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A Podcast on Contemporary Dance in Israel

Yali Nativ & Iris Lana

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Dancing In Arabic

الرقص بالعربي

Nur Garabli

مع نور غرابلي

[Episode 52](#)

Transcript

From the series

Embodied Contacts

Dance in the aftermath of October 7th and the 2023 war

ردّة فعل الرقص على 7.10 والحرب

With

Nur Garabli

choreographer, dancer, and activist

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[Link to episode 52](#)

Yali: Hi Iris.

Iris: Hi Yali.

Yali: As part of a series of conversations about dance following October 7th and the war, we're here at the Yasmeen Godder Studio at the Mandel Cultural Center in Jaffa, with Nur Garabli. Hello Nur. Tell us, Nur, about yourself from your professional point of view.

Nur: I'm Nur Garabli. I always have to make corrections between Hebrew and Arabic.

Iris: How do you pronounce your name in Arabic?

Nur: Rarabli

Yali: The G becomes an R.

Nur: I'm a choreographer and dancer from Jaffa. I was born and raised in Ajami (Yaffa), and I am a dancer with the Yasmeen Godder Dance Company. I'm an independent dancer; I dance in my own projects.

Iris: Where were you on October 7th?

Nur: I was at home.

Yali: Where everybody was, in bed. Right?

Nur: Yes. With a siren.

Yali: Do you have a safe room?

Nur: No

Iris: So, where do you go when there are sirens?

Nur: We are staying in the living room.

Yali: Sitting

Nur: Yes.

Iris: Do you live with your family?

Nur: Yes. With my mother, grandmother, and my twin sister.

Yali: Were you scared?

Nur: When we're together, it isn't scary. When it catches me alone on the street, then I'm scared. But when we are together, then I tell myself, ok, at least I... If something happens to me, I'm with my family. So, it's comforting. On the surface, it seemed just like another day in the State of Israel. Something we're a little used to, and I didn't expect it would escalate to where we are today. I kind of feel that it's not different in a way, but it changed my entire internal world, and the external world too, the professional and the artistic.

Yali: What do you mean when you say it's not different and it's also different?

Nur: It's not different because there has always been a blockade on Gaza; it just intensified. And since the 7th of October, the balance of power only intensified, and for me at least, it was always there, but it got another layer and more presence. And it's about shutting off resources from Gaza, denying them water or electricity. And the terminology, too. I don't say 'war', I say 'genocide'.

Yali: Were you surprised by what happened that day in the south?

Nur: Yes. I was very surprised. I didn't think something like that could happen, but there is also something inside me that wasn't surprised, because love brings love, and terror brings terror, and that is something I always ask myself. Ok, what? What will happen when I am free as a Palestinian? Will I continue to oppress? Because it's the same cycle, and history repeats itself, and I see the intergenerational transference through history, and (I hate this word) 'complexity'.

Iris: You also have family in Gaza.

Nur: Correct. My father is from Gaza, and his whole family is in Gaza, and my parents are separated, so I don't know my father, because he just ran off and left us. But his family contacted us now, over the past few months.

Yali: Him too?

Nur: No, not him.

Yali: Does he know that you're in touch?

Nur: I don't know.

Yali: Who made contact?

Nur: His sister's daughters

Iris: Your cousins

Nur: Yes, my cousins. It's also strange to say, 'my aunt', because we don't know each other. I'm 28 years old and we were never in touch, so getting in touch now, especially in a time that is so fragile, when they can just, poof, disappear at any moment.

Yali: How do you stay in touch? What kind of communication is there? How does it work?

Nur: Through Instagram. We are kind of checking up on her, on them. There are two of them.

Yali: How old are they?

Nur: They're my age. Around 28.

Why don't I jump way ahead? I remember that at the premiere... The premiere was at the Al-Saraya Arab Theatre in Jaffa.

Yali: Which premiere?

