

**Maria Kefirova**

Choreographer/performer

<http://mariakefirova.wordpress.com/>



I am interested in the dynamics between signifier and signified, in redirecting, reordering, turning around, turning inside out, dislocating and stripping in order to make emerge the gaps where change of perception, presence and knowing are produced and new awareness can open. I am touched and inspired by the paradox of the body, a rich and complex place, where the experience of life both leaves its imprints and erases its marks. Combining dance, theater, performance and video, I explore all the possible and impossible correlations, which could exist between the “visible” body (social, cultural, political) and the “invisible” body (flesh, bone, organs, and fluids). My working methods are based in curiosity towards blind spots, explosion of inertia and the movements in, out and next to focus.

**The Only Reason I Exist is you, also: Why dogs are successful on stage?**

Concept and Performance: Maria Kefirova, in collaboration with Kelly Keenan, Sara Haley and Karen Fennell, Presented at Theatre d' Aujourd'hui, Montreal, 2013 Presented at Tangente Laboratoire de Mouvements Contemporains, Montreal, 2016

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/193242438>



*The Only Reason I Exist Is You, also: Why Dogs Are Successful On Stage?*  
is a dance-theater performance in which I am choreographing the audience attention.

During my stay in Europe between 2009 and 2012, I witnessed several contemporary dance and theater performances where dogs were taking central part in the artistic proposition. I was deeply captivated by the presence of these animals on stage.

My piece originates in the question: Why are dogs successful on stage?

The answers that I give to this question are the core of my creative process. Dogs are successful on stage because:

- they are what they appear to be.
- they don't talk and don't take part in the agreement of conditions.
- they are unaware of their role
- they move as fast as they think.
- they are displaced.
- they stay innocent and loyal in an artificial reality which is imposed on them.
- they don't understand.
- it is a mystery how they perceive us.

Contemplating this question and the possible answers, brought me to think about the fundamentals of dance performance, about what can be shared when we try to share what is not sharable, about the notions of visible and invisible reality, about personal and collective space, about fake and real presence.

#### **PRESS:**

VENDREDI 18 NOVEMBRE 2016

**LE DEVOIR**  
LIBRE DE PENSER

[|Catherine Lalonde](#) | [Danse](#)

<http://www.ledevoir.com/culture/danse/484515/danse-les-spectacles->

[invisibles](#) *The Only Reason I Exist Is You, also : Why Dogs Are Successful On Stage ?*

*D'une rare et lumineuse intelligence.*

*Cette finesse, cette délicatesse, cette intelligence de savoir offrir plutôt que de vouloir gaver se retrouve dans la nouvelle oeuvre de Maria Kefirova. ... la pièce propose des diffractions et des superpositions de perceptions fort intéressantes.*

*Quelques spectateurs se succèdent sur scène, et c'est magnifique de voir en gros plan ce moment où ils passent d'une contenance, sachant que leur image est vue, à de la pure curiosité face à cette danse intime qui leur est donnée. Une pièce différente pour le 1 % de la population qui ose monter sur scène (et que j'imagine privilégié) ; et magique pour le 99 % qui préfère l'anonymat*

*de la foule. On sent, par les yeux des autres, que les quatre interprètes sont d'une belle générosité ; elles arrivent à créer une île aux sirènes contemporaines, aseptisée mais mystérieuse, inquiétante et invitante, étrange et hypnotisante.*

## THE PARADISE

Concept and performance: Maria Kefirova and Hanako-Hoshimi, Light: Paul Chambers,  
Presented at Tangente Laboratoire de Mouvements Contemporains -Montreal and DNK,  
Sofia Bulgaria, 2015-16

**Video link:** <https://vimeo.com/175553414>

The Paradise is a dance duet that works between the two dimensional ready-made notion of Paradise as pink flamingos, beach side motels, rainbow colored harmony and the task of accessing extraordinary states, which are often far from comfortable and perfect looking. Through a series of unassuming and simple assignments, we are setting up conditions for the emergence of complexity and the production of multiplicity. Today paradise is a movement of synchronicity, a way of looking at and relating to. It is everything that I look upon with care and I spend time with. Paradise is also a movement that does not skip any part of its trajectory: a very alive and effortless state of simultaneously holding on and letting go. Paradise is not getting fixed in meaning, sensation, idea or image but constantly moving through their different nuances. The Paradise does not solicit audience participation but is a system of offering and receiving and the questions that arise from this.



**PRESS :**

VICTOR SWOBODA, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE, n: November 9, 2015

<http://montrealgazette.com/entertainment/arts/victor-swoboda-dancer-jose-navas-is-of-an-age-to-know-no-limits>

*The work of Montreal-based dancer/choreographer Maria Kefirova is consistently interesting and intelligent. In her latest collaboration, The Paradise, she teams up with another local dancer, Hanako Hoshimi-Caines in a duet that takes as its starting point various notions of paradise. The duet is performed with a background of changing idealized images by photographer Caroline Desilets. It considers the meaning of paradise in a Western world where multi-ethnicity, social inequality and conflicting religious affiliations reign. For these three artists, collaborating on this work might well be the paradise they seek.*

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*Le Devoir, 20 novembre 2015, Nayla Naoufal*

<http://www.ledevoir.com/culture/danse/455838/paradis-mode-d-emploi>

*Dans The Paradise, des chorégraphes et danseuses Maria Kefirova et Hanako Hoshimi-Caines, ne vous attendez pas à un « paradis : mode d'emploi », une version chorégraphique de ces livres de psycho-pop qui expliquent la marche à suivre pour être heureux. La création à quatre mains est une pièce performative minimaliste, à la fois verbeuse et contemplative, qui fait un pied de nez à la notion de paradis et nos attentes avec. Brillant, inventif et solide, mais éprouvant à force d'austérité.*



**NoDistance (work in progress)**

Choreography and performance: Maria Kefirova

Artistic advisors: Miguel Melgares and Kelly Keenan

Presented at Topological Media Lab in Montreal, Centro Federico Garcia Lorca, New Contemporary Art Museum in Granada - Spain, and at DNK, Sofia -Bulgaria, 2016

**Video link:** <https://vimeo.com/127826990>

password: nodistance



This piece is not funny. It is about absence and grief, about disconnection, relativity, about negative space, risk and inertia.

This is a piece about shifts of view points, points of contact, and points of reference, about allocentric and egocentric forces, about momentum and about the explosion of inertia.

### The Nutcracker

Concept, choreography, sound design and performance: [Maria Kefirova](#), Artistic advisor and scenography: Miguel Melgares, Light: Paul Chambers, Developed as graduation project at DasArts, Presented at Tangente Laboratoire de Mouvements Contemporains, Montreal, 2014

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/100673084>





The Nutcracker, a 60 min solo dance-theater performance for a dancer, voice recorder, 4 audio speakers and 25 kg of walnuts.

The walnuts are used as a material that has a clear definition between inside and outside. The sound is used as a material with no inside or outside. The body is a surface between the inside and the outside. Sound , body and walnuts perform a series of dislocations and relocations, folding into each other in a process where sound becomes a body and a performer of its own. With this work I express my desire to share a certain shift of attention and to discover the presence of what seemed to be absent.

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The knocking is constant from both sides and I am a closed door.  
Who is knocking? I am knocking.  
I am knocking on a closed door.  
I am knocking on an open door.  
Who is there?

The Nutcracker is a response on The Knocking.





## **PRESS:**

### **Craquing nuts**

By Philip Szporer February 18, 2014 <http://www.thedancecurrent.com/review/cracking-nuts>

*Kefirova's achievement in The Nutcracker is not only the discovery of the walnut's outer core and inner meat – it represents, on a poetic level, the cracks and fault lines that can exist within the body. Resonance is explored as a physical, bodily surface that responds to external vibrations and sounds as well as its own frequencies. The stimulation that Kefirova exposes in this challenging work is individual, powerful, subtle and personal.*

*Kefirova's compelling cross-disciplinary performance and art practice reverberates with her research into affective complexities.*

