



KOULOUNISATION

by **Salim Djaferi**

DISTRIBUTION KIT

A DOCUMENTARY INVESTIGATION INTO THE LANGUAGE OF COLONIZATION

I came to Algiers for the first time in July 2018. Because of my Algerian heritage, I had been curious about the colonization of Algeria and more precisely, about the years before independence. However, my knowledge of that period was superficial and limited. It came from French historians, snippets of family stories, and fragmentary textbooks. I decided that Algeria was the best place to start learning about this history in context and set off to buy books written by Algerians themselves. I went to a bookstore in the city center of Algiers and looked for the section dedicated to the “Algerian War” for some time. I couldn’t find anything. I was about to give up, but I couldn’t believe that there would be no books on the topic in that store. Confused, I asked for the bookseller’s help, she answered without missing a beat that “All of the books on the Algerian War are in the ‘Revolution’ section”. Yes, of course: it was a Revolution. Only I had never given it that name, and therefore never really thought about it as such.

I immediately started to think about this key difference: who taught me to say “war”, and who taught them to say “revolution”?

Did the words evoke the same historical facts on each side of the Mediterranean Sea? If it exists, what would the right word be? With this discovery came the revelation of my ignorance. I knew factual history alright – the dates, the stakes, the main actors – but I was ignorant of the semantics and their ideological function.

I didn’t end up buying a book. This anecdote was a trigger and a spark. I came across the tip of the iceberg that hints at something much larger and unknown.

Ever since that day, I have carefully been writing down all the words that make up this iceberg and the ways in which I encounter them. There are many. Some I encounter randomly, some I look for with intention, and sometimes I find myself on an adventure like that of the bookstore.

Woven from anecdotes and encounters, Koulounisation is shaped by others’ stories and the words that they use to tell these stories.”

2021 CREATION · HALLES DE SCHAEERBEEK (BE)

Excerpt of an interview about the play *Koulounisation*, with Sylvia Botella and Salim Djaferi (October 10th, 2021, Brussels).

Sylvia Botella

Can you speak more about the essence of the play *Koulounisation*: language?

Salim Djaferi

When I started working on *Koulounisation*, I asked myself: how can I address the issues of colonization and the French-Algerian relations without speaking from the position of the victim? Sidestepping these issues could work. As an artist-researcher, I am interested in language. More precisely, I am interested by the word "colonization". How do you say "colonization" in Arabic? *Koulounisation* isn't a play about the historical experience of colonization as such. It is about the word "colonization", and the experiences, life stories, and violence that are associated with it.

Sylvia Botella

Koulounisation questions our relationship to truth, memory, transmission, and history by questioning our relationship to language. What is it that language does to us exactly?

Salim Djaferi

My parents are born from Algerian immigrants. I have often witnessed conversations about what we call "the Algerian War". Only recently did I hear the word "revolution" used for the first time. This shifted my thinking. What if "the Algerian War" wasn't only a historical reality, but also a linguistic one? What if it were put in words?

What words would that be? What meaning and what direction are determined by a word? To what end? Who decides? What does the choice of one word instead of another say of the person who speaks it?

I was intensely tormented by these questions. I wanted to listen to the sound of the world in the most obvious ways. I refused to settle for the exploration of familiar grounds, and I refused to only grow consensual ideas.

Sylvia Botella

What really strikes me in your approach is that it is both theatrical and aesthetic.

Salim Djaferi

I started by doing a lot of research and investigation. When the time came to work on stage composition, it became obvious that my work needed to exceed the authentic documentary matter that I had collected. It wasn't enough to condemn the damage done to language nor the loss of imaginaries to colonization. I had to be brave and creative. I had to commit to a truly aesthetic approach. Perhaps this decision comes from my exposure to a certain kind of documentary theater; scrawny, sad, inaccessible, trapped under some sort of disembodied intellectualism.

Early on, it became clear to me and to stage designers Justine Bougerol and Silvio Palomo -both of whom taught me a lot-, that visual arts being center-stage would help us tremendously in developing a sensory and playful relationship with the audience. Some elements came to life very quickly, like using string to delineate space or polystyrene cuts as building blocks. Making thought into matter was the only acceptable artistic choice for me. I didn't want to be completely isolated with my research. I didn't want to be in my own bubble.

Sylvia Botella

And indeed, something is being built in front of the audience's eyes, something layered that also produces critical thinking.

Salim Djaferi

I cannot bring research onto the stage without using the tools of theater. What can theater do? Theater can cause emotions that sometimes exceed the spectator's language or intellectual background. Something else is at stake when I break polystyrene on stage or when I hang everyday objects from the ceiling with a piece of string... something very powerful: emotional intelligence.

