

**DES CHANTS ET DES MOTS
REPRIS EN CHŒUR**

Conversation with

Maya KHALDI

A musician, artist, composer from Palestine

**Other World: Exploring
the Collective in the
Music**

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Mots clés : Sounds. Cultural practice. Decolonization. Indigenous.
Artistic experimentation.

Introduction

Much like other parts of the Levant and North Africa, Palestine has a rich cultural history that encompasses a diverse range of musical and performance practices. Indigenous performance traditions, often referred to as *turath* (*folklore*)¹ form a significant part of Palestinian history and have not been given sufficient attention by scholars of theatre and performance studies.¹ Here, the term 'Indigenous practices' refers to performance traditions that are not based on European-style theatre. Examples of such Indigenous practices include puppet theatre, sword dancing, and Sufi rituals. The importance of these practices is not only that they challenge European cultural supremacy by going beyond eurocentric definitions of performance, but that they also create new avenues for artistic experimentation through engagement with Palestinian cultural history in a manner that is relevant to the Palestinian community. Such practices have had a significant influence on the works of several contemporary musicians and theatre troops such as al-Basta Theatre, Bint Mbareh, and Maya Khaldi whose work contributes to the decolonization of Palestinian cultural practice.² The following chapter consists of an interview with Maya Khaldi, a Palestinian musician from Jerusalem, whose most recent album *Other World*, provides a great example of how experimentation with indigenous traditions can lead to new forms of artistic innovation that engage with the culturally specific aspects of Palestinian performance history.

1. Although there are several studies on Palestinian theatre, scholars have not sufficiently explored performances traditions that are not based on European-style theatre and their influence on contemporary artistic practice. For example, see Gabriel Varghese, *Palestinian Theatre in the West Bank: Our Human Faces* (London: Palgrave, 2020), Erin B. Mee, "The Cultural Intifada: Palestinian Theater in the West Bank," *The Drama Review* 56, no.3 (2012): pp. 167-177, Samer al-Saber, "Beyond Colonial Troops: Two Productions of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in Palestine," *Critical Survey* 28, no. 3 (2016): pp. 27-46. Reuven Snir briefly mentions certain traditions such as *Karakoz* in *Palestinian Theatre* (Berlin: Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden, 2005).

2. For more on the work of Bint Mbareh see Dia Barghouti, 'Indigenous Sufi Theatre in Palestine: Rain Summoning in the Performances of Bint-Mbareh,' *Jadaliyya*, 11 September 2020.

The Decolonization of Palestinian Cultural Practice

It is important to provide a brief explanation of the sociocultural context in which Khaldi is working to clarify how her work relates to the decolonization of Palestinian cultural practice. There are two primary ways in which the work of artists who experiment with Indigenous traditions contribute to the decolonization of Palestinian music and theatrical production. First, the return to Indigenous traditions creates opportunities for artistic innovation challenging the false notion that Palestinian artists can only 'develop' through dialogue with Euro-American traditions. However, it must be stressed that the inclusion of indigenous forms in a performance does not necessarily mean that it is challenging European cultural supremacy, rather it is how artists engage with these forms and their relation to the broader context that determines the meaning that such practices take on in the present day.

As is discussed in greater detail in the following interview, many Indigenous traditions (including music) share features of the so-called European/American 'avant-garde.' As is well known, the European/American 'avant-garde' was significantly influenced by performance traditions from other parts of the world. These indigenous practices, as well as European/American artist's misreading of them, have significantly influenced European/American avant-garde performances.³ Unfortunately, when attempting to engage in new forms of experimentation, Palestinian artists often draw on the works of European/American artists and neglect indigenous performance practices that share many of the same features of the so-called European/American 'avant garde.' This raises important questions as to why Palestinian theatre-makers have not sufficiently explored or engaged with their own performance traditions. Here, it must be stressed that I am not referring to merely performing songs or plays derived from Palestinian performance history. Rather, the focus is on the ability to innovate through artistic experimentation in a culturally specific manner that speaks to the Palestinian community.

3. See Marvin Carlson, 'Avant-Garde Drama in the Middle East', in James Harding and John Rouse (eds), *Not the Other: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2006), p. 125-137. Also see Christopher Innes, *Holy Theatre: Ritual and the Avant Garde* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).



