



# GATHERING

 Yaa Samar!  
DANCE THEATRE





Conceived, written, and directed by Samar Haddad King (Artistic Director, Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre), *Gathering* is a full length work that 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, *Gathering* is part staged work, part interactive experience in collaboration with local artists and audiences. With the goal of breaking traditional performance boundaries and uniting diverse groups through creative encounters, *Gathering* invites audiences to join as participants or witnesses in the collective action.

Featuring original movement, text, song, dance, puppetry, and play, *Gathering* includes music from Max Richter's *Vivaldi: The Four Seasons* and original compositions by King.





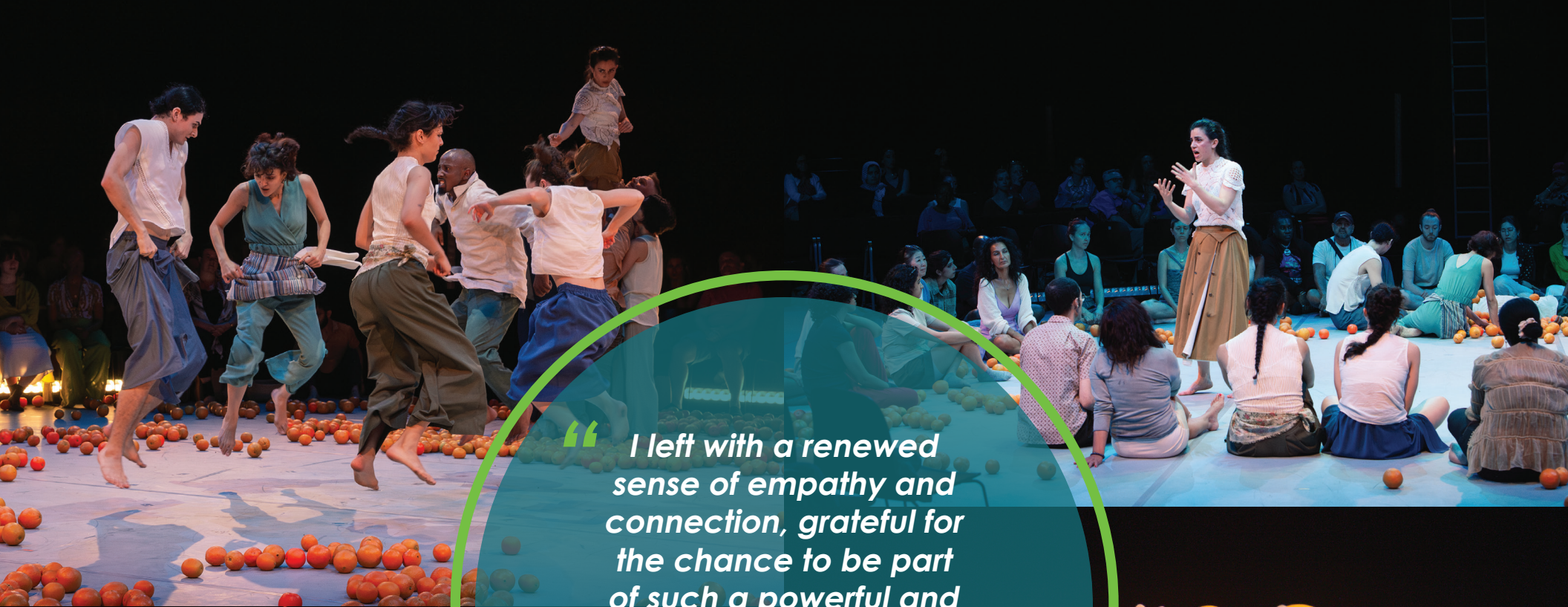
Samar Haddad King (Creator/Writer/Director), is a writer, choreographer, director, composer, and Artistic/Founding Director of Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSDT). A graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA program (NYC), King's work has been performed in 21 countries on 5 continents, with commissions throughout 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. ”