Sylvia Botella

How does the interplay between theater and visual arts function to emerge what remains unspeakable in terrible, unique historical events like the "Algerian War"? Or what is commonly called, in contemporary France, the "war of national liberation"?

Salim Djaferi

What is at work in this interplay is a form of intelligence that relies on metaphors accessible to all. A good example of that is the sponge soaked in red liquid hanging from a string. The image of the dripping sponge is enough to make the spectator understand what happened. The image alone is commentary enough. It signifies. No need to be of Algerian origin or to be a visual artist to understand it. All the remains on the stage produce the play's meaning, without it being spelled explicitly. The material traces map in physical space what has been said and what remains unspoken. Together, they become some sort of subjective and fragmentary museum of the colonization of Algeria, which the audience can visit after the show

PRESS KIT

La Libre - October 2021

Radio Grenouille - November 2021 (from 20 min 30')

Half & Half Closer - La Bellone - June 2021

Le courrier de l'Atlas - December 2021

Mouvement - December 2021

IO Gazette - April 2022

Le Soir - July 2022

DISTRIBUTION

Creation and performance

Salim Djaferi

Stage composition

Delphine De Baere

Artistic collaborator

Clément Papachristou

Dramaturgic advisor

Adeline Rosenstein

Writing support

Marie Alié and Nourredine Ezzaraf

Scenography

Justine Bougerol and Silvio Palomo

Lighting design and stage control

Laurie Fouvet

Lighting control

Laurie Fouvet and Cyriel Lucas (alternately)

Development, production, distribution

Habemus papam (Cora-Line Lefèvre, Rosine Louviaux, Alix Maraval, Apolline Paquet)

Special thanks to Aristide Bianchi, Camille Louis, Kristof van Hoorde and Yan-Gael Amghar

A play by Salim Djaferi, co-produced by Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Le Rideau de Bruxelles and L'Ancre - Théâtre Royal de Charleroi, with the support of the writing grants Claude Etienne, of the SACD, La Chaufferie-Acte1, La Bellone-Maison du Spectacle (BXL/BE), Théâtre des Doms, Théâtre Episcène and Zoo Théâtre, with the help of the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles.

Salim Djaferi's work is registered by Habemus papam.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE TEAM

Salim Djaferi

Creation and performance

Salim Djaferi lives and works in Brussels. An actor, author, and director, he has turned to documentary practice, exploring both intimate and collective narratives through scenic, plastic, and performative forms. His work is part of a research-driven approach, notably shaped by his collaborations with Adeline Rosenstein, Nouredine Ezarraf, and Clement Papachristou.

In 2019, he created *Sajada/Le lien*, an installation-performance arising from a collection of Muslim prayer rugs.

In 2021, he presented his first theatrical piece, *Koulounisation*, a documentary investigation into French colonization in Algeria, approached through the lens of language. Starting with the question "how do you say colonization in Arabic?", the work weaves a collective narrative in which various ways of living and telling History are revealed. In 2023, Salim Djaferi launched a new documentary project, *Bâtir*. Focusing this time on large housing estates in France, he continues with this project to question collective History through individual stories, while developing a scenic writing that blends theoretical rigor with artistic collaborations.

Delphine de Baere

Stage composition

Delphine De Baere graduated from ESACT (Royal Conservatory of Liège). After taking over the vacant Théâtre de la Place, she collaborated on the writing, performance, and direction of two productions: "Fausse commune" and "Dommage qu'elle soit une putain" (John Ford). Upon graduating, Delphine founded the ephemeral collective Vlard and participated in the creation of *Almanach*, a site-specific production in an occupied space, which was presented at the 2017 Emulation Festival. Then begins a series of theatrical projects as an actress. These include *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique de Michel Foucault - Le nerf du crapaud* by Angélica Liddell, *Anti-université*, a collective project initiated by Adeline Rosenstein, "A ce qui manque" directed by Chloé Winkel, "Les interstices de nos actes", directed by Vincent Sornaga, and "Que la peste soit", directed by Noémie Zurlatti.

She directed and performed in her first show, *COWBOY*, at the Festival Factory in February

2020 (Festival Supernova Toulouse, Festival WET CDN de Tours, Halles de Schaerbeek). She is currently performing in the show *Koulounisation*. Delphine is also an actress in various film projects, such as *Amours* by Delphine Noels and *Mourir gracieusement* by Joseph Paris. She also works in dubbing and voice-over for *La Fille Inconnue* by the Dardenne brothers, the series *The Detour*, as well as various animated films, manga, and documentaries.

