

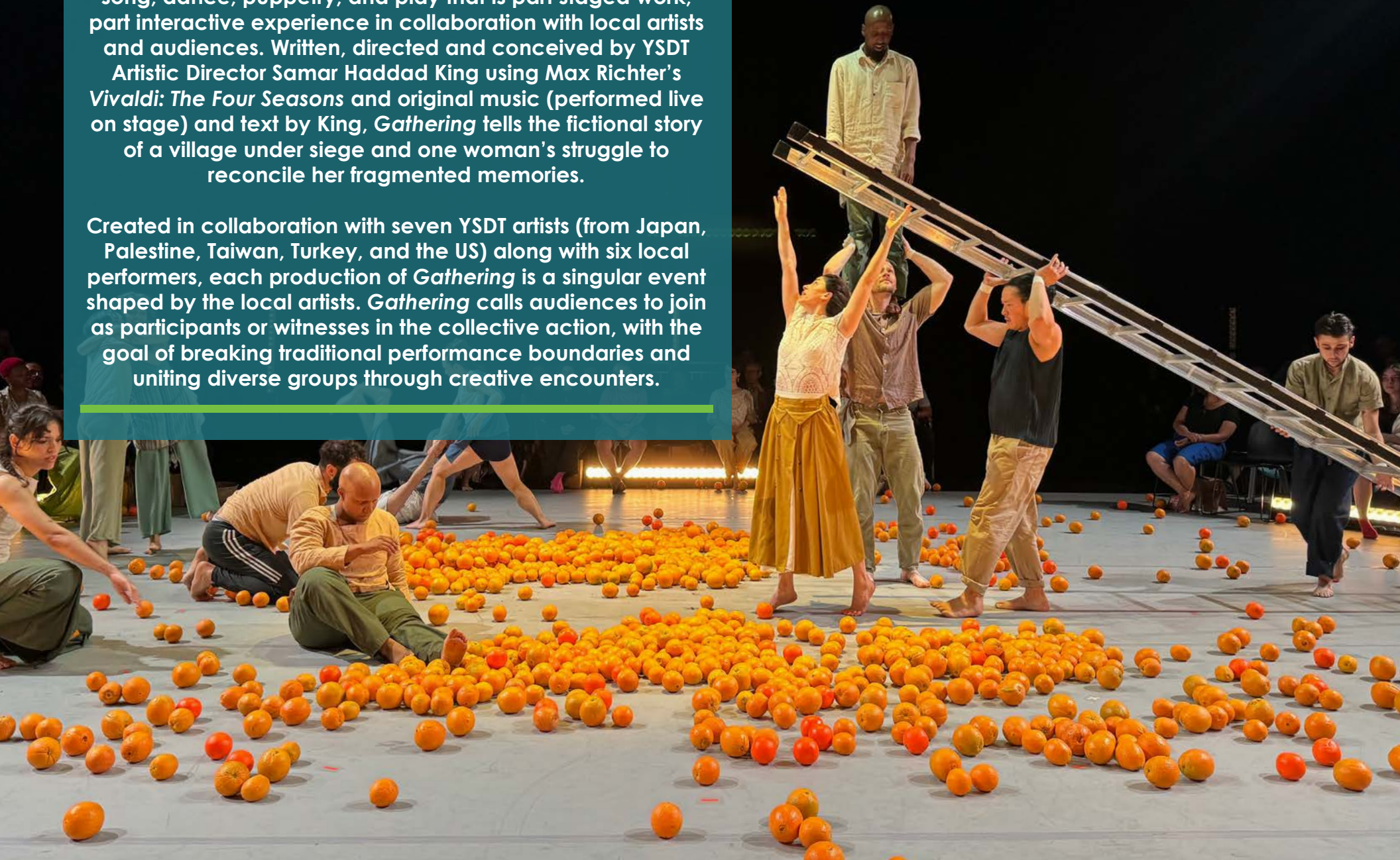
GATHERING

 Yaa Samar!
DANCE THEATRE



Gathering is a full-length performance of movement, text, song, dance, puppetry, and play that is part staged work, part interactive experience in collaboration with local artists and audiences. Written, directed and conceived by YSDT Artistic Director Samar Haddad King using Max Richter's *Vivaldi: The Four Seasons* and original music (performed live on stage) and text by King, *Gathering* tells the fictional story of a village under siege and one woman's struggle to reconcile her fragmented memories.

