

# ستوديو 8 Studio A

An independent space - emerging as a central organization in the creation and development of contemporary dance in Jordan.



# Director's Words

**“Dance brings people together. Dance transcends all barriers and boundaries.”**

--- Abd Al Hadi Abunahleh

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Dance has long been at the forefront of the performing arts that raised awareness and nourished dreams of change and reintroduced concepts such as freedom, human dignity and justice.

But for young people in Jordan, whose talents lie in performing arts, there is often one major factor that disrupts their ability to create: a massive lack of opportunity, within the education sector, and in the process of career building.

There is nearly no coherent and consistent dance education in the country and the creative and collective nature of dance has become to be seen as invalid. Hence we are building a platform of contemporary dance in Amman for artistic presentation, exchange, and collaboration.

**This is the birth of “Studio 8”.**

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# “We enjoy sharing the joy of dance!”

Studio 8 is a Jordanian non-for-profit performing arts theatre company. It was founded in 2014 by a group of young artists aiming to shape and humanize the dance art through innovation, experiment, development, exchange, education and research.

In the past more 10 years, Studio 8 has collaborated with more than **600** people of **43** nationalities in creating 10 original dance productions, giving more than 60 performances, and organizing more than 160 classes and workshops. Studio 8 has also made dance videos, facilitated art incubations, artistic residencies, dance inspired exhibitions, dance discussions, community art walks and street art fairs.

In 2019, Studio 8 launched an independent dance festival, IDEA – International Dance Encounter Amman (IDEA).