She is currently writing her second theater show *GLISSER TOMBER*.

Clément Papachristou
Artistic collaborator

Actor, director, and playwright Clément Papachristou has been an associate artist at the Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles since 2022. A graduate of ESACT / Conservatoire de Liège in 2014, he quickly developed an interest in inclusive artistic practices aimed at marginalized audiences. His work focuses particularly on the relationship between the body and collective history.

Following *Almanach*, presented in 2017 at the Émulation Festival, he created *Une tentative presque comme une autre* in 2020, a performance with his twin brother Guillaume, who has a disability. The piece was shown at the Pays de Danses Festival and the Festival de Marseille. It was re-staged in 2022 at the Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles and toured to the Théâtre de Namur, Mars – Mons Arts de la Scène, the Kinneksbond Cultural Centre in Mamer, Luxembourg, as well as Orme Festival in Lugano, the Out of The Box Festival at the Comédie de Genève, BewegGrund.Das Festival in Bern, and the Wildwuchs Festival in Basel as part of the IntegrArt network.

His third directorial work, *La Grotte*, premiered in 2022 at Théâtre Varia in Brussels and Théâtre de Liège, and was performed again the same year during Scènes Nouvelles at the Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles.

Adeline Rosenstein
Dramaturgic advisor

Adeline Rosenstein grew up in Geneva, where she trained in clowning, acting, and later directing at the Ernst Busch Academy in Berlin, while also studying the history of religions and sociology. She develops work in documentary theatre. Between 2011 and 2016, she created the six episodes of the series *Décri-ravage* in Berlin and then in Brussels, focusing on the Palestinian question. Since 2017, she has been working with Laboratoire Poison on representations of various resistance movements.

A director, performer, and writer, Adeline Rosenstein anchors her work in an approach that is both committed and reflective. Her numerous collaborations with the academic world reflect a deep engagement with the types of knowledge mobilized, constructed, and conveyed through her work.

Marie Alié **Writing support**

Actress and collaborator, Marie Alié has been living in Belgium since 2012. After training in acting at ESACT, she graduated in 2017. During her studies, she met most of her close collaborators. Together with some of her classmates, she co-wrote and performed in the youth theatre piece *Jusque là-bas*, directed by Baptiste Isaia. She also acted in *Les Estivants*, directed by Marie Devroux.

She joined the Greta Koetz Collective, where they co-wrote *Le Jardin* and are currently preparing their next production. It was also through this work that she met Adeline Rosenstein, with whom she has been performing in *Décri-Ravage*, *Laboratoire Poison*, and *Antipoison*.

Drawing on her experience in contemporary and documentary writing, she supported Salim Djaferi in the writing of his play *Koulounisation* and is now preparing to assist Clément Papachristou with dramaturgy and direction in his upcoming production.

Nouredine Ezzaraf **Writing support**

Nouredine Ezzaraf (born in 1992) lives and works in Marrakech, Morocco. He describes himself as a “self-taught artist and tinkering poet,” and through his multidisciplinary work, he operates in a constant oscillation between poetry and action, archive-object and *oraliture*.

In recent years, he has developed street actions, interventions, poetry readings, as well as video and visual art works in various places including Marrakech, Casablanca, Madrid, Brussels, Malta, and London.

Justine Bougerol Scenography

Justine Bougerol lives in Brussels. A visual artist, she creates immersive site-specific installations exhibited in galleries in Brussels and Paris. Alongside her personal artistic practice, Justine Bougerol also works as a scenographer. She graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure de La Cambre in 2014. It was in Brussels that she developed a passion for dance-theatre, particularly that of Pina Bausch, as carried forward by many Belgian choreographers. There, she found an affinity for lived experience and for ordinary situations that lift off from reality to shift into an absurd and poetic world.

Among her collaborations with Belgian and French choreographers and directors, Justine Bougerol designed the scenography for five productions by the Belgian company Peeping Tom: *The Lost Room* and *The Hidden Floor*, commissioned by the Nederlands Dans Theater in The Hague, followed by *Kind*, created at the KVS in Brussels in 2019. Her collaboration with the company continued in 2021 with the scenography for the opera *Dido and Aeneas*, and again in 2023 with *S 62° 58', W 60° 39'*, presented at the Lyon Dance Biennale.

Justine Bougerol also collaborates with directors and choreographers from the Belgian and French performing arts scene, including Magrit Coulon, Marion Blondeau, Flora Detraz, Jean Lepeltier, Salim Djaferi, Julien Carlier, Ahmed Ayed, Olmo Missaglia, Lorette Moreau, and Guillaume Barbot.