Created in collaboration with seven YSDT artists (from Japan, Palestine, Taiwan, Turkey, and the US) along with six local performers, each production of *Gathering* is a singular event shaped by the local artists. *Gathering* calls audiences to join as participants or witnesses in the collective action, with the goal of breaking traditional performance boundaries and uniting diverse groups through creative encounters.



Samar Haddad King (Creator/Writer/Director), is a writer, choreographer, director, composer, and Artistic/Founding Director of Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSDT). A graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA program (NYC), King's work has been performed in 20 countries on 4 continents, with commissions throughout the US and abroad including The Shed (NYC); Hubbard Street 2 (Chicago); Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival (Ramallah); The Walk with Little Amal: Good Chance Theatre (Marseille) and St. Ann's Warehouse/The Walk Productions (NYC); /si:n/ Festival (Ramallah), among others. Awards/Fellowships include: 2023/24 Creative Capital Wild Futures Award, Prix des Jeunes Créateurs Palestiniens pour la Diversité des Expressions Artistiques (Palest'In & Out Festival, Paris); La Fabrique Chaillot Residency (Chaillot - théâtre national de la Danse, Paris); The Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU and Toulmin Creator (CBA/ National Sawdust, NYC). Theater and musical theater credits include *Dead Are My People* (Noor Theatre, NYC), *Hoota* (Sard Theatre, Haifa) and *We Live in Cairo* (American Repertory Theater, Boston).



“ Samar Haddad King's premiere at the Shed tells a layered story of trauma, dislocation and resilience. ”

— CANDICE THOMPSON
THE NEW YORK TIMES



“ A deeply moving and powerful work of art that explores themes of love, loss, dignity, the sanctity for human life and connection. ”

— ALEX POOTS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE SHED



A Palestinian American Choreographer's Intimate, Epic 'Gathering'

Samar Haddad King's premiere at the Shed tells a layered story of trauma, dislocation and resilience.



5 Things to Do This Weekend



Danielle Dowling
Reporting on the arts

Dance



"Palestinians know how to gather — in celebration, in mourning, in harvest. This piece started as a homage to that," says Samar Haddad King, the choreographer of "Gathering." The piece, which tells the fictional story of an unnamed village under siege, is at the Shed in Manhattan through

NYT ARTS LISTINGS

Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

By Candice Thompson • June 19, 2024, 5:00 a.m. ET

For the Palestinian American choreographer Samar Haddad King, the orange is more than a prop in her latest show. It's an entry point into her culture. "It's one of the few fruits that you can divide into individual components without using a knife," King said, noting that oranges are symbols of livelihood and sustenance to many Palestinians. Each slice "is perfectly formed with its own casing and borders, and yet, it's just a piece of the whole."

In "Gathering: New York City," hundreds of oranges spill across the floor. The performers toss the oranges in athletic dance phrases and stack them ceremoniously on each other's prone bodies. Audience members are drawn into the play, rolling errant oranges toward the middle of the room.

"Gathering," which has its world premiere on Thursday at the Shed as part of its Open Call series, tells the fictional story of an unnamed village under siege and one woman's struggle to reconcile her fragmented memories. Though the work had been in development since before the pandemic, the Israel-Hamas war, which has gone on for several months, is now part of its subtext, lending increased resonance to its themes of trauma and dislocation — and bringing people together. [**READ THE FULL FEATURE HERE.**](#)

Gathering: New York City premiered June 20-22, 2024 at
The Shed as part of the Open Call Series

ARTISTIC TEAM

Creator, Writer & Director by - Samar Haddad King
Assistant Director - Stephanie Sutherland
Dramaturg - Enrico D Wey
Rehearsal Director & Producer - Zoe Rabinowitz
Lighting Designer - Muaz Aljubeh
Costume & Prop Designer - Nancy Mkaabal

