- 11:30-12:15 *OQT-returns [Title in Progress]*, Alphonse Eklou Uwantege (theater director, performer) @Les Grands Carmes
- 12:15-13:00 A Conversation with Alphonse Eklou Uwantege and Mlonzi Zondi, moderated by Safa El Alami (researcher, KU Leuven), Jonas Rutgeerts (dance researcher, dramaturge, KU Leuven) @Les Grands Carmes
- 13:00-14:00 *Break*
- 14:00-14:45 *Worldbuilding with African Accelerationism*, Mark Mushiva ya Mushiva (artist, researcher, technologist) @Les Grands Carmes
- 14:45-15:30 *Co-Authoring The Archive: Entangled Remains*, Esther Siddiquie (artist, PhD researcher Goldsmiths, London University) @Les Grands Carmes
- 15:30-16:15 A conversation between Mark Mushiva ya Mushiva, Esther Siddiquie, Irit Rogoff & Arkadi Zaides @Les Grands Carmes
- 16:15-16:45 *Break*
- 16:45-18:00 *A Fidai Film*, Kamal Aljafari (filmmaker) @Beursschouwburg

Wednesday, 30 April 2025

- 10:00-10:30 *Gathering* @KVS BOL
- 10:30-10:45 *Introduction to the day* @KVS BOL

- 10:45-12:00 ***On Shielding: Body-based Studies on Integrity and Protection***, Bojana Cvejić (researcher, dramaturg, professor at Oslo National Academy of Arts) & Sandra Noeth (curator, body theorist, professor at the University of the Arts Berlin) [@KVS BOL](#)
- 12:00-12:45 ***PRIDE***, Igor Dobričić [@KVS BOL](#)
- 12:45-13:15 **A conversation with Bojana Cvejić, Igor Dobričić & Sandra Noeth**, moderated by Annelies Van Assche (dance scholar, Ghent University and Royal Conservatoire Antwerp) [@KVS BOL](#)
- 13:15-14:15 ***Break***
- 14:15-15:00 ***About some an-archivic reggaetoneras resistances and the process of ¡Dale Duro !***, Emma Gioia (choreographer, dance researcher) [@KVS BOL](#)
- 15:00-15:45 ***Choreography as a practice of self-defense***, Carolina Mendonça (choreographer, dramaturg) [@KVS BOL](#)
- 15:45-16:15 ***A conversation with Emma Gioia & Carolina Mendonça***, moderated by Martin Zicari (postdoctoral researcher at Ghent University, producer at Hiros) [@KVS BOL](#)
- 16:15-16:45 ***Break***
- 16:45-18:15 ***REAS***, film by Lola Arias (theatre and film director, writer, performer) [@Beursschouwburg](#)

DETAILED PROGRAM & BIOGRAPHIES

13:30-14:00 - *Gathering*

14:00-14:15 - *Introduction to the day*

14:15-15:00 - *Notes on Documentary Choreography*, Arkadi Zaides

In this presentation, I will provide insight into some of my projects that explore the intersection of embodied and documentary practices. Engaging with texts by several scholars who referred in their writing to my work—specifically Pouillaude (2016), Stalpaert (2022), and Rogoff (2024)—I will propose a number of key principles that define what I mean by “documentary choreography” and outline its main tenets. Drawing from my own artistic practice, I will reflect on the role of the choreographer

as both researcher and witness, examining how choreography can function as a mode of inquiry and critical engagement with reality. Finally, I will consider how documentary choreography challenges conventional notions of both dance and documentary, proposing an expanded notion of choreography in which movement itself becomes evidence.



Arkadi Zaidés, *Archive* (2014), photo: Ronen Guter

Arkadi Zaidés works as a choreographer, curator, and researcher. He obtained a master's degree at the AHK Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam. Since 2021, he is a doctoral researcher in the Arts at the University of Antwerp, Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, Ghent University, and KASK/School of Arts (HoGent). He is a member of the CORPoREAL research group at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp and the research center S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media) at Ghent University. His performances and video installations have been presented at numerous dance and theatre festivals, museums, and galleries across Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Zaidés is a recipient of various awards, among them a prize for demonstrating engagement in human rights issues, awarded to him by the Emile Zola Chair for Interdisciplinary Human Rights Dialogue.

15:00-17:00 - *Hyphen-ated*, Leticia Assemien, Geert Ates, Aïsta (Aissata) Bah, Thierno Dia, Mamadou Taslim Diallo, Henriette Essami-Khaullot, Fran Kourouma, Pierre Marchand, Milady Renoir, Christel Stalpaert, Alberto Isifin Tchama, Arkadi Zaides, Martín Zicari

Since 2022, a cross-disciplinary group of artists, researchers, technicians, and activists has been collaborating through a series of encounters to design and develop an information infrastructure aimed at tracing and commemorating migrant deaths and disappearances. Rooted in diverse practices, the group seeks to address pressing societal questions while mobilizing people and structures to respond to the critical impact of migration in our contemporary times.

This initiative stems from Arkadi Zaides' artistic project *Necropolis*, which inspired the formation of this collective effort. While acknowledging and building upon existing commemorative gestures initiated by societal and activist movements, the group aims to complement these initiatives by proposing tools for an online infrastructure. The focus is on designing a framework that both responds to its complex subject matter and remains sustainable within a socio-cultural context. During this reflection afternoon, different members of the project will share insights into the collective process and explore the potential outcomes of this ongoing work.

Leticia Assemien loves to create, dare, and, above all, organize. Often described as both funny and calm, she's also known to raise her voice loud and clear when it comes to claiming her rights. Nicknamed MC Climate Change, she brings the energy needed to shake things up and make change happen!

