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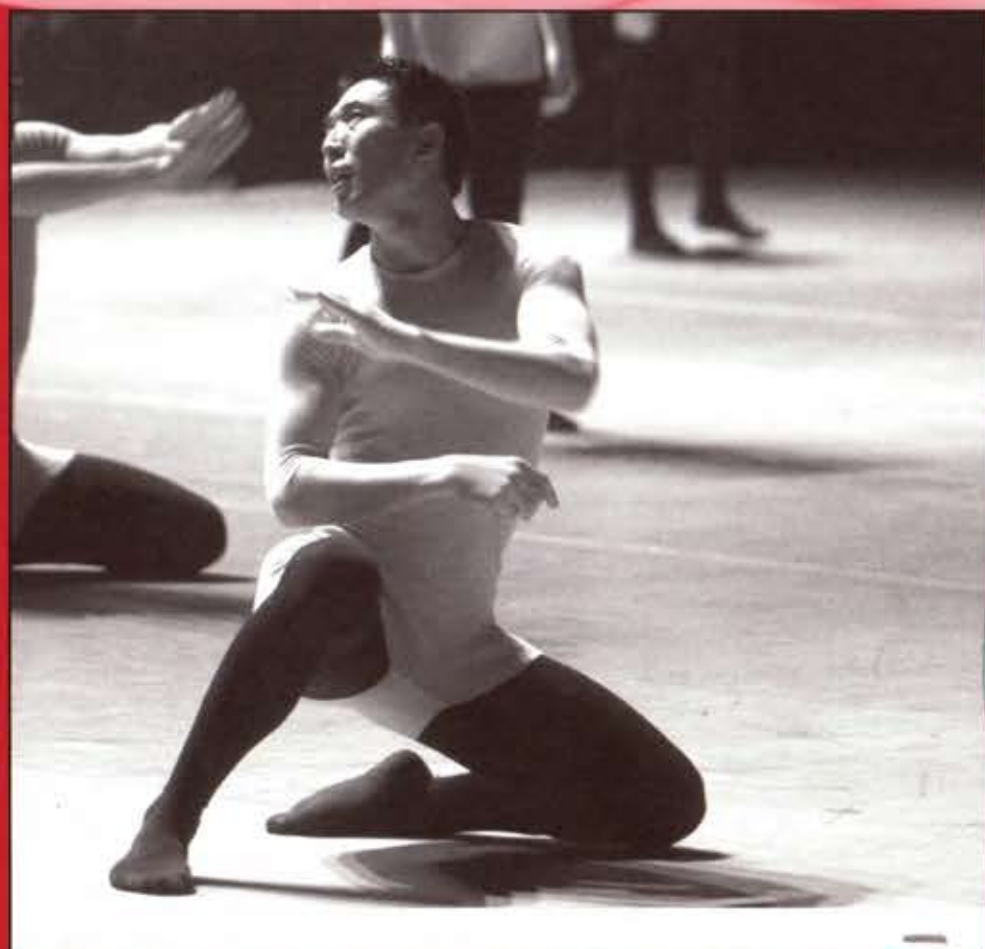
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# BITE

BARBICAN  
INTERNATIONAL  
THEATRE  
EVENTS

## Batsheva Dance Company



### Naharin's Virus

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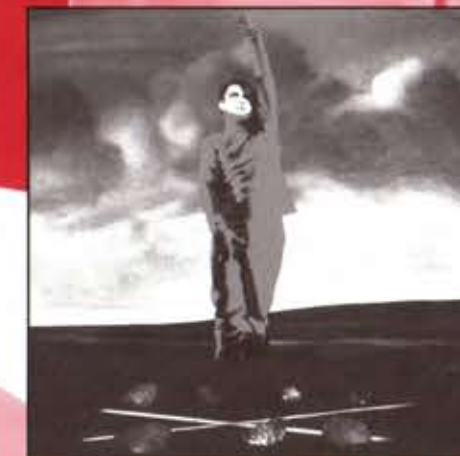
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17 May - 19 June  
BARBICAN THEATRE

Wilson Waits Burroughs  
**The Black Rider**  
The Casting of the Magic Bullets

A Musical Fable  
with Marianne Faithfull

'A Triumph'  
Time Magazine



# BITE:04



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BARBICAN THEATRE

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Look out for the following highlights over the coming months



### Art

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**Helen Chadwick:**

**A Retrospective**

**Tina Modotti and Edward Weston: The Mexico Years**



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**William Burroughs**

**The Black Rider**

**The Casting of the Magic Bullets**



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## Batsheva Dance Company

At the core of Batsheva Dance Company is a group of passionate, creative people with a common goal: to excel in artistic endeavours and to strengthen common human values through the power of creativity.

