



AFTER THE LAST RED SKY



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After the Last Red Sky is a dance performance and ritual gathering to hold the weight of—and imagine healing for—the Palestinian sky. A sky where violence hovers and falls on Palestinian bodies. A sky carrying a folk belief of a whale eating the lunar-eclipsing moon. A blood-red sky. In this work we ask what it means to dig down into the rubble of decades of attacks on Palestinian Aliveness to re-member our sky. To move through grief and rage together in community, so we don't collapse under its weight.

This new work by Body Watani Dance project is created by a trio of Palestinian dancers and musicians: Leila Awadallah, Noelle Awadallah, and Tarek Abdelqadar. They engage in an evening-length embodied scream at the sky that demands change from below it; calling on community to gather; falling through a work that is transforming and warping traditions of Arabic dances and music into sorrowful, joyful, rageful reclamations of life.

We dedicate this work to GAZA, to the unimaginable loss of Palestinian life in this ongoing genocide carried out by the Israeli state, funded by the United States. This work is for our local and global community that stands in solidarity with ongoing and forever commitment to:

PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE, LIBERATION, ALIVENESS.





photo by Pat Berrett



Body Watani Dance project is a space to research, investigate and create performances from an embodied relation with 'watan' or *homeland* inside our bodies. Our work is held by two Palestinian sisters, Leila and Noelle Awadallah; daughters of a Palestinian refugee lineage, born on a stolen land called Turtle Island. We center Palestine in our lives and artistry. It is our compass, and point of entry into relations with peoples and lands. The knowledge we cultivate flows from ancestral digs, present realities, and future visions of liberation that carry our dancing bodies across terrains of grief, rage, sumud, and love for Palestinian Aliveness.



Body Watani names a body-as-homeland research practice we develop and share with communities. It investigates how we find dance that is rooted in Arab and SWANA* movement languages within experimental, somatic, and contemporary contexts. Our work is not only about sharing stories and celebrating culture, rather we engage directly in politics of the region, the specificity of injustice and the implications on our bodies and lands with all who we encounter. At the same time, it is a space to gather to investigate ones' unique body-watani through ones' own research and questions. As we meet within this space from very different trajectories of life and pathways across the earth. We ask how to do that kind of personal work while simultaneously in collective community.

Dancing activates our cells, bones, blood and matter. Our ideas at Body Watani are not new, but engage teachings of Black, Indigenous, brown scholars, activists, artists and teachers whom we carry and contemplate. We see the ways ancestral work heals deep wounds and calls us to confront the complexity of where we come from, and where we are now, as important for all people. Body Watani is a defined, yet unknown vessel where we develop and share how we use dance as a pathway to physicalize decolonizing our bodies from the inside out. We see the core of decolonial work as an endless dive into the material body, and as tangible resistance — not an abstract academic thought.

**SWANA: South West Asia North Africa; a phrase that reorients a broad region of shared & different cultural connections / replacing the euro-colonial name: 'Middle East'.*



community offerings



CONJURED INTERRUPTION

COMMUNITY PERFORMANCE

After the Last Red Sky includes a section of Dabke social dance, folk stories and a future folk song inside the performance. Palestinian / Arab, BIPOC, and/or dancers in solidarity with Palestinian resistance and liberation are invited onstage in a 'conjured interruption'. This community section of the performance is learned through a shared meal, and minimal rehearsals, depending on resources, time, and relationships. Participants are stationed in the audience throughout the show, and abruptly enter into the work. Flooding onstage, greeting each other like old friends, leading to a Dabke dance that conjures visions of return and liberation.



EMBODY PALESTINE

WORKSHOPS

is a workshop that explores questions around how moving our bodies and dancing together can become a ritual of communal reflection around our relationships to Palestine. Using improvised movement and Dabke as a folk form of resistance and communal celebration, we explore strategies embodiment that bring us closer to Palestine, both the distant land and the one within (all of) us. In the spirit of the protest, and the poem.

The workshop is created for people who have been, and continue activating their solidarity with Palestine at the level of the body while in collective, artistic space. No dance experience necessary.



BODY WATANI

CREATIVE PRACTICE

a body-as-homeland research practice that began and continues to evolve from a Palestinian diasporic lens. Where we research Arab and SWANA rooted movement in experimental, somatic, political, and contemporary contexts and examine personally / collectively our relationship to the notion of homeland through improvisation.

This practice is most resonant for professional dancers, University students, people with a regular physical movement practice, and/or interdisciplinary performers.



GRIEF & RAGE CIRCLE FOR PALESTINE

SOMATIC / ACTIVATED GATHERINGS

a space we hold for somatic grappling around bearing witness to genocide, and processing at the level of the body. Within the space we practice conjuring collective visions of liberation, strategies of action and fall of empire. *An offering created/held in collaboration with Aziz Bisanz, Anniessa Antar, Erica Jo Vibar Sherwood*



photo by Pat Berrett

tours & residencies

KESHET CENTER FOR THE ARTS

with support from National Center for Choreography (NCCAkron)

Albuquerque, New Mexico

October 2024

DAR JACIR ART & RESEARCH

Bethlehem, Palestine

May/June 2025

UPRISING THEATER

Chicago, Illinois

Fall 2025

ARAB AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

Dearborn, Michigan

Spring 2026

We are available for adding additional touring in 2025 and 2026.

Email us: bodywatani@gmail.com



photo by Sabrina Jasmin



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