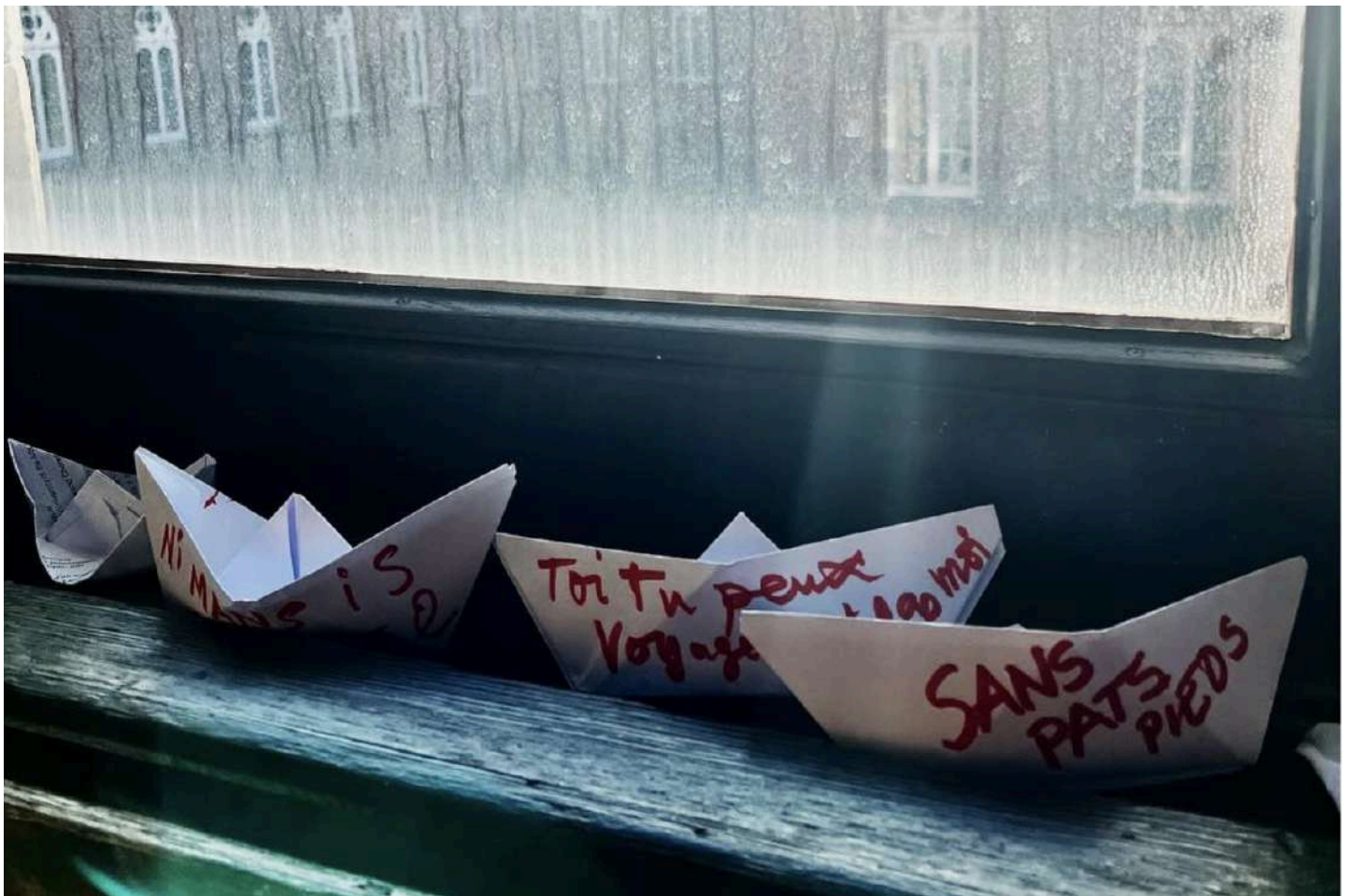
Geert Ates, co-founder of UNITED for Intercultural Action, served as the network director from 1993 to 2019. UNITED is a pan-European grass-root network dedicated to combating nationalism, racism, and fascism and advocating for migrants and refugees, with support from over 550 organizations spanning 48 European countries. He represented the network at key institutional gatherings such as those of the EU, Council of Europe, UN, and OSCE. Additionally, he coordinated numerous pan-European projects tackling various issues related to anti-discrimination and migration. Since 2019, he has taken on the role of coordinator at the Amsterdam secretariat for the "Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe" campaign. UNITED compiles annually the List of Refugee Deaths to raise awareness on the human tragedies related to European migration policies. Since 1992, over 63.000 deaths have been recorded. The List is a powerful advocacy tool used by artists and activists around the world.

Aïsta (Aissata) Bah is an activist and leading member of La Voix des Sans-Papiers (VSP)¹, a Brussels-based collective founded in 2014 that fights for the regularization of all undocumented people. As a poet, author, and trainer, she is committed to

¹ La Voix des Sans-Papiers de Bruxelles (VSP) is a self organised collective of undocumented people who fight to regain their rights towards régularisation.

making the struggles of undocumented women visible, as they are the primary victims of institutional violence. As the only woman on the organizing committee of VSP Fritz Toussaint, she advocates for the creation of safe, self-managed spaces by and for women. She is also the founder of the *Journal des sans-papiers*, the “Y’en a marre” project, and collaborates on the “Exils et Création” project.

Thierno Dia is a member of the collective La Voix des Sans-Papiers (VSP)*, a Brussels-based collective founded in 2014 that fights for the regularization of all undocumented people. The members occupy several buildings in Brussels and across Belgium, turning them into spaces of struggle, socialization, and awareness-raising about the violation of fundamental rights. In 2022, he co-published *Les Turbulents*, a comic book created collectively by sixteen people with Studio Baraka Grafika, exhibited at the Belgian Comic Strip Center in Brussels and supported by FRMK editions and Atelier du Toner. Thierno is also an artist and djembe workshop facilitator, advocating for this instrument as a messenger of resistance and community.



Ecologies of mourning: expanded gestures of care in the virtual commemoration site of Necropolis (United), as part of the “Ecologies of Architecture and Dance” symposium (2024), photo: Annelies Van Assche

Mamadou Taslim Diallo explores activism through various forms of expression. He is a slam poet, journalist for the *Journal des sans-papiers*, actor, and illustrator. A member of La Voix des Sans-Papiers (VSP)* since 2014, he has been collaborating as

an actor with Mierem Coppens and Elie Maissin since 2018, notably performing in *Caught in the Rain* and *Et leurs lettres*. In 2022, he co-published *Les Turbulents*, a comic book created collectively by sixteen people with Studio Baraka Grafika, exhibited at the Belgian Comic Strip Center in Brussels and supported by FRMK editions and Atelier du Toner. In 2024, he also took part in the Zinneke Parade as the artistic coordinator of the Zinnode “Résistance des invisibles”.

