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## Freedom

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

PEAK Performances at Montclair State University

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## DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Exploring the concept of complete freedom, we found ties and restrictions: in conventions of religion and civilization; in rules and codes of behavior; in our awareness of those around us; in respect, politeness, and responsibility to ourselves and others; in history that doesn’t let go.

We found restrictions of science, of language, of physical abilities and disabilities, and of the gravity that ties us to the ground.

But above all we found the restrictions of fear. Fear that can paralyze and completely restrict our freedom, the ultimate tie, but also an instinct that is there to protect us.

It seems that whenever we think of freedom, it is defined by what it is not. It is left to us to imagine the unattainable and create the opposite of our restrictions.

Circles of desire and failure.

We have to fail the experience of freedom to be able to recreate it. We keep recycling it, and to recycle it we have to experience its failure.

Perhaps the door to complete freedom is found only in our imaginations.

Please feel free to imagine.

—*Jasmin Vardimon*

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Freedom Bound

What does it mean to be free? To what extent are we as a society trapped in our desire to attain freedom? When does the search for freedom transform into an oppressive condition, in and of itself? Jasmin Vardimon examines the ironic relationship between the concepts of freedom and constraint within her latest piece of work.

Vardimon, an eminent force in British dance theater, is renowned for her provocative, political, and powerful commentaries on the complexities of contemporary life. In *7734* (2010), Vardimon explored the horrors of the Holocaust, examining how such momentous historical events continue to percolate into and mold the psyche of future generations. *Lullaby* (2005) examined the relationship between a diseased body and the disease itself. Using Susan Sontag’s insightful work *Illness as Metaphor* as a point of reference, the piece brought home disturbing truths about the parallels drawn in society between military warfare and an ill body under attack as mediated through health-care systems. Through an episodic structure that drew on sections from past works, the company’s 10-year retrospective *Yesterday* (2008) examined the slippery spirit of democracy, the manipulative nature of memory,

and the politics of homes and homelessness. In *Justitia* (2009), Vardimon explored the legal system and challenged its so-called objectivity by demonstrating the easy slippage between fact and fiction in the court room. The unique and interdisciplinary aesthetic that Vardimon has developed over the years integrates dance, theater, digital arts, and music, creating works that are disturbing, exhilarating, challenging, and rewarding in equal measure.

Vardimon thrives on deploying juxtapositions as a key performance strategy in exploring specific themes in her works. In *Yesterday* a speech on democracy was delivered by a demagogue who wielded power and control over the masses with the flick of a national flag. In *7734* we witnessed a group of seemingly liberal and cosmopolitan young people on a beach holiday, talking about the perfect scenery in front of them. Gradually their more conservative streaks were revealed as they discussed how it could be even more perfect by erasing all signs of “otherness” from the foreign shores they were visiting. Vardimon invariably starts off revealing one side of a coin before flipping it over to present an antithetical perspective, constantly destabilizing audience expectation.

*Freedom* delivers this strategy with great verve. Vardimon’s insightful exploration of this lofty theme is conveyed by consistently evoking images of captivity and conditions of constraint, such that one begins to question whether we are all held captive by our romanticization of the need to be free. Or as free entities, can we and how often do we choose to remain captive? In our desire as a society to perpetually seek freedom, are we, in fact, bound by freedom and what it has come to stand for?

Through a fragmented, anti-narrative structure that has come to be associated with the dance theater genre, Vardimon crafts a piece that introduces us to several characters whose stories, on the surface, seem distinct and unconnected. However, on closer examination, these characters and their stories overlap and morph into each other until we start to understand them as manifestations or metaphors of each other.

*Freedom* is an honest and personal commentary that unpicks the contradictions that are innate within this mighty marker of human progress. Through humor, cynicism, and sensitivity, Vardimon once again delivers a critique of political systems, social conditions, and personal philosophies that we endorse and even take for granted, by revealing the complexities that nuance them.

(Extract from an article by Dr. Royona Mitra, Senior Lecturer in Drama, University of Wolverhampton. Full article at [jasminvardimon.com](http://jasminvardimon.com).)

Dance Theater

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Jasmin Vardimon** (Concept, Direction, and Choreography/Set and Media Designer/Sound Designer) was born and raised on a Kibbutz in central Israel. She joined the Kibbutz Dance Company and in 1995 won a British Council “On the Way to London” Choreography Award. She moved to London in 1997 where she founded Jasmin Vardimon Company (previously Zbang). Vardimon has been an associate artist at Sadler’s Wells since 2006. Previously, she was an associate artist at The Place in 1998 and a Yorkshire Dance Partner from 1999 to 2005.