TOURING INFORMATION

Cast: 7

Local Performers: 5-7

Touring Company: 13

Duration of work: 80 minutes (no intermission)

ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS*

*available upon request

One-day creative process workshop

with local artists + showing

Multi-day creative process workshop

with local artists + performance

Gathering events with local theater staff + community

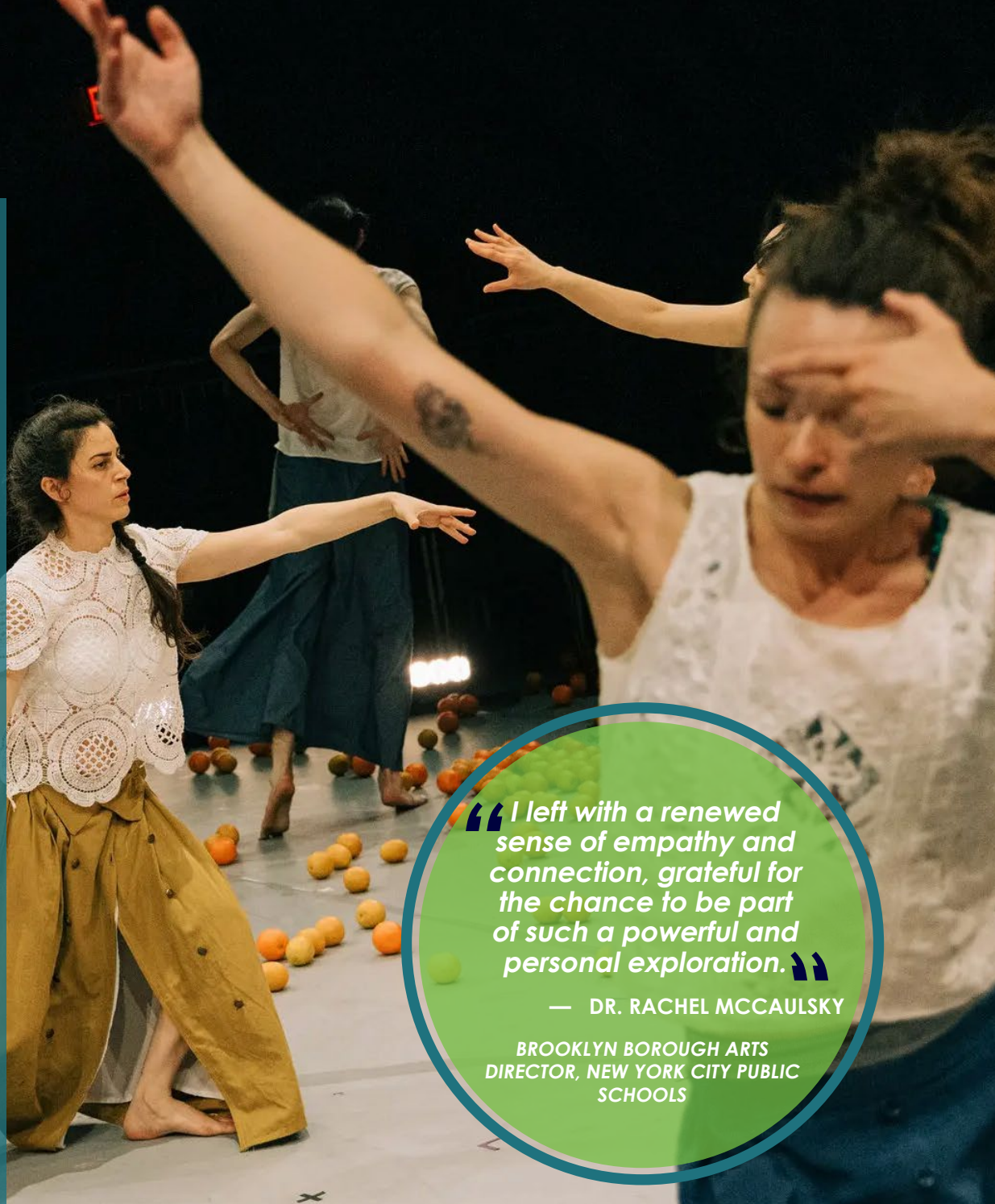
VIDEOS & IMAGES *available upon request

🔗 Trailer

Full length*

🔗 Additional images

🔗 Educational Module Trailer



“ I left with a renewed sense of empathy and connection, grateful for the chance to be part of such a powerful and personal exploration. ”