Moreover, experimentation with Indigenous practices contributes to the decolonization of Palestinian art by challenging the economic and political structures that reinforce European cultural supremacy. Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1993, following the Oslo Accords, Palestinian cultural practice underwent a process of institutionalization with the establishment of theatre and art NGOS.⁴ Because these NGOs are reliant of foreign funding, they assimilate the political and cultural discourses of donors who want to ‘develop’ Palestinian artistic practice through dialogue with Euro-American traditions and artists. The problem with these exchanges, and the manner in which these art NGOs operate more generally, is that they fail to engage with the worldviews, needs, and traditions of the Palestinian community, who, more often than not, have little interest in these so-called ‘development’ projects.⁵ The importance of Khaldi’s work is that it engages with collective history in a manner that does not seek to create museumized performances of past traditions, nor do they attempt to ‘develop’ Palestinian art through the adoption of European methods. Rather, they creatively explore their relationship to the past in a manner that is specifically accentuated for a Palestinian audience.

4. Rashna Daruis Nicholson, ‘On the (Im)possibilities of a Free Theatre: Theatre Against Development in Palestine,’ *Theatre Research International* 46, no.1 (2021), p. 4–22. Also see Lara Khaldi, Yazan Khalili, and Marwa Arsanios, ‘What We Talk about When We Talk about Crisis: A Conversation, Part 1,’ *e-flux*, issue 111, September 2020.

5. Ibid.

'*Alam Tani (Other World)*

Innovative, poetic, and highly nuanced in its exploration of the past, Khaldi's album '*Alam Tani [Other World]*' represents a significant contribution to the fields of music and performance. Inspired by archival material (traditional Palestinian songs), recordings of conversations with her grandmother, as well as a compilation of texts that had special significance for the artist, Khaldi's '*Alam Tani*' adopts an innovative approach to the exploration of Indigenous performance traditions. She not only explores indigenous Palestinian sources such as *tahalil* (songs of praise), but also alters, re-invents, and develops new musical practices. Drawing on both archival material and oral history, she reshapes the form, content, and meaning of these sources in a manner that makes them relevant to the conversation on the decolonization of Palestinian cultural practice. This is not only because her work stresses the aesthetic and cultural value of indigenous sources, but also because it challenges the dominant modes of musical production that seek to either 'museumize' traditional songs or appropriate Euro-American methods and practices.

Perhaps the most defining feature of Khaldi's work is her ability to innovate, to take even the most common features of the Palestinian soundscape (such as the *zagharit*, ululation) and transform the listener's relationship to these familiar sounds, while also raising questions about Palestinians' relationship to their cultural heritage and the forms that such practices can take on the future. Adopting a more critical approach than musicians who attempt to preserve the so-called 'original' form of these songs, Khaldi examines the tension between the individual and the collective by altering various aspects of these traditions without alienating them from the contexts from which they have emerged. In fact, these traditions were created through a similar dialogue between the individual and the collective, which led to the creation of forms, aesthetics, and performance practices specific to the Palestinian socio-cultural context.

Moreover, this element of change is fundamental to the survival of indigenous traditions, which are constantly altered by the societies in which they are performed. To not engage in this process of change is to attempt to negate the disruption in Palestinian cultural life caused by the ethnic cleansing and mass



displacement of Palestinians in the 1948 Nakba. And, as already noted by Franz Fanon, the decolonization of cultural practice cannot occur without the acknowledgement of the disruption caused by colonialism and defiance of the existing power structures.⁶ In Palestine, in the context of neoliberalism and Israeli settler colonialism, such defiance occurs through the aesthetic, economic, and political choices made by artists, which determines the meaning that their work takes on in the present day. And it is no coincidence that much of the works that challenge the existing power structures are created by independent artists who are subject to less restrictions than the theatre and art NGOs. Among them is Khaldi, who brilliantly explores how collective Palestinian history can re-shape contemporary artistic practice. Moreover, as Khaldi points out in the interview, it is only by altering these traditions that we can truly make them our own, by adding a personal element that contributes to the creation of a collective culture, which not only embodies the past but is also shaped by the present. In the context of Israeli settler colonialism, the importance of such work cannot be underestimated, for it is yet another means of keeping Palestine alive. Although there is much that can be said about Khaldi's rich and complex work, the defining features of her music are best described by the artist herself in the following interview.

6. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 168–99.

Interview with *Maya Khaldi*

DB: Tell me about your artistic process, how do you begin the process of composition?