Enjoying sell-out performances across the UK and internationally, her Company’s works include *Freedom*, *7734*, *Yesterday*, *Justitia*, *Park*, *Lullaby*, *Ticklish*, *LureLureLure*, *Tête*, *Madame Made*, and *Therapist*. *Lullaby* gained Vardimon selection for the BBC documentary Dance Film Academy, featuring the development of a film version of the piece (2005). She has been commissioned to choreograph for the Royal Opera House (*Tannhäuser*, 2010) and for ROH2’s OperaShots season with composer Graham Fitkin at the Linbury Studio (*Home*, 2012). Other commissions include Hellenic Dance Athens, Candoco, Welsh Independent Dance, Bare Bones, Transitions, and curating the Dance Ballads Festival at the Oval House.

Vardimon’s many awards include the prestigious Jerwood Choreography Award (2000), the Jerwood Foundation’s “Changing Stages” Award (2004), a nomination for Best Female Artist at the Critics’ Circle National Dance Awards (2003), the London Arts Board “New Choreographers” Award (1998), the Colette Littman Scholarship Award (1997), the Havatzeleth Foundation Scholarship (1997 and 1995), and the America-Israel Foundation Choreography Scholarship (1989 and 1991).

Vardimon has been a visiting professor at the University of Wolverhampton since September 2011. She developed a Higher Education program for dancers and actors, led by her company as a postgraduate diploma at Royal Holloway University London, and in 2012 launched a full-time certificate course at her company’s home base in Ashford.

**Guy Bar-Amotz** (Set and Media Designer/Dramaturg) was born in 1967 at Kibbutz Ma’abarot, Israel. He has lived and worked in London since 1996. He graduated with a BA in Fine Art from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem, and an MA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, London (supported by a full scholarship from the British Council). He participated in a two-year residency program at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (with a full scholarship from the Dutch Government).

Bar-Amotz’s projects have been commissioned by the Israel Museum (Jerusalem), Tate Britain (London), CCA (Geneva), Project (Dublin), the

Ein-Harod Museum, the Stedelijk Museum Bureau (Amsterdam), Kwangju Biennale (South Korea), the Biennale of Sydney 1998, the Ikon Gallery (Birmingham, UK), Fuori Uso (Italy), Saitama Museum of Modern Art (Japan), the Trade Apartment and the Art in Perpetuity Trust (London), W139 (Amsterdam), fashion house W&LT’s show room (Antwerp), and Transport for London’s Platform for Art (London). He has collaborated with Jasmin Vardimon on all her productions since 1997. In 2004 Bar-Amotz was selected by Art Forum as “The Artist to Watch” for the year ahead, and in 2010 he received the Lottery Award for Excellency in Art, one of Israel’s most prestigious prizes for the arts.

**Chahine Yavroyan** (Lighting Designer), in addition to theater, opera, and dance, has lit objects, clothes, casts of 1 to 240, buildings, and shows in back rooms of pubs as well as on main stages, site-specific, indoors, and outdoors. Previous works with Jasmin Vardimon include *7734*, *Yesterday*, *Justitia*, *Park*, *Lullaby*, and *Ticklish*. She has lit other dance work with Bock & Vincenzi, Colin Poole, Candoco, Arthur Pita, Henrietta Hale, Dog Kennel Hill Project, Walkerdance, Rosemary Lee, Ricochet, Hofesh Shechter, Lea Anderson, and Kate Brown, among others.

**Abigail Hammond** (Costume Designer) has created costumes for more than 100 choreographic works over the past 25 years. Recent commissions are *7734* for Jasmin Vardimon Company and *Desert Crossings* for Gregory Maqoma and State of Emergency. She was the resident designer for the National Youth Dance Company for 13 years, working with many early-career choreographers, including Lea Anderson, Mark Baldwin, Matthew Bourne, Wayne McGregor, and Ashley Page. For six years she designed for Zimbabwean Bawren Tavaziva, and her work with Tavaziva Dance was part of the Society of British Theatre Designers *Collaborators* exhibition at the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London, 2007–08. Theater work includes costumes for *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien (West End). Hammond leads the costume design pathway of the BA (Honors) Theatre and Screen degree course at Wimbledon College of Art. She has lectured at schools including the Royal Academy of Dance, London College of Fashion, Laban Centre, and Croydon College. In 2010 she was the lead costume design facilitator for the Blue Train Project, a collaboration with the V&A’s *The Golden Age of the Ballet Russe* exhibition.

