

JERUSALEM

A CHOREOGRAPHIC SITE FOR CITIZENS
BY MICHAEL KLIËN
2014



michael cliën

JERUSALEM A CHOREOGRAPHIC SITE FOR CITIZENS

Choreography: Michael Kliën

Dramaturgy: Steve Valk

Artistic Collaborators: Jeffrey Gormly, Vitoria Kotsalou

Cast: 12–20 locally recruited individuals

Rehearsal period: 4 days

Rehearsed and performed 3 times within one week

Duration: 120 minutes / 3–5 performances in each location

Originally commissioned under the title 'Jerusalem - Choreography for Greece' by the Athens Festival 2014

Video Documentation: www.vimeo.com/klien/jerusalem

For we do not have an abiding city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. **HEBREWS 13:14**

Dance will develop oddly unburdened by codes, structures and language, providing tentacles into other realities. This raw physical matrix, the place for not knowing, is at once unintelligible and engaging. What emerges does not correspond to what we have previously known, no sanity can be found. It makes no sense. It gives no meaning: a thorough loss of coherence. This work is a crucial response to the contemporary practice of humanity: quietly crashing out of unsustainable visions of ourselves, into other worlds. **KLIËN**

The boy sat tottering. The man watched him that he not topple into the flames. He kicked holes in the sand for the boy's hips and shoulders where he would sleep and he sat holding him while he tousled his hair before the fire to dry it. All of this like some ancient anointing. So be it. Evoke the forms. Where you've nothing else construct ceremonies out of the air and breathe upon them. **MCCARTHY**

Cover-image: Walter Spies; Rafal Kosakowski

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

After Kliën's seminal work *Choreography for Blackboards*, *Jerusalem* presents the necessary step to unravel a world of relations, order and ecologies. For one week up to twenty diverse (age, body, sex, education, social background etc.) citizens work together with Michael Kliën to develop and rehearse a choreographic process based on embodiment, movement of thoughts and the exchange of resulting physical traces. Setting out to create a choreographic matrix that disregards its socially constructed context (i.e. the current social-economic conditions, protests, ideologies etc.), *Jerusalem* focuses entirely on physical presence: One's embodied being in exchange and communality with others. The work, situated in a gallery, museum or alternative spaces will unfold over the period of two hours and offers profound experiences in embodiment to participants and audience alike. Unconcerned with established notions of grace, mastery and beauty *Jerusalem* is a counter spectacle of things to come. Along the unusual constellation of diverse bodies on a delineated floor, their level of concentration and embodied communication sets the work apart from its surroundings. Observers are free to walk, sit, drink and converse around the process. Throughout the days of performance other citizens, artists and stray dogs alike, are invited by the choreographer to join the work spontaneously and without prior rehearsal.

This work is an urgent, necessary response to contemporary situation of a globalizing reality. Rigid mind-dynamics of Western thought have been unable to address crises in a meaningful manner. *Jerusalem* suspends the dutiful workings of 'the cold winds of a civilization driven insane' (Bateson) for the 'other of rationality' (Boehme) to take charge, to think and speak. For the shameful body to come forth and reclaim what is properly his and hers: Precisely not the frozen patterns of consciousness, but the presence and potential of all movement.

Just as movement has become unthinkable in the minds of people, common gods enter the scene to end this addiction to rationality. They put to rest the daunting spirits that walk the village by day and by night and evoke a new name given to the earth in the instance of a moment. In this 'second order protest' their flesh will be anchor and their fleeting constellations concrete revelations of this unsettled land.

PROGRAMME TEXT

SHORT

Performed by a mixed company of citizens (professional dancers alongside non-performers from diverse walks of life) and with audience free to wander around and amidst the action, this radical, choreographic 'counter-spectacle' sets up a process for humans to re-root themselves in the social, physical and instinctive. Imagined as an urgent response to the fixed dynamics of Western thought, the limitations of rationality, and the crisis this has engendered, Jerusalem aims to provide a ceremonial site for embodied sensing and embodied utterance.

LONG

Performed by a mixed company of citizens (professional dancers alongside non-performers from diverse walks of life) and with audience free to wander, this radical, choreographic 'counter-spectacle' sets up a process for humans to re-root themselves in the social, physical and instinctive. Imagined as an urgent response to the crisis of Western civilization, Jerusalem aims to provide a ceremonial site for embodied sensing and moving.

Sitting within Kliën's wider oeuvre of "choreography as an aesthetics of change" this work has grown out of living in Greece throughout the financial crisis and extended public unrest, although it equally responds to universal conditions and wider realisations that Western paradigms have left us largely bereft psychologically, socially, spiritually and ecologically. Jerusalem inhabits the confusion of collapse and evokes a sense of possibility of other ways of being. Under the glow of construction floodlights in an industrial space, imperatives of the established social contract are revised. Challenging customary notions of human conduct, of theatrical boundaries, and of artistic beauty and mastery, this work creates a shared and porous space where performers and audience coexist, essentially in the body. Manifesting a disorienting loss of coherence and a simultaneous meshing into new communion, Jerusalem seeks the emergence of a new lucidity. Echoing William Blake's poem of the same title, it asks: can a new sacredness and ground be engendered here amongst the chaos?

