

# Courage

# 17 AMSTERDAM

VERANTWOORDING STORYTELLING FESTIVAL 2024

## INLEIDING

Met 17 uitverkochte festivalonderdelen en ruim 3.000 bezoekers was de zeventiende editie van The Amsterdam Storytelling Festival de succesvolste in haar geschiedenis. 'Courage' was het verbindende thema tussen de programmaonderdelen.

Artistiek leiders Sahand Sahebdivani en Raphael Rodan kozen dit thema, vanwege hun ervaringen in de aanloop van de vorige editie van het festival in 2023. De oorlog in Israël was toen net uitgebroken, wat de relaties tussen de verschillende Midden-Oosterse groeperingen op scherp zette. Sahand, met wortels in Iran en getrouwd met een Palestijnse en de Joods Israelische Raphael Rodan, ontvingen in de aanloop tot het festival dreigementen. Podium Mozaïek zag zich genoodzaakt om beveiliging in te schakelen om de artiesten en het publiek te beschermen. Ondanks de dreiging, ervoeren deelnemers en publiek van het festival juist veiligheid en troost bij elkaar.

Sahand: "Courage, moed, is voor ons niet de afwezigheid van angst, maar de angst voelen en toch je hart volgen, toch doen wat je belangrijk vindt."

Bij de samenstelling van het programma voor 2024 werden voorstellingen gekozen die in meer of mindere mate uitgesproken over moed gingen of in zichzelf moedig waren, omdat de performer experimenteerde met een nieuwe kunstvorm (of -vormen) in het eigen repertoire.

Een aantal voorbeelden: 'Till Death', voorstelling van Arjen Barel over de moed om verder te leven na het verlies van een dierbare; 'Alright, solving the problem of life' van de Canadese schrijver en performer Nisha

Coleman, over de moed om over zelfmoordgedachten te spreken; de première van 'Divine Madness' waarin de Turkse theatermaker Başak Layiç op lichtvoetige wijze intergenerationeel trauma aankaart; 'We All Fall!' de voorstelling van de Ierse Danni Cullen die als afsluiter van het festival in première ging en verhaalt over de moed die nodig is om voor een leven op het podium te kiezen.

Zoals elk jaar werd ook deze editie weer een kunstvorm verkend en uitgediept die storytellers in hun praktijk kunnen integreren. Dit jaar was dat 'clownerie' dat zich in het Nederlands het best laat vertalen door 'mime'. Een kunstvorm die moed vraagt van de performer, omdat de verhaallijn puur fysiek -dus zonder woorden- wordt overgebracht. Hoogtepunten binnen dit genre op het festival waren de voorstellingen 'Bdfrght' van Dr. Brown en 'Untitled document' van Ari Tepperberg.

### Colofon

The Amsterdam Storytelling Festival is een project van Storytelling Centre in samenwerking met Podium Mozaïek | Artistieke leiding en programma: Raphael Rodan & Sahand Sahebdivani | Zakelijk leider: Jasmijn Snoijink | Productie: Vera Andeweg & Jan-Joris Indra buis | Promotie: Dorèndel Overmars & Irina Koriazova.

De zeventiende editie van het festival kwam tot stand met bijdragen van het Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst, Fonds 21, het Nederlands Letterenfonds, Virtutis Opus en Zabawas.

## PROGRAMMA

### Workshops

'Introduction to storytelling' by Fer Rodil

Thursday November 7 13:30 - 16:30

'The courage to move' by Ben Haggarty

Friday November 8 13:30 - 16:30

'A short dive into clownerie' by Dr. Brown

Saturday November 9 11:00 - 14:00

### Wednesday | November 6

**Sahand Sahebdivani, Raphael Rodan & friends | *Grand Opening: Courage***

Grand opener full of stories and starter energy. Our festival directors create a variety show with different artists coming together. With Claron Mac Faddon, Huszar Bence, Aleksej, Vincenzo Castellana, Paolo Rossetti Murittu and Basak Layic. After this night you will feel the courage to stay for the full festival!

20:00 - 21:30

### Live music of an amazing band

Move your body to the upbeat tunes and show us your bravest moves!

21:30-END

### Thursday | November 7

#### Talk 'From fear to courage in stories'

Do stories have a recipe to allow us to live: moving from a state of fear to a state of courage? We will dive into the world canon of stories to explore these deep subjects.

17:00-18:00

#### 3Troubadours | *ROOTS!*

Electrifying dive into three people's ancient and personal stories from Norway, Finland and Belgium intertwined into a brotherhood.

18:30-19:45

#### Rod Ben Zeev and Renske Ebbers | *Narrative Animations*

Adventurous double bill where storytellers and animation come together. Let your inner child come out and enjoy the spirit of excitement and experimentation!

