

A WEE JOURNEY

**Farah Saleh
Oğuz Kaplangı**

The *Refuge* series is supported by
**British Council, Edinburgh Futures Institute
at the University of Edinburgh** and
Claire and Mark Urquhart

Made possible through the
PLACE Programme
In collaboration with
Scottish Refugee Council

16, 17, 18 & 20 August 7.30pm
18 Aug 2.30pm

THE STUDIO

The performance lasts approximately
55mins with no interval.

Please ensure that all mobile phones
and electronic devices are switched off
or put on silent.



REFUGE

**A celebration of the profound contribution to arts and culture
given by the movement of people across the globe**

Artists are often the vanguards of community life and social justice. This is why they play such an important role in illuminating the commonalities and the complexities of humanity, wherever they find themselves rooted or uprooted in the world. Yet they are especially at risk of censorship, harassment, criminalisation and persecution when their work gives voice to ideas, imagination and freedom of expression, and when they inspire others to do so too.

Refuge invites and weaves together the perspectives of artists who have taken different journeys. Perspectives and journeys that remind us that people are often carrying more than we can see or know. They are always listening, attuning, questioning and making: these are exceptional minds. This series is a rich tapestry of experiences, stories, poetry, performance, challenges and resistance.

Soizig Carey
Arts and Cultural Development Officer
Scottish Refugee Council

Scottish Refugee Council is honoured to collaborate with the Edinburgh International Festival and mark this very special anniversary year. This has been a year of terrible stories. War in Ukraine, unrest in Afghanistan, families stranded and separated by bureaucracy, Rwandan detention centres and people left with no option but to risk their lives on dangerous journeys in a desperate bid to reach a place of safety. In this relentless fight for human rights and freedoms, we must not forget to reflect on hard won triumphs as well. Had Rudolf Bing not sought and been granted refugee protection here 75 years ago, this world class festival may not exist. The cultural fabric of Scotland would be very different. We are in awe of his legacy, and of the exceptional artists performing as part of *Refuge*.

Sabir Zazai
Chief Executive
Scottish Refugee Council

SCOTTISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

Scottish Refugee Council is Scotland's leading independent charity dedicated to supporting people in need of refugee protection. Since 1985, it has supported refugee integration and inclusion through provision of specialist advice and advocacy to people seeking protection in Scotland.

The people it works with have fled horrific situations around the world and come from countries where conflict is rife and human rights abuses common. When people arrive in Scotland, a new journey begins. The UK's asylum system is tough and takes its toll on individuals and families. Settling into a foreign country and a whole new system can be disorientating and challenging.

Through its direct services it provides practical support, advice and a listening ear to help people rebuild their lives in a sustainable and meaningful way. It speaks out against an unjust asylum system and campaigns for changes that make a positive difference to people's lives. To date it has supported more than 25,000 refugees arriving and living in Scotland.

Find out more about its work:
www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

A WEE JOURNEY

**BY FARAH SALEH AND OĞUZ KAPLANGI,
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PERFORMERS**

Co-Director and Choreographer
Co-Director, Composer
and Performer

Farah Saleh

Oğuz Kaplangı

Lighting Designer
Costume and Set Designer
Design Assistant
Dramaturg

Emma Jones

Zephyr Liddell

Emily Smit-Dicks

Lucy Suggate

Performers

Daniel Navarro Lorenzo

Francesca Till

Kemono L.Riot

Nada Shawa

Pirita Tuisku

Creative Producer

Helen McIntosh

PR & Marketing

Joy Parkinson

Production Manager

Fi Fraser

Associate Production Manager

John Wilke

Sound Engineer

Neil Dewar

Stage Manager

Astrid Rothmeier

Performers and collaborators from initial development

Adam Kashmiry and Leticia Sanchez

Stage Manager (creation)

Judy Stewart

Supported by Creative Scotland, Edinburgh International Festival, Tramway and Dance Base

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

FARAH SALEH

Co-Director and Choreographer

A Wee Journey is a choreographed musical journey of migration and refugeehood, created in collaboration with Oğuz Kaplangı and the performers in the piece.