Henriette Essami-Khaullot is an activist and a member of La Voix des Sans-Papiers (VSP)*, a Brussels-based collective founded in 2014 that fights for the regularization of all undocumented people. As the former coordinator of VSP Amazones (Defacqz) and active member of the Comité des Femmes Sans-papiers, she advocates for the recognition of the rights of undocumented women, who are often rendered invisible. As an author, trainer, and spokesperson, she works to create self-managed shelters and denounces the specific violence and discrimination that undocumented women face daily.

Fran Kourouma is a writer, performer and healthcare worker. After earning a diploma in Food Technology and Control in Dalaba (2015), he was forced to flee his home country Guinea in 2016, arriving in Belgium as an asylum seeker in 2017. His time in homelessness led him to start writing *Notre Soleil*, published by Samsa Editions (2020). Since then, he has worked in various sectors, performed in the stage adaptation of *Notre Soleil* (2022), and is currently training in dual diagnosis (mental health and social care) at Tam Tam Workshops (2024-2025).

Pierre Marchand is a co-founder of the worker-owned cooperative Atelier Cartographique (AC). He develops open-source software. A former visual artist and forestry engineer, he is a programmer-architect for collective projects linked to digital data and its representation. His research focuses on a form of speculative programming that activates the dynamics of questioning, both in relation to the tools being used and to their historical and cultural dimensions, by exploring the processes involved in the formation of a digital sensibility.

Milady Renoir is a poetesse™, performer, and workshop facilitator since 2004, working with people full of stories to tell-write-shout. She also facilitates training sessions for professionals from cultural organisations, continuous education, and social justice collectives resisting state violence. She prefers poetry and the stage over unspoken words and misunderstandings, even though they are fertile ground for poetry. Milady writes for journals and podcasts on arts, humanities, and political analysis, fully dedicating herself to the reclaiming of rights for undocumented people. She contributes to radio programs, performs with her fifty-something grumpy body, and writes pleas, slams between two doubts and three urges, while keeping a sensitive thorax, a tight throat, and a raised fist. – miladyrenoir.org

Christel Stalpaert is an activist and works with different companions at the Arts Department of Ghent University. She is Senior Full Professor and director of the

research center S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts and Media) and co-founder of the research network “CoDa | Cultures of Dance.” She recently published *Performance and Posthumanism: Staging Prototypes of Composite Bodies* (with Kristof van Baarle and Laura Karreman, 2021) and is currently working on her book *Hyphenated Thinking: Performance (Studies) Activating Ecological Encounters*.

Alberto Isifin Tchama is one of the coordinators of La Voix des Sans-Papiers (VSP)* in Brussels, a self-organized collective of undocumented people founded in 2014 that fights for the regularization of all undocumented individuals. Its members occupy several buildings in Brussels and across Belgium, turning them into spaces of struggle, socialization, and raising awareness on the violation of fundamental rights. In 2022, he co-published *Les Turbulents*, a comic book created collectively by sixteen people with Studio Baraka Grafika, exhibited at the Belgian Comic Strip Center in Brussels and supported by FRMK editions and Atelier du Toner.

Martín Zicari is an Argentinian writer and producer based in Brussels. He holds a PhD in Literature from KU Leuven, and did undergraduate studies in Latin American history at the University of Buenos Aires. Currently, Martín is the research coordinator of the FWO funded project Necropolis United at Ghent University. As a producer, he works for Bâtard Festival in Brussels as well as for the production house Hiros. He also produces exhibitions in the US and Mexico in the context of a collaborative art project around the US-Mexico border under the name “The Place Where Clouds Are Formed”. He is a published author in poetry and fiction. His most recent book *Oostende* was published in 2023 by Paripé Books (Madrid).

17:00 - 17:30 - Break

17:30 - 18:15 - *Epistemic invention*, Irit Rogoff

“Epistemic invention” is one of the terms I am trying to develop in order to think about the new parameters of practice-based research. In part, I am positioning it as a force in the denial of ‘frontality’ as stance and address in facing our woeful conditions. If ‘frontality’ is dealing with war, armed conflict, civil destabilization, and human suffering, it operates largely through binaries of perpetrators and victims, allocation of responsibility, tracing the mechanisms and technologies of violence, territorial gains and losses, and the creation of conditions of possibility for colossal mishaps that are social, environmental, and governmental. In contrast, “epistemic invention” refuses a steady place for us to be anchored as observers, whether we are complicit or judging. It is propositional, fictionalising, mismatching knowledge platforms, inventing archives, envoicing, embodying, and setting in motion. It is both anchored in knowledge and permitting a degree of invention in order to ask how knowledge affects.

Irit Rogoff is one of the initiators of the transdisciplinary field of Visual Culture and founder of the department at Goldsmiths. Her initiatives to establish this new field are led by a belief that we must work beyond bodies of inherited disciplinary knowledge and find motivation for knowledge production in the current conditions we are living out. Her current work “Becoming Research” (MIT 2026) is concerned with the Research Turn in the arts, with new modes of knowledge production through creative practices and how these have continued to challenge traditional notions of research throughout academic and artistic environments. Most recently, Rogoff founded the PhD in “Advanced Practices” (2020).

18:15-18:45 - A Conversation with Irit Rogoff, moderated by Igor Dobričić

Igor Dobričić studied dramaturgy at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, (former) Yugoslavia and holds a Master’s degree in Theatre from DAS Theatre in Amsterdam, Netherlands. He is living between Berlin and Amsterdam while working internationally. As a dramaturg, he is regularly collaborating with a number of choreographers and performance makers, such as Nicole Beutler, Alma Sodeberg, Meg Stuart, Marble Crowd Collective, Arkadi Zaides, and others. In the role of a teacher and mentor, he has a long-term engagement with a broad range of educational institutions, including K3 Choreographic Centre in Hamburg, SNDO - School for New Dance, DAS Master of Theatre in Amsterdam, amongst others. From 2010 onwards, he is also developing his own performative research project under the title “TableTalks”. During the last 15 years, “TableTalks” has hosted and presented in a number of different cultural contexts, from Amsterdam to Stockholm, Cairo, São Paulo, and Vienna.