Iris: The premiere of your work

Nur: Of my new work. And I'm on the stage as the audience is entering. And most of the people that came were Arab, local, from Jaffa, some came from the north, especially to see us. And I remember that I was kind of hanging in there, holding on, I won't give too many spoilers, and I hear Hebrew among the audience. And I remember that I'm kind of hanging there, trying to breathe, and get myself into a performative zone, and I say to myself, "fuck, it's so easy for you. It's so easy for you to just walk in, speak Hebrew, in a loud voice." Never in my life did I walk into Suzanne Dellal Hall with two Arab friends, speaking in Arabic, because I don't feel ownership of this place. And I remember that that was the first thing I heard. And it pissed me off so much, this ownership, and the way Israelis perceive themselves in space, feeling at home, even though they were a minority here. I remember I was triggered, right at the beginning of the show, and tried to breathe, to just breathe it in, and then remind myself – "Ok. This is it. This is what I do, this is the work, this is the *Arabesqua*." And it also connected me to *Shout Aloud* (by Yasmeen Godder), because I was a minority there. And there's something about *Shout Aloud*, too. Dikla sings the songs, and who is Dikla? She is a Jewish-Arab woman from Beer-Sheva, after all. She's a Mizrahi with Middle Eastern roots. And I feel a deep connection with her lyrics, and I feel we have the same identity, and the same double lives. I won't elaborate on it because she has her privacy, and I have mine, and we do know each other professionally. But another question that came up for me was what's with the hip-swaying that happens in *Shout Aloud*, and all the Darbukas, and all the Oud and the Nay, which are musical instruments that are mine. They're mine! So why am I dancing with eight other white dancers? And that's a question that came up, "What does that mean to you?".

Yali: It came up in the group?

Nur: It came up in the group, it came up in the company. I know this music, these gestures, from weddings and Henna ceremonies – cultural symbols that are mine. So, "What does that mean to you?"

Yali: What did it mean to them?

Nur: It didn't mean what I wanted it to. Because for me, it also raised a lot of resistance. What about the elephant in the room? Let's talk about the elephant in the room. And of course, Naot – Ma Ba'ad, the workshops with the community of Arab and Jewish women that Yasmeen and I have been working on for the past 4-5 years, which are emotional, successful, and large, bringing together women from Jaffa, from all religions and cultures, of all ages.

Yali: Tell us about your part in these workshops.

Nur: I teach contemporary Dabke, and that has been my practice for the past years, and how I reclaim for myself the Palestinian Dabke anew, also from a gender perspective, because Dabke can be seen as a male dance. So, how do I reclaim my gender identity? How do I take ownership over the Dabke as someone who identifies as a woman? And it all mixes together. Because Yasmeen is a very important pillar in my professional world, and she is the Israeli choreographer I'm willing to cooperate with, especially nowadays. Since October 7th, I have been very careful who I collaborate with and in which venue I present my works. I feel that I don't have a home, and I don't have a place. And I'm also not in the same mental place; I'm not going to convince anyone to translate my content to Arabic. There were cases where I kind of offered and said: "I'll translate it for you, don't spend money from a budget you don't have", and the response I got was: "Why not translate to Russian or Ahmari?". And this equation, of putting me in the same category, comparing me to Russians and Ethiopians, it pissed me off, because I consider myself a native to this place. And that's something I'm proud of now, presenting *Arabesqua* specifically at the Arab Theatre. You should come and be a

guest at my home, I won't be a guest at yours, and if you want to hear what I have to say, then "Tfadallu" [be my guest] "Ahalan u Shalan" [welcome], I won't cross that bridge anymore. Because for years I tried crossing that bridge, and I didn't feel mutual responsibility, so I'm trying to change the hierarchy, as hard as it is.

Yali: Yes, you use only the Arabic language in publications as well.

Nur: And do your Google Translate, just go ahead, do it.

Iris: I told Yali how hard it was to buy a ticket to your performance.

Nur: Good. I'm glad. That's the goal.

Iris: Good thing there was a date and numbers.

Nur: Luckily, numbers are universal.

