



Batsheva Dance Company's Mixed Bill: Yasmeeen Godder and Sharon Eyal & Gai Bachar

By Deborah Friedes Galili
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On first thought, Batsheva Dance Company's new mixed bill seems an unusual choice of programming. *House* (titled "Ha'avoda shel hofesh" in Hebrew) by Sharon Eyal and Gai Bachar is a natural pick, since Eyal has served as the troupe's house choreographer since 2005. The first half of the evening, however, belongs to someone from decidedly outside of the Batsheva fold: Yasmeeen Godder. Godder is not a complete stranger to Batsheva, having created *Green Fields* on the Ensemble in 2000, but her *The Toxic Exotic Disappearance Act* is the first work by anyone other than Ohad Naharin or Eyal to be performed by Batsheva in several years. Beyond the novelty of a guest choreographer working with the company, the combination of these particular artists initially seems to be an odd coupling. Were I to make a family tree of contemporary dance in Israel, Godder's branch would be far away from that of Eyal and Bachar. Indeed, aesthetically, these creators occupy nearly opposite ends on the art form's spectrum.

Yet watching the performance at Suzanne Dellal on January 4, this pairing started to make sense.

For all their stylistic differences, Godder and the team of Eyal and Bachar do have one key trait in common: they are artists who are audacious and provocative, in the best senses of those words. Rather than play it safe, these creators unabashedly delve into the realms of the twisted, the disturbing, and even the grotesque in their repertory. Rarely have I heard anyone deliver a lukewarm review of either Godder's or Eyal's work; indeed, it's practically impossible to *not* react strongly to their choreography.



Yasmeen Godder's The Toxic Exotic Disappearance Act. Photograph by Gadi Dagon.

Batsheva's mixed bill of Godder's *The Toxic Exotic Disappearance Act* and Eyal and Bachar's *House* may not be an aesthetically cohesive evening. But it's savvy programming, for each dance has the capacity to leave a significant impact on the audience – and together, these electrifying works outline the range of contemporary dance in Israel today.

Batsheva's new program continues at Suzanne Dellal in Tel Aviv through January 7 and returns from January 18-20. Additional performances are scheduled later in the season; for more details, please visit [Batsheva's website](#).