

ISRAEL / DANCE
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



WE LOVE ARABS

Israel has long been a leader of contemporary dance, with Batsheva Dance Company at its epicenter. This October, Batsheva's Rehearsal Director, **Hillel Kogan** will bring his award-winning duet **We Love Arabs** to the Melbourne Festival stage.

We Love Arabs is the political and satirical story of a Jewish choreographer who enlists an Arab dancer to help create a work to overcome stereotypes and fears, diving headlong into the toughest of questions: how can we co-exist within conflict?

An extreme adventure into choreographic hilarity, **Hillel Kogan** and dance partner **Adi Boutrous** combine spoken text with intense physicality, laced with humour and emotion. One will have a Star of David scrawled on his shirt, the other will have a red crescent moon on his forehead. One likes hummus, the other pita bread.

In a smart send up of choreographic clichés and ethnic prejudices, Kogan on stage assumes a role of choreographer in the midst of preparation of a new dance piece. He shares his thoughts with the audience during the process and lets his body search for honest and politically correct ways to explain why he needs an Arab partner for the theme of the new piece – co existence.

Skewering choreographic fads and unconscious

politics, good intentions and bad faith, **We Love Arabs** is at once a precise and ambitious work of physical performance and a joyous, irreverently comic dismantling of real world politics.

Hillel Kogan studied at the Bat Dor school of dance in Tel Aviv and the Merce Cunningham Trust in New York. He is also a dancer and director at Israel's famous Batsheva Ensemble of modern dance, and has collaborated with some of Israel's most famous contemporary choreographers as well as with Switzerland's Nomades ensemble and Portugal's Gulbenkian Ballet. In 2013, he was awarded Distinguished Creator by the Circle of Israeli Dance Critics for **We Love Arabs** and in 2015, named artistic director of the Israeli Dance Festival.

Adi Boutrous dances with Israeli choreographers such as Iris Erez, Dana Ruttenberg, Shlomi Twizer, Edmond Rousseau, Bosmat Nussan and others. He is also creating for various events in the Israeli independent dance scene. In 2013 he won the young choreographer's first prize at "Shades in Dance" competition, in Tel Aviv.

"This cohesive piece is by far the most brilliant choreographic adventure I have seen in years!"
Jerusalem Post

"Hillel Kogan has created that rarest of birds: a politically charged piece which is subtle, clever, thoughtful, humorous and pithy, a piece that is relevant and relatable." - Critical Dance

The Coopers Malthouse, Beckett Theatre

Wed 18 – Sun 22 Oct

Wed & Fri 8.30pm

Thu 6.30pm

Sat 1pm & 3pm

Sun 5pm

55 mins, no interval

\$59 / 49

Under 30s \$30

www.melbourne.festival

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