



Masonn (Walls)

Dance and video / For all ages 6 and up

Cie Boukousou - Max DIAKOK

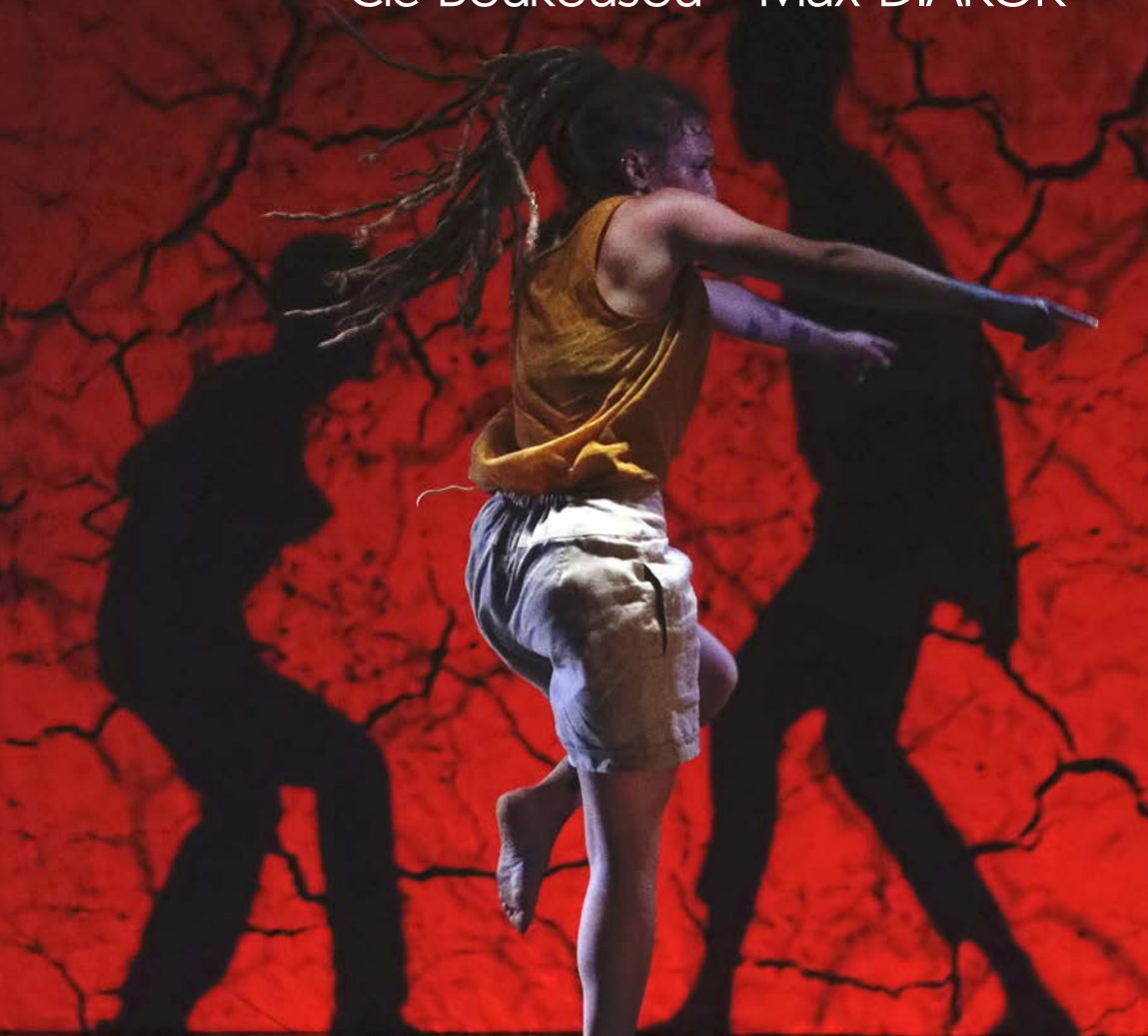


Photo : Nathalie Sternalski

PRODUCTION AND PRESS

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COMPAGNIE BOUKOUSOU

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Masonn (walls)