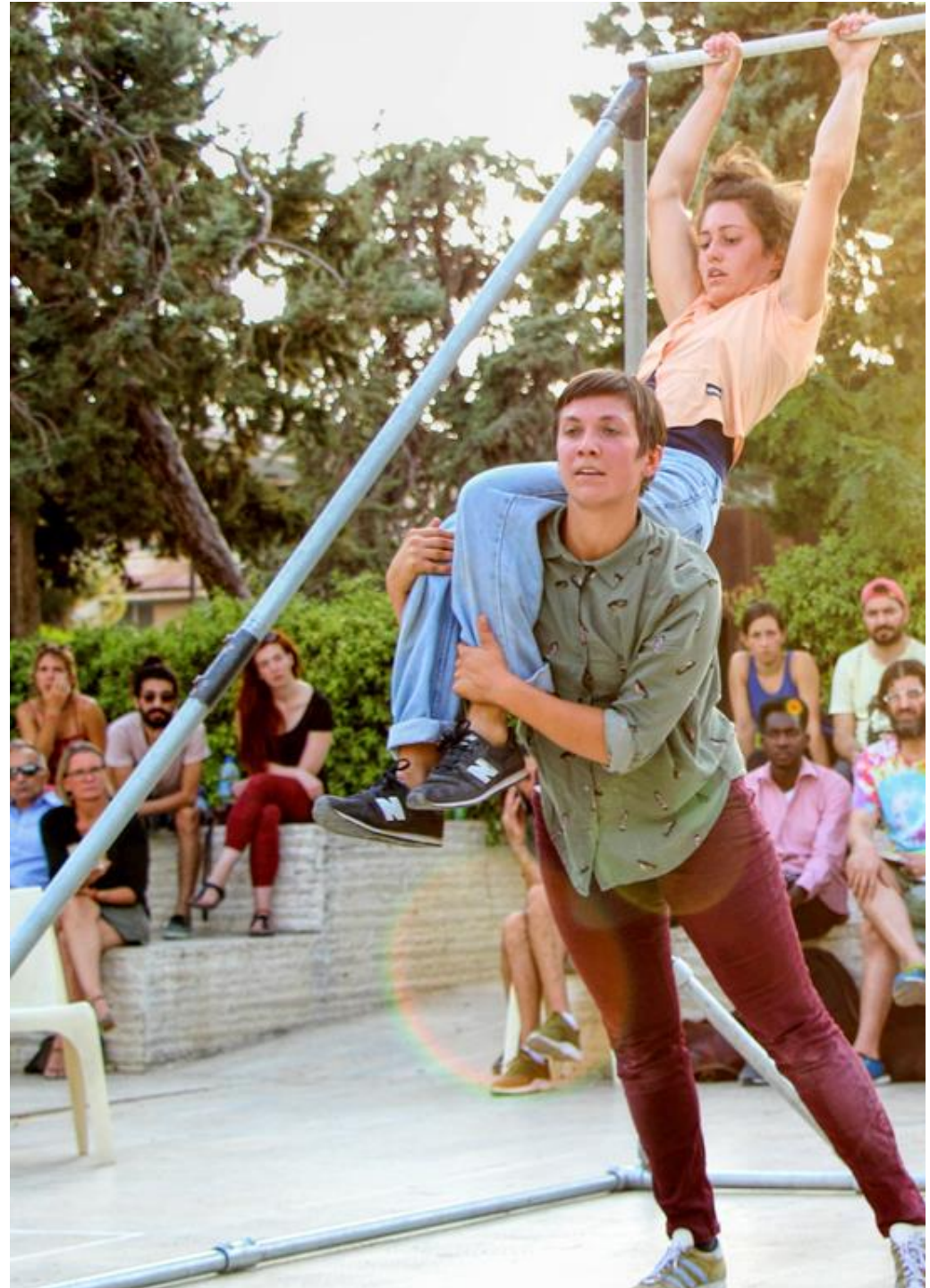
# About IDEA

IDEA - International Dance Encounter Amman, is currently Amman's newest and only international multi-disciplinary bi-annual dance festival.

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[ideajo.co](http://ideajo.co)

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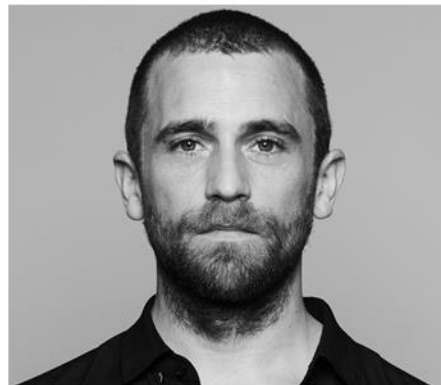
# Why IDEA?

IDEA is not only a festival, it is also **an educational platform** that dedicated to building connections between artists and innovators in Jordan and the world.

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IDEA connects Jordanian talents with a global network of dance & educational experts, opportunities, audiences, and the resources necessary for their growth and development. The IDEA Alumni community has more than 200 Jordanian and International Artists.

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# IDEA 2019

World class choreographers, performance directors and dance-makers join with Jordanian dance artists for a cultural celebration in Amman!

For 2019, the 1st edition of IDEA presented 9 cutting-edge dance works from home and abroad, including 46 artists coming from 18 different countries. Among them, 7 international dance performances.

IDEA 2019 also included 2 original local productions produced by Jordanian choreographers in collaboration with installation, sound, and light artists from France, Czech Republic and Iran.

It is at the heart of IDEA's mission to support, commission, and help launching the careers of local makers by creating a vibrant environment in which dance artists, choreographers, musicians, and designers collaborate to produce unique, challenging and diverse works.

**22-29**  
**AUGUST**

**IDEA**

**INTERNATIONAL**  
**DANCE**  
**ENCOUNTER**  
**AMMAN**

ideaajo.co  
**07 9815 3321**

Organized by **STUDIO 8**

In collaboration with **MAJHI**    

# IDEA 2021

Even during COVID-19, art brings us closer together than ever.