Tuesday 29 April 2025

10:30-11:15 - *The Loss of Loss*, Mlonzi Zondi

* The session will be conducted in English, with a French translation available on printed handouts upon request.

This presentation addresses historical violence and the violence of History through a reading of Faustin Linyekula’s *My Body, My Archive* (2023). We will examine the ways that violence on Africa (and the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular) comes to be known, documented, remembered, and silenced. Linyekula’s performance also attunes us to those African modes of knowing that are now gaining global recognition but previously buttressed the position of Africans as improperly human and needing Western interventions. To what extent does the recognition of this absented (maternal) knowledge help us locate "truth" beyond the document, and how far does this recovery through performance consign African orature into the logic/logos of the archive?

Mlondi Zondi is a performance artist, dramaturg, and assistant professor of comparative literature at the University of Southern California. Mlondi's writing is forthcoming or has been published in *TDR: The Drama Review*, *ASAP Journal*, *Liquid Blackness*, *Contemporary Literature*, *Text and Performance Quarterly*, *Mortality*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, *Safundi*, *Performance Philosophy*, *Espace Art Actuel*, and *Propter Nos*.

11:15 - 12:00 - *OQT- returns [Title in Progress]* by Alphonse Eklou Uwantege

To be in motion
is to not know where one belongs.
It is to refuse borders,
to reject the confinement of the nation.
There is a possibility in not fully belonging—
neither to the colonizer,
nor to the colonized.
Another way of inhabiting,
a diagonal to trace,
a memory that does not seek to return,
but to reinvent itself elsewhere.
To arrive with one's passport,
not as proof of identity,
but as a relic,
a document that speaks as much of passages as of prohibitions,
of rights granted and those denied,
of visible and invisible borders that continue to mark bodies.

What does a history in struggle look like when it finds no anchor?

I write to you with my three identity cards.
Who am I, with these three cards?
What do I embody here, what do I no longer embody there?
What does *here* mean?
What does *there* mean?
Does having multiple identity cards mean having multiple identities?
What does it mean to grow up in a country without an identity card?

From the recorded stories of my parents, who lived through migration, I try to construct my own trajectory. In this imagined space I dream of, my body moves in a wandering dialogue with those who accept the invitation to journey into this in-between—this third territory. Its representation is conceived beyond an attempt to define space. The stage is imagined as a place of passage, where the personal stories of the spectators shape a utopian landscape, where forgotten languages finally find their echoes.



Alphonse Eklou Uwantege, *faillies (obligation to leave the territory)*, (2024) photo: Alphonse Eklou Uwantege

Alphonse Eklou Uwantege, a 28-year-old queer Sagittarius, was born in Minsk to a Rwandan mother and a Togolese father. Based in Brussels, they are a model, performer, and director whose work uses the body as a tool, writing as a weapon of resurrection, and performance as a site of political urgency. Their practice seeks to disrupt representational norms and reconfigure the relationship between performers and spectators by unsettling conventional performance spaces. In *Restes*, the first part of their triptych, Alphonse explores transgenerational trauma, invisible memory, and colonial transmissions in a solo performance dedicated to their uncle, Alphonse Kanimba, who was killed during the Tutsi genocide in April 1994. They are now developing the second part of the triptych, investigating migratory inheritances and the silences imposed on diasporic identities. Through a fusion of traditional and contemporary movement, the languages of their family, and archival documents as witnesses to erasure and resistance, they examine the fractures and reinventions shaped by displacement.

12:00-13:00 - A Conversation between Alphonse Eklou Uwantege, Safa El Alami, Jonas Rutgeerts & Mlondolozzi (Mlondi) Zondi

* The session will be conducted in French and English, with translation available in both directions.

Safa El Alami is a doctoral researcher in Cultural Studies at KU Leuven. Her research interests lie in visual arts, postcolonial studies, diaspora studies, and queer theory. She holds a Master's degree in Cultural Studies from KU Leuven. In her Master's thesis, she studied the orientalist depiction of gay male characters in North African queer cinema co-produced with Western media. Currently, she is working - under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Anneleen Masschelein - on her doctoral thesis, titled "Thinking past pride, creating beside shame: Hshouma in contemporary visual artist's works from the Moroccan diaspora in Belgium and France", which delves into the themes of shame, identity, and cultural expression within the context of Moroccan diasporic art.

Jonas Rutgeerts is a dance researcher and dramaturg based in Belgium. He earned his PhD in Philosophy from KU Leuven in 2015, focusing on how temporality is performed in contemporary European dance. His current research examines the role of dance in shaping (sub)cultural practices and its potential to rethink traditional relationships between time, space, and embodiment. As a dramaturg, he has collaborated with Ivana Müller, David Weber-Krebs, and Begüm Erciyas, among others.

13:00-14:00 - Break

14:00-14:45 - *Worldbuilding with African Accelerationism*, Mark Mushiva ya Mushiva

This talk introduces "African Accelerationism" as a futurist framework for building speculative decolonial futures. Drawing on post-colonial theory and cultures of resistance, I will interrogate how colonial structures persist in technological progress and how worldbuilding supported by 3D printing, modeling, and AI-driven design can create insurgent futurisms to counter prevailing racial techno-capitalism. Several speculative real-use artifacts will be presented as offerings of decolonial technologies as well as examples of technological investigations produced by Forensis/Forensic Architecture that demonstrate the strong links between environmental degradation and colonial occupation.

Mushiva is a Berlin-based Namibian technologist and multidisciplinary artist. His work focuses on making games, cinematic 3D worlds, and wearable AI devices that try to subvert the colonial legacies of today's technologies, a decolonial insurgent design that helps gesture towards a more just and equitable future. Mushiva holds a PhD in Human-Computer Interaction from the University of Trento (Italy). He has written various works around games as socio-technical interventions for social interaction and cultural preservation. Mushiva currently works as a computational

researcher at the investigative agency Forensis/Forensic Architecture, where he explores the environmental impacts of colonialism and military occupation through remote sensing tools, machine learning, and decolonial frameworks of thought.



