



BABEL (WORDS)

EASTMAN | BELGIUM

SIDI LARBI CHERKAoui & DAMIEN JALET



THURSDAY 21 MARCH — SATURDAY 23 MARCH
THE CIVIC

POST-SHOW TALK
THURSDAY 21 MARCH

AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

FREE PROGRAMME

BABEL (words)

SIDI LARBI CHERKAOUI & DAMIEN JALET / EASTMAN

THE CIVIC THEATRE

Choreography: Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Damien Jalet

Visual design: Antony Gormley

Assistant choreographer: Nienke Reehorst

Costume design: Alexandra Gilbert

Light design: Adam Carrée

Dramaturge: Lou Cope

Performed by Navala Chaudhari, Darryl E. Woods, Damien Fournier, Ben Fury, Valgerdur Rúnarsdóttir (*Paea Leach), Christine Leboutte, Majon van der Schot (*Ulrika Kinn Svensson), Kazutomi Kozuki, Sandra Delgadillo Porcel (*Moya Michael), Helder Seabra, Jon Filip Fahlstrøm, James O'Hara, Damien Jalet (*Francis Ducharme)

cast members not performing in Auckland

Traditional Turkish musical counsellor: Fahrettin Yarkin

Dresser: Elisabeth Kinn Svensson

Technicians: Mathias Batsleer, Jens Drieghe, Patrick Liénart, Bart Van Hoydonck

Tour Manager: Esther Michiels

Production : Eastman vzw and Theatre Royal de la Monnaie

Coproducers : Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Etablissement Public du Parc et de la Grande Halle de la Villette (Paris), Sadler's Wells (London), Theaterfestival Boulevard ('s Hertogenbosch), Festspielhaus (Sankt-Pölten), Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg, International Dance festival Switzerland - Migros Culture Percentage, Fondazione Musica per Roma (Rome) and the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele (Allemagne).

Babel (words) is co-commissioned by Dash Arts 2010 programme on Arabic Arts and is supported by Garrick Charitable Trust.

Eastman vzw is company in residence at deSingel International Art Campus (Antwerp) and is supported by the Flemish authorities, La Fondation BNP-Paribas and Asano Taiko.

Eastman is European Cultural Ambassador 2013.

CORE FUNDERS



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COLENSOBBDO



MUSIC PERFORMED IN BABEL

The Line: 3' Shogo Yoshii

Hit the Wall: 4' Gabriele Miracle

Pleur: 2' Christine Leboutte

Durme Querido: traditional 4' elaborazione Patrizia Bovi

Architecture: 7' Patrizia Bovi

Chinese Pizza – running structures: 3' Gabriele Miracle

Running Structures Aja sajani: '4 Mahabub Khan-Sattar Khan

Popule Meo: trad. elaborazione Christine Leboutte

Irme quiero (Ulrika's solo): trad.sefardic source Berta Aguado

Queen jig: 1' Patrizia Bovi

Us: Jig 1 ' Patrizia Bovi

Quasi cedrus: trad. Ceriana

Duo Damien Nikku: Sattar Khan - Mahabub Khan

Alone: 3' Patrizia Bovi

The Call: 1' Mahabub Khan

Zhikr: 6' Gabriele Miracle

Connecting feets/Toyoma: 4' Shogo Yoshii

The music is performed by Patrizia Bovi, Gabriele Miracle,
Mahabub Khan, Sattar Khan, Kazunari Abe.

Duration 1hr 40mins

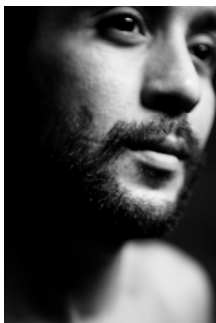
With thanks to : Asano Taiko, Marek Pomocki, Seniz Karaman, Raad van Bestuur Eastman, De Munt, Lise Uytterhoeven, Assaf Hochman, Casey Spooner, Alistair Wilson (Push 4), Antony Gormley studios, Juliette Van Peteghem, Milan 'Mino' Herich, Sven Bahat, Hisashi Itoh, Kodo Ensemble (Melanie Taylor), Rakesh Mps, Karthika Nair, Frederik Verrote

COVER PHOTO AND HEADSHOTS BY: Koen Broos

MAJOR GRANTS



BEN FURY



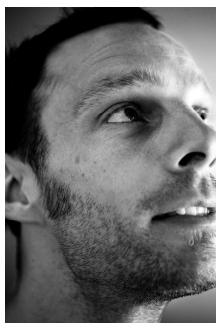
PATRIZIA BOVI



CHRISTINE LEBOUTTE



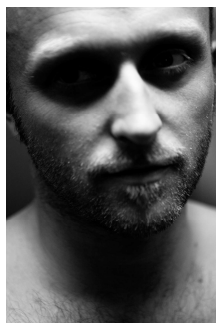
DAMIEN FOURNIER



SANDRA DELGADILLO



DAMIEN JALET



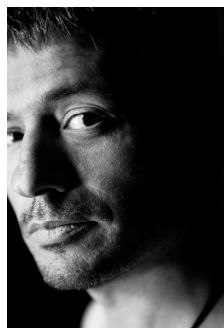
DARRYL WOODS



SATTAR KHAN



GABRIELE MIRACLE



HELDER SEABRA



VALGERÐUR RÚNARSDÓTTIR



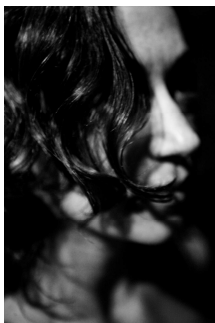
KAZUNARI ABE



KAZUTOMI KOZUKI



NAVALA CHAUDHARI



MAHABUB KHAN



JOHN FILIP FAHLSTRØM



MAJON VAN DER SCHOT



JAMES O'HARA



BABEL (words)