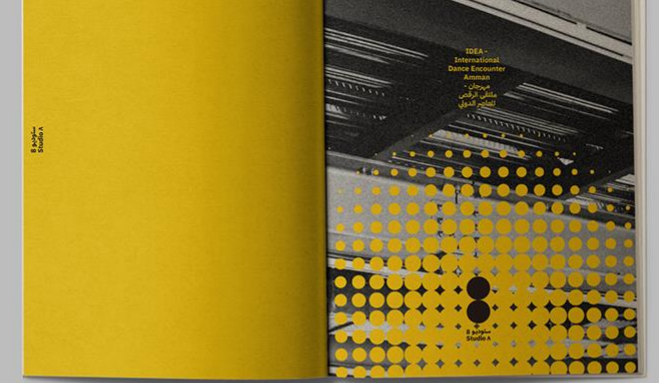
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the performing arts.

Despite the challenges, IDEA festival grew bigger. From September the 8<sup>th</sup> to October the 31<sup>st</sup> of 2021, 35 artists from more than 10 different countries were co-creating, performing with local artists on Jordan's stages, outdoor locations, galleries and museums, with a specific focus on inter-cultural understanding and capacity building.

For the 2nd edition of the festival, a 45-day-program was created as **a safe space** where performing artists from Jordan and abroad had access to peer support; that education on technologies is incorporated into the festival activities.

The program featured 27 events, including artistic residencies, live performances, technical theatre trainings, multidisciplinary workshops, film screenings, pop-up exhibitions, and online specials.

“This is how, despite the crisis, art is demonstrating its resilience today”, exclaimed by an audience member.





## IDEA 2021 Performance

### Wreck

- List of extinct species

**Pietro Marullo | INSIEME  
IRREALI asbl  
(Italy|Belgium)**

Concept, choreography and direction:  
Pietro Marullo

Assistant: Marianna Cifarelli

Dance: Jamal Suleiman,  
Saleh Bellagon,  
Tala Asender,  
Reema Asender,  
Mohammad Qattan,  
Daniel Issa

Soft sculptor and costumes:  
Pietro Marullo, Bertrand Nodet

Soundscape: Jean Noël Boissé

Lightscape: Julie Petite Etienne

Produced by INSIEME IRREALI asbl

**Location:**

**Ras Al Ain Hangar, Amman, Jordan**







## IDEA 2021 Capacity building

### Technical Theatre Trainings

**Angela Stoecklin,  
Antje Brueckner  
(Switzerland)**

Program details:  
Dramaturgy Workshop ( 120 min )  
Lighting Design Workshop ( 120 min )  
Movement Workshop ( 120 min )  
Case Study ( 550 min )

**Location:  
Al Balad theater, Amman, Jordan**



# IDEA 2023

For 2023, for the 3rd edition of the festival, we have brought you more than 50 artists from 25 different countries with a program that includes more than 20 events:

- 16 performances**
- 5 residencies**
- 4 workshops**
- 4 co-creations**
- 2 free-style dance jams**
- 1 round-table**

All

Performance

Workshop

For Children

Networking

Residency

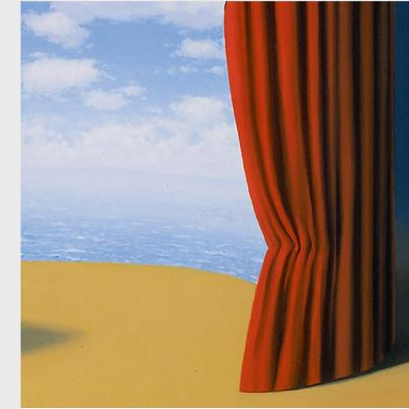


## No Corners

Performance

15 Sept 2023  
Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts  
16 Sept 2023  
MMAG foundation

[Read more](#)



## Welcome Reception

2023, Networking, Performance

14 Sept 2023 | 7 – 9 pm  
MMAG foundation

[Read more](#)