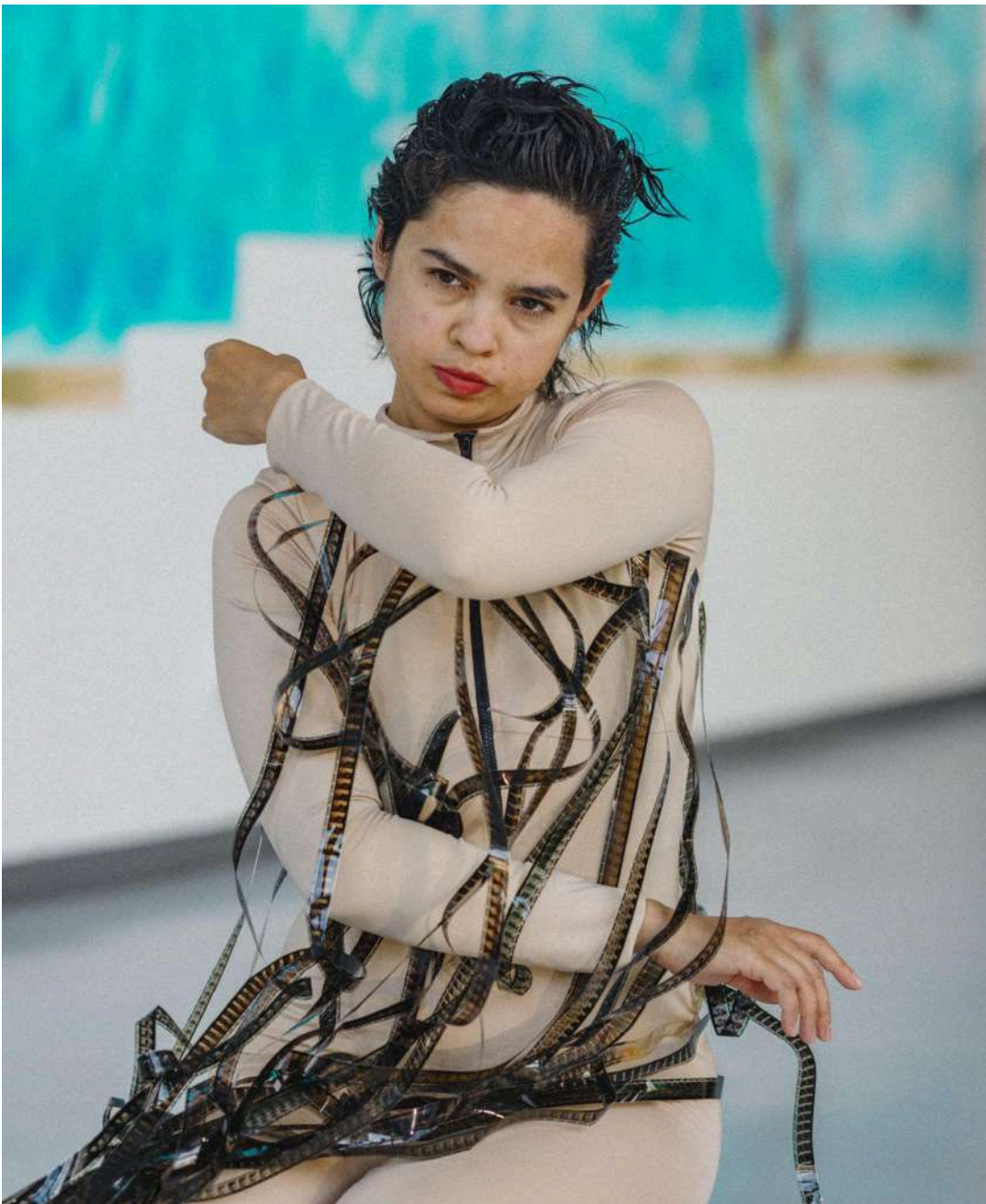
Image (credit: Ian Wainaina AKA Shutterdu)

14:45 - 15:30 - *Co-Authored The Archive: Entangled Remains*, Esther Siddiquie

My PhD research, *Co-Authored the Archive*, examines the potentiality of corporeal interventions inside archival spaces. In 2018, I inherited over 1,000 analogue film materials documenting UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Caring for this archive raised questions about its exclusionary logic and the need for alter-native archival practices.

Inspired by Tina Campt’s concept of “listening to images,” I shifted from viewing the archive to listening to it, revealing its spectral resonance—a wild anarchic chorus singing into being the presence of its author and the absences of those omitted.

I consider archival gaps not as voids, but as spectral spaces teeming with potential. My approach invites a somatic, relational engagement with archival materials, using sensing as a mode of knowledge production. My participation will highlight my research on developing sensory archival practices rooted in performance which resist entrenched power structures in archives.



