



***Who Am I?***  
***An exploration of how artistic identity is maintained in a nomadic life***

**Friday 11 & Saturday 12 December 2015**

An exciting, challenging and provocative two-day gathering comprising keynotes from Guy Cools and Jenny Roche; special performances from Manuel Roque (Québec/Canada) and Su-Feh Lee (British Columbia/Canada), lecture demonstration by Meagan O'Shea (Ontario/Canada) and moderated panel discussions and audience Q&A.

Focusing on the professional dance practitioner, and informed by questions surrounding identity, mobility and migration. We will explore, from different perspectives how an artist's identity is constructed and maintained in a climate where mobility is seen as a badge of honour, crucial to the creative process and an essential component of professional practice.

Many countries, including Ireland, have long prided itself on its open and welcoming of international dance artists. Many see mobility as key to a successful dance career. However do we have the right models to support mobility? The afternoon sessions will include contributions from a range of Irish and international dance artists including Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Philip Connaughton, Maria Nilsson Waller and Meagan O'Shea, framed by contributions from cultural geographers Dr. Karen Till and Prof. Gerry Kearns, moderated by Mary Brady, concluding with a panel discussion and audience participation.

Informing our atelier are two unique presentations that thematically, from different perspectives will inform, challenge and encourage critical reflection and stimulate discussion: Su-Feh Lee presents *The Things I Carry* and Manuel Roque presents *Black Matter*.

To coincide with *Who Am I?* Dance Ireland will curate a *Friday New Works*, mixed-bill works which respond to the themes under discussion.

Open to all, including artists, curators, programmers, academics, cultural theorists, and the general public. Key questions to be considered, include:

- What motivates artists' to be mobile – it is necessity or desire?
- Does working in multiple/different cultural contexts have an impact on an artist's identity?
- How does an artist maintain his/her identity when working in different cultural contexts?
- Is a nomadic existence (an essential and accepted) part of the creative life?
- Finding the balance between mobility and economic and artistic challenges.



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**Schedule**

**Friday 11 December**

12noon	Keynote presentation	Dr Guy Cools
1.30pm	<b>The Things I Carry</b> (performance)	Su-Feh Lee
2-3pm	Lunch	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor
3- 4pm	Lecture Demo <b>Artistic Identity &amp; Global Mobility</b>	Meagan O'Shea
4 -6pm	Panel, featuring Dr Karen Till, Meagan O'Shea, Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Philip Connaughton; moderator Mary Brady.	
7-8pm	<i>Friday News Works</i> , featuring:  <b>As We Know It</b> Choreography/Performance: Sibeál Davitt & Kristyn Fontanella  <b>Hear Me Sing Your Song</b> Choreography: Liv O'Donoghue.	
8-9pm	Reception 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor	

**Saturday 12 December**

11am	Keynote presentation	Dr Jennifer Roche
12.45pm	<b>Black Matter</b> (performance)	Manuel Roque
1.30pm	<b>Black Matter</b> (performance)	Manuel Roque
1-2pm	Lunch	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor
2-4pm	Panel, featuring Prof Gerry Kearns, Maria Nilsson Waller, Alexandra Waierstall; moderator Mary Brady.	

**Who Am I? An exploration of how artistic identity is maintained in a nomadic life**, is presented by Dance Ireland, in partnership with Dublin Dance Festival and with the support of the European Dance House Network.



European  
Dancehouse  
Network



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## **Who Am I?**

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#### **Biographies:**

**Dr. Guy Cools** is a dramaturge, dance critic, and curator. His latest book is *In-between Dance Cultures: on the migratory artistic identity of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan* (Valiz 2015).

[www.anagrambooks.com/in-between-dance-cultures](http://www.anagrambooks.com/in-between-dance-cultures)

**Dr Jennifer Roche** is Lecturer in Dance at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. Her latest work is *Multiplicity, Embodiment and the Contemporary Dancer; Moving Identities* (Palgrave Macmillan 2015).

