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For Immediate Release

## U.S. PREMIERE OF JONAH BOKAER'S 'THE ULYSSES SYNDROME' AT FLORENCE GOULD HALL, MAY 9 & 10

Performances are Part of The French Institute Alliance  
Française (FIAF)'s World Nomads Tunisia Festival



Jonah Bokaer's "The Ulysses Syndrome," will receive its U.S. premiere when it is performed as part of FIAF's *World Nomads* Festival, which this year focuses on Tunisia, the place of Bokaer's father's birth. The dance will be performed May 9 and 10 at Florence Gould Hall.

Referring to a medical condition describing the disabling sense of alienation, dislocation, and isolation experienced by immigrants, travelers, and expatriates uprooted either by force or voluntarily from their homeland, "The Ulysses Syndrome" explores the resulting physical and emotional issues related to the psychic trauma.

Tsvi Bokaer, Jonah's father, provided the text titled "Le Danseur Errant et La Méditerranée" on which the work is based. Written over the past year, the text is comprised of 12 Cantos, strongly influenced by his father's memories of the Mediterranean, and meditates on the transient life he lived before settling in Ithaca, NY, where he raised a family of six children. The changing relationship between father Tsvi Bokaer, 71, and son, Jonah Bokaer, 31, is also explored through the sixty minutes.

The accompanying soundscape, "The Passenger," is a compilation gathered by the SOUNDWALK Collective, which in 2009 followed the path of Ulysses on a sailboat equipped with scanners and aerial antennae, recording all the possible radio interceptions over a 40-mile area along the shores of the Mediterranean basin.

To deepen his understanding of his family's past and its effect on him, Jonah Bokaer spent time in Tunisia in January 2013 traveling to eight of his family's cities and villages. His discoveries, including the rhythms of his father's cantos, the Roman Amphitheater in Carthage, the tile works and friezes (comprised of hexagrams) at the Musée Bardot, all contribute to the structure and content of the dance, which is comprised of 12 sections.

### PERFORMANCE TIMES

Thursday & Friday, May 9 & 10, 2013 at 8pm

### WHERE TO GO

Tickets, which are \$20 for FIAF members and \$25 for non-members, are available at the box office, located at 55 East 59th Street, New York, NY, [www.fiaf.org](http://www.fiaf.org), or by calling 1-800-982-2787. Florence Gould Hall is located at 55 East 59th Street, between Park Avenue and Madison Avenue.

**MORE**

## ARTIST BIOS

**JONAH BOKAER** Born to Tunisian and Welsh parents and raised in Ithaca, NY, Jonah Bokaer, 31, is an international choreographer, media artist, and art space developer. His work, which integrates choreography with digital media, is often the result of his cross-disciplinary collaborations with artists and architects.

The creator of 30 choreographies, ten videos, three motion capture works, three interactive installations, two mobile applications, and one film, Bokaer's work has been produced in theaters in Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, India, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Some of his most recent performances include two seasons at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (2011 and 2012), the 2012 Festival d'Avignon in France, and Théâtre de la Cité Internationale in Paris. "ECLIPSE," a collaboration with visual artist Anthony McCall, was commissioned by the Brooklyn Academy of Music, to open its BAM Fisher theater in fall 2012.

Often created in museum spaces, Bokaer's dances have been performed at The New Museum, MoMA PS1, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, as well as in The Asia Society Houston, Le Carré d'Art de Nîmes, IVAM Valencia, and MUDAM Luxembourg, among others.

In 2008-2009 Bokaer became the first dance artist to be appointed a Young Leader of the French-American Foundation, in acknowledgment of his efforts to develop Chez Bushwick, and CPR - Center for Performance Research, two independent arts centers which nurture young artists in New York City and internationally.

Bokaer has collaborated with artists such as Daniel Arsham, Anne Carson, Merce Cunningham, Robert Gober, Anthony McCall, Tino Sehgal, and Robert Wilson.

He has choreographed many operas by Robert Wilson including "Faust" (Poland), "Aïda" (Italy), "Kool" (USA/Japan), and "Fronteras" (Spain), and "On The Beach" (NYC).