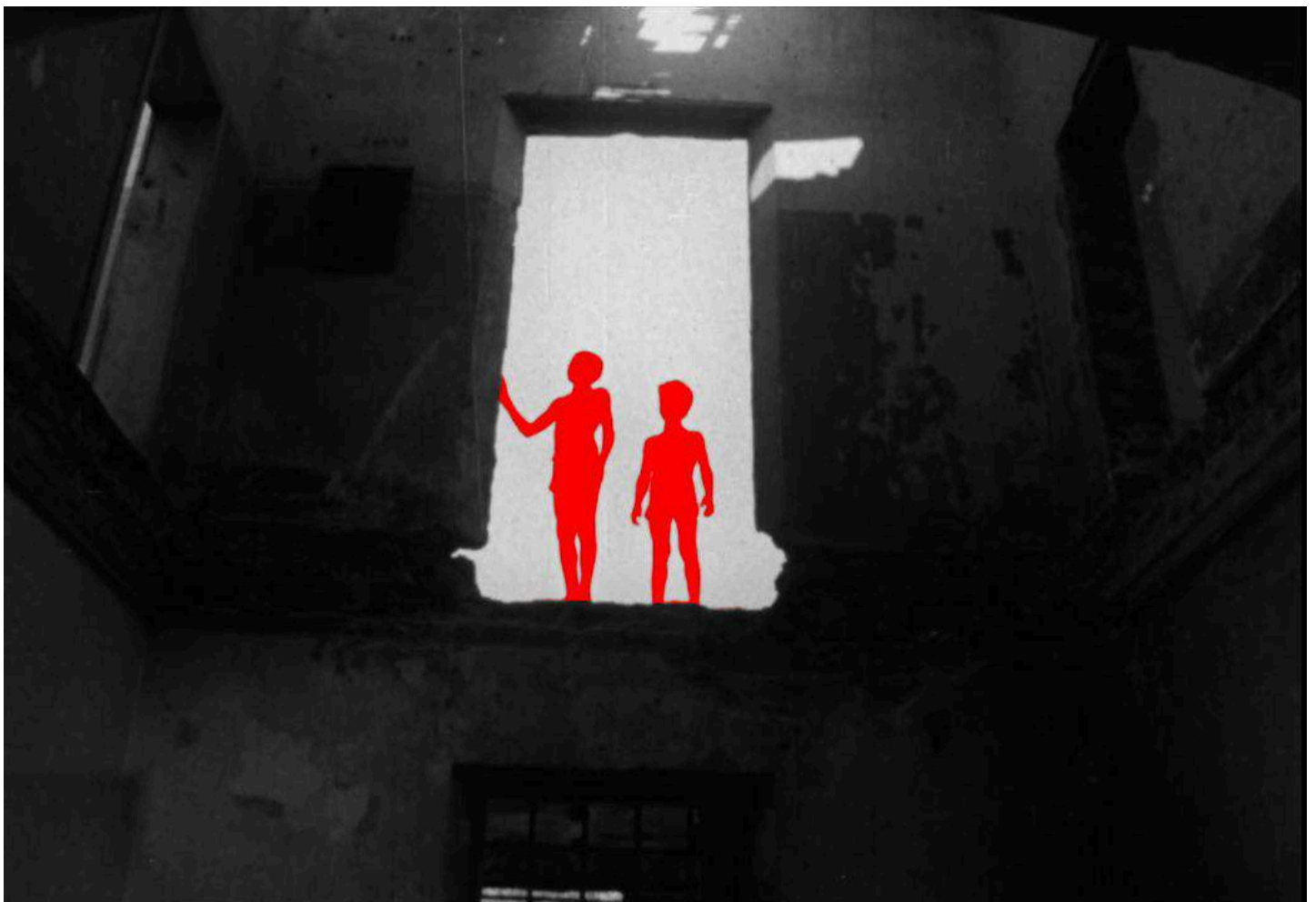
Esther Siddiquie, *re| mains* (2023), photo: Monica Munioz

Esther Siddiquie's work emerges from a choreographic practice exploring the potential of somatic archival work. Through performative stagings of sensory encounters with archival objects, she investigates ghostly matter in human and more-than-human entanglements. She is a 2023-24 DAAD scholarship holder and a Charlotte Kirk Patrick Award recipient. Her works span photography, performances, and choreographic installations showcased at ICA London, CAC Vilnius, Galerie Wedding, Favoriten Festival, Tanzhaus NRW, Dance Umbrella Festival, and more. A graduate of London Contemporary Dance School and NYU Tisch, she is a PhD candidate in Advanced Practices at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research critically examines a film archive of UNESCO World-Cultural Heritage Sites created by her late father, Shabbir Siddiquie.

15:30-16:15 - A conversation between Mark Mushiva, Esther Siddiquie, Irit Rogoff & Arkadi Zaides

16:30-18:30 - *A Fidai Film*, Kamal Aljafari

Film, 78 min. Arabic, English, Hebrew with English subtitles



Kamal Aljafari, *A Fidai Film* (2024), film still

In the summer of 1982, the Israeli army invaded Beirut. During this time, it raided the Palestinian Research Center and looted its entire archive. The archive contained historical documents of Palestine, including a collection of still and moving images. Taking this as a premise, *A Fidai Film* aims to create a counter-narrative to this loss, presenting a form of cinematic sabotage that seeks to reclaim and restore the looted memories of Palestinian history. It is a poignant exploration of identity, memory, and resistance, told through a unique blend of documentary and experimental filmmaking techniques.

Kamal Aljafari (Palestine) is a filmmaker and artist born in Ramla in 1972. His films have been screened at festivals and museums worldwide: Locarno Film Festival, Fondazione Prada, London Film Festival, Sarajevo Film Festival, Viennale, and the 35th Bienal de São Paulo. He is the recipient of major awards from FIDMarseille, Pesaro Film Festival, and Visions du Réel, among others. A full retrospective of his work to date was held at IndieLisboa in 2024. Aljafari has taught at The New School and the German Film and Television Academy Berlin. He has received a fellowship from the Film Study Center-Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. He is currently a fellow at the Institute for Ideas and Imagination, Columbia University (2024–2025) and is developing a fiction film, *Beirut 1931*, set to be shot in Jaffa.

Wednesday 30 April 2025

10:45-12:00 - *On Shielding: Body-Based Studies on Integrity and Protection*, Sandra Noeth & Bojana Cvejić

In their theoretical and artistic work, Bojana Cvejić and Sandra Noeth explore how the body appears simultaneously as a witness, document, and agent in contemporary life. Based on two short inputs that draw on their recent research, they will open a dialogue on how corporeality, as an often-neglected dimension, cuts through ethics, aesthetics, and politics: How can life be weaponized as a transindividual form of dissent when self-destruction also ends the person's despair and suffering? How are we to attend to irreparable acts of self-annihilation that stand in stark contrast to contemporary practices of self-care, vitalist intensity, and self-enhancement? (Bojana Cvejić) How are legal notions of bodily integrity, designed to protect one's own body and the bodies of others from danger and threat, defined by normative notions of the body? Where is the place and recognition of bodies that do not conform to this framework, and how do performance, aesthetics, and imagination come into play? (Sandra Noeth)

Bojana Cvejić is author of several books, notably *Choreographing Problems* (2015) and *Toward a Transindividual Self* (co-written with Ana Vujanović, 2022) and has widely published in journals, edited volumes of essays and artists books on