Text by Lizzy Le Quesne

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Jerusalem is conceptualised to need minimum production requirements and to scale according to its context. The work requires a very large open space (empty industrial hall, gallery, theatre, etc.) Lighting and Sound are adjusted to suit each particular venue. Soundfile playback from Computer; 4(+1) or 8 (+2) or 12 (+2) speaker setup; computer and soundcard to be provided by host. This work can be performed on any surface, except plastic flooring (ie. dancefloor). Ideally the performance venue itself is also used for rehearsals the four days prior to the premiere with light and sound build-up prior to the rehearsals.



BIOGRAPHY

MICHAEL KLIËN (*1973, AUSTRIA)

Michael Kliën is an acclaimed choreographer, curator and producer of numerous touring productions, installations and events. In 1994 he co-founded the performance collective Barriedale Operahouse (in operation till 2000) and worked as a choreographer for Ballett Frankfurt, Volksoper Wien etc. From 2003 to 2011 he was Artistic Director/CEO of Daghdha Dance Company, one of Ireland's premiere dance organisations. His artistic practice encompasses interdisciplinary thinking, critical writing, curatorial projects, and centrally, choreographic works equally at home in the Performing as well as the Fine Arts. Michael Kliën's choreographies are predominantly dance-based works of art, situated in galleries, museums or on stages. Increasingly, visual art works form part of his choreographic output; yet, other creations may act directly upon the social sphere (Social Choreography). His choreographies for dance are marked by a distinctive improvisation methodology and the subsequent movement aesthetic. Amongst a considerable body of work, Michael Kliën's seminal choreographies include *Einem* for Ballett Frankfurt, *Sediments of an Ordinary Mind* and *Sense and Meaning* for Daghdha Dance Company (Limerick) as well as *Choreography for Blackboards* for Daghdha Dance Company and Hayward Gallery (London) and *Slattery's Lamp* of IMMA's (Irish Museum of Modern Art) permanent collection. www.michaelklien.com

JEFFREY GORMLY (*1971, IRLAND)

Jeffrey Gormly ist Autor, Editor und Performer. Seine künstlerischen Arbeiten umfassen Aufträge von dem Abbey Theatre (Irland National Theatre, Dublin), CREATE Ireland und Daghdha Dance Company. Seit 2008 ist er Editor von choreograph.net, einer internationalen Internet-Plattform für die Förderung eines erweiterten Choreographie-Begriffs. Seine jüngste Arbeit ist der Formulierung der Sozialen Choreographie gewidmet. Verschiedenste Aufträge, Unterstützungen und Förderungen (Arts Council, Irland) beschäftigen sich speziell mit dem Design von Projekten, die neues, kollektives und kreatives Denken fördern. Er ist Gründungsmitglied des Institutes für Soziale Choreographie in Frankfurt (2012) und lebt in mit seiner Familie in Kilkenny, Irland. www.choreograph.net

VITORIA KOTSALOU (GREECE)

Vitoria Kotsalou (intitiator) received a BA in Psychology from the University of Reading, England. Since then she has trained and developed as a dancer and performer. Since 2004 she has taken part in dance, street theater, theater and puppetry performances in Greece and abroad. She has participated in planning and conducting creative programmes for children that have been presented to schools and museums in Greece as well as creating her own work. In August 2012 she initiated and directed the Hydra Small Dance Festival, which included numerous international workshops and performances. In 2013 she co-founded R.I.C.E. (riceonhydra.org) together with Michael Kliën, and has been collaborating with Michael on various performances and exhibitions since then.

STEVE VALK (*1962, USA)

Contemporary dance dramaturge, visual artist and designer, lecturer and leading figure in the emerging field of Social Choreography. Influenced by his experiences as Personal Assistant of theatre director Robert Wilson (1988–90) he joined Ballett Frankfurt as Head Dramaturge and creative collaborator for William Forsythe (1992–2004). From 1998 to 2004, this dramaturgical practice and a subsequent focus on trans-disciplinary networking strategies lead to the development of a new participatory/situational epistemology for the institution of contemporary dance. From 2004 to 2011, Steve Valk, in partnership with choreographer and Artistic Director Michael Kliën, became Head Dramaturge and artistic collaborator of Ireland's Daghdha Dance Company. Since 2012 he has been Director of the newly founded Institute of Social Choreography in Frankfurt, where he currently lives.

VOLKMAR KLIEN (*1971, AUSTRIA)

Volkmar Klien today strives to extend traditional practices of composing, producing and listening far beyond the established settings of concert music. He works in various areas of the audible and occasionally inaudible arts navigating the manifold links in-between the different modes of human perception, the spheres of presentation and the roles these play in the communal generation of meaning. His works have been widely recognized, exhibited, performed and presented. Volkmar Klien's work has been awarded numerous prizes and awards, amongst these an honorary mention at the Prix Ars Electronica, the State Scholarship for Composition of the Republic of Austria, the Max Brand Prize for Electronic Music, the Scholarship of the Vienna Symphonic Orchestra and the Gustav Mahler Prize for Composition. www.volkmarklien.com



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