Contemporary dance and video

For all ages 6 and up

Creation : Off Avignon 2021 - Golovine Theatre

Duration : 52 minutes

"Max has woven a poetic relationship with Gwoka" **Jacques Denis (Libération)**

"Great energy" **Gérald Rossi (L'Humanité)**

"A fine piece of work, from hip hop to Gwoka,
a hymn to humanity" **Geneviève Charras (Amuse-danse)**

"Beautiful and full of energy, a big well done to these young dancers with a bright
future ahead of them." **Patrick Denis (La Provence)**

"A dazzling dance" **Belinda Mathieu (La Terrasse)**



DISTRIBUTION

Choreographer : Max Diakok
Performers : Esther Trusendi - Eva Julliere,
Omar Cretella - Yann Brelle (Presher Blue)
Video and set designer : Claudio Cavallari
Lighting designer : Anthony Valentin
Composer of the soundtrack : Rico Toto
Performing musicians : Jaklin Etienne, Nathalie Jeanlys,
Franck Nicolas, Olivier Juste and Rico Toto
Costume designer : Peggy Housset

PRODUCTION

Compagnie Boukousou

SUPPORTS

French Ministry of Culture and Overseas Territories (FEAC), Spedidam, CDCN
Toukadanse (Cayenne), ANCT, City of Saint-Denis,
FME and Ile-de-France Region (distribution support)

PARTNER VENUES

Créteil CCN, Le Moustier in Thorigny-sur-Marne, La Chaufferie Compagnie DCA- Decoufflé
in Saint-Denis, Gare au Théâtre in Vitry, CDCN Cayenne Toukadanse, CND (studio work),
Saint-Denis Music and Dance Conservatory, Raviv, L'Orfèverie in Saint-Denis.

PAST PERFORMANCES

Festival Chaos Danse – Théâtre Astrée – University Lyon 1

16 november 2023

L'Oulle Theatre - Festival Off, Avignon

7 to 29 july 2023

L'Artchipel -Scène nationale, Basse Terre (Guadeloupe)

3 may 2023

Espace Culturel Bernard Dague, Louvres (95)

11 march 2023

L'Odyssée Theatre (Festival Hiphopsession), Orvault (44)

26 february 2023

Théâtre Jacques Brel, Champs sur Marne

6 april 2022

Rencontres de danses métisses, CDC de Cayenne, Guyane

4 december 2021

Centre Culturel Le Moustier, Thorigny

19 et 20 november 2021

Théâtre de la Belle Etoile, Saint Denis (93)

30 september and 1st october 2021

Théâtre Golovine - Festival Off, Avignon

7 to 29 july 2022

Masonn (walls)

MASONN is the third and final part of a triptych devoted to contemporary alienation. Exploring this theme from three different angles, the aim is to shed light on what it is about the mechanics of this globalised system that cuts us off from our humanity and sets us on the road to that 'verticality without crutches' that we have yet to conquer.

The first part, the trio **DEPWOFONDIS**, questions our relationship with time, which is becoming increasingly metronomic, and invites us to stretch it through an inner journey. The second part, the solo **J'HABITE UNE BLESSURE SACRÉE** (I inhabit a sacred wound), establishes a dialogue between two necessities : on the one hand, inner listening and the subtle energy that underpins it, and on the other, the emancipatory struggle that asserts itself in a martial mode.

This latest part, **MASONN** (Walls), explores a theme that is certainly as old as the hills, and one that has particular resonance today in these chilly, walled-in times : the figures of otherness.