Yali: Nur, tell us about the work with this group in *Arabesqua*, and the work you do with the Dabke. You said you want to reclaim it culturally and you're trying to change the power structure, but more from a choreographic perspective, from an artistic perspective.

Iris: I'll sneak in another question: Where did you learn Dabke? Dabke is a big story, a very serious matter.

Nur: It's a very serious matter. I'll start by saying that until I was 16, I absorbed only Israeli dance. And truly, as a child...

Yali: What is Israeli dance?

Nur: Good question. I studied at the Arab-Jewish Community Center in Ajami Jaffa, and we were an Arab majority, with Jewish teachers, so I also studied in Hebrew, even though most of us were Arab. Unlike the current period, which attests to gentrification in Ajami, where most of the participants at the dance school are Jewish, and there are very few Arabs. So, I didn't dance Dabke there, I danced modern dance. I did ballet.

Iris: Classical ballet.

Nur: I danced jazz and all different kinds of –

Yali: Western dance

Nur: Western dance. And as a kid, I knew Batsheva and Yasmeen Godder. Because Yasmeen was already in Jaffe since '99, when I was three, and she takes part in the community life here, and it's important for her to maintain a connection with the local people. So, I remember her as a child, when she came to run workshops and classes, and I also think her company worked there for a while. And as a child, my dream was to dance with Batsheva.

Yali: And you also studied at the Kibbutzim College?

Nur: Yes, I also studied at the Kibbutzim College, and there, too, I was the only Palestinian. I really wanted to feel part of the elite, so it manifested itself in that I was pushing away every Arab trait in me, hiding the 'Ain', the 'Chet', the rolling 'Resh' – behaving like a white Ashkenazi Jew, and there's a term for that, it's called Acting White. And that was a perfect setup, because from there, the choreography of *HaKovshim Corner of Allenby* began.

Yali: When was that?

Nur: In 2020, when I was in my last year of dance studies, it was part of a course with Dr. Erez Mayaan Shalev and Yael Turgeman. We were asked to create from the personal...

Yali: From your identity

Nur: From a personal identity, a personal question.

Yali: That was the moment you understood that there was a change in your consciousness?

Nur: There were several moments. I started dancing Dabke when I was 16, in a company called Jobi, a Dabke company from Jaffa, which was the first Jaffa Dabke company that was founded, and its activity ended a few years ago, unfortunately. There, I became acquainted with my Palestinian identity. Because until the age of 16, you live and breathe in Hebrew. You walk around Jaffa, and around the center – the Hummus Asli place – and you ask yourself, Asli is in Arabic, Hummus is in

Arabic, so why the fuck is it written in Hebrew? Where is Arabic? You walk the streets, and everything is – ‘Siona Tagger’ [Jewish artist], and ‘Olei Zion’ [Zion pioneers], and ‘HaKovshim’ [conquerors] Streets – so your consciousness is also in such a state of mind, brainwashed. And how do you decolonize? How do you grow up with such a consciousness and a universe? And the hardest action is to self-decolonize, because what I knew was only a colonialist space, it was a space that encouraged self-oppression. For years, I oppressed myself. For years, I hid my identity to be part of, to feel part of. And this question of belonging, of living between two narratives, is heartbreaking. And I really did break my leg. The body...

Yali: When did you break your leg?

Nur: A year ago.

Iris: What happened in your work, *HaKovshim Corner of Allenby*?

Yali: Tell us about the creative process –you’re in that course with Erez and Yael...

Nur: *HaKovshim Corner of Allenby* is a solo I created from a place where my target audience is [Jewish] Israeli. And that’s something that is now different, in *Arabesqua*, my target audience is not Israeli.

Iris: It is not Jewish-Israeli

Nur: It is not Jewish-Israeli. Of course, the door is open to everyone, but first and foremost, I wanted to create from a different perspective.

Yali: It’s a cultural position.

