

# La Fracture

Solo performance by Yasmine Yahiatène



# NOTE OF INTENT

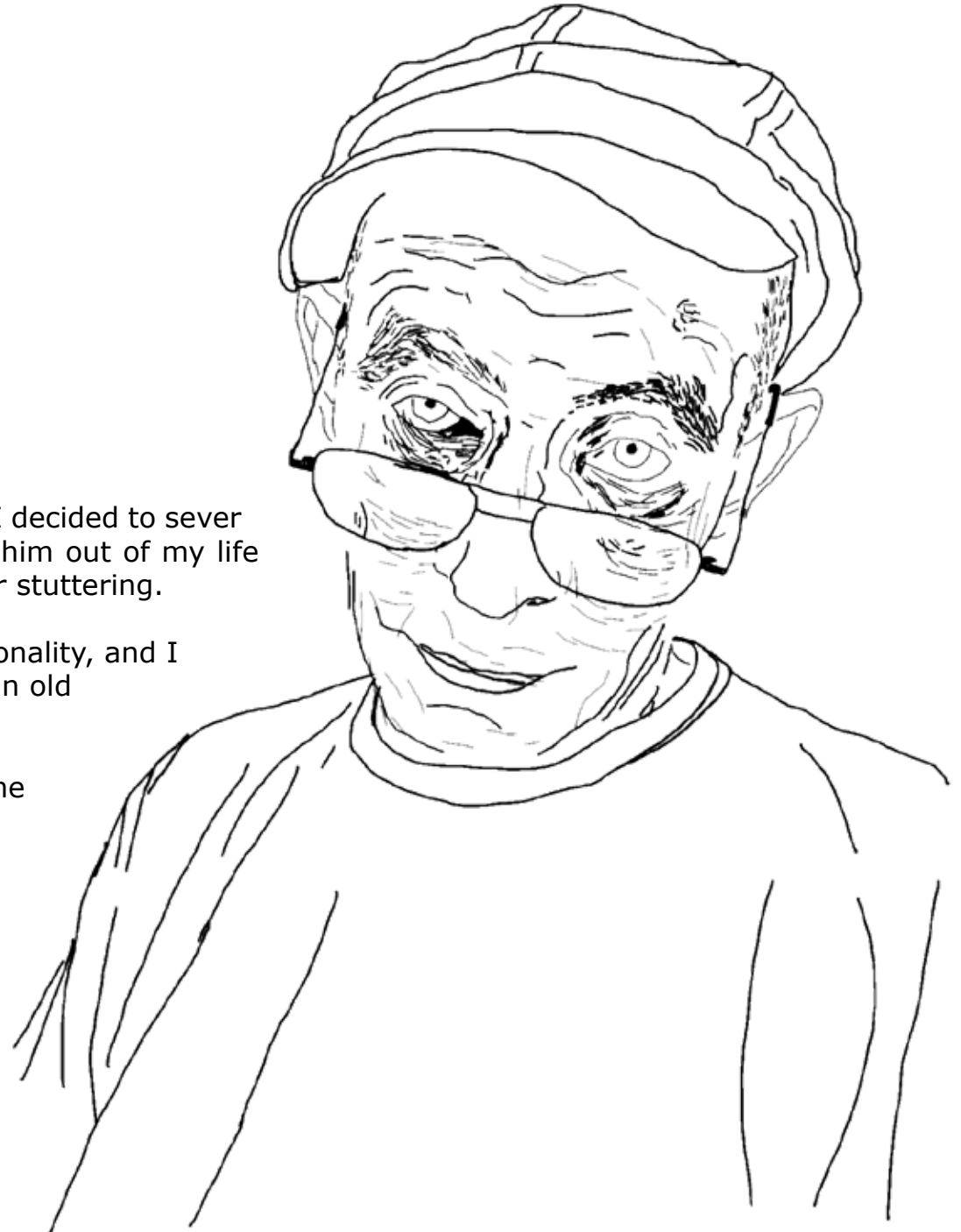
**No matter how old I get,  
I will always be the child her father left behind.**

My father was my hero.  
The kind of hero you want to be like.