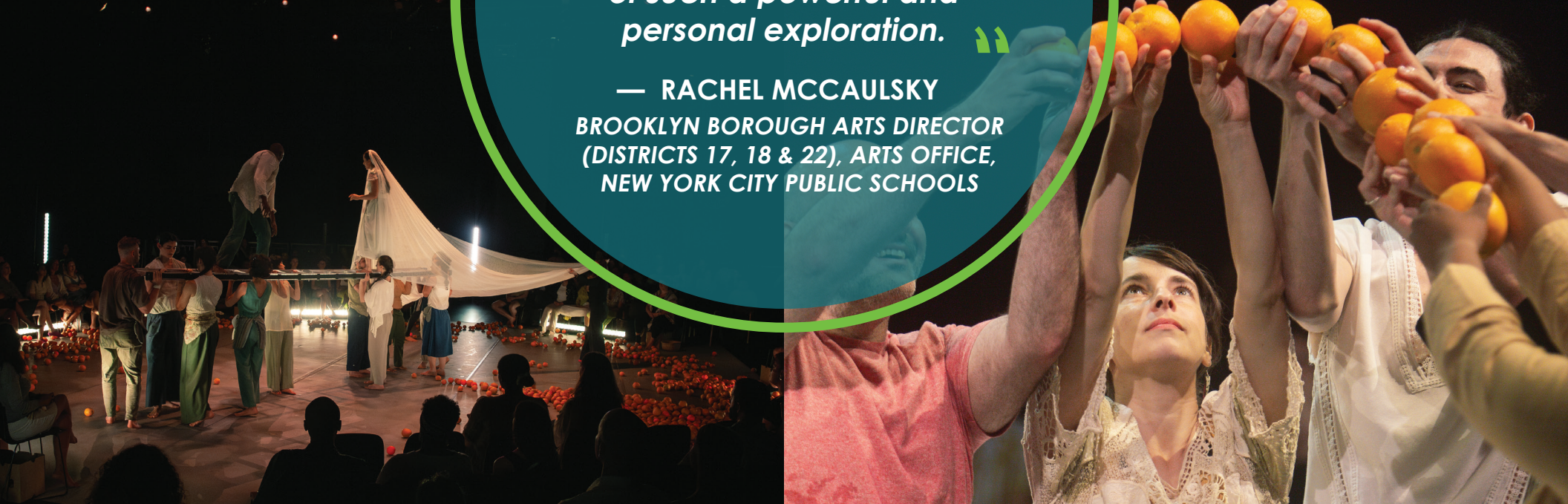
— CANDICE THOMPSON  
THE NEW YORK TIMES





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

— RACHEL MCCAULSKY  
BROOKLYN BOROUGH ARTS DIRECTOR  
(DISTRICTS 17, 18 & 22), ARTS OFFICE,  
NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS







# 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.\*\*](#)



### 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)

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

🔗 [Technical Rider](#)

