

Presented by the Cedar Tree Project in partnership
with Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts

1001 Arab Futures



*An intimate outdoor site-specific dance
performance and visual installation*

Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts
June 10-12, 2021@ 7pm

Welcome to this performance journey in three sections. Please follow the audience guides through the outdoor spaces at MCA. We invite you to be open to all of the sights and sounds, movements and images of *1001 Arab Futures*.

We would like to acknowledge that this performance will take place on the ancestral and traditional lands of the Sauk and Meskwaki, Wahpeton, and Očeti Šakówiŋ. These and the surrounding nations remain the original, current, and future protectors of the land on which we stand today. We recognize the colonial settlers took this land through predatory treaties. We honor the histories of this land before colonization. MCA and the 1001 Arab Futures project commits to going beyond a written statement and investing in continued efforts to acknowledge and support the past, present, and future of Indigenous artists and community members.

COVID-safety guidelines will be followed: Masks and social distancing will be required of all audience members. Please wear comfortable shoes for walking in grass. Bringing your own lawn chair or blanket is also recommended. Indoor restrooms will be available on site.

1001 Arab Futures is an intimate outdoor site-specific solo dance performance and visual installation contemplating imaginative visions, past reckonings, embodied truths and other future potentials from the SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African)/Arab diaspora.

1001 Arab Futures Creation and Direction:

Yara Boustany

Mette Loulou von Kohl

Andrea Shaker

Concept/Creative Contributions/Performance:

Sharon Mansur

Design and Production:

Sound: woolen lover

Costume: Angie Vo

Production Coordinator: Samantha Heaver

PERFORMANCE SECTIONS

1. *a physical imaginary map of presence* (Yara Boustany)

This performance intends to explore through the physical and the imaginary the inner and outer maps of presence and temporality.

Sound design/editing/composition: woolen lover

Contributing voices:

- Georges Boustany
- Yara Boustany
- Claudia Carena
- Julia Mansur
- Raymond Mansur
- Sharon Mansur



2. *carrying you carrying me* (Mette Loulou von Kohl)

Objects as archive, as reverence, as shit, as burden, as mapping across distance and time. Asking the questions, why do we gather? What are we allowed to forget? And knowing none of the answers.

Sound design/editing/composition: woolen lover

- Various Music Samples

Additional Clips:

- MSNBC News

- Mariam Barghouti on *Middle East Eye*

- Bells at Alverna Center

Contributing voices:

- Sharon Mansur

- Mette Loulou von Kohl



3. *(fragmented) echoes of future memories* (Andrea Shaker)

Through movement and stillness, the body explores spaces of home, homeland, migrations, and Arab diasporas—performing memories and imagined futures (comforting and traumatic) that accumulate, physiologically, across generations and geographies.

Sound design/editing/composition: woolen lover

Sound recordings:

- Leila Awadallah

- Andrea Shaker

Andrea Shaker interviews and conversations with:

- Leila Awadallah

- Ahmad Ayash

- Haifa Chacar Derderian

- Sophia Moussa



1001 BIOS

Yara Boustany (she/her), Co-Director

Yara is a Beirut-based dance /theater performer and choreographer. After graduating in Audiovisual, she continued her studies in Dance and Circus in Spain and is currently doing her Masters in Choreography at Codarts University in Rotterdam. She is the founder of Amalgam Studio, a dance and theater space in Beirut, Lebanon. Her interdisciplinary work is a poetic approach to the dilemmas of the human being in a rapidly changing society - technologically, scientifically, and philosophically. She uses imagination and improvisation as tools to unravel the hidden layers of existence. She has toured with her shows notably in Lebanon and Beirut, and also in Stuttgart, Ankara, Warsaw, London, Manchester, Liverpool, Chalon sur Saône and Athens. She is preparing to tour her new piece "Noctilūca" in 2021, supported by AFAC (Arab Fund for Culture). <https://uirii.com>