19:00-19:50

#### Meysam Forooz, Raffi Feghali, Bence Huszar | *The Chord*

An Iranian family tragedy and murder mystery. A sister dies in a fire. Or does she? Childhood memories that no one can explain start to emerge... Inevitably, the truth has to come to the surface.

20:10-21:10

#### Ben Haggarty | *Atalanta*

Greek myths unleashed! Spend a moonlit night in the company of maniacal kings, cocksure warriors, gruesome gods and a remarkably fierce virgin huntress who sure as hell doesn't want to have anything to do with men.

20:30-21:55

### Friday | November 8

#### TALK 'The courage of the performer'

How to tell a story without talking? For this talk, we have invited Ari Teperberg and Philip Burgers who remain silent in their shows. What does this courage mean to them?

17:00-18:00

#### Lara Ricote | *Little Tiny Wet Show (baptism)*

The award-winning comedy queen has the courage to dive into the subject of love, and share many intricate (and oh so relatable!) moments of her relationship in this slightly dark show.

18:15-19:15

#### Ali Zijlstra and Vladlena Sandu | *The Rainbow Cinema* (incl. Q&A)

An adolescent heroine falls into the hands of a criminal gang after the Chechen war and is forced to take the path of prostitution. In this autobiographical account Vlada is still choosing to see the light over the dark.

19:30-21:00

#### Soula Notos | *Gurbet - or how I became rich IN DUTCH*

A personal story about migration, warm hands, wealth, and the space in-between cultures and identities. A Dutch-Greek storyteller looks on all sides of displacement. Maybe the in-between isn't that bad?

20:00-21:00

**Nisha Coleman | *Alright: Solving the Problem of Living***

An intimate storytelling show filled with nail-biting darkly comedic adventures, from Madrid to Montreal! And all in hopes to solve the problem of living: how to learn to be Alright with Being Alive.

21:30-22:30

**Irina Koriazova and Sanne van Dijk | *12 Kisses Before Midnight***

How many kisses do you need to give, and to receive — to feel loved? Some say all you need is 12 kisses a day. Is that really all it takes? And should all kisses count?

23:00-00:00

## Saturday | November 9

**Vincenzo AcquAria Castellana & Paolo Rossetti Murittu | *Bread and Brave***

Join us for an immersive journey to the Mediterranean that celebrates courage and community! Experience enchanting tales, captivating rhythms, and the irresistible aroma of freshly baked bread...

14:30-15:20

**Ari Teperberg | *Untitled Document***

A mute monologue in a Google Doc. Soft rhythm of typing. Letter follows letter as the performer dives into his memory in search of forgotten stories, lost voices and inventions.

16:00-17:15

**TALK: 'The courage to live'**

Stories have highs and lows and so do our own lives. Let's explore the lives of those who have experienced it all, and ask them: what gave them the courage to continue living?

17:00-18:00

**Raffi Feghali | *Halim Al-Hakawati***

The greatest storyteller in the world (that you probably never heard of) will tell you stories from Kitab Al-Hikayat - the book that contains every story ever told, in the past and in the future!

19:00-20:00

**Chidi Ebere & Ham Ko Ham | *We Are Who We Are***

Follow a long journey to uncover a simple truth: in the great scheme of life, not one human being is ever truly above the other. Beautiful stories inspired on and interlaced with the amazing music of Hungarian Roma band Ham Ko Ham.

19:30-20:40

**Laura van Dolron & Mark Kulsdom | *De Uitnodiging* IN DUTCH**

In an eclectic mix of her work, with De Uitnodiging as a basis and courage as the theme, this stand-up philosophy queen pays tribute to love. Love after a divorce.

20:50-21:50

**Dr. Brown | *Befrdgth***

Absurd, surreal, and totally ridiculous! International comedy sensation Dr. Brown joins the festival with his multiple award winning (non-verbal) comedy show. A stunning mix of anarchy and symmetry.

22:00-23:00

**The Midnight Saloon**

The flicker of candle lights, gentle songs, improvised surprises and of course, short stories, told from heart to heart, all in the late hours of the night. Come join us in this midnight adventure.

23:00-1:00

## Sunday | November 10

**Arjen Barel | *Till Death...***

In this touching story about love, saying goodbye and carrying on, Arjen tells about losing his husband to cancer. What is it like to live with someone you have to say goodbye to? How do you deal with the uncertainty?

13:15-14:10

**Raphael Rodan | *Masterclass: Deep Connection***

How to find a deeply personal connection to a traditional story, and infuse the ancient images with your own experiences? Witness the process of story creation under the guidance of a masterful teacher.

14:30-15:30

**Rasha Hilwi & Sahand Sahebdivani | *A Trail of Pomegranate Seeds***

A very personal show about love, lullabies, melancholy and a journey to find belonging. A journey that culminates in making two children, who, through their parents, have their roots in Palestine and Iran.

16:00-17:00

**Başak Layıç | *Divine Madness***

After years of battling panic attacks, Başak consults a modern witch in Istanbul. Turns out, she's haunted by her grandmother. To change her fate, Başak embarks on a journey through madness and asks for help from the Divine Feminine.

16:30-17:30

## TALK: 'The courage of the mind traveller'

In ancient times monks and druids tried to explain the mysteries of life through stories, often with the help of psychedelic substances. Today we listen to the stories, but do we travel deeper into the mind?

17:00-18:00

## Peter Chand & Kirsten Milliken | *Roses are dead*

Traditional Indian and Scottish tales about soaring highs and crushing lows of romance!

Sometimes falling in love is the scariest thing to do, because wild, passionate, burning love is not for the faint hearted...

18:45-19:45

## Danni Cullen | *We All Fall!*

This is a show about chaos, disorder, imperfection and failing. Sometimes we try so hard and still everything turns out so wrong. Learn from this gypsy pirate, how to find comedy in every tragedy!

20:15-21:00

## Dj Zé Karlo | *Closing party*

Dance dance dance! Crossing borders with this energetic & fun DJ will make you smile and dance the night away.

21:00-23:30

## RECENSIES

Theaterstuk *Divine Madness* van Başak Layıç, is als een trip die de Bijbel bij zijn lurven grijpt - [Lorianne van Gelder over 'Divine Madness' in Het Parool, 11 november 2024](#)

Wanneer Layıç het verhaal van Lilith aanroept, 'the mother of darkness', geeft dit haar monoloog een universele dimensie. De grappige, ongehoorzame en 'gekke' verhalen over Layıç' oma, als reactie op de onderwerping die ze als vrouw ervoer – waar ik graag meer van zou horen – worden versterkt door het verhaal van Lilith en haar weigering te conformeren, en daarmee alle andere onderdrukten die in hetzelfde schuitje zitten. - [Maya Reus Yazdanbakhsh over 'Divine Madness' in de Theaterkrant, 13 november 2024](#)

Cullen is een begenadigd verteller en weet moeiteloos het publiek een klein uur mee te nemen in haar persoonlijke geschiedenis. - [Nuno Blijboom over 'We All Fall!' in de Theaterkrant, 13 november 2024](#)

De songs die de groep 'Ham Ko Ham' tussen de monologen van Ebere speelt, zijn de hoogtepunten van *We are who we are*: het is afwisselend melancholieke en opzweepende muziek, en vooral frontman Balász Sándor Herceg weet met zijn natuurlijke charme het publiek moeiteloos om zijn vinger te winden. - [Marijn Lems over 'We are who we are' in de Theaterkrant, 14 november 2024](#)

## PUBLIEKSBEREIK

Met 3.137 bezoekers en 25.758,50 euro (inclusief BTW) inkomsten uit kaartverkoop, heeft het festival beter gedraaid dan ooit. Door de matige respons op betaalde online campagnes afgelopen jaar, werd de focus in de communicatie dit jaar gelegd op een sterke campagne binnen Amsterdam. In de week voorafgaand aan het festival zijn 800 posters en 8.000 brochures verspreid. Daarnaast hebben we voor het eerst campagne gevoerd in de tram. Een campagnemiddel dat zeer effectief bleek: niet eerder kregen we zoveel reacties op de zichtbaarheid van het festival in de stad. En dat heeft zich vertaald naar een hogere kaartverkoop en grotere bezoekersaantallen.

Behalve het voor het festival bekende jong volwassen internationale cultureel diverse randstedelijke publiek, waren er ook weer veel gasten die speciaal voor dit festival naar Nederland gekomen waren. Ondermeer vanuit de Verenigde Staten, België, Duitsland en Frankrijk. En er waren programmeurs van verschillende Europese Storytelling Festivals, die voor hun eigen programmering op het festival kwamen scouten. Verreweg de meeste bezoekers kwamen niet slechts voor één show, maar echt om zich onder te dompelen in de sfeer van het festival en boekten tickets voor meerdere shows.

Ook de talks, de masterclass en workshops waren po-

pulair en vrijwel allemaal uitverkocht. We moesten voor meerdere workshops met wachtlijsten werken.

Omdat de uitkomsten van publieksonderzoek de afgelopen jaren vrijwel identieke respons opleverden (publiek was tevreden over de kwaliteit van de pro-

grammering, de communicatie, de ambiance op het festival) hebben we dit jaar gericht twee bezoekers uit het buitenland gevraagd om een reactie op het festival te verwoorden. Zie hieronder.