### 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](#)



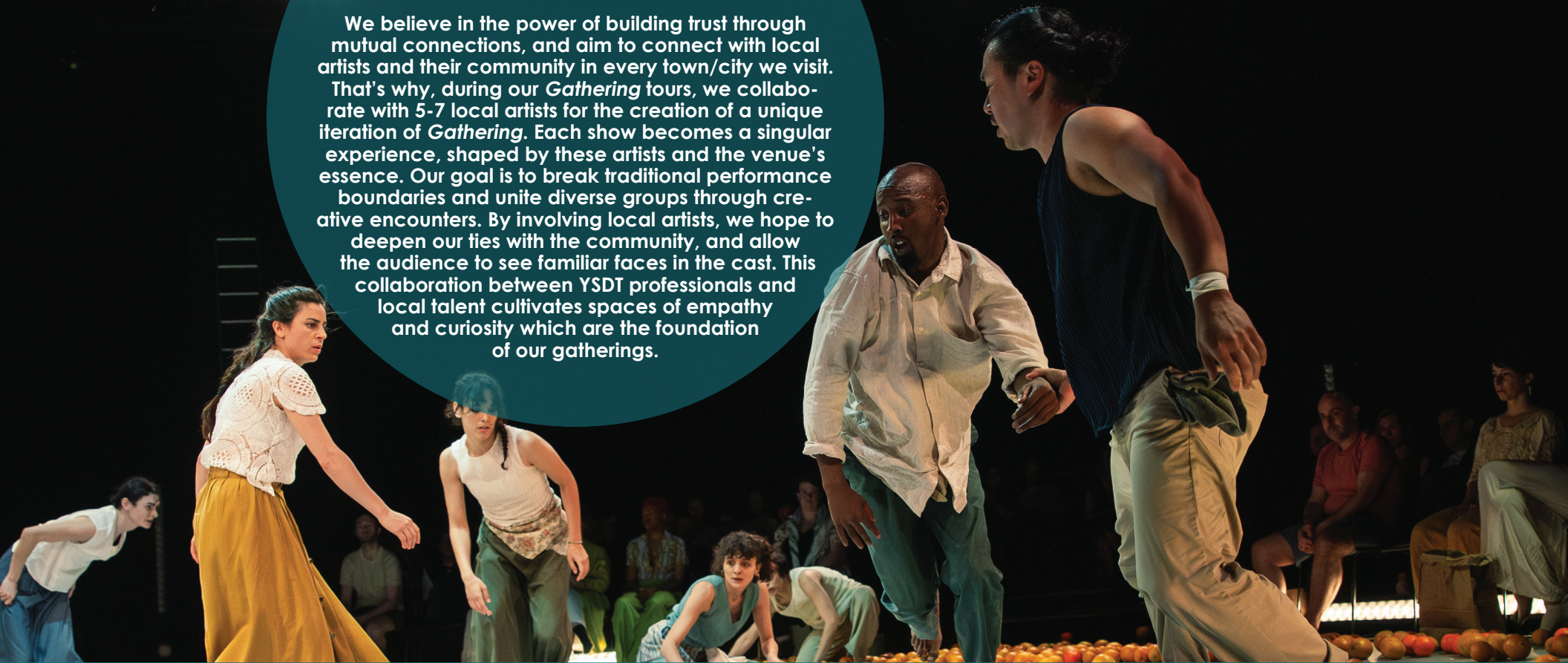
“powerful and  
immersive”

— MELISSA WEST

DIRECTOR & SENIOR CURATOR,  
NEWHOUSE CENTER FOR  
CONTEMPORARY ART, SNUG  
HARBOR CULTURAL CENTER &  
BOTANICAL GARDEN



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.



**MOHAMMED SMAHNEH  
(BARGES) (HE/HIM)**

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



**SAMAA WAKIM  
(SHE/HER)**

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



**ASH WINKFIELD  
(XE/XEM/XYR)**

FORMATION: PUPPETRY,  
THEATER, SINGING  
PERFORMING WITH YSDT  
SINCE: 2024  
LANGUAGES: ENGLISH  
FROM: USA



**ARZU SALMAN  
(HE/HIM)**

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



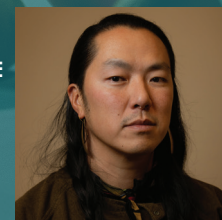
**ZOE RABINOWITZ  
(SHE/HER)**

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



**YUKARI OSAKA  
(SHE/HER)**

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



**ENRICO DAU YANG WEY  
(HE/THEY)**

FORMATION: LITERATURE,  
IMPROVISATION, PUPPETRY  
PERFORMING WITH YSDT  
SINCE: 2024  
LANGUAGES: MANDARIN,  
ENGLISH,  
GERMAN, SPANISH  
FROM: TAIWAN



*Gathering* is produced by Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre

### 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 20 countries across five 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](http://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., following early development workshops at Center for Ballet and the Arts (NYC, 2020) and Freedom Theatre (Palestine, 2021).

This work was made possible with support from the British Council, Center for Arab American Philanthropy, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, Howard Gilman Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, New Music USA, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, and The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Zoe Rabinowitz - Executive Director  
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Claire Béjanin - Au Contraire Productions  
(Australia/Europe/UK Bookings)  
claire@aucontraireproductions.org

# THANK YOU

Produced by Devi Penny

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

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