Sick of alcohol, he was out of his depth. To save myself, I decided to sever all contact with him, to not see him ever again. To get him out of my life was easier than to see him weak, staggering, flushed, or stuttering.

Then, I shaped my personality, well, re-shaped my personality, and I slowly erased him from my memory, little by little, like an old drawing fading away.

He appears in photos only as a secondary character in the background.  
I speak about him as if he was already dead,  
but he is not, dead.



## **How Do You Grieve Someone Who is Still Alive?**

By severing all contact with him, I also broke ties with a part of myself. A part of myself that is remembered to me every day, because of the name which is mine, the colour of my skin, the shape of my face, expressions and attitudes inherited from my parents and, in this special case, from him...

My father is Kabyle, from the depths of the mountain in Algeria. He ended up in France, like so many others, before the end of the Independence of Algeria. He arrived in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais with his parents, who did not neither speak nor write French. Him, he was going to learn it, to master it, to become French; them, they would remain fixed in their own culture.

With *La Fracture*, I am trying to cling to a culture that is supposed to be mine, without knowing its codes, its history, its language, etc. Today, through this project, I am trying to decipher and to tell the story and the direction followed by my Kabyle father in order to have a better understanding of who I am. I am also questioning myself about the impact of the French colonisation in Algeria and the consequences for my father's life. I am trying to understand where the French education that I had comes from, as it has been able to cancel my Kabyle/Algerian culture.

"Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."  
Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto

The starting point of the creation process takes roots in my collection of memory videos (VHS), photos, and songs memories, as well as in my obsession for a video of my father crying, 9 years ago, in a Pub in Lille, last time I saw him. Since my arrival in the arts world, I never stopped using those archives to change them into creations, experiences, to wear them out, to use them, to test them.

With *La Fracture* I decide to reunite them in a single object, to use performing arts to try out, to differently fix things, to play my own story in theatre to mix mediums endlessly, because theatre allows this creation space.

The will of talking about and with a "racialized" body, in front of a public also exist. To give voice to tell a story that has gone silent, to invest the gallery, the stage, the public playing area to make a political statement.



## Privacy is Political

Coming back to my father's story. To my own story. Is that coming back to a bigger story?

From now on, I decide, while being facing my inner demons, to face a common History that is full of monsters. The one of Algeria, the one of the History of one people. My father, to forget those monsters, for his part, chose alcohol.

To understand who I am and what my story is, our story, I have to understand what those monsters involve.

"Sometimes, things go wrong. When it occurs in one's life it almost always possible to fix it. But when it occurs in the inner part of someone, it is more difficult to be fixed."

Richard Wagamese, *Medicine Walk* \*

Thus, with the project *La Fracture*, I decide to jump in a memory exercise, in order to not forget, to not repeat, to grow up and to reflect on the world all around me.

\*Translation Note: This quote has been translated by Clémentine Froidefond from the French version of the book *Les étoiles s'éteignent à l'aube* for the purpose of this document only.



"Daddy, do you know what do Algeria and alcohol have in common? I found three: shame, taboo, and silence..."  
Yasmine Yahiatène, La Fracture



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*La Fracture* is the result of an accumulation of archives and of works around those. Yasmine writes, draws, films, cuts, edits, collects, etc.

One day, she decided to gather all those works to create only one from those. She decided to gather the whole to create a play, a living play, some performing Arts. In this play, the video will be Yasmine's main partner on stage. A large set almost empty, with few objects, some archives: some K7s, a camera, white pens and a big screen covering the whole background of the stage. Yasmine wears a loose-fitting jacket of Zinedine Zidane.

*La Fracture* is the will of telling one's own story to understand it, the will of talking about topics like alcoholism and colonialism in an intimate space. Yasmine is alone on stage, and, like a child in her room, she invents a world that she would like to be more pleasant. Like a child in a castle built from pillows and covers, she builds her own hut, creates new memories, recreates things to make these softer. She celebrates the win of France against Brazil and the consecration of Zinedine Zidane, with his two headers during the World Cup 98. She records herself, films herself like a teenager would write her diary, watches family archive videos (VHS).