*"The Amsterdam Storytelling Festival is an important event on the map of Europe's storytelling community. It perfectly combines different storytelling conventions, from traditional storytelling with references to various traditions such as Persian naqqal or Arabic hakawati to forms on the border between stand-up and one man show. The programme includes stars of the world storytelling scene and debutants, as well as meetings with masters and samples of workshop to meet the needs and interest of festival participants and audience. The festival is accompanied by a multi-cultural atmosphere and the presence of live music, which makes the festival open to cross-genre exchange. A great ambiance and a venue that offers many possibilities, make this an unforgettable event."*

*Agnieszka Aysen Kaim*

*member of the Artistic Board of the International Warsaw Storytelling Festival*

*First of all, here is the website where I found out about your Festival:*

*<https://festivalsandretreats.com/2022/01/24/the-amsterdam-storytelling-festival-2/>*

*Well this festival was a very beautiful discovery for me. I really enjoyed the diversity of the shows and also the cosy venue of Podium Mozaiek which allows us to easily meet the storytellers before and after the show. I found the vibe really amazing, a lot of friendly people to get to meet who are diverse and pretty international!*

*To be honest, I forgot all the descriptions of the shows when I was there so I could blend in without any prejudice and I was surprised and amazed every time. Especially the Russian theatre show, at the end when the storyteller removed her King Kong mask and told us that was her story, I was speechless. I found it so amazing to get through all of this and then get on stage. It's really courageous, the festival theme was indeed well chosen!*

*In a nutshell, as a guy that can tend to be shy sometimes, it was really inspiring to experience all those shows and talks. It made me want to do the same! Moreover, it touched my imagination to create a link between my current job (agriculture) and Storytelling in a way that makes people know more about how things are grown... Nowadays most of the people don't know anything at all anymore, even me, I didn't know shit for 3 years ago! So there's work to do I feel and that is a great input you gave me.*

*I feel the storytelling shows make the experience more than just consumerism like watching a movie for example, you are getting kind of part of it (the clownery show for instance). There were things to say about every show, but I kept on the ones that struck me most and could illustrate my mind.*

*I felt really welcome there, by you and your colleagues (like Irina and Sahand). As I told you already I think, I was used to summer festival with camping... but having this festival in November makes it also cozier, like coming inside the comfy Podium Mozaiek after the outside coldness and sitting in the dark listening to stories, feels anyhow more like wintertime.*

*That's the reason why I thought I should get to the most shows I could and that's also part of my personality (either everything or nothing). Nevertheless, this decision made me see a lot of different ways of storytelling so as a newcomer it was pretty perfect to see a bit of all about Storytelling.*

*Once again, thanks a lot for this really amazing festival! It's been so nice to be full of stories on the way back home and after :)*

*Sincerely yours,*

*Louis Etienne*

*First time visitor of The Amsterdam Storytelling Festival in 2024*

## BEZOEKERSAANTALEN PER PROGRAMMA-ONDERDEEL

PERFORMANCE	TICKETS			
	BETAALD	VRIJ	CAST&CREW	TOTAAL
Openingshow	177	5	70	252
Untitled Document	62	17	0	79
Befrdfgth	111	21	9	141
We Are Who We Are	158	20	2	180
We all Fall!	104	24	11	139
Bread and Brave	37	23	0	60
De uitnodiging	33	12	0	45
ROOTS!	88	4		92
Divine Madness	122	13	2	137
Tot de dood... / Till Death...	32	18		50
Atalanta	105	4	11	120
Rainbow Cinema	96	6		102
Narrative animations	56	4	6	66
Roses are dead	37	23		60
a trail of pomegranate seeds	33	23	4	60
Alright: Solving the Problem of Living	56	4		60
12 Kisses Before Midnight	55	6	4	65
Gurbet	24	2		26
The Chord	50	3	3	56
1001 nights (Halim Al-Hakawati)	51	9		60
Little tiny wet show	58	2		60
<b>Workshops</b>				
Introduction to Storytelling	16			16
The courage to move	15	1		16
A short dive into clownerie	16			16
<b>Talks</b>				
Masterclass	19	17		36
The courage to live	51			59
The courage of the mind traveler	51	8		59
From fear to courage	45			45
The courage of the performer	16			16
<b>Dagpassen</b>				
Zaterdag	20			20
Zondag	20			20

Bijboekingen				
Regulier	16			16
Jongeren	4			4
Gast	2			2
Randprogrammering				
Openingsband	150			150
Midnight saloon	100			100
Closing party	75			75
Randprogrammering buiten MoZa				
Tuesday 29 October @ Mezrab	70			70
Islamic horror @ filmhuis de hallen	187			187
Taste of TASF november 3 @ Mezrab	250			250
3Troubadours november 5 @ Mezrab	70			70
				0
Totaal	1774	269	122	3137