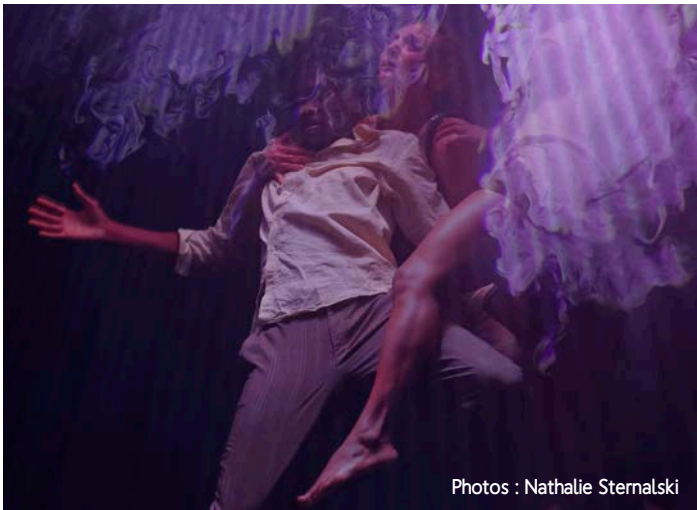
PRESENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE

Continuing to shed light on what, in the mechanics of a globalized system, cuts us off from our humanity, Max Diakok explores the theme of alterity.

The other : mirror, monster. Flush out illusions. In a contemporary approach, the gestures intertwine (Gwoka and hip hop).

« *The walls threaten everyone, on both sides of their darkness.* »

(Patrick Chamoiseau and Edouard Glissant).



Photos : Nathalie Sternalski

[Teaser link : https://vimeo.com/482842388](https://vimeo.com/482842388)



Photo : Willy Vainqueur

« Max Diakok has woven a poetic relationship with the gwoka, which he has since used in contemporary transpositions or, more recently, in conjunction with hip-hop and house. A warrior's kick, a sense of challenge, work on the axis, asymmetry, relationship to the ground, articular relationship, are all tools for establishing « a gestural language, which brings out a dance in itself, made up of traces. I track down this energy, something that is not formal but that pushes the dancers and drummers to surpass themselves. How you inhabit the space. How the foot placed in that space changes you ».

Jacques Denis
Libération

« Le corps en transe »

PRESENTATION OF THE COMPANY

Since it was founded, Compagnie Boukousou has focused on contemporary artistic expression rooted in Afro-Caribbean cultures. Guadeloupean Gwoka in particular is a dance, a music and an art of living inherited from slavery and the practice of marronage. The company wanted to defolklorise the way in which these aesthetics are viewed. The notions of relationship with the earth and energy, of balance and imbalance are of great importance in the company's creations. Also the relationship between bodily memories and life in today's society.



Photo : Nathalie Sternalski

NOTE OF INTENT BY MAX DIAKOK

Through this new work, I intend to explore in greater depth my questioning of the relationship between the individual and society in the age of globalisation. I felt it necessary to approach this from the point of view of otherness, given all the upheavals that have resulted from post-colonial migration. Although the theme was already present in the first two parts of the triptych, it became clear to me that it should be the central theme, following a number of articles in the press and on social networks.

At the same time, since the 1990s, I've also been dealing with the issue of the representation of the imaginary, on television among other things. So many recurring debates that bring us back to living together.

In this duality between identity and otherness, a source of tension, how can we stay the course towards an alternative utopia ? Especially as new technologies increasingly turn the world into a vast village.

In this respect, Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau's appeal against the Ministry of National Identity speaks volumes. It is a genuine act of resistance against a certain prevailing timidity.

(...) « The walls that are being built today (on the pretext of terrorism, uncontrolled immigration or a preferable god) are not being erected between civilisations, cultures or identities, but between poverty and superabundance, opulent but worried drunkenness and dry asphyxiation (...) The walls threaten everyone, on both sides of their darkness. It is our relationship with the Other (with all the Other, in all its animal, plant, environmental, cultural and human forms) that shows us the highest, most honourable and most enriching part of ourselves. (...)» (Extracts from Quand les murs tombent).

The theme resonates strongly with me. It takes me back to a notion inherent to the animal kingdom : that of territoriality, in the sense of taking possession of and defending a territory against members of one's own species. I linked it to the notion of proxemia, a neologism conceived by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall. This term refers to the use of space and distance between the bodies of individuals when they communicate with each other. