



THE
SWAN
AND
THE
PIMP

BY HILLEL KOGAN

**INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE
INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE - TEL-AVIV
SUZANNE DELLAL CENTRE
Friday 7 December 2018 at 6 PM**

THE SWAN AND THE PIMP

Choreography: **Hillel Kogan**

Dramaturge and Artistic Advisor: **Sharon Zuckerman Weiser**

Dancers: **Carmel Ben Asher, Hillel Kogan**

Original Music: **Rejoicer**

Other music: **P.I. Tchaïkovsky - J Dilla, - C. Saint Saëns**

Lighting: **Ofer Laufer** - Costumes: **Evelyn Terdiman**

Production: **Hillel Kogan Ltd**

Executive producer: **Drôles de Dames**

Co-production: **Hillel Kogan LTD, DdD, Scène Nationale de Châteaувallon,
L'Étincelle de Rouen.**

Thanks to La Briqueterie - Centre de Développement Chorégraphique du Val de Marne.
Hillel Kogan is supported by the Israeli Lottery and the Israeli Ministry of Culture.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/236046734>

Full-length video on demand

AUTHOR'S NOTE



"The Swan and the Pimp" is the second part in a trilogy of duets that deal with the relationship between ethics and aesthetics.

In this piece, I seek to reveal the sexuality, the seduction and the voyeurism that lie beneath the aesthetic-artistic aura of dance. It is a choreographic journey around the clichés of dance and of gender, giving a critical look at the grey areas of the dance world, through the emblematic figure of the swan, and of the gender traditional roles, through the figures of the dancers, pimps and rappers.

SEX BECAME SOMETHING THAT WE CAN'T ANYMORE SEPARATE FROM THE DANCER'S BODY: NOT BECAUSE OF SIGMUND FREUD BUT RATHER BECAUSE OF MTV.



In general, my work is frequently laden with visual responses – and critical, – to canonical images of masculinity and femininity from the world of ballet and culture.

I am willing to expose the ideology embodied in aesthetics, a subject already raised in my work “We Love Arabs”, in the ethnical context (an ironic presentation of the prejudices of a left-wing Israeli choreographer on an Israeli-Arab dancer).

In “The Swan and The Pimp” I focus my criticism on gender issues. The ballet establishment, which in the 19th century was dominated by men only (choreographer, composer, libretto), still preserves the

image of a woman as divine, not real, and sexual. Thus, continues to meet the expectations of those who might be the real pimp – the audience, those whose gaze preserves and sanctifies the sexy/divine image of the female dancer. Swan Lake is probably the most well known piece in the ballet repertoire and the ballerina in the shape of the swan in her white airy costume – the most iconic image. The noble-looking bird is a charmed beautiful and seductive maiden. Only a prince deserves to save her. In this romantic hit ballet, the power shifts from the strong man to the tender, passive woman. But is the white coat of the swan really innocent and pure? And who actually makes sure to

paint the female dancer in black and white? the dichotomous split between the black swan and the white swan in “Swan Lake”, reflects the traditional misogynous division regarding women: a saint or a prostitute. Female dancers were considered historically “easy to get” and quite a strong connection existed between dance and striptease, and even prostitution. Many

artistic myths are referring to that, just ask Edgar Degas or Toulouse-Lautrec. These questions emerge in my work, and embody a deeper discussion of the complex relationship between creator, art and audience.

ON STAGE MYSELF, 44 YEARS OLD GAY MALE DANCER, WITH CARMEL BEN ASHER, 24 YEARS OLD FEMALE DANCER.

Usually, the dance fields, similarly to sports and to modelling, belongs to the young. Our age gap raises fundamental questions related to the viewer and expectations. The male dancer is expected to be strong and virtuosic, a super-man who can lift his woman up in the air, support her and guide her steps. We also know that many male dancers are, like myself, gay. Could the dancer be considered a real man? the aesthetics of dance – and to a great extent the society in which it was created, and of the one that continues to sanctify its values – is my focus, but I do not discuss it merely as a form but as content. The stage world is revealed in the piece as a system of contrasts, just like the traditional ballet: a woman, in front of a man, white ballerina tights against black rapper hoodie, classical music versus electronic sound, the world of the “white ballet” As opposed to “dirty”, street culture.

The absolute contrast gradually dissolves and deconstructs as the piece evolves. The movement composition does not fulfil the traditional power system of ballet – leading man/woman – but introduces an alternative choreographic interpretation which places the male and female, old and young dancers, in a position of mutual dependence.