MK: I always start with the lyrics, with the words, so I begin by writing text. With the album [*Alam Tani, Other World*], I didn't want to write lyrics that rhyme. This is because I knew I wanted to work with folklore [which often rhymes] and I knew that I wanted to break the form and for me this took the shape of trying not to rhyme. This was important for me because I wanted to work with a text that did not already have a [musical] form built into it.

DB: What were the traditional sources that you drew on for the album?

MK: I have been working with material from archives for several years, even before beginning work on this album. I had already been to the sound archives of the *Popular Arts Centre (Markaz al-Fann al-Sha'bi)* and had listened to hours of recordings. Initially, I was not sure what to do with this material, but I knew I wanted to be closer to the place I was from [by creating music derived from the history and performance traditions of Palestine]. I studied opera and jazz, and this always gave me a feeling of being distant and I knew I wanted to know more about Palestinian musical traditions. My method of learning centres on exploration, not merely learning how to sing a traditional song, but also experimentation. I chose the things I connect to from the archives: women singing, lyrics and sounds I liked such as the *mijwiz* (a wind instrument indigenous to the Levant).

DB: Can you tell me more about how you composed the lyrics?

MK: I wrote the lyrics using some of my favourite books. I created some rules for myself (such as choosing two words from each paragraph every ten pages), so for example, *Daw'* (light, one of the songs in the album) was composed this way, drawing on a book by Hussien al-Barghouti titled *Sa'akun Bayn al-Lawz (I Will Be Among the Almond Trees)*. I truly felt a connection to this book because of the way the author describes the landscape of his village, but also because the book is about death. I chose for this to be my process because it removes me from



myself. I am less judgemental, and I am curating the words, and although it might not directly feel that is a form of self-expression, it in fact is, because you are intuitively choosing the words that you find meaning in.

DB: Do you feel that you are also going beyond yourself in the sense that you are connecting to something shared that is part of the community? Also, in the sense of *turath* (cultural heritage) and roots?

MK: Yes definitely, and it is part of a (cultural) context that Hussien Barghouti was also in, but most importantly for me it removes me from myself.

DB: How did the songs that you listened to in the archives influence you work?

MK: In many ways. There were some songs, like the *tablilih* (song of praise) for Sami, which is a folkloric song that I could connect to. I used a few of the lines that are part of that song. But throughout the entire process I constantly asked myself: What is my relation to *turath* (cultural heritage)? When we speak of *turath*, it always pertains to a time that no longer exists, or something that seems to be frozen in time, especially in the archives. You can also see this in the work of other musicians, with what they are doing with 'folklore,' and part of what they are trying to do is preserve this Palestinian cultural heritage. Intuitively, one feels the urge to preserve folklore, but I did not want it to be something static, I wanted to understand what [Palestinian cultural heritage] means to me in the current moment and how I can relate to it from the place [time, and context] I live in, without attempting [to return to] its time. I also wanted to explore how I can change these traditions. It took me a while to allow myself to change them. How do you change folklore, which is also tied to the issue of origins and indigeneity (*usuliya*)? But in the end, I decided that I had the right to change it because it belongs to me [*because I also am part of the Palestinian community*] and I can alter it in whatever way I want. But at the same time, I was aware I did not want to include the piano and the contrabass or to do a fusion or jazz arrangement because then I will be trying to give it the character of another culture, which would essentially be the dominant western (Euro/American) culture. To make this material more accessible to me and more accessible to [Palestinian] people, because eventually the purpose of creating this music is to share it with others, I

did not want it to have the character of the dominant western culture which robs us of the feeling that our culture is as important.

DB: It is interesting that you are also making this statement aesthetically. It is not just about the words, or the process, but also the aesthetics of the music itself.

MK: Yes, and that was the thing that was difficult. How do you keep the aesthetics of folklore while also experimenting with its form, and this is what was so difficult. I am in a constant search of what this means. And it was not easy to understand the aesthetics of this (indigenous) music. And you cannot do this without breaking it in some way so that you understand its elements. It is difficult to break folklore because in a way you need to remove it from its context. Our folkloric music is usually performed in ceremonies, in weddings, for special occasions such as harvesting olives. So, to engage with these traditions I had to remove them from these contexts, and this requires that I find a new context, one that is my own, which gives them a new meaning.