[www.palgrave.com/page/detail/multiplicity-embodiment-and-the-contemporary-dancer-jennifer-roche](http://www.palgrave.com/page/detail/multiplicity-embodiment-and-the-contemporary-dancer-jennifer-roche)

**Dr Karen Till**, is Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth, Ireland.

[www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/karen-till](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/karen-till)

**Prof Gerry Kearns**, Department of Geography, NUI Maynooth, Ireland.

[www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/gerry-kearns](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/gerry-kearns)

**Su-Feh Lee** (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada) is a dancer, choreographer, dramaturge and teacher born and raised in Malaysia. [www.batteryopera.com](http://www.batteryopera.com)

**Manuel Roque** (Montreal, Quebec, Canada), is a dancer, choreographer. [www.manuelroque.com](http://www.manuelroque.com)

**Mary Brady** (Ireland) is a dance artist, curator, writer and researcher and arts consultant.

[www.linkedin.com/pub/mary-brady](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/mary-brady)

**Meagan O'Shea** (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) is a contemporary dance-theatre artist creating, performing, teaching and facilitating creative work across Canada and internationally; [www.standupdance.com](http://www.standupdance.com).

**Fearghus Ó Conchúir** (Ireland/UK) is a choreographer and dance artist. Brought up in the Ring Gaeltacht in Ireland, Ó Conchúir works internationally from his base in London. [www.fearghus.net](http://www.fearghus.net).

**Maria Nilsson Waller** (Sweden/Ireland) is a freelance dance artist, teacher and choreographer. Born in Sweden and based in Dublin, she is an Associate Artist with Dance Ireland; [www.marianilssonwaller.com](http://www.marianilssonwaller.com).

**Liv O'Donoghue** (Ireland/Norway) is Irish. But she's also Norwegian. A dance artist and choreographer working independently and with dance and theatre companies. An Associate Artist with Dance Ireland.

[www.livodonoghue.com](http://www.livodonoghue.com)

**Philip Connaughton** (Ireland) is a choreographer/performer, working independently and with a range of companies and collaborators nationally and internationally. An Associate Artist with Dance Ireland.

[www.philipconnaughton.com](http://www.philipconnaughton.com).

**Alexandra Waierstall** (Cyrus/Germany) born in England and raised in Cyprus Alexandra Waierstall is a Düsseldorf based choreographer and artist. [www.alexandrawaierstall.com](http://www.alexandrawaierstall.com)

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*In-between Dance Cultures: on the migratory artistic identity of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan*, by Guy Cools (Valiz Amsterdam).

*Belgian-Moroccan Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and British-Bengali Akram Khan are two of the most prolific, contemporary choreographers. Their artistic universes are largely built around their identity **in-between dance cultures**. Dramaturge Guy Cools who accompanied both situates their work within the larger critical debate on the (post)modern and (post)migrant identity. He offers a privileged insight in their creative practices discussing in detail some of their iconic choreographies and how they invent a much needed, new social imagery that fits our present day experience of living in a globalized environment and that is both dialogical and embodied in a lived, migratory experience. As such this book offers a complementary view on questions of cultural identity taking the somatic awareness and knowledge of the body of the contemporary dancer as its starting point.*



Guy Cools

Photo credit: Luc Senecal

**Dr. Guy Cools** is a dance dramaturge. Recent positions include Associate Professor for Dance Studies at the research institute Arts in Society of the Fontys School of Fine and Performing Arts in Tilburg, and Guest Professor at Ghent University, where he finished a practice-based PhD on the relationship between dance and writing. He has worked as a dance critic, artistic programmer, and policymaker for dance in Flanders. He now dedicates himself to production dramaturgy, contributing to work by choreographers all over Europe and Canada such as: Koen Augustijnen (BE), Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (BE), Danièle Desnoyers (CA), Lia Haraki (CY), Christopher House (CA), Akram Khan (UK), Arno Schuitemaker (NL), and Stephanie Thiersch (DE). He regularly lectures and publishes, and has developed a series of workshops that aim to support artists and choreographers in their creative process. His most recent publications include *The Ethics of Art: ecological turns in the performing arts*, co-edited with Pascal Gielen (Valiz, 2014) and the series *Body:Language* (Sadler's Wells, 2012), a series of published, live interviews with major contemporary artists which Cools curated from 2008 till 2013. In the autumn of 2015 his next book will appear, *In-between Dance Cultures: on the migratory artistic identity of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan* (Valiz). With the Canadian choreographer, Lin Snelling, he developed an improvised performance practice 'Rewriting Distance' ([www.rewritingdistance.com](http://www.rewritingdistance.com)) that focuses on the integration of movement, voice, and writing.