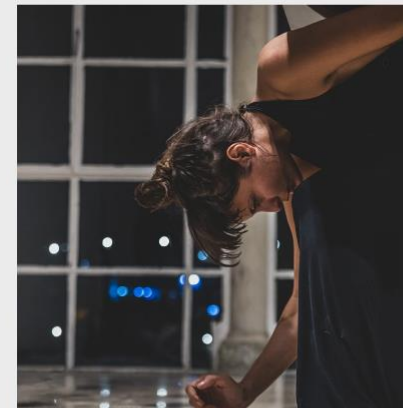


## Wonderful Life

Performance

16 Sept 2023 | 5:30 – 7 pm  
MMAG foundation *Activate Windows*

[Read more](#)

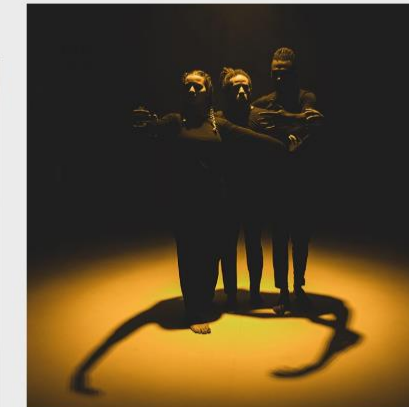


## Frame of Resonance

Performance, Residency

17 Sept 2023  
MMAG foundation

[Read more](#)



## Crossing

Performance

18 Sept 2023  
National Center For Culture & Arts (NCCA)

[Read more](#)



## Subject to

Performance

17 Sept 2023  
MMAG foundation

[Read more](#)



## I U I M

**Matilda Bilberg (Sweden),  
Jenna Hendry  
(Switzerland)**

Concept and dance: Jenna Hendry, Matilda Bilberg

Dramaturgical advice: Sabine Hass-Zimmermann

Music: Alex Zampini

Light design: Maria Ros

Costume: Karen Petermann

**Location:  
National Center For Culture & Arts (NCCA),  
Amman, Jordan**

**IDEA 2023  
Performance**



## No Corners

**Decadance Co (Singapore)**

Choreographer: Rachel Lum  
Lighting design: Liu Yong Huay  
Dance: Rachel Lum,  
Stephanie Rae Yoong, Joanne Seow

**Location:  
MMAG foundation, Amman, Jordan**





## IDEA 2023 Exchange

### Dance Round-tables

Topic: Mobility, touring  
**Moderator: Nedjma Benchelabi**

Topic: Finding new narratives in performance  
**Moderator: Husam Abed**

Topic: Increase accessibility, achieving sustainability  
**Moderator: Bella Stenval**



### Beyond New Normal

**Research, Residency, Work in Progress, Discussion**

Anas Abunahleh (Jordan), Klaus Erika Dietl & Stephanie Müller (Germany)

**Location:**  
Private rooftop, Amman, Jordan



### AVAE Research, Residency, Workshop

Soly Volná (Czech, Burkina Faso), Ellen Redner, Naser Al Sughaiyer, Mirjam Liebl, Abu Youssef

**Location:** Tajalla for Music and Art, Amman, Jordan

# What are we working on?

This year marked the third edition of IDEA, a festival that prioritizes local engagement and education that creates exchange opportunities for professionals, artists, students, and researchers from around the world.

We attribute our central challenges to the following cross-cutting issues:

- Weak national cultural policy—there is currently no overarching government strategy for the arts and extremely limited funding;
- Limitations in the educational system—art was removed from the curriculum of state schools in the 1970s and dance is almost entirely absent from school curriculum;
- A lack of safe public gathering spaces for carrying out cultural activities;
- A lack of a national cultural identity; and Limited public awareness and negative perceptions—dance (outside of folk dances such as dabke) is still widely considered taboo, inappropriate, or unacceptable.