Nur: Yes. In *HaKovshim Corner of Allenby*, I broke the fourth wall, and approached the audience, and I said, "Repeat after me: Kusemak ya bnei sharmuta" [fuck your mother you sons of a whore, in Arabic], and they said to me, "Sharmuta" [whore]. And I say back: "Sharrrrrrrmuta, with a rolling R. Let’s speak the same language."

Yali: Tell us what you do in this work.

Nur: In this work, I curse [in Arabic] because there’s a cultural appropriation of the Arab cuisine, of Arab dance, of the Arab language. The research began from the

language – many words in Hebrew are from Arabic, like Sababa [cool] and Achla [great], Waqef waqef wailla betuhak.

Yali: Is that in Hebrew what you just said?

Nur: It's a militaristic term.

Yali: Say it again

Nur: Waqef waqef wailla betuhak.

Yali: What does it mean?

Nur: It's when you hold the rifle [Stop or I'll shoot]

Iris: Yes. Soldiers. Yes.

Nur: So, there are also a lot of curse words– kusemak (fuck you), sharmuta (whore), and maniac – a very rich language. It goes back to communication – I speak Hebrew like a native, and the person facing me curses. It does not bring hearts closer. I have no desire to speak with the person in front of me, if that's the lexicon, the vocabulary. It doesn't connect me. It doesn't make me feel closer. It doesn't awaken empathy in me. So, it's going back to communication, because when we don't have a common language, there's a gap. And it's crossing that bridge again and taking a step, and another step, and another step, towards a void. So, the research started from this place. My sister was the one who pointed it out to me. I was talking with a friend on the phone and said to him, "Hayati" [my life, in Arabic]. And she looked at me with kind of disgust and said: "What? What do you mean Hayati? [pronounced in Hebrew]. Hayati! Pronounce it correctly, in Arabic. Speak Arabic!". So, the research started from here from "Hayati" [in Arabic], which evolves into "Hayati" (pronounced in Hebrew). And then, the way I am perceived by Jewish Israelis is "She is an animal [Haya means animal in Hebrew], she is a beast, she is a terrorist." I wanted to dismantle this concept, and to hold up a mirror, "Here, look, this is how you see me, as someone who came to entertain you, from a very orientalist perspective." And here, on the physical level, The Dabke [in Arabic] vs. The Debka [in Hebrew] opposite Israeli

folk dances, which are a collection of cultures. And what is Israeli dance? it's made up of a Yemenite step, and Polka and Debka. And Dabke. In general, when I read sources about how the Dabke was appropriated, it was always during the Aliyah, when European Jews immigrated here, and they saw the Bedouin figure. It sparked their imagination! It inspired them! With the Jalabiya [long dress], and the donkey, or the camel. And this is a very Orientalist view. Why aren't the words 'cultural appropriation' ever mentioned? It's not inspiration, it's cultural appropriation. Let's put it on the table!

Iris: And then, what do you do in *HaKovshim Corner of Allenby*?

Nur: I take ownership of the Dabke that was appropriated, and on folk dances as well. I ask [What is folk dance? What is Israeli? What is Israeli history? What are 70 years of dance? 80 almost.

Yali: This work won the Akko Festival, right?

Nur: It won the Golden Hedgehog prize for 'A Movement Performance', and we participated in the Akko Festival three years ago

Iris: Did you perform it abroad?

Nur: No

Iris: Is it possible?

Nur: It has some very local references. I don't know how well it would do abroad.

Yali: I taught it abroad, and it was hard to explain. I showed a map of Tel Aviv, and pointed to the intersection of HaKovshim/Allenby streets, and I had to explain what 'HaKovshim' means, who Allenby was, and how it all connects to history. And then show what you do, and how you deconstruct it. It was very hard. I taught it to American students at Berkeley, and it was a lot of context work without which they wouldn't...

Nur: It would have been lost.

Yali: Yes, it couldn't have been understood.