DB: Do you think this element of change is important so that these traditions do not become museumized and be relevant to the present?

MK: Absolutely, and that is the point. How do you continue to make it live? How do you give it a life of its own? And not just static or frozen in time or put in a museum to be looked at. And the idea of collecting *turath* (folklore) and putting it in a museum and not engaging with it is a very colonial western idea. Creating these museums composed of things stolen from other cultures. It kills it [folklore] when you take it out of its context, and you freeze it in time. The only way for me to make these traditions living was to give it meanings that I feel or that I connect to. For example, the *tablilih* (song of praise) for Sami, I sang it for my brother.

DB: And that makes it personal as well, and that is what culture is, personal expressions that are in dialogue with and contribute to the creation of the collective and that includes taking what exists in our culture and then changing it.

MK: Absolutely.



DB: I found the song with the *zagharit* (ululations) to be one of the most interesting songs because you took a form that still exists, I don't know if the rest of the songs you worked on are still performed or not, you engaged something that everyone who is Palestinian has heard before, a very common sound, in a manner that was quite experimental.

MK: This specific song (with the *zagharit*) was incredibly challenging to me, because intuitively that is what I wanted to hear. When you are in a wedding and everyone is ululating, people won't be ululating to the same note. Everyone ululates to a different note, and this creates something powerful sonically. But because I am a musician, I needed to grid it up and it was incredibly challenging because I was creating a harmony for a vocal expression that doesn't have a harmony. And harmony is more of a western musical language, so deciding to do this was a challenge for me. But because I thought carefully about it, and I did it very intentionally I felt it was an acceptable thing to do. And in the end, I used *zagharit* and put harmonies with them. The other thing is that you can't control the speed of the *lulululish* (*zagharit*, ululation) unless perhaps you are very well trained musically. I had to grid it (the ululation) up in the electronic medium and this gave it a more futuristic tone because I do not think I could sing *lulululish* for four consecutive minutes at the same speed. This is a very electronic thing.

DB: What about the other songs, are they still performed? For example, the *tahlilih* of Sami?

MK: I have heard versions of these songs from our grandmothers, but now I am not sure anyone uses it. But it also has a certain similarity to other songs of praise (*tahalil*) from the levant, for example, Fayrouz's song *Yala Tnam*, aesthetically the elements in this song are remarkably close to the *tahlilih*. It is possible that there are areas in which these songs are still performed, but in the society, we are in and the people around us, I don't know anyone who is still performing this song.

DB: In the album there are other songs that were directly derived from the material you found in the archives.

MK: Yes, Bi-Qalamin is one of them, part of the song is from a wedding song. What I did with this song is that I embroidered it with another composition, I composed around it, and I gave it my own meaning. I used my mother's swing magazines for the rest of the lyrics. On each page I would choose three to four words. I chose to use these magazines because they relate to the idea of a wedding and how in our society women's value depends on their marital status and their dowry. For me this was part of my exploration of how women are viewed in society.

DB: So, it was a critique of how women are viewed?

MK: Yes, exactly.

DB: Is this why you chose to include part of a wedding song in Bi-Qalamin? To use part of the original song and then compose other lyrics that transform it into a critique.

MK: Absolutely.

DB: This reinforces your idea that we don't need to museumize this music, instead we should be critical of material derived from the past and give it a new meaning that defies sexism in the present context. Specifically In this song (Bi-Qalam), there is a part where you are counting, I wasn't sure how you wanted listeners to interpret it, but when I heard I felt it was as if you were including me in the artistic process. Were you trying to include the audience in the process or was it something else?

MK: I think it's wonderful that you felt that because it was about the process of measurement. The numbers are the measurements from the magazine. In a certain sense it is a process, a process of measurement, of starting to make a dress or a garment.

DB: When you are creating this music do you have a specific audience in mind? Are you specifically creating it for a local audience that will understand the music in a different way?



MK: Yes, it is for a local Palestinian audience. I do not think anyone else would understand it in the same way. But in the end, music, like every other form of art, will be perceived and experienced by each person in a unique way. Even when you aim for a specific audience you can't expect that people will understand your art exactly as you want, unless you write about it and ensure that people are looking at the way you want. But when you put an album out into the electronic world you can't control anything.

DB: Yes, of course. But I am thinking of how you accentuate things because artists are always communicating with someone. I felt that in your work you are specifically speaking to a Palestinian audience.