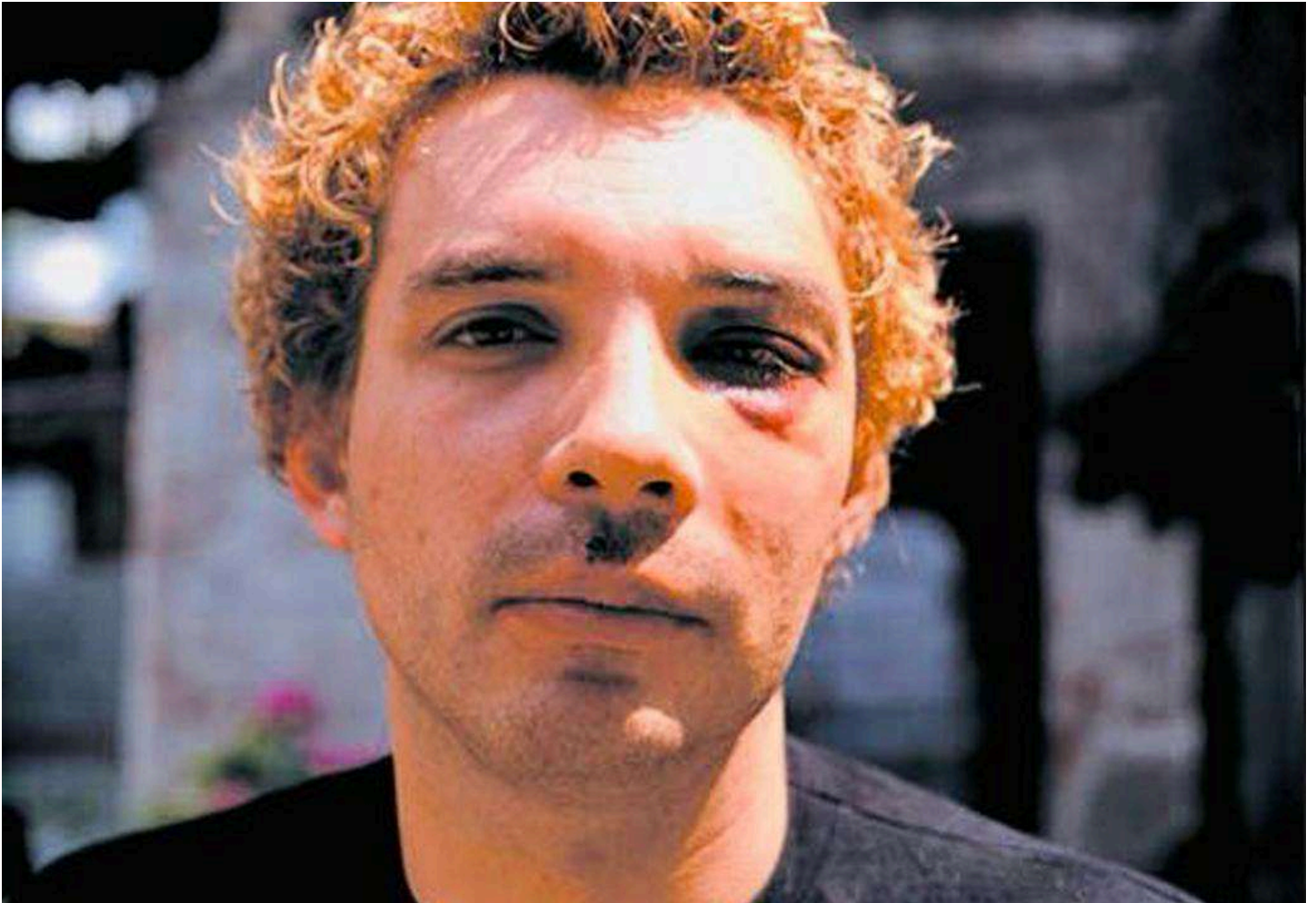
contemporary dance, critical theory, and performance. As a practicing dramaturg, performer or director, she co-created many performances that have extensively toured internationally. Bojana has been active in the self-organization of two collective platforms for experimental artistic production, critical theory, and self-education in Europe and former Yugoslavia (Performing Arts Forum, Saint-Erme since 2005; TkH/Walking Theory 2001-17), which have informed her research in social choreography, transindividuality, and anti-fascist political solidarity. Since 2017, she has been Professor at Oslo National Academy of Arts.

Sandra Noeth is a Professor at Berlin University of the Arts, and a curator and dramaturg. Her work focuses on body-based research in the arts, society, and politics, and often brings together knowledge from different artistic, social, political, and activist fields and disciplines to reflect on current socio-political developments. Her recent projects focused on the role, status, and agency of bodies in bordering processes; the relation between arts, bodies and unequal politics of protection (“Bodies, Un-Protected”, with Mousonturm Frankfurt); the embodiment of violence (“Violence of Inscriptions”, 2015-18, with Arkadi Zaides); the ambivalent status of the body in international humanitarian law. She is the author of *Resilient Bodies, Residual Effects: Borders and Collectivity from Lebanon and Palestine* (transcript Verlag, 2019) as well as a co-editor of *Breathe: Critical Investigations into the Inequalities of Life* (with Janez Janša, 2023) and *Shielding: Body-based Studies on Integrity and Protection* (with Janez Janša and Sandra Umatham, 2024).

12:00-12:45 - PRIDE, Igor Dobričić

In June 2001, during the first Gay Pride in Belgrade, Serbia, I was severely beaten by a group of football hooligans. The circumstances of this violent attack, inflicted on me by pure chance, were fully documented by several local TV stations. More than 20 years later, the video recording of the incident is still circulating through [online channels](#).

In 2008, the Croatian artist Igor Grubić incorporated the publicly available video documentation of the incident into his artwork—a two-channel video installation titled [East Side Story](#). In November 2024, while attending the opening of the exhibition *Dancing, Resisting, (Un)working* at the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art, I came across Grubić’s artwork—only vaguely aware of its existence and completely unaware that his installation occupied a prominent place in the exhibition. What I would like to address in my contribution is the moment when, while strolling through the exhibition, I suddenly stood in front of *East Side Story*, confronted with my own battered body—blown up and in motion—projected across the white museum wall.