The story takes as its starting point the specific moment in the tale of the Tower of Babel when God punishes those who built a tower in his name, causing chaos by splintering them into different languages, cultures and lands.

That is to say that on Day 1 of rehearsal, a microcosm of 18 performers from 13 countries, with 15 languages, 7 religious backgrounds and numerous performance modes between them, joined choreographers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Damien Jalet, as well as visual artist Antony Gormley, to embark upon a new journey.

And it was in the swirling maelstrom of identity, nationhood, and culture that they found their inspiration. Where language is both verbal and physical, where it unites and divides, makes communication both possible and impossible, and is loaded with meaning at the same time as being profoundly meaningless.

Both in process and production, what grew was a city of multiplicity, a network of possibilities, where Gormley's huge 3-dimensional frames are raised, knocked down and transformed, as if made of nothing but our thoughts. Space is dissected and appropriated, creating territories, axes and borders that hint at the often random but sometimes deadly geo-political divisions of land, as well as evoking the boundaries and limitations we impose on ourselves and each other. But, of course, by also offering shelter and relief in a landscape of chaos and complexity, structures enable tender, private and intimate moments, without which none of us could survive.

The city is not dissimilar to the landscape French philosopher Michel de Certeau strolls through in his work 'The Practice Of Everyday Life', where wanderers wander blindly, taking decisions by the millisecond, knowing not what they do, nor why they do it, what it means or where it will lead. People stumble into choices of belief, community and identity that as well as giving support - close doors, build boundaries and set limits.

And of course they build ivory towers, not just as a demonstration of status and wealth, but also in search of some kind of higher knowledge and enlightenment. The aerial view of, and distance from, those silent patterns far down below bring feelings of comfort, control and order, because as the old sign at the top of the World Trade Centre once read - 'it's hard to be down when you're up'!

Indeed Cherkaoui and Jalet's journey was informed by their own profound 'belief in the belief that something matters' and their joint search for what that something might be. During the process the show revealed to its makers that what they were doing was turning the Tower of Babel upside down: what mattered was not the external multiplicity of our (regional, spiritual, linguistic, physical...) differences, but the underlying bond of what unites rather than

divides us, and therefore the responsibilities we all share.

Thus just as the piece spirals towards some kind of omega point, we see a peeling away of the artificial boundaries, structures, definitions and technologies we seek to impose on our geographical, virtual, political or spiritual worlds. We are left with something more primitive, transcendent and unified. We are left with each other. Chained together, as neuro-scientist VS Ramachandran's words tell us in the performance, entirely and literally by our neurons and separated only by our skin.

Lou Cope April 2010

ABOUT THE CREATORS

ANTONY GORMLEY

In a career spanning nearly 40 years, Antony Gormley has made sculpture that explores the relation of the human body to space at large, explicitly in large-scale installations like ANOTHER PLACE, DOMAIN FIELD and INSIDE AUSTRALIA and implicitly in works such as CLEARING, BREATHING ROOM and BLIND LIGHT, where the work becomes a frame through which the viewer becomes the viewed. By using his own existence as a test ground, Gormley's work transforms a site of subjective experience into one of collective projection. Increasingly, the artist has taken his practice beyond the gallery, engaging the public in active participation, as in CLAY AND THE COLLECTIVE BODY (Helsinki) and the acclaimed ONE & OTHER commission in London's Trafalgar Square.

SIDI LARBI CHERKAOUI

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's debut as a choreographer was in 1999 with Andrew Wale's 'contemporary musical', Anonymous Society. Since then he has made more than 20 full-fledged choreographic pieces and picked up a slew of awards, including the Laurence Olivier (with close associate Damien Jalet, for Babel (words), 2010), two Ballet Tanz awards for best choreographer (2008, 2011) and the Kairos Prize (2009) for his artistic vision and his quest for intercultural dialogue.

DAMIEN JALET

Damien Jalet is a French and Belgian choreographer and performer. Since 2000 he's been working as the closest and most regular collaborator of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, within Les ballets C. de la B., Toneelhuis and Eastman vzw (he danced in *Rien de Rien, Foi, Tempus Fugit, Myth* and recently *TeZuka*). In February 2013 he created *Les Médusés*, a choreographic journey through the Louvre museum in Paris. In May he'll premiere with *Boléro*, co-signed with Cherkaoui and performance artist Marina Abramovic at the Ballet de l'Opéra de Paris.

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Co-commissioned by Dash Arts 2010 programme on Arabic Arts
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More information and webshop: www.east-man.be