Founded in 1964 by Baroness Batsheva De Rothschild and Martha Graham, Batsheva has become a leading cultural institution in Israel. The appointment of Ohad Naharin as Artistic Director in 1990 launched Batsheva into a new era earning the company a reputation for artistic integrity and innovation. Applauded at the most prestigious theatres and festivals, Batsheva performs over 200 times annually in Israel and worldwide.

Batsheva's main troupe is joined by the Batsheva Ensemble, a greenhouse cultivating the next generation of dancers and choreographers. Much of their performance schedule is dedicated to educational activities and outreach programmes.

In September 2003, Yoshifumi Inao was named Artistic Director, Sharon Eyal as Associate Artistic Director and Ohad Naharin was elevated to House Choreographer. Naomi Bloch Fortis, Naharin's long-time associate, continues as General Manager and Co-Artistic Director.



# Batsheva Dance Company

## Naharin's Virus

by Ohad Naharin

An adaptation of Peter Handke's play *Offending the Audience*

Original music Karni Postel, Habib Alla Jamal, Shama Khader

Music Samuel Barber, Carlos D'Alessio, P. Stokes, P. Parsons

Text Peter Handke (excluding the dancers' stories)

Costume design Rekefet Levy

Lighting design Avi Yona Bueno (Bambi)

Musical advisor Karni Postel

Sound design Frankie Lievaart

Recordings Frankie Lievaart, Haim Laroz

Dancers Yaniv Abraham, Eldad Ben Sasson, Caroline Boussard, Matan David, Stefan Ferry, Yoshifumi Inao, Roi Itzhak Halevy, Luc Jacobs, Talia Landa, Inbar Nemirovsky, Rachael Osborne, Maya Weiser, Adi Zlatin, Noa Zoukquest guest dancer Keren Malkit

Batsheva's dancers collaborated in the creative process.

### Batsheva Dance Company

House choreographer Ohad Naharin

General manager, Co-artistic director Naomi Bloch Fortis

Artistic director Yoshifumi Inao

Associate artistic director Sharon Eyal

International tour producer Iris Bovshover

Company manager and stage manager Yaniv Nagar

Rehearsal director Aya Israeli

Technical director Roni Cohen

Chief electrician Gadi Gilk

Sound Moshe Shasho

Technician Yitzhak Assulin

Wardrobe Shoshi Or Lavi

Physiotherapist Hani Alon

Photographer Gadi Dagon

International tour management Multi Media Ltd.

Batsheva Dance Company is generously supported by the Ministry of Education Culture and Sport, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Division of Cultural and Scientific Affairs, the Tel-Aviv Municipality, Israel National Lottery - Council for the Arts, America-Israel Cultural Foundation, The Rich Foundation, The Tel-Aviv Foundation, The State of Israel Legacies Foundation, The Schussheim Foundation Haifa, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, Lee Cooper Israel, Recanati Winery, Isrotel Chain of Hotels, Shuki Zikri, Ramet Ltd., Mr. Robert Weil-Proventus, Necama Boraq The Kenny Family and Eastronics, The Dellal Family, The Sokolovsky Family and Dani Karavan.

Batsheva Dance Company and the Batsheva Ensemble are the resident companies at the Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre, 6 Yechiely St. Tel-Aviv 65149, Tel:+972 3 5171471 Fax:+972 3 5160231, e-mail: batsheva@batsheva.co.il

Works cited in this programme include: *Offending the Audience*, translated by Michael Roloff in *Plays: 1* by Peter Handke (Methuen 1997); *Encore BAMbill*.

*Naharin's Virus* was first performed March 14, 2001 in Tel-Aviv.

BITE would like to thank the Israeli Ministry of Education Culture and Sport for their support.

The performance lasts approximately 70 minutes with no interval.

There will be a Post Show Talk on 29 April.

Ohad Naharin will be in conversation with dance writer Nadine Meisner.

