



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ami Bennitt
617.797.8267, ami@motormmm.com

**ARTSEMERSON WELCOMES
*GARDENS SPEAK***

**AN INTERACTIVE, FULL-BODY, THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE
BY AWARD-WINNING LEBANESE ARTIST TANIA EL KHOURY**

**ONLY 10 PEOPLE ADMITTED AT A TIME
NOVEMBER 8 THROUGH 19, 2017
ON STAGE AT THE EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER, BOSTON**

PART OF ARTSEMERSON'S SYRIA-THEMED PROGRAMMING

**PLUS SPECIAL PUBLIC DIALOGUE EVENT: *ART & REVOLUTION*
NOVEMBER 10, FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

email ami@motormmm.com for tickets, more information, images, and select interviews

[Boston, MA—November 8, 2017] ArtsEmerson, Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre, proudly welcomes Tania El Khoury's **Gardens Speak**, an intimate, fully-immersive theatrical experience examining the oral histories of ten ordinary citizens who were buried in Syrian gardens. Ticketed entry for the experience takes place hourly November 8-19, 2017 on the Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage, located at 559 Washington Street in downtown Boston. Limited tickets remain and are \$55, and may be purchased online at www.ArtsEmerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, or in person at the box office. Only ten people may attend at a time.



Photo by Jesse Hunniford

Across Syria, many gardens conceal the dead bodies of activists and protesters who took to the streets during the early periods of the uprising against the Ba'athist government in 2011. These domestic

burials play out a continuing collaboration between the living and the dead — each providing safety, truth and a voice for each other. In **Gardens Speak**, Lebanese artist Tania El Khoury carefully reconstructs the oral histories of ten ordinary people and transforms Syrian statistics into universal, human stories. Click [here](#) to view the trailer.

“**Gardens Speak**,” shares ArtsEmerson Artistic Director David Dower, “sits in our season as a companion piece to Guillermo Calderon’s **Kiss**, which runs alongside it in the Paramount Center, through November 19. We wanted to explore, with our audiences, the complex tragedy in Syria and challenge our American perspective of it. Where **Kiss** speaks to our distance from it, **Gardens Speak** puts the audience up-close and personal with it. Taken together, the two works, and the conversation between Yasser and Tania, may open a space of true empathy for the audience and lead us all to a deeper and more informed discussion of our responsibilities around this humanitarian disaster.”

To provide Boston audiences with the opportunity to delve deeper into the themes and creative process of **Gardens Speak**, ArtsEmerson is hosting a free public dialogue on Friday, November 10, 2017 at 7:00pm. Entitled **Art & Revolution**, Tania El Khoury (writer of *Gardens Speak*) and scholar Yasser Munif will explore the intimate relationship between art and revolution, using Tania’s performative work as an example of how creative expression can redefine how audiences engage in artistic practice. Tickets are free with reservation.

Gardens Speak Creative Credits

Author	Tania El Khoury
Research Assistant & Writer (Arabic)	Keenana Issa
Calligraphy & Tombstones Design	Dia Batal
Scenic Designer	Abir Saksouk
Production Manager	Jessica Harrington
Production Assistant	Naya Salame
Sound Recording & Editing	Khairy Eibesh (Stronghold Sound)

Co-commissioned by Fierce Festival, Next Wave Festival, and Live at LICA. Developed through the Artsadmin Artists’ Bursary Scheme. Supported by Arts Council of England.

Gardens Speak Performance Schedule

Wednesday, November 8, 2017	6:00pm
Wednesday, November 8, 2017	7:00pm
Wednesday, November 8, 2017	8:00pm
Thursday, November 9, 2017	6:00pm
Thursday, November 9, 2017	7:00pm
Thursday, November 9, 2017	8:00pm
Friday, November 10, 2017	4:00pm
Friday, November 10, 2017	5:00pm
Friday, November 10, 2017	7:00pm
Friday, November 10, 2017	8:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	1:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	2:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	3:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	4:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	6:00pm

Saturday, November 11, 2017	7:00pm
Saturday, November 11, 2017	8:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	1:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	2:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	3:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	4:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	6:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	7:00pm
Sunday, November 12, 2017	8:00pm
Tuesday, November 14, 2017	6:00pm
Tuesday, November 14, 2017	7:00pm
Tuesday, November 14, 2017	8:00pm
Wednesday, November 15, 2017	6:00pm
Wednesday, November 15, 2017	7:00pm
Wednesday, November 15, 2017	8:00pm
Thursday, November 16, 2017	6:00pm
Thursday, November 16, 2017	7:00pm
Thursday, November 16, 2017	8:00pm
Friday, November 17, 2017	4:00pm
Friday, November 17, 2017	5:00pm
Friday, November 17, 2017	7:00pm
Friday, November 17, 2017	8:00pm
Friday, November 17, 2017	9:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	1:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	2:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	3:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	4:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	6:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	7:00pm
Saturday, November 18, 2017	8:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	1:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	2:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	3:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	4:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	6:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	7:00pm
Sunday, November 19, 2017	8:00pm

About Tania El Khoury

Tania El Khoury is a live artist working in London and Beirut. She creates interactive installations and performances in which the audience is an active collaborator. Tania's work has been shown in five continents in spaces ranging from museums to cable cars. She is the recipient of ANTI Festival International Live Art Prize 2017, the Total Theatre Innovation Award and the Arches Brick Award 2011.

Tania is currently working on a practice-based PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her research and publications focus on the political and ethical dimensions of interactive live art in the wake of the Arab uprisings. Tania is associated with Forest Fringe collective of artists in the UK and is a co-founding member of Dictaphone Group in Lebanon, an urban research and site-specific performance collective working in collaboration with local communities and focusing on the politics of space.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. It is dedicated to engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. These programs are core to ArtsEmerson's mission and expresses commitment to civic responsibility to create a more cohesive society. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. This shared leadership model reflects the organization's values — that diverse perspectives are essential to leading a 21st century arts organization. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

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