## **RÉVERBÉRATIONS DU CORPS, RÉVERBÉRATIONS SONORES**

Df danse Publié le 31 janvier par Audray Julien

<http://www.dfdanse.com/article1720.html>

*Choreographer Maria Kefirova transports us into a world that seems at mechanical and practical edge, but that will be refined and illuminated by unique and stunning images. We find in her new creation, The Nutcracker, a brilliant use of sound, amazing scenic elements and her phenomenally fine presence. It all proves to be a must-see at Tangente, from January 30 to February 2.*

*... we can escape for a moment and return purified and reconnected. We can find a feeling of fullness, like after a long and pleasant journey.*

## **THE NUTCRACKER // SYLVAIN VERSTRICHT LOCAL GESTURES 31/01/2014**

<http://www.localgestures.com/dance/the-nutcracker-une-critique>

*Maria Kefirova does not use sound to fill the silence as many others do, but to materialize the invisible.*

*The choreographer continues to fascinate. The Nutcracker is the strongest dance piece I've seen in the last months.*

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**Talons aiguilles et noix de Grenoble  
NAOUFA**

**VIOR, Montreal 31 JANVIER 2014 par NAYLA**

*With The Nutcracker presented at Tangente, Maria Kefirova offers an ingenious reflection on the performativity of everyday life where we can laugh our heads off.*

## Corps.Relations

Choreography, performance and video by Maria Kefirova, Light : Karine Gauthier  
Presented at Tangente Laboratoire de Mouvements Contemporains in Montreal, 2010,  
Dance Roads 2013, Encuentro 14 in Montreal- 2014 and DNK in Sofia- 2016.

Video link : <https://vimeo.com/110097797>



This piece is a duet between a body and its head.

The work explores the gap between the logical representation of reality and the immediate embodiment of impulses, creating an absurd illusion for unity.

.....

The image on the TV screen, closes up of a dancer's head (shoulders and hands), executes quotidian gestures and gives an impression to observe and analyze the show in real time. At the same time, the performer (live) on stage is absorbed in her dance trying to transform in pure movement her physical sensations and her perceptions of the surrounding environment; trying to measure the distance that separates her from her own image.

## **PRESS:**

Shifting Ground, Growing Concepts Montréal: February 25-28, March 4-7 and 11-14, 2010  
by Philip Szporer <http://www.thedancecurrent.com/review/shifting-ground-growing-concepts>

*In "Corps.Relations", Montréal-based Maria Kefirova's superb interplay of dance, video, objects, and text is a fascinating investigation of how the body is perceived in a concrete manner, i.e., what's visible or what's explained, and what is not (internal activations, internal dynamics/functions of bone and sinew, or pure functionality).*

### **Le Devoir Catherine Lalonde Montreal, 11mai 2012**

*"Le coup de coeur, ça semble chauvin, va à Maria Kefirova de Montréal pour son Corps. Relations. Que sa tête sur écran télé, qui parle de corps. Jusqu'à ce qu'elle arrive, tenaillée d'un hoquet, ce mouvement involontaire s'opposant à toute pensée, tout contrôle. Une pièce conceptuelle et personnelle, réfléchie en ses recoins mais respirant, d'une intelligence cristalline."*

### **Bettina Forget review of Corps Relations at Movement**

Museum radio show broadcast on March 11,

2010, CKUT 90.3 FM, Montreal (entire review at  
<http://www.archive.org/details/20100311>, from 00:39:40 till 00:46:00)

*"Maria's piece Corps. Relations really blew me out of the water. She is Montreal's own Laurie Anderson. The woman is a genius.*

*Her piece basically express the entirety of the body, including its met reality. What we make of the flesh and bones and its movements, emotions and the function of the body. So it was totally focused on everything on what the body is about..."*

## **MouVoir**

**Publié par Cathy De Plée**

vendredi 26 février 2010

*« La danseuse dit dans le programme faire "un duo entre son corps et sa tête". Et c'est bien ce que l'on voit. La proposition est forte mais ne se contente pas d'elle même. Le mouvement très présent (allant des hocquets convulsifs, à la démonstration de figures techniques parfaitement maîtrisés) et les différents états de corps ne s'éclipsent jamais, ils soutiennent, encadrent, nourrissent, renforcent la réflexion, entretenant avec elle une relation à rebondissement. S'il s'agit d'une danse conceptuelle ici, elle n'est en tous cas pas désincarnée.*