Sharon Mansur (she/her), Concept, Creative Contributions, Performer

Sharon is a dance and interdisciplinary experimental artist, educator, curator, and community mover and shaker of Lebanese and Italian heritage based in Keoxa/Winona, Mni Sota Makoce/MN, in Dakota country. Her creative practices weave movement making, improvisation, visual environments, food, screendance, audience participation and site-situated/ responsive art to offer multi-sensory and immersive experiences rooted in body, imagination, and environment. She loves creating artistic opportunities for people from all walks of life to connect and engage. In recent years Sharon has received support from the McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council, the Winona Fine Arts Commission and Springboard for the Arts. She was also a 2019-20 National Arts Strategies Creative Community Fellow. Sharon is currently the director of The Cedar Tree Project, presenting and amplifying regional, national and international creative voices of the SWANA/Arab diaspora. www.mansurdance.com

Andrea Shaker (she/her, b. 1964), Co-Director

Andrea grew up in a small town in Connecticut on Quiripi lands. After earning her BA from Georgetown University and MFA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, she moved to Dakota and Annishaabe lands, where she is a professor of art at the College of St. Benedict | St. John's University. Andrea's creative work is interdisciplinary, spanning photography, moving image, experimental film, and written and spoken word. As an Arab American, she explores the spaces between home & homeland and migration & diaspora. Through image and word, her work addresses how these

spaces, and the movement of the body within these spaces, are imagined and experienced through the physiology of intergenerational memory.

www.andreashaker.com

Mette Loulou von Kohl (she/her), Co-Director

Mette Loulou was born from the orange at the center before the new world came. She is a wanderer, performer and cultural worker. Currently living on un-ceded Lenape territory, now colonized as New York City. Mette Loulou is a queer femme, of Lebanese/Palestinian and Danish ancestry. She has lived in New York, Romania, Morocco, Denmark and England. Mette Loulou is fascinated by the intersection between her personal identities as a jumping off point to reveal, dismantle and rebuild realities and dreams. She grapples with her past to complicate and better understand her present. Mette Loulou weaves movement and words into the exploration of her embodied histories. She exists in two places at once.

www.metteloulouvonkohl.com

woolen lover (they/them), sound artist

woolen lover is a queer witch mxther sound & movement artist living on the mississippi river. in 2016 they began developing their live-looping performances & have since recorded three albums. they have danced in pieces by Fischer Dance Company, Lisa Kusanagi, Erin Drummond, and Erinn Liebhard, & in 2020 created "the rituals we are searching for," their first solo sound & movement film. creating sound for 1001 Arab Futures combines their loves of interdisciplinary collaborations, inclusive & diverse movements, & site specific pieces. woolen lover strives to host & hold space that is braver, queerer, more inclusive, antiracist, honest, playful, & connected to the Earth.

Find more about woolen lover albums & happenings at:
www.patreon.com/woolenlover
www.woolenlover.bandcamp.com

Samantha Heaver (she/they), Production Coordinator
Samantha is a local arts and nonprofit professional. She transplanted to Winona from the Twin Cities six years ago and enjoys all the opportunities that this lovely community offers. She enjoys spending time outdoors, gardening and hanging out with her dog.

Isaac Sawle (he/him), Technical Assistant
Isaac is a local theatre technician and sometimes artist who grew up on a farm near Rushford, MN. He enjoys carpentry, creative tinkering, and teaching those skills to others. Currently he spends the bulk of his time as the Technical Director for the Winona State University Department of Theater & Dance. When he isn't working on productions his interests include games, music, and exploring the Driftless region.

Angie Vo (she/her), Costume Designer
Angie Vo, is excited for the opportunity to reconnect with Sharon Mansur on this project and to collaborate with her co-directors on the imagery for *1001 Arab Futures*. Her last work *Objet de Desir Inaccessible* (2019) was performed by Threads Dance Project/Karen L. Charles in the galleries of Mia, her collaboration with the company continues in November at the Cowles Center for the Arts with *Out of the Ashes/Tapestries 5.0* and designing with Macalester College for their dance department. She resides in Minneapolis where she has her

design space, practices intuitive healing in bodywork and enjoys traveling through cooking until she is actually able to book a flight to wherever life opens. Angie Vo is a first generation Vietnamese-American, artist and fellow wanderer. Her family arrived in the United States after the fall of Saigon in 1975, her roots have taken hold in Minnesota because she loves watching the passing of time with the four seasons. Her meandering career path has lead her to discover, expand and remain curious along with keeping an open heart.