Nur: Yes, so it's very local, and it's a solo that is no longer performed, and I don't want to go back to it either, because I feel that I've moved on, and I'm changing. And the way that I perceive myself is also changing. The work on *HaKovshim Corner of Alleby* started from a cry, from a student who is a minority, at the HaKibbutzim College, and I also used to have these clashes with the girls in my class... I would say to them, "Ok, so let's not talk about Arabs and Jews, let's talk about Jewish Ashkenazi and Mizrahi. Why is the entire faculty Ashkenazi women? Where are the Mizrahi faculty members? And there were Mizrahi students in the class, but they just didn't make this connection. And I would look at them, saying [to myself], "Ok, they are the next generation of teachers, they are the next educators, they are the next artists, so, why isn't there any critical thinking about what's happening among yourselves? Ok. Cool, let's not talk about the 'distant other', but what about the close self?" And that's something that bothered me, that perception was missing, no thought given to this matter. And it also represents a very superficial idea of "There's no racism, we're all the same". As if all the Yemenite child abduction, the periphery, the Asi River – everything was dismissed, diminished, and censored. And I understood that it was never about religion, it's a race issue, it's white against black.

Iris: How does *Arabesqua* begin? Tell us about the process, about choosing the dancers, and the team that works with you.

Yali: And about the intention behind the work.

Nur: Wow. It's so fresh that I'm still collecting the words. *Arabesqua* had several phases. I realized that if, as a choreographer, I have the privilege to get funded to work with dancers, then I'm going to collaborate only with Arab dancers.

Yali: What funding did you get? Where from?

Nur: I received funding from the Independent Creators Fund, and the Al-Saraya Theatre supports the work as well. I tried to get non-Israeli funding from abroad and didn't succeed. And it's funny that it was an Israeli fund that supported me.

So, I used the funds because I prefer that the money come to me and not to some settlement.

Yali: You're an Israeli citizen, you deserve it.

Nur: Right, right. I pay my taxes.

Iris: You pay taxes, why wouldn't you use budgets?!

Nur: I'm entitled. I deserve it, we deserve it. So, I said, "Ok. If I already have this privilege", even though I had an open call and got 40 applications, I decided, "Ok. I'm going to work only with Arab (women) dancers", also because of the context. And that was long before October 7th.

Yali: Did Arab dancers apply?

Nur: There were also applications from Arab dancers, local, and Jewish as well, most of the applicants were Jewish dancers. But the context was important to me, and I didn't want to work with dancers who wrote on their CVs that they were in the category of 'Outstanding Dancers' during their military service. There's such a gap that I didn't understand, "Sister, you're applying to a Palestinian choreographer, why would you note where you served (in the IDF)?"

Iris: We should say that 'Outstanding Dancers' is a joint project of the IDF and the Ministry of Culture.

Nur: Yes! It's still a military institution, so where....

Iris: Blind spots.

Nur: Exactly! So, it took me about two years to gather the dancers, because in the dance field in '48 [borders], we're something like 12 professional Palestinian dancers.

Yali: What do you mean by "in '48"?

Nur: Meaning, not in Jerusalem [East Jerusalem] or Gaza.

Yali: Within the '48 borders of Israel.

Nur: Yes. Within the '48 borders. And it's like a different world in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem, and in Gaza. We're something like 12 dancers, I counted them, maybe 15 that are professional.

So in *Arabesqua* I danced with Misan Miso Samara, whom I've been collaborating with for several years now, and this is our third piece together.

Yali: Where is she from?

Nur: Miso is from Tira, and this year I also had a chance to dance in her trio work.

Yali: Where did she study dance?

Nur: She studied at Zeadim (Steps) as a child.

Yali: Kfar Saba

Nur: Right. And moved to New York to study there. Bressa Ayoub from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, Dima Zaharan from Nazareth

Iris: Did she study with Wedad Atallah?

Nur: Yes

Iris: She has a huge and interesting dance school [Al Amal], where she teaches hundreds of (Arab) students.

Nur: Wow, hundreds of students, impressive.

Iris: Very.

Yali: Wait, the one from the Golan Heights?

Nur: Bressa Ayoub. She studied at the Clore Center [Kfar Blum] in the north as a child, and then did her training in Berlin.