**TSVI BOKAER** was born in Tunis, in 1941. Tsvi's early childhood exposure to cinema in Tunisia occurred in Rades, La Goulette and Tunis and inspired a lifelong interest and passion for film and cinema. During a series of Mediterranean travels between 1949-1965, he produced and directed several experimental films, shot in and around the Mediterranean Sea, on 16mm film. Tsvi then moved to the United States to attend the University of California at Los Angeles, earning a degree in French Literature while formalizing his studies in film. Narrowing his focus to screenwriting, he went on to make several independent shorts and a feature about the radical social atmosphere of California in the 1960s. During his early career as a screenwriter, he received critical support and mentoring from the renowned film critic Pauline Kael, who influenced several aspects of his work in cinema. Tsvi relocated to Ithaca, New York in 1980, where he raised a family of 6 children, setting up and operating "Fall Creek Pictures," a lively Independent Cinemathèque. He also established a music concert hall, a film and video production facility, and Tai Chi and Pilates Studios, while he continued to write screenplays. At 71, Tsvi's legacy is still present in the art spaces that he founded in Ithaca, and is embodied in his children who are also involved in the arts. His archives are currently being digitized and preserved by two of his sons.

## ABOUT WORLD NOMADS TUNISIA

The biennial *World Nomads* Festival, produced by the French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF), celebrates the phenomenon of 21st-century transculturalism through the arts and scholarly

discussion, offering a platform for the exchange of ideas and artistic expression among traditional and contemporary cultures. This May, the fifth edition of the Festival arrives at a particularly suitable time to celebrate the many facets of Tunisia. [www.fiaf.org/worldnomads](http://www.fiaf.org/worldnomads)

## ABOUT FIAF

FIAF's mission is to create and offer New Yorkers innovative and unique programs in education and the arts that explore the evolving diversity and richness of French cultures. FIAF seeks to generate new ideas and promote cross cultural dialogue through partnerships and new platforms of expression.

[www.fiaf.org](http://www.fiaf.org)

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*“The Ulysses Syndrome,” was commissioned by CDC Les Hivernales d’Avignon, is a co-production of Pôle Culturel Camille Claudel à Sorgues, and is produced in partnership with the Ville de Sorgues. Jonah Bokaer’s choreography received support from FUSED: French U.S. Exchange in Dance, and the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). Major Jonah Bokaer/Chez Bushwick, Inc. 10th Anniversary support is provided by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.*

### *Corporate Sponsors*

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### *Foundations & Agencies*

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie; Florence Gould Foundation; Fondation Orange; Institut français; Kamel Lazaar Foundation; The Tunisian National Tourist Office; The Violet Jabara Charitable Trust.

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### *U.S.-based Key Partners:*

Embassy of Tunisia in Washington D.C.; The Cultural Services of the French Embassy; Lost Candor; Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations; Promo Tunisia; Tunisian American Young Professionals; Waveform.

### *Tunisia-based Key Partners:*

U.S. Embassy in Tunisia; Office National de l’artisanat Tunisien (ONAT); the Tunisian Ministry of Commerce.

### *Un grand merci to all our friends and champions!*

Tahar and Narjess Bayahi; Mohamed Becheur; Hélé Béji; Nejib Belkhadit; Syhem Belkhadja; Ryma Benayed; Salma Ben Mahmoud; Wassim Ben Yahia; Zeineb Ben Yahmed; Dora Bouchoucha - Nomadis Images; Simone Carrica; Lina Chaabane; Elisabeth Daldoul - Editions Elyzad; Jaouida Djehane; Annie Djamal; Kenza Fourati; Marc de Gontaut Biron; Anissa Kasbaoui; Sofia Khaoula Zaïed; Sonia Louzir - Deloitte; Karim Maatoug; Saoussen Mahjoub; Mohamed Malouche; Imed Marzouk; Anis Mnif; Pavan Pardasani; Bernard Royet; Mustapha Tlili; Daria Vancavas; Amar Zribi; Tunisian Network for a Successful Society (TUNESS).

Photo by Bénédicte Longechal.