Studio 8 sees strategic capacity-building as a means of developing dance economies across Amman. Their efforts (both in-person and utilizing virtual opportunities) include:

- Developing “how-to” guides and templates for grant applications, standard contracts, artist statements, etc.;
- Improving dancers’ commercial and business skills, including social media marketing;
- Provide practical “labs” for young people who are currently creating micro content, thereby offering them the possibility to develop their skills without going to university;
- Upskilling in lighting, sounds, scenography, and dramaturgy so that local performance-makers so not have to rely on specialists from outside of Jordan;
- Establishing mentorships; and
- Foster international knowledge exchange rather than only focusing on accessing international funding resources.



# Abd Al Hadi Abunahleh

## Director of Studio 8

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### Education

Choreomundus - International Master in Dance Knowledge, Practice, and Heritage  
2015-2017  
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
Trondheim, Norway  
- University of Szeged, Hungary  
- University of Clermont Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, France  
- University of Roehampton, London, United Kingdom  
Bachelor of Business Administration  
Al-Balqa' Applied University, Jordan  
2013-2014

### Art Management

IDEA-International Dance Encounter Amman / Director  
2019-Present,  
Amman, Jordan

Studio 8 / Co-Founder, Artistic Director  
2014-Present,  
Amman, Jordan

### Grant & Award

tural Foundation Abu Dhabi, production grant, 2021  
British council - Cultural and Art, production grant, 2021  
Arab fund for culture and art - AFAC, production fund, 2020  
Cultural Resources, production Award, 2019  
Erasmus+ Master study grant, 2015 - 2017

### Artistic Experience

[Crossing](#) / Artistic Director,  
Choreographer  
2021 – present

[Wujoud wa Hodoud](#) / Artistic Director,  
Choreographer, Performer  
2019

[Space Harmony](#) / Artistic Director,  
Conceptualization  
2017

[Hiwar](#) / Choreographer, Performer  
2017

**Sharing Expertise and Advisory**  
Medearts - The City Artists Network  
Association / Board Member  
2021- Present

Prince Claus Seed Award / Jury  
2021, 2022

Bozar, Goethe Institut brussels,  
Halaqat Project- Exploring Cultural  
links between Europe and the Arab  
world / Invited Expert and mentor  
2021 – Present

EUNIC - EU National Institutes for  
Culture,  
Rise Contest/ Jury  
2019



# Xiaoman Ren

Creative Manager  
of Studio 8

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## Education

Graphic Design  
Central Saint Martins - University of the Arts, London, UK  
2008 - 2013

## Art Management

IDEA-International Dance Encounter Amman / Assistant Director  
2019-Present,  
Amman, Jordan

Studio 8 / Co-Founder, Creative Manager  
2014-Present,  
Amman, Jordan

## Visual Arts

“Go-around” – a dance inspired exhibition (virtual and in-person)  
/ Co-curator, Exhibition design  
2021  
Amman, Jordan

Virtual exhibition: <https://www.instagram.com/go.around.pop/>



## “Tales of the Golden Corpse”

- Tibetan Folk Tales Animation  
(In Progress),  
in collaboration with Namchak band  
/ Conceptualization, Puppet design, Puppet  
making, Set Design  
2016  
Lhasa, Tibet

## “Out to Sea: Plastic Garbage Project”

– a traveling exhibition, organized the Royal  
Marine Conservation Society of Jordan,  
Drosos Foundation and partnership with the  
Design Museum of Zurich  
/ Installation Artist, Workshop Conductor  
2014  
Amman, Jordan

## Performing Arts

### “Dance on Mars”

- a multidisciplinary performance  
/ Art installation  
2021  
Amman, Jordan

“The Unwritten New Normal” - a multidisciplinary  
performance as part of the Online Co-Production  
Challenge by the Goethe-Institut Amman  
/ Video-grapher, Photographer, Archive  
2020  
Online event

## “Wujoud wa Hodoud”

- a multidisciplinary  
performance  
/ Visuals and installation, Video-grapher,  
Photographer  
2019  
Amman, Jordan