MK: Definitely.

DB: And do you think it is correct to say that this is also part of your critique of how music and the performing arts more generally operate in the Palestinian context?

MK: Many musicians and artists are attempting to museumize *turath*. For them, this is how it used to be, and this is how it will stay. The album is also my way of objecting to this. *Turath* is alive, it's something that is yours, that is ours collectively, and we all have the right to deal with it in whatever way we want, to make it current and specific to our context in the present. Also, with music it is all about the imagination - you can't see it, you can only sense it with your hearing, so there is something that is much more abstract about it - not just abstract but it's a lot about imagination. For me, the album was a way of saying there is also the future, not just the past and the present, there is also [the meanings that these traditions can take on] later. Colonialism imposes an inability to anticipate or to contemplate or to imagine our future.

DB: I also think it is a critique of the problematic idea that there is nothing in our own culture that is worth exploring, which we can draw upon to create and develop art in the future. I don't know if it's the same in music, but in theatre many of the things that are considered 'avant garde' are actually things that have existed in other cultures for centuries. It is problematic that Europe and America are seen as the centres of

theatrical innovation when people from other places, including Palestine, have been using these techniques for centuries. Is it the same in music? Are their experimental elements in traditional music that challenge Euro-American cultural supremacy?

MK: Absolutely. I think what is most experimental (from a western point of view) about the traditions that are part of our culture is that *we create collectively*. That things change and develop without there being a centralized source for it. In the western musical tradition, there is always a composer, and his name is always written. And even in the west, in its own way, their folklore is also disappearing because there is always a centralized source-

DB: It is very individualized.

MK: Exactly, I think that is why what we do is considered very 'experimental.' We do not know who wrote these [traditional] songs and there is no need for anyone to know- it is never attributed to a specific person. But also, now in a lot of contemporary works in the west that incorporate a lot of repetition-

DB: And of course, repetition is part of many rituals-

MK: And it is very present in our culture. Repetition is one of the aesthetic features of our *turathi* (folkloric) music. There is always a melody that is repeated, there is always a rhythm that is repeated, even the words are repeated, but each time there is something different [about how this repetition occurs]. The ornaments or *al- 'Urrab*, which really characterizes our music, is a particularly important part of our musical aesthetics. They [in western music] have harmony, we don't have harmony, we have *tazyin* (ornamentation).

DB: What is *tazyin* (ornamentation)?

MK: *Tazyin* (ornamentation) means alterations in the *lahin* (melody). This same feature can be commonly found in visual art from our region. There aren't clear cut lines, there are always divisions in the lines, this is a form of visual ornamentation. And this is an especially important part of our aesthetics.



DB: To go back to the point you raised earlier about things being considered 'experimental' from a western point of view, perhaps we could also say that your work is inviting us to rethink what 'experimental' or 'avant-garde' even means? or if the use of these terms is even necessary when talking about Palestinian music? since many of the features of 'experimental' or 'avant-garde' performance have existed in our culture for a very long time.

MK: Certainly.

DB: One of the songs in the album features the voice of your grandmother, can you tell me a bit more about this song?

MK: With this specific song, even though it also contains material from the archives, I felt that it also includes part of my personal history. It contains recordings of my grandmother who died at the age of ninety-seven. She was born in 1922 and she lived through the Nakba (1948) and the 1967 war. She always used to tell us stories about Haifa before the 1948 Nakba. She loved to tell stories, it truly nourished her to tell me and my siblings these stories, she felt that it was her purpose. She also had the need to tell us these stories so that she could relive them because she is now in a quite different reality than what once was. For me, for us to remember, listen to, and relive these stories from my grandmother's life in Haifa allows us to imagine Palestine before the Israeli occupation.

DB: And this is an anticolonial act - reimagining history.

MK: Exactly. That is why my grandmother's stories were always important to me, and lucky I recorded her telling these stories. She used to tell me these stories while we were cooking together. Near the end of her life, my grandmother couldn't cook anymore, so we would cook together- this was the space for her to tell her stories. [One of these stories] was about her father who was from al-Sham, from Damascus, and how no one wanted to employ her brother because he was [not considered] Palestinian but Shami (from Damascus). I thought it was wonderful that her father was from Damascus and her mother is Palestinian.

DB: It brings us back to a time in which these borders did not exist.