In partnership with  
**Evening Standard**

## Peter Handke and *Offending the Audience*

### Offending the Audience

*Offending the Audience* (*Publikumsbeschimpfung*) won instant recognition at the 1966 Experimental Festival in Frankfurt, and quickly became one of the most widely performed 'anti-plays' of the 1960s. Handke, then 24, assaulted the conventional pieties of both theatre and middle-class society. His text discards both plot and character, and even the overtly political drama of the Brechtian tradition. Instead, a torrent of invective seeks to uncover the deficiencies of society by criticising its language.

Peter Handke is an Austrian playwright, novelist, poet and essayist, often described as the most important postmodern writer since Beckett. Born in 1942, Handke studied at a Catholic seminary and then read law at the University of Graz. He came to public notice in 1966, with the controversial play *Offending the Audience*, and with his first novel, *The Hornets*. Other plays include *Kaspar* (1968), *The Ride Across Lake Constance* (1970), *They Are Dying Out* (1973), *The Long Way Round* (1981), *The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other* (1992) and *Preparations for Immortality* (1997). Later this year, *Untertagblues* premieres in Vienna (directed by Luc Bondy) and at the Berliner Ensemble (directed by Claus Peymann, who also directed the first production of *Offending the Audience*). Other fiction and prose includes *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams* (1972), *A Moment of True Feeling* (1975), *The Weight of the World* (1979), *Repetition* (1986), *Absence* (1990) and *On a Dark Night I Left My Silent House* (1999). For Wim Wenders, he wrote the screenplays for *The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty* (1972), *Wrong Movement* (1975), and *Wings of Desire* (1987), which was later adapted as *City of Angels* (1998). He also wrote and directed the films *Die Linkshändige Frau* (1977) and *Absence* (1993).

### Rules for the actors in *Offending the Audience*

Listen to the litanies in the Catholic churches.

Listen to football teams being cheered on and booed.

Listen to the rhythmic chanting at demonstrations.

Listen to the wheels of a bicycle upturned on its seat spinning until the spokes have come to rest and watch the spokes until they have reached their resting point.

Listen to the gradually increasing noise a concrete mixer makes after the motor has been started.

Listen to debaters cutting each other off.

Listen to 'Tell Me' by the Rolling Stones.

Listen to the simultaneous arrival and departure of trains.

Listen to the hit parade on Radio Luxembourg.

Listen to on the simultaneous interpreters at the United Nations.

Listen to the dialogue between the gangster (Lee J Cobb) and the pretty girl in *The Trap*, when the girl asks the gangster how many more people he intends to kill; whereupon the gangster asks, as he leans back, 'How many are left?', and watch the gangster as he says it.

See the Beatles' movies.

In *A Hard Day's Night*, watch Ringo's smile at the moment when, after having been teased by the others, he sits down at his drums and begins to play.

Watch Gary Cooper's face in *The Man from the West*. In the same movie watch the death of the mute as he runs down the deserted street of the lifeless town with a bullet in him, hopping and jumping and emitting those shrill screams.

Watch monkeys aping people and llamas spitting in the zoo.

Watch the behaviour of tramps and idlers as they amble on the street and play the machines in the penny arcades.

Peter Handke

Handke's play is about the negation of the theatre. The direct, continuous appeal to the public turns the spectator's mere presence, his self-awareness and his act of listening into the main issue of the play. He glorifies the public, but means no praise; he scorns them, but means no offence. He contradicts himself. The play empties the stage of all expectations, of all theatrical conventions. A space, a void is created: it is there that my creation takes place.

Ohad Naharin on *Naharin's Virus*

## Creating Naharin's Virus

I established the musical group Al Majad in 1993. The aim was to reconstruct the music and dance appealing primarily to those over sixty years of age, people devoted to it. I strengthened it and recreated it for this generation - the heart of the 21st century - and today I present the traditions and customs practised in weddings and family parties, on the way to the water spring, in the harvested meadow, and on the battlefield.

The starting point of my work is the elderly man wedged in the wheels of old age and the old woman recounting her young loves, smiling with a mouth empty of teeth, re-enacting unforgotten days, reconstruction for me the songs and the debka and the folklore of bygone times. I show this today with the instruments and lyrics of ancient songs and dances, though modern staging.