Silvio Palomo Scenography

Director Silvio Palomo develops, together with Le Comité des fêtes, a stage language woven from trivial dialogues, repetitions, and verbal tics. Through collaborative improvisation, they dissect everyday behaviors to extract deeply theatrical material and create surprise by revealing the unusual within the ordinary. Following the creation of *LA COLONIE* (2016), a four-part theatrical series, *ØRIGINE* (2018), and *ABRI* (2022), Le Comité des fêtes continues its exploration of the limits of language and human relationships with *PHILIPPE* and *UNE PLANÈTE*.

In parallel, Silvio Palomo collaborates on various projects as a scenographer (*Koulounisation* by Salim Djaferi and *Juste encore assez de lumière...* by the collective Rien de spécial), actor (*Juste la fin du Monde* by Hugo Favier), technical director (*Quelques Lueurs* by Justine Bougerol), and on more hybrid projects at the crossroads of visual and performing arts (*Terrain Vague*, in collaboration with Justine Bougerol).

Between 2017 and 2021, he also conducted research at L'L on "*The Non-Event in Theatre*" with Manon Joannotéguy.

Laurie Fouvet

Light design and stage control

Laurie Fouvet, artist and technician, has been telling stories through the medium of light since 2010. She graduated in 2012 from 3IS with a degree in stagecraft and soon specialized in lighting design, technical direction, and stage management. She began working as a lighting assistant for various organizations, including Ballet Preljocaj, which she joined for an international tour in 2015 (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Les Nuits*).

She later chose to dedicate herself to more politically engaged artistic projects. In 2014, she met the Balleperdue collective in Marseille, with whom she has been collaborating since then. With them, she explores light creation in public space, working on poetic landscape projects such as *AsileClub*, *Gora*, and *I'm not Gisele Carter*. Through this work, she learned how to manage the technical aspects of a collective—her early experience in general stage management. In parallel, she began a long-term collaboration with choreographer Christian Uhl, working on several of his productions: *Au* (2015), *H&G* (2018), and *La Cinquième Saison* (2021).

She has also collaborated with artists such as Jenny Abouav (*Mu*), Clément Papachristou (*Une tentative presque comme une autre*), and Delphine DeBaere (*Cowboy*), before joining Salim Djaferi for his debut creation *Koulounisation*, where she was responsible for both lighting design and technical direction.

Laurie is also developing her own voice and lighting work, with the writing and direction of her sound play *Sousoumarin* (soon to be published by Balleperdue) and *Cycyborg* (a two-voice podcast).

Cyriel Lucas

Lighting control

Cyriel Lucas was born in Brussels in the mid-90s to a working-class family. At the age of twenty, after a year of training at IAD (Institut des Arts de Diffusion - Louvain-la-Neuve) and an academic year in communication at university along with physical training at the École de Théâtre Physique de Strasbourg – where he worked with members of the Peeping Tom company in workshops – he joined INSAS (Institut national Supérieur des Arts du Spectacle - Brussels), where he obtained his first master's degree as an actor in 2020.

During all these years, he developed an artistic sensitivity focused on interdisciplinarity, towards a danced theater. Alongside his studies, he trained as a lighting designer and stage manager, learned makeup, and created a drag persona with which he continues to perform. He also became involved in the founding and development of the non-profit organization Ravie and its various activities.

Hyperactive and always curious to learn and explore all aspects of his work, he began a choreographic research project in 2021 within the master's program in dance at the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp, in partnership with deSingel, where he obtained his second diploma in 2023.

Today, he works primarily in the collective direction of the Théâtre de la Vie (Saint-Josse - Brussels) and as a lighting designer, both for theater, dance, drag, and children's performances.

Habemus papam**(Cora-Line Lefèvre, Rosine Louviaux, Alix Maraval, Apolline Paquet)****Development, production, distribution**

Habemus Papam is a performing arts production house based in Brussels. Supporting contemporary and diverse creation, it contributes to the emergence and development of artists and companies within the artistic community and among audiences, both in Belgium and abroad.

Habemus Papam grounds its work in a dramaturgical approach focused on experimenting with alternative collective imaginaries. In collaboration with Entropie Production, Habemus Papam initiated PACO (Pôle d'Accompagnement Collaboratif et Ouvert) within its spaces located on Rue de Birmingham in Molenbeek-Saint-Jean.

