

MATRIMONIA

Fatma Oussaifi & Rosalie Wanka



Fatma Oussaifi & Rosalie Wanka. Photo Paola Evelina Gallarato

MATRIMONIA

Duo - 20min – work in progress

[link to full length video](#)

*"The omission of the feminine in the dictionary
contributes more than you might think to
the omission of the feminine in law".
Hubertine Auclert. 1898*

*"Most often in history
"anonymous" was a woman".
Virginia Woolf*

"In our research, we departed from the word **PATRIMOINE** ("heritage") and landed on the edge of an enchanted world responding to the word **MATRIMOINE**."
(FO and RW)

"Tango is a dance where two things are essential: embracing and walking together. The first embrace experienced by every human being is that of the woman/mother. Embracing and accompanying each other along the way deserve to be part of the universal intangible heritage"
(FO and RW).

Tango, a dance originating in Argentina and Uruguay and now practiced all over the world, was inscribed on Wednesday September 30, 2009 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, at a meeting in Abu Dhabi, where 76 other traditions from 27 countries were also recognized.
(Source: UNESCO)

MATRIMONIA is a manifesto of the female body on the long road to self-(re-)appropriation.

MATRIMONIA is a manifesto of the female psyche on the long ascent to wisdom and resilience.

MATRIMONIA revolves around movement and words. Words are therefore crucial here, and the chosen texts are not the result of random chance. As the word universal often implicitly implies 'masculine', our attention was doubly drawn to the call of universal heritage/*patrimoine*.

As for movement, it spans a broad field, from tango to contemporary dance and physical theater. With the support of dance and video projection, Oussaifi and Wanka take us into a contemporary feminist universe.

In **MATRIMONIA**, Fatma Oussaifi and Rosalie Wanka take the stand of women on a path of evolution and wisdom. A challenge that doesn't fight, doesn't oppose, doesn't seek to win any battle except perhaps that of solidarity, philanthropy and sisterhood.

On stage, they experiment with recklessness, denial, rivalry and fear, then recognize each other and it's up to empathy, solidarity and love to rub off on their relationships. Along the way, they come to realize that their journey is not going to be a face-to-face confrontation, but an altruistic odyssey.

It's a long way from Barbie to Baba Yaga, but well worth the effort.

They dance the tango together, which can take on both the air of a boxing match and the allure of a consoling, comforting embrace.

STAGING

The show opens with the words of a tango projected on the wall, then translated into Arabic and recited in voice-over. This is not just any tango. It's not a tango about romantic love, nor is it a nostalgic tango about one's hometown or the past, to take up the most common themes of the genre.

This tango is called "un crimen" - a crime - and poetically narrates the confession of a femicide and its absolution as a crime of honor.

F.O. and R.W. have chosen this Tango to question the patriarchal principle and the legitimacy of the notion of Heritage/*Patrimoine* through tango.

Reminder: Argentine Tango was declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2009.



[link to full length video](#)

USING TANGO FOR THE FEMINIST CAUSE

Fatma Oussaifi, Tunisian, and **Rosalie Wanka**, German, both multi-disciplinary dancers, share a long practice of Argentine tango.

Tango, more than a dance, is a popular artistic manifestation that originates from a very specific socio-cultural environment: Buenos Aires and Montevideo. In its staging of bodies, rituals, social codes and attitudes, the Tango addresses highly socio-political issues as well as the very current question of gender identities.