Ohad Naharin believes in the sacred notion of the freedom of man, demonstrated in the trust and collaboration between Al Majad and Batsheva. He initiated this collaboration between two heritages very distant from one another, between two peoples entangled in complex ideological confrontations and immersed in the deep social fissure between Jewish and Arab societies. We both believe in peace and intimacy and everyday life, and that music is a shared universal language. We believe that man is man, and with the same firmness we believe that two traditions meet and unite in one amazing performance a fact.

**Habib Allah Jamal** on the music for *Naharin's Virus*

When the head and the body succeed in merging, it is a feeling second to none. It is a kind of ecstasy, of spiritual elevation. This is also Ohad's virus. When he talks about how the body moves, I think of life itself - movement which stems from weakness, out of abandonment, simply letting go - and let things happen.

**Yael Schnell**, dancer

My creative process and my encounter with the public involve finding keys and passing them on. Imagine there is a locked room, full of treasures: wisdom, a cure for cancer, world peace, etc... Sometimes, all you need to open that room is one little key. The difference between being inside or outside the room is that little key.

**Ohad Naharin**

In my solo part, I utter all sorts of voices. They sound like an animated creature, or a talking doll, or an animal. It is without thinking I utter these voices. In some way, I am talking to someone, in my own language.

**Chisato Ohno**, dancer

I'm very informed about what's going on. And I have very clear opinions. Right now, there's a real clash between my politics and my country's politics. It's very tragic what is going on because it's obvious that eventually there will be one of two possibilities: total disaster in the region or a big compromise and peace treaty. So, if we don't want to choose the total disaster, then it will be a peace treaty. And if the peace treaty, why wait? ... But the present acts of the Sharon government don't make it safer. It's not a government that seeks negotiations. It's a government that has an illusion of power ... I think a lot of people in Israel live in an illusion, and that Sharon has infected a lot of people with his phobia. The phobia is really a lack of guilt. It's blaming everybody but yourself. It actually causes you to lose any kind of sensitivity to the suffering of other people. And it's kind of a chronic thing. That's the illusion that I'm talking about. So maybe what I'm trying a little bit to evoke an awareness, just the ability to look at ourselves from a little bit of distance and perspective.

**Ohad Naharin** interviewed in *New York Times*, 2002

[Naharin was born on a kibbutz near Haifa in 1952] I think the fact that I was born on a kibbutz and the fact that I'm Israeli have very little to do with the essence of my work. My work is about the development of composition, and it's about how I deal with my limitations and how I deal with what I like and what I don't and the power of imagination and my sense of humour, my love for mathematics and things like this. One thing I really like - not just in my work, but in any work - is the ability to be ambivalent about things. The lack of clarity of what the source is. The lack of clarity of what the school is. So for me the important thing is the coherency of the work and not the coherency of the background of the work. There is somewhere the fact that I'm Israeli, but it's not the engine of my work.

Ideas are easy. They just float and come from almost everything. It's much more the development of my composition that is intriguing to me. And many times out of that comes the ability to look at something old from a new angle ... the ability to take something, even a cliché, and create with it a fresh moment.

[Naharin covers the mirrors wherever he rehearses] It's very clear to me that mirrors spoil the soul. And not just for dance. Mirrors spoil the soul. I find that for my dancers, and everywhere else I go to teach my work, when I cover the mirror the result is much better. And the dancers enjoy the dancing more. They connect to the space. In a way, the mirror is limiting them from connecting to the world.

**Ohad Naharin** interviewed by **Julia Goldman** in *The Jewish Week* (2003)

Naharin's dances are acts of protest against received ideas (that handbook of permanency), but it is poetry rather than agitprop that Naharin chooses as his means of resistance. The kibbutz-born choreographer sees dance as a free space, or what he calls an "oasis" for working out ideas. From his youth, he has been drawn to art as a place where an alternative world can be imagined and given form. He is appreciative of dance as a medium that can accommodate illusion. "I distort reality in order to create my own world," he recently told a journalist. "I don't want to reflect the reality around me." In refusing to be bounded by convention and social purposes, Naharin's choreography is an emancipatory act, a cry for freedom. While Naharin is a dyed-in-the-wool postmodernist, he is not without a hint of the Romantic, for, despite the deep skepticism they often seem to convey, his dances are also yawps of the soul in opposition to regimentation and complacency.

From *The Permanence of Impermanence* by **Suzanne Carbonneau** (*White Bird Programme Notes*)