2022-2023 TOUR

Festival d'Avignon OFF Théâtre des Doms (FR)	July 7th to 29th
Festival Sens Interdits Théâtre des Célestins (FR)	October 26th to 30th
Romanian National Theater Festival Bucarest (RO)	November 5th to 6th
Théâtre des 13 vents CDN de Montpellier (FR)	November 19th
Théâtre du Rideau Bruxelles (BE)	November 29th to December 9th
Festival Impatience Plateaux Sauvages (FR)	December 14th & 15th
Théâtre de l'Ancre Charleroi (BE)	December 19th to 22nd
Théâtre de Liège Liège (BE)	January 22nd to 27th
Théâtre Christian Liger Nîmes (FR)	February 3rd
Live Art Network Africa Cape Town (ZA)	February 17th & 18th
CDN Nouveau Théâtre de Montreuil Montreuil (FR)	May 15th to 20th

2023-2024 TOUR

Festival La Bâtie Genève (CH)	September 7th to 9th
Théâtre Prospero Montréal (CA)	Septembre 25th to October 7th
Festival Afrovibes 2023 Amsterdam (NL)	October 12th to 14th
Festival fast Forward Dresden (DE)	November 4th & 5th
Euro-Scene Leipzig (DE)	November 7th & 8th
Centre Culturel d'Uccle Bruxelles (BE)	December 6th
Pôle itinérant en Val d'Oise (FR)	December 8th
Scène nationale d'Orléans Orléans (FR)	December 12th & 13th
Théâtre Sénart Scène Nationale Lieuxaint (FR)	December 15th to 17th
Le Méta, Centre dramatique national Poitiers Nouvelle-Aquitaine (FR)	January 23rd & 24th
Théâtre de Châtillon Châtillon (FR)	February 9th
Théâtre Antoine Vitez Scène d'Ivry (FR)	February 10th
Maison de la culture de Bourges Scène nationale (FR)	1February 13th & 14th
Théâtre du Nord CDN Lille Tourcoing Hauts de France (FR)	February 20th to 22nd
Théâtre Les Bambous La Réunion	February 27th
Auditorium Harry Payet Ville de Saint-Joseph, La Réunion	February 29th
Théâtre Luc Donat Le Tampon, La Réunion	March 1st

2023-2024 TOUR

**Centre dramatique national
de l'Océan Indien, La Réunion**

March 7th & 8th

**Espace 1789
Saint-Ouen (FR)**

April 23rd

**Points Communs, Nouvelle scène nationale
Cergy Pontoise / Val d'Oise (FR)**

April 24th and 25th

**Théâtre de la Bastille
Paris (FR)**

April 29th to 19 May 19th

**Le Bordeaux
Saint-Genis-Pouilly (FR)**

May 14th

**Festival des Arts du Récit
Saint-Martin-d'Hères (FR)**

May 15th and 16th

**Comédie de Saint-Etienne
(FR)**

May 21st to 24th

2024-2025 TOUR

Theaterfestival Bâle (CH)	2 August 24th & 25th
Théâtre La Seizième Vancouver (CA)	September 25th to 28th
La Biennale, Centre culturel Alban Minville Toulouse (FR)	October 8th
La Biennale, Théâtre de la Cité Toulouse (FR)	October 9th to 12th
Théâtre de Namur (BE)	October 15th to 19th
Festival Theater is a Must Alexandrie (EGY)	November 11th
Théâtre de la Croix Rousse Lyon (FR)	January 21st to 24th
La Garance Cavaillon (FR)	January 28th
Théâtre Joliette Marseille (FR)	January 29th to February 1st
Festival Shubbak Battersea Arts Center, Londres (UK)	May 23rd & 24th

ON TOUR

Duration	1h10
Team	4 people: 2 actors, 1 stage manager + 1 tour manager (optional)
Stage	Flat stage and tiered seating 10m wide and 10.5m deep Can be adapted
Set-up	D-0 Dismantling after the last performance (60 minutes)
Fee	1 show: 4.600 € 2 shows: 6.800 € 3 shows: 8.800 € 4 shows: 10.000 € beyond: on quotation
Transportation	Team transportation: train/car/flight (quote on request) Set transportation: truck / aircraft (quote on request)
Accommodation	4 single rooms (D-1 arrival)
Per diems	Per diems based on the amount applicable in the country or meals directly on site (4 people)
Royalties	SACD
Recommended for ages 14 and up (ages 15 and up for school performances)	

CONTACTS

Artistic**Salim Djaferi**salimdjaferi@gmail.com

+33 6 47 69 43 33

Development, production, distribution**Habemus papam**www.habemuspapam.bediffusion@habemuspapam.be**Cora-Line Lefèvre, director**coraline@habemuspapam.be

+32 473 53 18 23

Apolline Paquet, tour coordinatorapolline@habemuspapam.be

+33 6 03 10 15 70