**Jesse Collett** (Video Animation) studied illustration and animation at Kingston University, graduating in 2010. His animated short film *I Fall Down* has been shown in several festivals worldwide, including Rushes Soho Shorts Festival (UK), Red Stick Animation Festival (USA), and Mumia 8 (Brazil). It was also a semifinalist for the Adobe Design Achievement

Dance Theater

Awards and featured on Channel 4’s *Random Acts* series. Collett has worked on a variety of animation projects for clients including the BBC, Google, and the National Maritime Museum and recently worked with Jasmin Vardimon on a short opera entitled *Home*, commissioned by the Royal Opera House.

**Christine Gouzelis** (Rehearsal Director) graduated from the Athens State School of Dance (K.S.O.T.) in 2004. She received a scholarship for ImPulsTanz in Vienna, where she trained and performed with Ultima Vez, David Zambrano, and Mathilde Monnier. In 2005 she became a member of Jasmin Vardimon Company and has toured internationally with various performances. In her role of assisting choreographically and participating in past productions of the Hellenic Dance Company, she has worked with choreographers such as Wim Vandekeybus, Rootlessroot Dance Company, Tono Lachky, Pascal Rioult, Athina Valha, and others. In 2010 she took part in the renowned “50days” workshop with master David Zambrano in Costa Rica, with performances at the National Theatre of San Jose. She became a member of the 50collective, touring through the US and Europe. She teaches workshops internationally and is a faculty member of the K.S.O.T. in Athens. In 2010 she founded, alongside Paul Blackman, Juk-sta-poz Dance Theatre.

**Luke Burrough** (Performer) graduated from the Laban Centre in 1995 and worked with Green Candle, Retina, and Turning Worlds dance companies before meeting Jasmin Vardimon in 1997. He collaborated with the company on *Therapist*, *Tête*, *LureLureLure*, and *Ticklish*, taking a break in 2003 to train as a skipper and to work in the sailing industry. Returning to London in 2004, Burrough took over a role in *Lullaby* and has since then been involved in the creation of *Justitia*, *Yesterday*, *7734*, and *Freedom*.

**Kai-Wen Chuang** (Performer) was born in Taiwan. In 2011 she graduated from the Taipei National University of the Arts, the same year receiving a scholarship for American Dance Festival. In 2012 she joined Jasmin Vardimon Company as an apprentice. She is also studying for a postgraduate degree at London Contemporary Dance School.

**Estéban Fourmi** (Performer) was born in Le Mans, France, and received his education at different art institutions, including dance, music, and drama at Conservatory of Angers and Paris. He finished his studies in 2008 at Palucca Schule in Dresden where he danced for the Palucca Dance Studio, performing works by William Forsythe, Sasha Waltz, Rui Horta, and others. Since then Fourmi has worked for the Staatstheater Kassel (Germany), Tanzfaktor (Switzerland), and other projects in Europe. He joined Jasmin Vardimon Company as an apprentice in 2009. He has been involved in the creation of *7734* and *Freedom* and performances of *Justitia* and *Yesterday*.

**David Lloyd** (Performer) graduated from West Australia Academy of Performing Arts in 2006. Credits include *Terminal Velocity*, *Refund Policy*, *Cinderella Dressed in Yella*, and *Rabbit* (Buzz Dance Theatre Company); *Hair the Musical* and *Rent* (Yellow Glass Theatre); Luca Silvestrini’s *On Display* (Birmingham International Dance Festival); *Dear Body* (Protein Dance Company); *Coal* (Gary Clarke Dance Company); *Irreversible* (Mad Dogs Dance Theatre); *Falling from Trees* and *Intention* (Neon Productions Company); and *Inside* (Jean Abreu Dance Company). Lloyd joined Jasmin Vardimon Company in 2009 for the creative development of *7734* and *Freedom* and the performance of *Yesterday* and *Justitia*.

**Aoi Nakamura** (Performer) received her education at Ballettschule der Oper Leipzig and graduated from State Ballet School Berlin in 2006. She joined Donlon Dance Company/Saarländisches Staatstheater, Germany in 2006. From 2009 to 2011 she worked with ThossTanz Kompagnie/Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden in Germany. Since July 2011 she has been working as a freelance dancer and choreographer. As a choreographer she received first prize at the Aarhus International Choreography Competition 2010 for her piece *OTOTOXIC*. Nakamura joined Jasmin Vardimon Company in January 2012.