<https://www.angievo.com>

Anne George (she/her), Visual Consultant for Yara Boustany, Installation Assistant for Andrea Shaker

Anne George is a visual artist currently residing in Winona, MN. Her work involves mixed media works on paper, photography and video, sculpture, and artist books. She has work in the collections of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN and Minneapolis Institute of Arts, among others.

www.annegeorge.net

Sydney Swanson (she/her), Photographer, Videographer, Project Assistant

Sydney is a dancer, photographer, and dance filmmaker recently relocated to Rochester, MN. She crafts images to reveal her subjects' true nature and feels energized when in the flow of creating. Her recent videography work has expanded her comfort zone and idea of what's possible. Sydney finds inspiration in being outside in nature and is excited to bike and garden this summer.

<https://www.swansonphotodance.com/>

Leyya Mona Tawil (she/her), Virtual Artist Discussion Moderator
Leyya Mona Tawil is an artist working with sound, performance, and hybrid transmissions. Tawil is a Syrian, Palestinian, American engaged in the world as such. Her 25-year record of performances have been presented in the US, Europe, Russia, and the Arab world. She is the director of TAC Temescal Art Center in Oakland, CA, and founder of Arab.AMP - a platform supporting futurist art and ideas from the SWANA diaspora, our region, and our allied BIPOC communities.
www.danceElixirLIVE.org @leyyamona @arab.amp

UPCOMING 1001 ARAB FUTURES EVENTS

Online Performance Viewing:

June 17-19, 2021

A special online viewing of the *1001 Arab Futures* live performance recording.

Director of Photography: Sydney Swanson

Videography:

Jenna Amundson, Rich Anthony, Sydney Swanson

Online Watch Party* followed by an Artist Discussion:

June 19 @ 2pm.

Join *1001 Arab Futures* artists in viewing the live performance recording followed by a discussion and Q&A moderated by Syrian, Palestinian, American artist, and Cedar Tree Project alum, Leyya Mona Tawil.

*Online Watch Party supported by Art of the Rural

Virtual Dance Performance Viewing & Watch Party Tickets: Sliding scale \$10-25

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1001-arab-futures-virtual-performance-viewingtickets-154595849347>

Visual Installation by Andrea Shaker:

June 1-28, 2021

Minneapolis based Lebanese American visual artist and *1001 Arab Futures* co-director Andrea Shaker transforms MCA's indoor Galleria Valência space for audience viewings in June.

Through written word and objects, Andrea Shaker's *(fragmented) echoes of future memories: a glimpse into a hallway* explores the transitory nature of a hallway space, while offering glimpses into Shaker's process directing a segment of Sharon Mansur's dance performance: *1001 Arab Futures*.

Free, no tickets required
See MCA website for hours and guidelines: www.mca.smumn.edu

*Please call MCA Director Jamie Schwaba at 262-424-2809 to schedule an alternate viewing appointment.



The Cowles Center for Dance & The Performing Arts Presents: SOLO

Six world premiere solo dance films by the 2018 & 2019 McKnight Dance Fellows

Saturday, September 18, 2021 7:30pm

Goodale Theater

The Cowles Center for Dance & The Performing Arts

www.mcknightdancechoreo.org/solo

MINNESOTA CONSERVATORY FOR THE ARTS (MCA)

MCA, located at the Valencia Arts Center in Winona, MN, provides quality arts education for all ages in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. MCA is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization and affiliate program of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. Jamie Schwaba is the Managing Director of MCA and has been an invaluable partner to *1001 Arab Futures* and The Cedar Tree Project.

<https://mca.smumn.edu>

ART OF THE RURAL

Art of the Rural is a collaborative organization with a mission to advance rural culture and quality of life through relationships that connect communities, cultivate dialogue, and forward rural-urban exchange. Matthew Fluharty is the founder and Executive Director of Art of the Rural and has supported The Cedar Tree Project since its inception in 2017.