***Traces from elsewhere: Nomadism, artistic identity and contemporary dance***

*This presentation explores the connections between nomadism and artistic identity formation by interrogating the creativity that migration elicits and the narratives that surround it. It is further situated in the complex role that emigration has in Irish culture questioning whether contemporary dance in particular is emblematic of this socio-cultural phenomenon. These questions are anchored through descriptions of a creative project currently underway that draws together artists from Ireland and Australia to explore how we manage absence and presence in a globalized yet increasingly virtual world.*



Jenny Roche      Credit: Enda O'Looney

**Dr. Jennifer Roche**

Originally from Ireland, Dr. Jenny Roche is a Lecturer in Dance at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane. Her research focus is the creative practice of the contemporary dancer, exploring the specific nuances of this career from multiple perspectives including philosophical approaches, somatics, and narrative inquiry.

She has worked extensively as a dancer, working with a range of choreographers including Rosemary Butcher, Jodi Melnick, John Jasperse, Yoshiko Chuma and in work by Dominique Bagouet (Les Carnets Bagouet, France). She was artistic director of Rex Levitates Dance Company (now Liz Roche Company), which she co-founded with choreographer Liz Roche and was a founder member of Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre.

From 2007 to 2011 she was dance advisor to the Arts Council of Ireland.

Palgrave Macmillan recently published her book *Multiplicity, Embodiment and the Contemporary Dancer: Moving Identities*.

## ***The Things I Carry* (performance) Friday 11 December**

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*My body is an archive of my experiences, my sensations, my history, my ancestors.*

Lee Su-Feh explores these ideas through story-telling, song, movement and our electronic devices. Along the way, she creates a space that is part ceremony, part conference, part confessional.

*The Things I Carry* is a work that Lee developed through Migrant Bodies, an E.U.-sponsored choreographic project aimed at opening up a civil and artistic reflection on migrations and their cultural impact for the European and Canadian societies.

Concept, Choreography and Performance: Lee Su-Feh  
Dramaturgy: Alessandro Sciarroni  
Text: Lee Su-Feh, with excerpts from *On A Plane*, by Chris Bose  
Sound Design: Junhong McIntosh-Lee  
Song: Both Sides Now by Joni Mitchell

Thanks to all the artists and organisers of Migrant Bodies Project for their feedback and support, all the individuals we have met in our journey and who have contributed to this work directly and indirectly.

**Su-Feh Lee** is a dancer, choreographer, dramaturge and teacher born and raised in Malaysia, where she studied with teachers who strove to find a contemporary Asian expression out of the remnants of colonialism and dislocated traditions. Before moving to Vancouver, Unceded Coast Salish Territories, in 1988, she lived in Paris where Lari Leong was an important influence. In Canada, important teachers have included Peter Bingham and Linda Putnam. In addition to dance and theatre, Su-Feh has studied and practiced Chinese martial arts for more than 30 years, most notably with Master Xu Gong Wei and Master Yang Guo Tai. Since 2010, she has been studying Fitzmaurice Voicework® and recently completed the Teacher Certification program as an Assistant Teacher.

