

Gecko INSTITUTE



Created by Amit Lahav

Images: Richard Haughton

THE SOUND WORLD OF INSTITUTE

Is it too late to care?

This feels to me like the right time to be asking this question. We are entering a time in which we are potentially more fractured and disconnected from one another than ever before. Are we losing our ability to read each other and therefore protect and care for one another? Alongside this, the notion of care has become a political currency, spoken about in the media every day. Institute is driven by Gecko's desire to explore complexities in human nature; our impulse to care and our complete reliance on one another.

Amit Lahav, Artistic Director

Founded in 2001, Gecko is an award winning company, led by Artistic Director Amit Lahav. With an expanding ensemble of international performers and makers, we create work through collaboration, experimentation and play.

Gecko shows are visceral, visual treats combining impressive technical design with striking physicality and a multitude of languages to communicate with our audiences.

Our work engages our audience on an emotional level. We explore universal human experiences with the ambition that each person's response to our shows will be a personal one, linked to their own life's journey and different from the meaning drawn by each of the audience members around him or her.

Institute explores the theme of care. Set in a warped world of emotional compartmentalisation and treatment, where memories are filed and relationships scrutinised, where patient becomes carer and carer becomes patient, four people undergo a series of extraordinary treatments as they struggle against the journey their life has taken.

We create our shows over two years and each element of the piece plays an important role. The choreography, set, lighting and sound and music must all work together to tell our story.

The sound world of *Institute* uses tones and noises related to the arena of officialdom with beeps and buzzers indicating success or failure of a task. But we also enter other worlds away from the Institute, which situate us within the personal stories and points of crisis of the characters Daniel and Martin. A bustling office suggests the high pressure of work while an Italian restaurant reminds us of lost love.

There is the quality of an old record in our sound world, which places us in another time, mirroring the visual world that feels both familiar and strange.

From our first show 15 years ago, Gecko has worked with composer Dave Price, whose intimate knowledge of the company allows him to create and source music that perfectly suits the narrative and tone of a scene. Most of the movement sections are choreographed to music composed by Dave. For *Institute*, Dave has been influenced by the central theme of care, and linked to this strength versus weakness. The composition reflects at times a high octane work environment and heart thumping pressure to achieve, at others the pain and confusion of losing a family member.

Language is used in the show but it is not the main method of storytelling. For this reason we use multiple languages within our shows and *Institute* uses English, French and German. Often words are muttered or sentences incomplete. Language becomes an equal layer of the soundscape with the intention of aiding the emotion of a scene rather than defining narrative or meaning.

Added to language is the use of breath, which is an integral element of our shows. Breath offers a way for the performers to connect rhythmically to one another and the choreography. It also acts as a universal form of communicating emotion – a guttural and instinctual human act. Language and breath both feature as recorded and live.

We hope that you enjoy being immersed in the world of Gecko. You can find us after the show to ask us any questions and we have a post-show discussion with BSL interpretation on Tuesday 8 March. You can also write to us at info@geckotheatre.com, and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).