Yali: Interesting.

Nur: And the fourth one is Maria Dally, who studied with Rabeah Morkus in Kfar Yasif, and she's from Kfar Yasif. She collaborates with Stereo48, A Palestinian dance company, most of whom are from Nablus [occupied territories]. Each one brings her rich cultural world. We're also from different geographical places, the Dabke changes from one geographic location to another. Our dialects are also very different, and each one comes from a different religion, and we are Muslims,

Christians, and Druze, and that is the cultural richness that interested me. If I already want to represent a Semitic narrative [E-Sham], which the West calls The Levant, so in Arabic it's Semitic, a non-Orientalist term.

Yali: What does it mean?

Nur: It refers to Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, without borders.

Iris: What do we call in Hebrew Shemi?

Nur: Yes, it's Semitic, Semitism. The Arab world without the borders the West imposed on us. Initially, I imagined *Arabesqua* differently, I imagined it in the way I presented it earlier, with boldness, playfulness, mocking and ridiculing the West. But with today's context and with all the bodies you see in Gaza, it was hard not to embody that.

Yali: So, what happened?

Nur: What happened was that the Dabke took a very central role, but all the ballet movements were embedded in footwork and not in the overhead view.

Iris: There are also choreographic mechanisms that you use, that we understand. You create complex, shifting patterns on stage. I'm talking about the choreographic aspects, not just about the movement language.

I want to ask you out of curiosity, do you have contact with dancers, or others in the dance field in Ramallah [occupied territories]?

Nur: Yes. There are.

Iris: What kind of contacts? Because there's a serious international dance scene

Yali: In East Jerusalem, too.

Iris: Yes, but in Ramallah it's a huge dance center, where we [as Israelis] can't get to.

Yali: You can?

Iris: Yes. Of course [she can]. What kind of connections do you have with them?

Nur: Very complex connections, because I collaborate here, and that's something that isn't well received, but I also don't have any other choice. I know that I want

to create, and I want to dance, and I could have chosen to sit behind a counter at some bank, but I don't want that; I want to dance, I want to learn, I want to develop in this field. That is something that is tied to identity, to context, and to language, and whether I want to or not, I was exposed to and absorbed Israeli dance, even though I still don't know what Israeli dance is, but that is the reference I had.

Yali: You can say dance made in Israel.

Nur: Yes. That is the reference I had. I didn't have... I didn't know Sahar Damoni as a child. I didn't know about Shaden [Abu Elasal]

Yali: Other Palestinian choreographers.

Nur: I didn't know them, we work at the same time. When I started creating, I met them.

Yali: They're a little older than you, right?

Nur: Yes. They're from the north.

Iris: There's also Ferial Khshiboun

Nur: Whom I don't know personally

Iris: In Haifa, which also has a very large center.

Nur: Right. I don't know her personally or artistically. Jaffa is very bubble-like.

It's not like Haifa, which is surrounded by Arab villages, and Haifa is the capital of Arab culture and arts. Jaffa is very systematic; it is separated at a systemic level. In Jaffa, I'm surrounded by Ness Ziona, Rishon LeZion [cities in the center of Israel], it repeats itself. Of course, Ramle and Lod too [Arab cities], but Ramle and Lod are also surrounded by them [Jewish cities].

Iris: So go back to these complex connections with dance people in Ramallah, on a personal and institutional level.

Yali: Festivals

Nur: Yes, I was supposed to participate in a festival last year, but because I broke my leg from exhaustion, activism – activism and art – I was just worn down; I

broke my leg and couldn't perform there. But this year we had a summer camp for all the dancers, the dancer-choreographers who operate within the '48 borders – I hate these reductive terminologies – in all of Palestine, as far as I'm concerned, that's what I want to call it. So, it also refers to '67 and in '48, East Jerusalem – it's like crossing the borders, the Separation Wall, ignoring reality. Even though Palestinians who come from Nablus must cross hundreds, hundreds of checkpoints, not the kind I have to go through, because I show my Israeli ID card, they ask me questions here and there, "what do I do, why is there a theatre in Ramallah? Why am I going there? It's dangerous" – the common perceptions.