BIOGRAPHIES

Carmel Ben-Asher

Carmel Ben-Asher was born in 1994 in Israel. Graduated in 2016 from the Dance Workshop in Kibbutz Ga'aton. Collaborates with the Israeli choreographers Noa Zuk, Ohad Fishof, Osnat Kelner, Roni Chadash and Dana Ruttenberg. Received the DanceWEB scholarship in the Vienna Impuls festival in 2017.

Sharon Zuckerman Weiser

Dance Artist- Choreographer/Performer/ Dramaturge.

Born In Israel 1977. Graduated from P.A.R.T.S at 1999. Since then alternating between dancing with others and creating her own work.

Worked with various artists in Europe and Israel, such as Charlotte Vanden Eynde, Jan Decorte, Shani Granot, Arco Renz, Ulrich Rasche, Yasmenn Godder, Arkadi Zaides and others. Her last piece 'Internal Ballistics of the Infantile' was created for the Curtain Up Festival. For the last 9 years Zuckerman became Dance Dramaturge for several independent artists among them: Iris Erez, Maya Brinner and Hillel Kogan. She has been mentoring and teaching in different high education programs, specializing in working on the performative skills of dancers. From next year on will be the head director of the New Choreography Program in Kelim Center at Bat Yam. Mother of three fairies.

Hillel Kogan

Hillel Kogan is an award-winning choreographer, dancer, dramaturge and teacher, whose work has been performed in venues and festivals all over the world. Kogan has performed as a guest dancer with Batsheva Dance Company and works as Assistant to Choreographer Ohad Naharin since 2005, in Batsheva Dance Company in Israel, as well as worldwide. Awards include The Israel Lottery Landau prize (2015), The Israel Critics' Circle's Outstanding Choreographer of 2013, and he was named as a Promising Choreographer by the European magazine Tanz in 1999 and 2014. Kogan is a member of the Israeli Choreographers' Association since 2009 and was appointed by the Israeli ministry of culture as co-artistic director of the Curtain Up Festival in 2015 and 2016. He collaborates with various choreographers in the Israeli independent dance scene. He works internationally as a teacher in Gaga movement language, repertoire (his own and other's) and improvisation, and has taught at companies such as Norway's Carte Blanche, Gauthier Dance in Germany, IT Danza in Spain, and more.

In 2018 he was invited to create a piece for Ballet du Capitole in France (performed in Theatre Garonne and Montpellier Danse festival). His latest pieces are We Love Arabs, The Swan and the Pimp, The Rite of Spring and Obscene Gesture.



PRESSE

"Kogan creates a kaleidoscope in which the frames change slowly and safely with a wonderful eye sensitivity to the changing geometric relationship. This is a fascinating and touching picture, mainly because of its relative simplicity, one that renews where everything has already been done. This is due to Kogan's tremendous sensitivity to shape, lines and volumes, and also to its remarkably precise performance. It was impossible to ignore the quality of Carmel's performance, through which it revealed sensitivity and surprising intensity of

expression, based on nuances that gave an unexpected intimacy to the work. It was thrilling because of the underlying sense of mastery, one that is expected from mature and safe performers. [...] A dancer and creator of international renown, considered one of the two or three most brilliant and original creators who have established themselves in the Israeli dance world of the current generation, without argument."

Ora Brafman, Danse / Talk, 30/10/17



"The Swan and the Pimp" is an intelligent and witty work that is performed in an excellent way."

Idit Suslik, City Mouse, Israël, 6/9/17

"Kogan's brilliance shines through in his ability to inject humor into the whole show. He whips out unexpected talents like rapping, leaving the audience in a fit of laughter, and even emerges in a surprise "costume" in the final scene to put forth an epilogue that comes full circle as the initial vulnerabilities of a young dancer in crisis are transposed onto the once confident choreographer. Many performances grace the halls of the Suzanne Dellal Center, yet

the immersive nature of Hillel Kogan's carefully crafted piece draws the audience in from the moment they step foot inside the building right up to the prolonged applause as the lights come back on. Simply put, Kogan has done it again."

Time Out Tel-Aviv, 09/05/17

THE SWAN AND THE PIMP

Israeli Premiere
in Tel Aviv, September 2017

Work in progress presentation
La Briqueterie, February 2018

French Premiere
15 & 16 May in l'Étincelle - Rouen

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