I'm a Palestinian dancer and choreographer based in Scotland, and the inspiration behind *A Wee Journey* comes from conversations with Oğuz who uses music to portray his emotions and states, related to his decision to leave Turkey for Scotland. As co-creators, we have collaborated on transforming this idea of migration into a series of wee journeys; working with performers who have lived experience of migration and refugeehood, to create a collective sharing of journeys that are depicted through movement and music.

In my practice, I work with gestures – daily movements that express meaning. I use choreographic tools to transform

them; repeating them, unpacking them, making them more-or-less readable for audiences to experience. *A Wee Journey* looks at the different states that refugees or migrants may go through – from being at home and realising that something is not right, economically, politically or socially, to starting to fight with the feeling of what to do about it, taking the decision of leaving and facing new obstacles in the new home.

The question of refugeehood and migration is recurrent. Everyone can become a refugee or a migrant at a certain point of life. We, as human beings, have been migrating and moving throughout history. It's not new. With *A Wee Journey*, we are reclaiming spaces with our narratives and bodies and reappropriating how we want to be represented. For me, it's a form of decolonisation, decolonising dance, decolonising the body.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

OĞUZ KAPLANGI

Co-Director, Composer and Performer

The inspiration behind *A Wee Journey* is life itself for me. As a Turkish composer, sound designer and performer I found myself moving from Istanbul to Edinburgh and so, for me that's the basis of the story – my lived experience of moving from one country to another.

Though the name suggests otherwise, *A Wee Journey* has been a long creative process for us. It has been created alongside Farah Saleh and has become a collaborative process as we have had the input of other migrants who are involved in the piece. As a project, it is very personal. Everyone involved has their own migration or refugee journey into Scotland. We have aimed to bring these delicate issues and shape them into one piece of performance.

We see *A Wee Journey* as a timeless project. It doesn't exactly belong to now because migration has always been happening. It isn't always a problem and so the most important thing is that people shouldn't see migrants or refugees as others. Everyone can move at any time because of any reason so when you cross a border to another country, you shouldn't be seen in this way.

I think the most important thing for me about this project is to try to build a sense of empathy and connection.

FARAH SALEH

Farah Saleh is a Palestinian dancer and choreographer based in Scotland, who has worked in Palestine, Europe and the USA. She studied linguistic and cultural mediation in Italy while continuing to her studies in contemporary dance. From 2017 to 2021 she was an Associate Artist at Dance Base in Edinburgh, and is currently finishing her practice-based PhD at Edinburgh College of Art.

Since 2010 she has taken part in local and international projects with companies including:

Sareyyet Ramallah Dance Company (Palestine), the Royal Flemish Theatre and Les Ballets C de la B (Belgium), Mancopy Dance Company (Denmark/Lebanon), Siljehom/Christophersen (Norway) and Candoco Dance Company (UK).

Since 2010, Saleh has been teaching dance, coordinating and curating artistic projects with the Palestinian Circus School, Sareyyet Ramallah and the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival. In 2016 she co-founded Sareyyet Ramallah Dance Summer School.

OĞUZ KAPLANGI

Oğuz Kaplangı is a musician based in Edinburgh. He composes for theatre, TV, film and advertising and his work explores a wide array of musical styles.

In 2017, he was nominated for the Best Stage Music Award at the Afife Theatre Awards for the music he composed for Zinne Harris's *How to Hold Your Breath*, and in 2018 he won the Best Music and Sound Award at the Critics for Theatre in Scotland (CATS) for his compositions for Harris' adaptation of Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*. In 2021, Oğuz was selected for the BAFTA Network x BAFTA Crew 2021 programme.

In the United States, his music has featured in TV shows including A&E's Emmy-nominated *Wahlburgers*, *Donnie Loves Jenny*, *Nightwatch*, *Lock Up*, *Sexy Beasts*, *According to Alex*, *Killer Kids*, *Young Marvels*, *Big Brew Theory* and *Bizarre Foods*. He has scored for many Turkish box office hits as well as Turkey's first animation film *Kötü KediŞerafettin / Bad Cat*.

Oğuz is the producer of the electronic *Istanbul Calling* album series. He has worked with international artists such as Valderrama, Alkistis Protopsalti, Suzy and Encarna Salazar.