Iris: But I asked not about the Israelis, or in front of Israeliness, or the Israeli army, or the Israeli establishment. Rather, in front of the place there, in front of the creators, there.

Iris: Yes, as I said, it's about complex relationships. There's a desire for more collaboration.

Yali: Does this complexity come up in conversations?

Nur: Yes, of course, the complexity comes up, and it also creates distance because there are gaps, and there's the BDS, and it's scary, it scares them to contact me, because I'm a citizen of Israel after all, and I cooperate with Israelis. And it creates a kind of...

Yali: It's a catch that you can't get out of.

Nur: It's really a catch.

Iris: And abroad? in front of the dance scene that you meet with in a residency, or in performances, or any communication with international dance communities. We know that today, many Israeli dancers, Israeli choreographers are receiving a lot of rejection. Rejections that are based on BDS, but that have grown tremendously since then [October 7th]. People are afraid of going, of performing, of speaking Hebrew.

It's interesting, where do you stand? – Pro-Palestinian activists in Europe facing an Israeli-Arab Palestinian creator?

Nur: I just want to correct that I don't define myself as an Israeli creator.

I am a Palestinian choreographer and citizen of Israel. It's just important for me to clarify.

Iris: Thank you.

Nur: I have a Palestinian friend, a citizen of Israel, who also got rejected by a German cultural institution

Yali: Because she's from her?

Nur: Because she defines herself as a Palestinian. So, they asked her, "Are you an Arab Israeli or an Arab Palestinian?" And she said, "No, I'm Palestinian, I'm a citizen of Israel, but I'm Palestinian", and she got a rejection. There's a counter-effect. Nobody talks about it, because it's not...

Yali: It's not part of the discourse.

Nur: It's not part of the discourse. Exactly.

Iris: What about the pro-Palestinian activists?

Nur: Well, those who run the theatres abroad are not pro-Palestinian activists. They're biased; they're the leaders. And the leaders aren't pro-Palestinian. That's also a catch, and it falls through the cracks. I haven't yet had the chance to go abroad as an independent choreographer.

Iris: With your work

Nur: With my work. I went as part of 1-2-3 at Suzanne Dellal, and also there, I felt a little silenced, so I kind of had to censor my Palestinian identity. And it's something I kind of did, because I wanted to experience this opportunity.

Yali: Nur.

Iris: Wow.

Yali: What would you like to happen?

Nur: What a scary question. I would very much like to continue touring with *Arabesqua*, and for it to reverberate. And the Right of Return, the Right of Return, of course, without throwing anyone into the sea. Because whenever I talk about the Right of Return, there's a kind of "what about us, what about us?" So, without that part. That I'll keep creating, and that future generations will have reference to Palestinian dance, to Palestinian choreographers, to Palestinian dancers, something that I was really missing as a child. I feel that an authentic, sincere, transparent collaboration with a terminology that suits me. It always comes with conditions, and I don't want those conditions. If it comes with conditions, then I simply won't cooperate. I want it unconditionally, unconditional love, radical acceptance without conditions. And more critical thinking, and there should be dialogue.

Iris: Amen

Nur: And of course, Inshallah, that this massacre will end, the war will end, and that everyone will go back to where they need to go back to.

Yali: Thank you for this conversation, and for your sincerity and courage.

Nur: Thank you.

Dancing In Arabic

الرقص بالعربي

Featuring

Nur Garabli

مع نور غرابلي

From the series

Embodied Contacts

Dance in the aftermath of October 7th and the 2023 war

ردّة فعل الرقص على 7.10 والحرب

The music in this episode is original:

CH'E (2022) by Shaher Khanfar

Arabesqua (2024) by Yusor Hamed

***Additional music from FMA [Caravan by Serge Quadrado](#), 2024

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The audio and video of this episode are available on our [website](#).

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Creatures of Dance

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