<https://artoftherural.org>



PROGRAM NOTE FROM SHARON

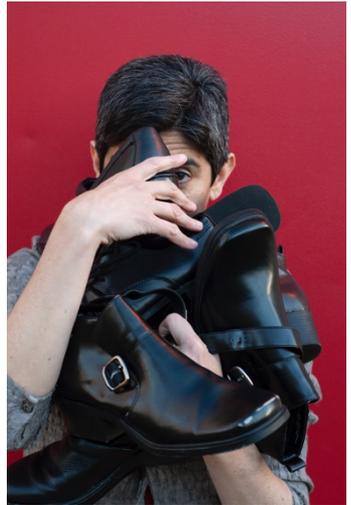
In 2019, through a McKnight Dancer Fellowship commission, I was fortunate to invite three artists of SWANA/Arab heritage: Yara Boustany, Mette Loulou von Kohl, and Andrea Shaker, to work with me towards a solo dance performance. I was excited to be immersed in new creative processes, with other Arab/SWANA artists and consider the concept of Future within the Arab diaspora. Original plans to rehearse in person during 2020 became centered instead in primarily online exchanges over our multiple and shifting geographic distances. The personal and global impacts of COVID, the murder of George Floyd, the political crisis and Beirut port explosion in Lebanon, and the ongoing struggle for freedom in Palestine, among other events, have deeply touched and influenced this project's journey.

Drawing from personal sourcings as well as global events, this performance reflects a glimpse into the diverse realities, identities, and perspectives from our rich conversations and artistic experiments. Our somatic realities. Our caring and support for one another. The project's title is a nod to the *1001 Arabian Nights*, classic fantastical folk tales from the Arab diaspora, often referenced as a precursor to Arab science fiction. I deeply value how *1001 Arab Futures* evolved organically into an open repository to support our past(s), our present(s), and our future imaginings. Ever shifting. Often beyond words but palpable and deeply felt. I journey into these public sharings as the embodied conduit for a generous and gifted group of artists, designers, and production staff who converged together during an extraordinary period of time. With a full heart I am here, meeting you in this unfolding now, open to the next moment.

THE CEDAR TREE PROJECT explores art, cultural heritage, perceptions, and identity through the lens of Southwest Asian & North African (SWANA) and SWANA American artists. CTP amplifies art from the SWANA diaspora and invites people to develop deeper understanding and empathy through artistic exchange. Curated by Keoxa/Winona, MN based dance and interdisciplinary artist Sharon Mansur, events include dance performances, dance films, visual art installations and exhibitions, as well as workshops, community meals, panel discussions, lecture/demonstrations, artist talks and other gatherings with Mansur and guest artists.

THANK YOU'S

Deep gratitude to the following who have journeyed far and wide within this project's creative process: all of the incredibly talented and generous artists, designers, and production staff involved, Jamie Schwaba and Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts, Mary Ellen Childs and Dana Kassel with the McKnight Foundation, Sherrie Fernandez-Williams with the Minnesota State Arts Board, Matthew Fluharty with Art of the Rural, Saint Mary's University Event Services, Infinity Chiropractic Wellness Center & Yoga Studio, Winona State University's Theatre & Dance department, River Rose Remembrance, Jennifer Anderson & Dave Crawford, and creative engineer Eric Wright.



SUPPORT

1001 Arab Futures was commissioned by The Cowles Center as part of their McKnight SOLO Commissioning Program, funded by the McKnight Foundation. It was commissioned on behalf of Sharon Mansur, 2018 McKnight Dancer Fellow. Sharon Mansur, in partnership with the Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts, is a fiscal year 2020 recipient of a Cultural Community Partnership grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature; and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support for this project is being provided by Art of the Rural.



ART OF
THE RURAL



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Arab American National Museum
<https://arabamericanmuseum.org>

Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies
<https://lebanesestudies.ncsu.edu>

Mizna
<https://mizna.org>

Museum of the Palestinian People
<https://mpp-dc.org>

River Rose Remembrance
<https://RiverRoseRemembrance.com>

SWANA Ancestral HUB
<https://SWANAAncestralHUB.org>



Cover photo taken by Sharon Mansur in Lebanon, 2018.
Program photos by Sydney Swanson.