— DR. RACHEL MCCAULSKY

BROOKLYN BOROUGH ARTS
DIRECTOR, NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

TOURING CAST:



YUKARI OSAKA

FORMATION: BALLET,
CONTEMPORARY DANCE
PERFORMING WITH YSDT SINCE: 2005
(FOUNDING COMPANY MEMBER)
LANGUAGES: JAPANESE, ENGLISH
FROM: JAPAN



ARZU SALMAN

FORMATION: BALLET,
CONTEMPORARY DANCE
PERFORMING WITH YSDT SINCE: 2019
LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, TURKISH
FROM: TURKEY



MOHAMMED SMAHNEH (BARGES)

FORMATION: DABKE, HIP-HOP,
CONTEMPORARY DANCE
PERFORMING WITH YSDT SINCE: 2013
LANGUAGES: ARABIC, ENGLISH
FROM: PALESTINE



ZOE RABINOWITZ

FORMATION: BALLET, CONTEMPORARY,
WEST AFRICAN DANCE
PERFORMING WITH YSDT SINCE: 2005
(FOUNDING COMPANY MEMBER)
LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, FRENCH
FROM: USA



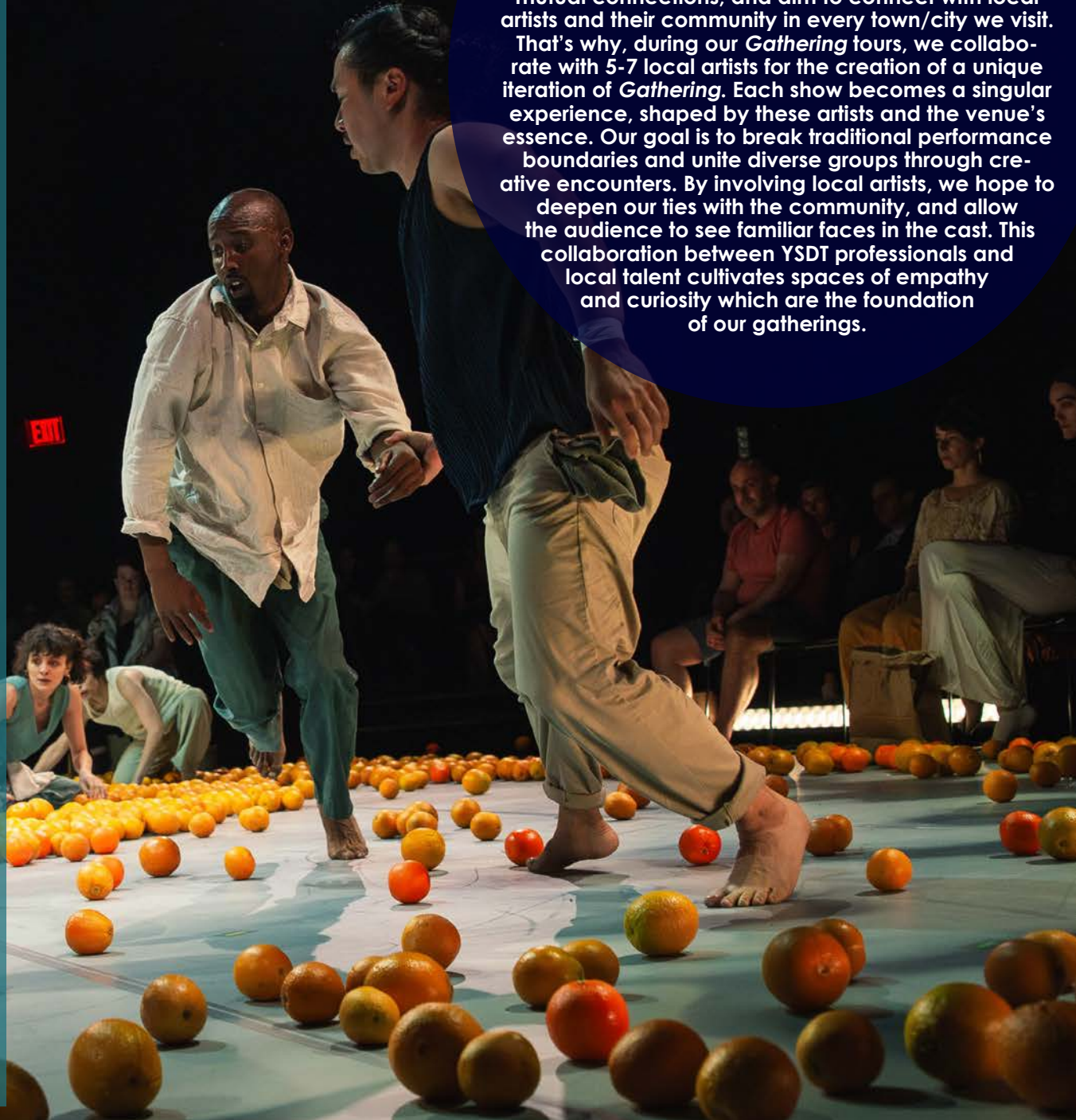
SAMAA WAKIM

FORMATION: ACTING,
CONTEMPORARY DANCE
PERFORMING WITH YSDT SINCE: 2014
LANGUAGES: ARABIC, ENGLISH, HEBREW
FROM: PALESTINE



ENRICO DAU YANG WEY

FORMATION: LITERATURE, IMPROVISATION,
PUPPETRY
LANGUAGES: MANDARIN, ENGLISH,
GERMAN, SPANISH
FROM: TAIWAN



We believe in the power of building trust through mutual connections, and aim to connect with local artists and their community in every town/city we visit. That's why, during our *Gathering* tours, we collaborate with 5-7 local artists for the creation of a unique iteration of *Gathering*. Each show becomes a singular experience, shaped by these artists and the venue's essence. Our goal is to break traditional performance boundaries and unite diverse groups through creative encounters. By involving local artists, we hope to deepen our ties with the community, and allow the audience to see familiar faces in the cast. This collaboration between YSDT professionals and local talent cultivates spaces of empathy and curiosity which are the foundation of our gatherings.