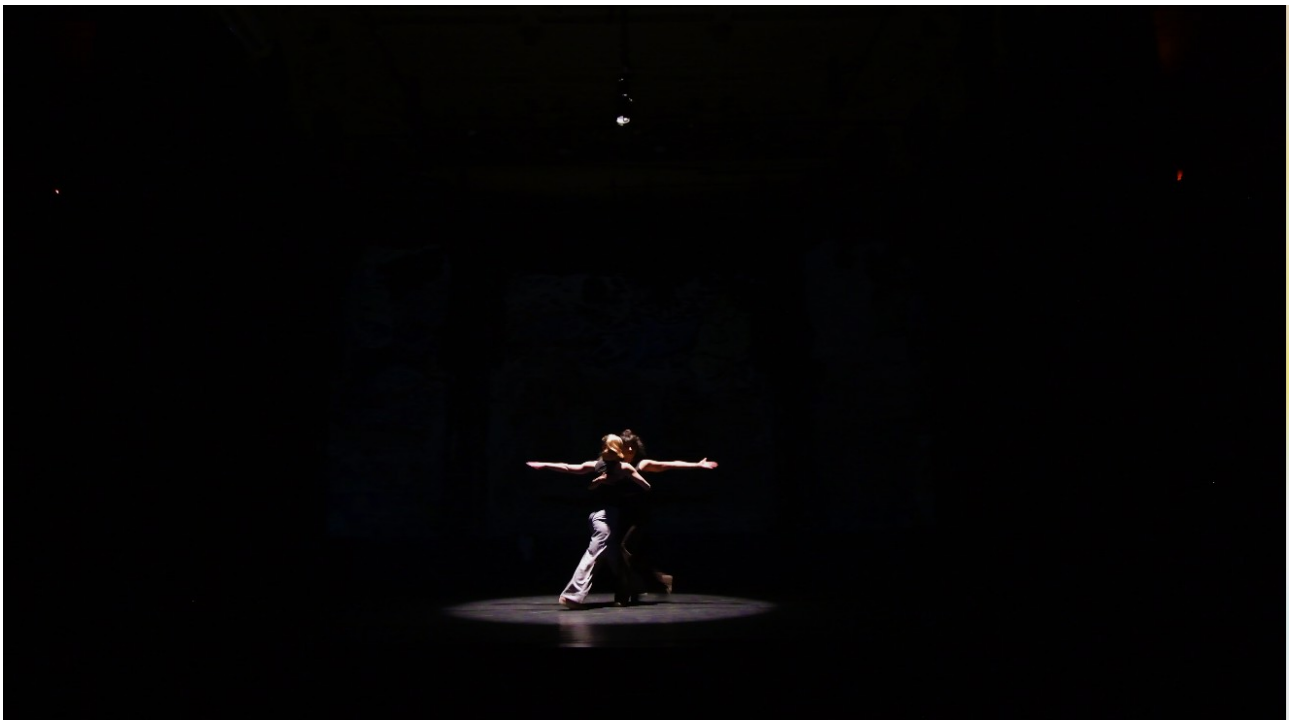
On a technical and choreographic level, tango is an improvisational dance, highly complex and subtle, made up of two complementary but non-gendered roles. The spirals that the partners weave with their movements intertwine their bodies, insinuating a sensual, harmonious and co-dependent relationship, where the movement of one is the condition for the movement of the other. To be able to improvise together with this complex language, you need great consciousness, sensitivity, listening and unconditional attention to your partner and to the present moment.

In this sense, tango is an introspective, intuitive dance, and perceived deeply mystical in its symbiosis of the dancing partners.

All these values associated with tango are increasingly reappropriated as being linked to femininity, or associated with the feminine archetype (and the 'sacred feminine'). They contrast with the '*mainstream*' image of tango 'for export' that you come across on any search engine, which is extremely gendered and notoriously machist and sexist: Often featuring a sensual, determined-looking white South American woman in a red dress and high heels, in the arms of/leaning on a seductive, protective, strong and viril dark-haired South American man with piercing eyes, slicked-back hair and dressed in black. The asymmetrical positions of the two bodies convey a sense of submission. The sexual tension is palpable (see annexe).

In this project, Argentine tango is seen through a relational prism. It is used by Oussaifi and Wanka as a barometer of current relationships between women, and of the heritage they pass down from generation to generation. Without denying the effect of 5,000 years of patriarchy on their bodies and psyche, or taking this as a target, they put the value of the links that are forged between them back at the heart of the matter, in a world still predominantly governed by men and a narrative still mainly written by men.