Untitled (2001), photo: Phil Collins

**12:45-13:15 - A conversation with Bojana Cvejić, Igor Dobričić, Sandra Noeth,
moderated by Annelies Van Assche**

Annelies Van Assche obtained a joint doctoral degree in Art Studies and Social Sciences in 2018 for studying the working conditions of European contemporary dance artists. She is a postdoctoral researcher at the department of Art History, Musicology, and Theater Studies of Ghent University and lecturer at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp's dance department. Her research focuses on the relation between labor and aesthetics in contemporary dance. She is author of *Labor and Aesthetics in European Contemporary Dance: Dancing Precarity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020) and co-editor of *(Post)Socialist Dance: A Search for Hidden Legacies* (Bloomsbury, 2024). She is a member of the research group S:PAM, CoDa | Cultures of Dance – European Research Network for Dance Studies, and the Young Academy of Flanders.

13:15-14:15 - Break

14:15-15:00 - About Some An·archivic *Reggaetoneras* Resistances and the Process of *¡Dale Duro!*, Emma Gioia

While its pelvic moves refer to other secular and sacred trans-Caribbean dances, *perreo* has accompanied the explosive success of *reggaetón* since the 1990s, spreading across Abya Yala and following the networks of “Latin” migrations and Web 2.0. Despite its global proliferation, this festive dance remains widely delegitimized. My choreographic research aligns with all those who reject both the “historiographic abandonment” (Guarato 2019) and the becoming thing of *perreo*, which, as many other popular dances, was at once massively appropriated and excluded from history. The an·archival resistances I relay aim to transmit stories of pleasurable disobediences and publicize dissident dance archives. During my presentation, I will share some elements of the process of creating the piece *¡Dale Duro! para bailar reggaetón estás donde estás (Give it all ! to dance reggaetón wherever you are)*, in which four friends gather and train to reactivate their flavorful rhythms and embattled transatlantic memories, while inventing, alongside a hybrid audience, a rehearsal-slash-anti-tutorial of *reggaetón*.



Emma Gioia, *¡Dale Duro!* (2023), photo: Jean Hubert

Emma Gioia (1990) holds a PhD in practice-based research from Aix-Marseille University. She is French-Argentinian and currently based in Paris. She graduated

from the School for New Dance Development (SNDO, Amsterdam) and holds a Master's degree in Contemporary History (Sciences Po, Paris). Her work consists of experimental interventions at the intersection of dance, improvisation, activism, and history. She is a member of the performance collective *les joueur-ses*, collaborates regularly with other artists—including choreographer Arkadi Zaides and filmmaker Paul Heintz—and shares dance theories and practices with diverse audiences (Sorbonne Nouvelle, community centers, etc.).

15:00-15:45 - *Choreography as a Practice of Self-Defense*, Carolina Mendonça

Objects that can be used as weapons may not be recognized as such. Here lies the difficulty in the idea of use, which can never be fully anticipated, circumscribed, or prevented. Everything can be used in thousands of ways; any object can become an improvised weapon. Can a weapon become something else?

Studying the relation between choreography and violence, I dive in this talk into the possible relations between gun training as a choreographic practice through a feminist perspective of struggle. I will linger on the figure of the female fighter, who is difficult to place, as someone who recalibrates violence and does not reject it in resistance. A movement that destabilizes the idea of a target.



Carolina Mendonça, *Something is Approaching* (2024) photo: Mathias G. Gutierrez

Carolina Mendonça is interested in the contamination of knowledge and in being vulnerable to different logics. She holds a Master in Choreography and Performance from Giessen University in Germany and graduated in Performing Arts at ECA-USP. Her latest projects are *Zones of Resplendence* (2023), which speculates on feminist perspectives on violence; *Sirens* (2021), which is an attempt to compose a dissonant choir; *Pulp-History as a Warm Wet Place* (2018), which deals with an intuitive archeology digesting the leftovers of the 17th and 18th centuries; and *a useless land* (2018), where together with Catalina Insignares they read through the night while the audience sleeps. Carolina develops practical theoretical research, which she shares in the workshop called “Impossible Practices”. The workshop deals with telepathy, levitation, deep listening, and other expanded perception practices. She also works as a dramaturg with Carolina Bianchi, Marcelo Evelin, Marcela Santander, Dudu Quintanilha, and others.

15:45-16:15 - A conversation between Emma Gioia, Carolina Mendonça, moderated by Martín Zícari

16:30 - 18:00 - *REAS* by Lola Arias

Film, 82 min., Spanish, with English subtitles



Lola Arias, *REAS* (2024), film still

Yoseli has a tattoo of the Eiffel Tower on her back and has always wanted to travel, but she was arrested at the airport for drug trafficking. Nacho is a trans man who was arrested for swindling and started a rock band in jail. Gentle or rough, blonde or shaved, cis or trans, long-term inmates or newly admitted: in this hybrid musical, they all re-enact their lives in a Buenos Aires prison.

REAS is a collective work that reinvents the musical genre: the performers dance and sing about their past in prison, relive their life as fiction, and invent, through fantasy and imagination, a possible future for themselves.

Lola Arias is a writer, theatre and film director, and performer. Her work spans theatre, literature, music, film, and art, often engaging with collaborators coming from diverse backgrounds and geopolitical contexts. Since 2007, she has focused on documentary theatre, addressing the intersection of individual stories and historical events. Notable works include *Mi vida después* (2009), examining the legacy of Argentina's dictatorship through performers reenacting their parents' youth, and *The Year I Was Born* (2012), based on accounts of life under Pinochet. Her productions, such as *Minefield* (2016), uniting British and Argentine Falklands War veterans, and *What They Want to Hear* (2016), a reconstruction of a Syrian refugee's bureaucratic struggles, explore themes of identity, memory, and political history. Arias' film *Theatre of War* (2018) extends her theatrical inquiry into cinema. Her works have been presented internationally in prominent festivals, theatres, and museums.

Production Assistant: Emma Meerschaert

Emma Meerschaert is a doctoral researcher at KU Leuven, working on the project "Diffracting the Choreographer: Shaping the Choreographer Position in 21st Century European Dance", under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Anneleen Masschelein and Dr. Jonas Rutgeerts. She holds a Master's degree in Theatre Studies from Ghent University and completed its post-academic program in Art and Cultural Criticism. She has provided artistic assistance to choreographer and dancer Femke Gyselinck, a role that deepened her understanding of and admiration for creation processes in contemporary dance.