Gathering is produced by Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre

This project follows early development workshops at Center for Ballet and the Arts (NYC, 2020) and Freedom Theatre (Palestine, 2021). *Gathering: New York City* premiered in summer 2024 as part of The Shed Open Call.

About

US

Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSDT) creates invigorating performance and education programs that expand access to - and promote understanding through - the arts. Founded in 2005 in New York City, YSDT has a repertoire of 30+ original works performed across NYC at venues such as Downtown Dance Festival, Gibney, Harlem Stage, Joyce SoHo, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Queens Museum and more; regionally; and abroad in 19 countries across four continents, including festivals such as Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival (Egypt), Nuit Blanche (Belgium), Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival (Palestine), SIDance (South Korea), Spring Festival (Tunisia), Theater der Welt, Theaterformen (Germany) and Theater Spektakel (Switzerland). Since 2011, the company has worked transnationally between NYC and Palestine, and is committed to uniting diverse artists and audiences in the creative process, rooted in the belief that art should be liberating, transformative, and accessible to all. For more information, visit: www.ysdt.org.

SUPPORTED

BY

Gathering: New York City was commissioned by The Shed (2023-24 Open Call Series) and created with the support of a 2022-23 CUNY Dance Initiative Residency at Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden and a 2023 Residency at Dance Place in Washington D.C.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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THANK YOU



Produced by Devi Penny; Marketing Manager

Photos © Heather Cromartie, Sarah Dhobhany, Jeenah Moon, Michelle Mor, Devi Penny