In 1995, she co-founded battery opera performance with writer/performer David McIntosh. Together, they have created a body of work that interrogates the contemporary body as a site of intersecting and displaced histories and habits. In 1998, Su-Feh received the Prix de Jeune Auteur of the Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint Denis for her work *Gecko Eats Fly*. In 2003, battery opera received the Alcan Award for the creation of *Cyclops*, which evolved into [storm] and toured across Canada in 2005. In 2013, Su-Feh received the Isadora Award for her contribution to the dance milieu in Vancouver; and in 2014, the Lola Award in recognition of her multi-disciplinary and “total art” approach to her work. Her last major work was *Sweet Gyre* (2013), her second collaboration with Montreal choreographer Benoît Lachambre and Juno Award winning composer, Jesse Zubot. Currently, she is working on building a *Dance Machine*, with the help of dance artist Justine Chambers and architect Jesse Garlick. [batteryopera.com](http://batteryopera.com) [folkandpalace.com](http://folkandpalace.com)



Su-Feh Lee

Photo Credit : Yvonne Chew

*Black Matter* (15 mins)  
Music: Xenakis, J.S.Bach

*Black Matter* was developed through *Migrant Bodies*, an European/Canadian research project which included residencies in Bassano del Grappa, Zagreb, Vitry sur Seine, Vancouver and Montréal. As part of the project, we met Harsha Walia, a social justice activist and journalist. She tells us about the mechanics of the American Government's approach to the migrant situation. Since then I have become more interested in the notion of visibility / invisibility. Some questions emerged from my reflections :

- Do we need to be visible to have a voice?
- How subversive is invisibility?
- Is there power beyond invisibility?

For me those questions have a direct connection with the theme of migration, and also resonate deeply on a personal, artistic and political level. *Migrant Bodies* was realised with funding from the European Union and the participation of La Briqueterie (Vitry Sur Seine, France), The Dance Center (Vancouver, Canada), Zagrebački plesni centar (Zagreb, Croatia), Circuit-est Centre Chorégraphique (Montréal, Canada) and OperaEstate (Bassano del Grappa, Italy).

Choreographer **Manuel Roque** has performed for a diverse range of choreographers including Marie Chouinard, Dominique Porte, Peter James, Sylvain Émard and Daniel Léveillé.

His choreographies include *Brendon et Brenda* (2002), *Ô mon bateau* (2004), *RAW-me* (2010) and the duet *Ne meurs pas tout de suite, on nous regarde* with Lucie Vigneault (2012). In 2013, he founded his company Manuel Roque and presented *In Situ* at the Place des Arts in Montréal. His solo *Data*, was presented at Usine C in 2014, and questions the notion of identity and mutation through a formal and hyper physical performance, touring to Festival Trans-Amerique (Montreal 2015), Festival June Event (Paris 2015), Festival B-Motion (Bassano Del Grappa 2015) and Festival Ailleurs en Folies (Mons 2015)

Manuel is also a choreographer of contemporary circus (*Babel*, Montréal Complètement Cirque in 2012, 2013 and 2014) and teaches at the Ecole de Danse Contemporaine, Montréal, where he created *Aurora* for students from EDCMTL.

His next creation, *4-OR* will premiere in Montreal in December 2015, presented by Tangente. He is nominated "Bearer of Hope" in the annual selection of the prestigious "Tanz" magazine (2015). Revolving around the notion of contemporary human condition, his work aims to open consciousness and to propose sensible, poetic and genuine artistic proposition; [www.manuelroque.com](http://www.manuelroque.com)



Manuel Roque Photo Credit: Grinelle Chagnon

## Lecture Demonstration

Friday 11 December 3 to 4pm

### ***Artistic Identity & Global Mobility***

Meagan O'Shea



Meagan O'Shea finds herself in many places both in her homeland of Canada and in multiple countries and contexts in Europe on an annual basis. Exploring the set of values that prompt this kind of vagabond lifestyle as a contemporary dance-theatre artist, O'Shea will attempt to explain, understand, justify, extol, demonstrate and co-opt you into her life(style) in this hour long encounter.



Working across disciplines and contexts, **Meagan O'Shea** creates, performs, teaches and facilitates creative process and transformative experience in art, education, community and social change contexts. Working in different countries makes her appreciate her homeland and working at home makes her homesick for other places and life on the road; [www.standupdance.com](http://www.standupdance.com).