**Júlia Robert Parés** (Performer) was born in Sitges, Barcelona, and trained at Area Dance Space before graduating with a first class honors degree at London Contemporary Dance School in 2011. She was a guest dancer in ImPulsTanz 2010 and Performing Arts Research and Training Studios summer school, where she trained with Anthony Lacky, David Zambrano, and Peter Jaxko. In 2011, with the special help of Bruno Guilloré, she created her own solo, which she performed at Viva Dança International Festival in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. She recently completed the Jasmin Vardimon Company (JVC) postgraduate certificate in physical theater at Royal Holloway University London. She joined JVC in 2011 for the performance of *Yesterday*, *Justitia*, and *7734* and the creation and tour of *Freedom*.

### Jasmin Vardimon Company

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American Premiere!

Jasmin Vardimon Company  
**Freedom**

Concept, Direction, and Choreography **Jasmin Vardimon**

Created with and Performed by **Luke Burrough,**  
**Kai-Wen Chuang, Estéban Fourmi, David Lloyd,**  
**Aoi Nakamura, Júlia Robert Parés**

Set and Media Designer **Guy Bar-Amotz** and  
**Jasmin Vardimon**

Lighting Designer **Chahine Yavroyan**

Sound Designer **Jasmin Vardimon**

Sound Advisor **Peter Hall**

Costume Designer **Abigail Hammond**

Video Animation **Jesse Collett**

Dramaturg **Guy Bar-Amotz**

Rehearsal Director **Christine Gouzelis**

Production Managers **Ben Payne** and **Andrew Stock** for  
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Sound Engineer **Kathryn Spreadbury**

Lighting Technician **Edward Yetton**

Stage Technician **Simon Young**

**MUSIC**

Alejandro Jodorowsky  
 Avre Henriksen  
 Ben Frost  
 Biosphere  
 Evan Lurie  
 Hawaiian Rainbow Singers  
 Helios  
 Hugh Dillon  
 John Lennon

Karon O & Trent Raznor  
 Led Zeppelin  
 Lustmord  
 Peter Hall  
 Roy Orbison  
 Steve Beresford  
 Tim Heker  
 Yoko Ono  
 Yuko Nexus6

The Jasmin Vardimon Company thanks Andy Sillis, Annika Pittaros, Oscar Lisshagen, and Recce Edmonds.

Co-commissioned by Sadler's Wells and La Comète.

Jasmin Vardimon Company is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organization.



Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes, no intermission.

In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted inside the theater.

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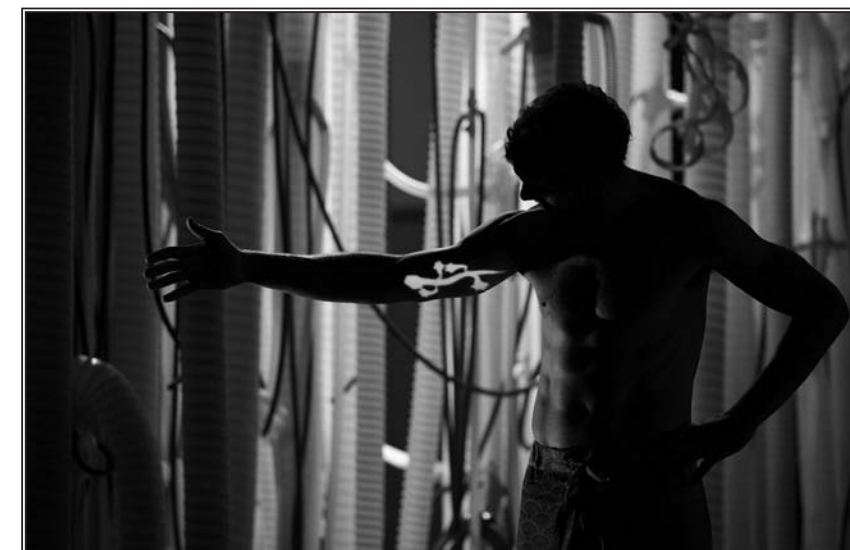
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**Peak Performances**



Credit: Alastair Muir

American Premiere!  
**Jasmin Vardimon Company**  
**Freedom**  
**April 18-21, 2013**  
**Alexander Kasser Theater**  
**Montclair State University**

To view our complete season and for more information, visit [www.peakperfs.org](http://www.peakperfs.org).



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