« By choosing to use Tango as an artistic tool in the context of this piece, we took the liberty of appropriating this language to tell our own stories. As a result, the tango, with its seemingly macho appearance, but which remains a malleable artistic expression, becomes a feminist instrument serving a women's cause, written and danced by women. »
(FO & RW)



**These pictures have been taken during the IVth Festival des Premières Chorégraphiques - Al badil. Tunis. February 2024.*

STARTING POINT

"Mirror my beautiful mirror, tell me who is the most beautiful?"

Two women meet in the 21st century. Somewhere in the western world. They carry a heavy burden of patriarchy's historically recent but brutal invasion of public space, vocabulary and customs.

They grew up on two different continents.

In their books and on their university benches, the word feminism was very often associated with the word fight. As for the word "woman", it was often associated with expressions with strong protective or diminishing connotations. Women's cause, women's day, women's ministry, women's rights, violence against women, among many other untitled attentions.

In spite of themselves, and still today, they continue to relive the same experience that the Western world and its colonial heritage have deeply inscribed in the female psyche: the spirit of competition and self-devaluation, competition as the first approach, and sacrosanct social validation, mainly from men.

Despite all this, among the women of their generation and those of their mothers before them, there are a few niches where tongues are loosened, precipitating an awakening of consciousness and heralding a great and noble wisdom. But they remain a minority among the minority, marginal among the marginalized. For the trend in most intra-female relationships is still competition.

Mirror my beautiful mirror, tell me who is the most beautiful?"

(FO)





TECHNICAL RIDER

- Minimum stage size : 4x6m
- basic lights permitting 3 senital spots
- sound system for mp3
- beamer of min. 5000 Lumen

1 rehearsal day in the Studio necessary before going on stage

2 people traveling:

- Fatma Oussaifi from Paris / France, unless on tour
- Rosalie Wanka from Munich / Germany, unless on tour

BUDGET

Preparation / traveling time / adjustment sound, costumes, projections / communication / management	300 €
1 rehearsal day on the spot in Studio	200 €
1 performance day including stage rehearsal, build up and break down	500 €
TOTAL per person	1000 €
TOTAL for the show / 2 performer	2000 €

This budget does not include

- traveling costs, per diems and hosting,
 - Music rights
 - Technician on the spot
- which have to be covered / provided separately!

CREDITS

Idea | Concept | Choreography | Interpretation

Fatma Oussaifi & Rosalie Wanka

Text MATRIMOINE

Fatma Oussaifi

Costumes | Light design

Fatma Oussaifi & Rosalie Wanka

Lay out | graphic design projections

Fatma Oussaifi

Sound composition

Fred Metayer

Sound track

Rosalie Wanka & Fred Metayer

Voice Confession Femicide (translation and interpretation of the tango lyrics in arabic)

Mohamed Houcine Grayaa

Music

- Tango 'Un crimen': Luis Rubinstein (composer, author), Raúl Beron (singer) and the Miguel Caló. Orchestra
- 'Send in the drums' – James Asher
- Tango 'Como dos extranos': Pedro Laurenz (composer), José Maria Contursi (author), Fatma Oussaifi (singer).

Voice-over

Fatma Oussaifi, Rosalie Wanka, Irina Wanka, Azza Filali, Azza Baaziz, Sidonie Gaucher

Supported by

Association Al Badil, Centre des Arts Vivants de Radès, Goethe Institut Tunis, Austrian Embassy in Tunis, Studio Bendixen.