MK: Exactly, these borders did not exist, and there were also these prejudices [about where people were from]. There was space for that kind of prejudice. For me this is especially important, to be able to imagine historically a space in which the Israeli occupation or British colonialism did not exist. This allows me to also imagine a future without occupation. I also used the sounds created while we were cooking together such as the sounds of the *nikhalih* (bran), we were making spices, we put them in the mixer, the process is wonderful, to see transformation of substance from one form to another, and the intermingling that occurs between them. This is what I was trying to reflect in the music.

DB: What about the other sounds that are part of the song?

MK: I later found electronic sounds that were like the organically made sounds [of the cooking process]. This was also my way of addressing the issue of time, and the transformation. This specific song is very much about time- how it is nonlinear. There are many transitions from real sounds to electronic sounds. I also added a song from the archive that I sing that says, 'I have for a time been waiting and I have loved ones who are waiting.' I used this specific song because it is about time (*want*), the age (*al-zaman*), and the passage of time.

DB: In a way it seems like this song is representative of the album more generally, in the sense that you are choosing elements through which to explore your relationship with your roots and your relationship to history- but a history rooted in the present through your grandmother, the songs from the archive, the patriarchal structures that are part of our present that you reject. But what I find so valuable about your work is that it shows how we can draw on our history to innovate and create something new, while also acknowledging that certain parts of it should be rejected, and all this can be found in the album.

MK: For me it was important that the album was not only an example of this way of working with *turath* (indigenous sources), but that it also has an influence. [I wanted it to be an] inspiration, something to go back to [for those who want to experiment] that has already broken down [various aspects of these traditions]. [Much of this work has been done by] Kamilya Jubran who has been living in Paris for twenty years, most of her audience is European. And this is the



thing that is interesting, I do not want to reduce our identity to being Palestinian, because we live in an area with borders that were created by colonialists, but despite Kamliya's work being distinctly Palestinian, Palestinian audiences struggle to engage with and comprehend her work. There is a rejection, we are rejecting innovation and this form of thinking ahead.

DB: Do you think that this is also due to the colonization of cultural production which also has an influence on aesthetics?

MK: Yes, Kamliya Jubran engages with music as an entity that is living, it is flexible and changeable. The colonial approach rejects this notion that culture is changeable. She is breaking this image of culture being static, and this is one of the reasons Palestinian audiences reject her work, even though it is a form of progress and innovation [because of the prevalence and influence of Eurocentric ideas and approaches to cultural practice].

DB: Are there other examples of Palestinian musicians, other than your own and that of Bint Mbareh whose work you think is attempting to innovate in the same way?

MK: From Palestine no. But there are several artists from the region that are experimenting with *turath* (folklore). The only other Palestinian musicians I can think of are those who were part of Sabrine.

DB: That included Kamliya Jubran-

MK: Yes, but Said Murad was the composer. Sabrin emerged in a revolutionary period (in the 1980s), and I think this is why Sabrine created the most innovative music. Now we do not think of it as 'new' but at the time it was very innovative. In the beginning it was difficult for audiences to engage with this music, but with time they accepted and embraced it, and the reason was that they were living in a revolutionary period. They had the capacity to comprehend and engage with the change. We are not living in a revolutionary moment.

DB: Is this because of cultural hegemony, which affects how audiences perceive and engage with music, specifically with work that challenges the existing power structures?

MK: Absolutely.

Conclusion

Since this interview, Khaldi has performed *Alam Tani* in Ramallah, Haifa, Jerusalem, and London. Her work is relevant to the decolonization of cultural practice in both Europe and locally as it highlights the richness of Palestinian collective history, which, not only serves as inspiration for new methods of artistic experimentation, but also allows its audiences to imagine alternative futures free of the restrictions and borders imposed by colonialism. Moreover, as already explained in the interview, Khaldi's music challenges European cultural supremacy by showing the value of indigenous sources and traditions, which have much to offer to both Palestinian and non-Palestinian performers, musicians, and theatre-makers. And although there are difficulties with presenting work that goes beyond so many of the established boundaries, there is no doubt Khaldi's work is an immensely important contribution to the Palestinian performing arts, one that highlights the importance of drawing on the collective when attempting to innovate and imagine a 'revolutionary moment' that gives value to the culturally specific aspects of Palestinian performance history and the various ways in which it can develop in the future ■





REPENSER L'AGIR
COLLECTIF