Based on the desire of using these archive images to nurture the show, Samy Barras – a videographer who followed the evolution of the work from the creation to the stage – decided to use low-tech visual effects as

much as possible: H18 camera on set, optical illusions, interplays of light and shadow, traditional animation overlay. This makes possible, when the video intervenes, to create sketches a little bit out of time, to blur the boundaries between the present occurring on set and family archives. In the end, lines are blurred, we no longer know what is from archives and what is being created on live, what relies on memories or on imagination.

There is also this ambiance track, the continuous common thread throughout the performance, that evokes subtly and yet in an overpowering manner the presence of alcohol. In these, we can hear doors slamming, sounds of glasses and other sense memories related to alcohol.

Throughout the creation and the writing process, it appeared that the text, strictly speaking, and oral interventions had to be used with stinginess. Just as the play relies on a composite of transformed, revisited, and twisted for fiction memories and archives, the words that Yasmine formulates during the performance are rare, addressed either to her father or to the audience. In this verbal economy, Yasmine gives space to sensitive and emotional rather than to analysis and intellectual.

In this arrangement, the set will remain quite bare: on the one hand on the floor, some scattered K7 and the

drawing that extends gradually; and then, on the other hand, rising like a wall, this enormous projection screen which takes up the whole background of the stage, becoming thus a partner, the main one, almost the one and only.

There is the will, like explained before, to seek for those links between Yasmine as a child and Yasmine as an adult. A bunch of devices and staging choices related to games have then been selected. This one for example: Yasmine playing on the ground with a white gouache pen, a scene that reminds childhood games in the playground. A camera is filming over her shoulder, evocating the watchful eye of a father looking over his child playing or doing her homework. Thanks to one of this video arrangements, Yasmine also plays at "being her father": the video image of the actress captured on live is directly superimposed on the archive video of her father, mixing and merging their two faces, and thus she is able to make him do or say what she wants. Thus, while acting, she embodies him, becomes him.

Here, there is the will to access to the story through some lightness, a childish impetus. In short, Yasmine is in her inner world, in her own space, a space in where she invites the spectator to look at her, to participate to her treasure hunt, her giant reconstruction, without any voyeurism. She just invites the spectator to be here, with her.

*La Fracture*, as intimate as it can be, is a show with a direct relationship to the public. A stage in front of and that includes the public. There is the desire to invite them to feel in a comfort zone, in order for the story told by Yasmine to be able to transport them wherever they want to. The desire for these spectators, with their guest status, to feel the intimacy in which Yasmine tries to bring them, intermingling whether the intimate nor the political in a total fluidness.

Yasmine takes them in her own story, in a way she asks them to be witnesses of her quest. Not only she watches again videos from her past with them, as if they were invited to a family reunion, even as if they were, in some way, part of this family, but she also shows them common memories, such as the Match France VS Brazil in 1998, in order for them to touch, with her, those objects from the past.

There is something close to the family reunion in this. She shows parts from her privacy, just as if she was telling to them, in an underlying way: what is your own taboo, your own story? In your own family, where did silence and shame were created? What is your own trauma? If you got one, of course, but, after all, who does not have one? If you want to, you can dream about it, maybe talk about it, with closely or remotely related people, it does not matter, talk about it, turn it into something, tip the shooting and transform the pain.





# TEAM



Design and Performance: Yasmine Yahiatène  
Dramaturgy and Co-Design: Sarah-Lise Salomon Maufroy  
Artistic Collaboration and Co-Design: Olivia Smets and Zoé Janssens  
Sound Design: Jérémy David and Martin Coutant (alternately)  
Video Design: Samy Barras  
Lighting Design: Charlotte Ducousso  
Video and Lighting Management: Samy Barras and Estefania Bigatti  
Huygen (alternately)

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# PARTNERSHIPS

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Co-production et Co-presentation : Kaaitheatre (Brussels),

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