ANNEXE 1

STAGING ELEMENTS

**THE FOLLOWING ARE TEXTS THAT FORM PART OF THE SOUND SCAPE OF THE
PIECE AND/OR STAGING ELEMENTS. (work in progress)**

'A Crime' - Tango 1942

Lyrics and music by Luis Rubinstein

*My drama, Your Honor, is this story [1] that can begin at the end.
I know that with this grotesque notoriety it's not easy to seem sentimental.
I made her life so torturous, and her soul put up with my madness—
my jealousy turned into insanity and in this living hell, I lost myself.*

*And I saw mist in her eyes when my steely fingers
wove a necklace around her pearly neck.
She rolled over, kissing my hands and was barely able to scream—
her voice drowned without complaint and so, quite tamely, her night ended.
I carry her anguish in my eyes and I can't get rid of it.*

*Your Honor, I want this story of such a perverse and brutal crime
to leave not a single blemish on her memory— let everyone know that she was good, and
I did her wrong...*

MATRIMOINE

Matrimoine: Feminine word with masculine pronoun.

We use a **P** to talk about universal, historical, cultural, architectural, material and immaterial, past and present heritage [**P**atrimoine] and we use an **M** for **M**arriage.

One dressed as a man to go on stage. **M**atrimoine slips into the **P** of **P**ater and ticks all the boxes of decency.

It's been branded with a masculine conjugation, banished from the algorithms of knowledge, tossed into the spams of History, so much, that even Google has only recently come across it.

Matrimoine no longer existed to the ears too long accustomed to the male dominance of the world of idioms.

Erasing the container out of fear that the content will settle in: a good old practice.

Excuse the audacity of a last-minute switch of letters, but our mother is calling.

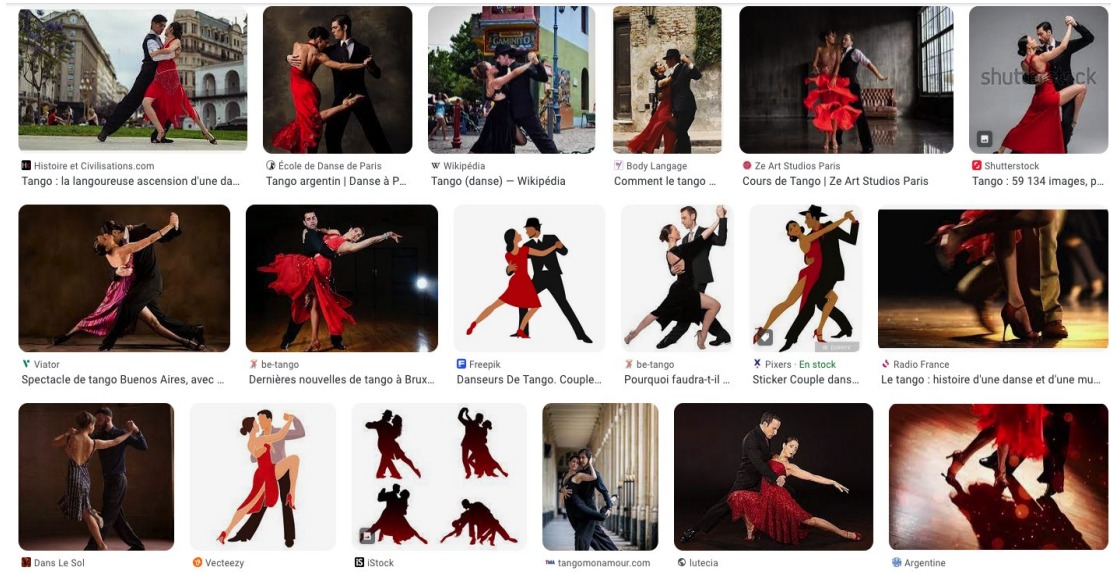
Note :

Patrimoine: *Def. All assets inherited from male ascendants or reunited and preserved with a view to passing them on to descendants. Word Of Latin origin during the Roman Empire, it has been in common use ever since.*

Matrimoine: *Def. All assets inherited from female ascendants or reunited and preserved for transmission to descendants. The term appeared in Old French in 1155 (matremuine, matremoigne) before becoming matrimoine in 1408. It disappeared for centuries, only to come back to prominence a few years ago.*

ANNEXE 2

Images of mainstream tango (source: google)





Fatma Oussaifi & Rosalie Wanka. Photo Paola Gallarato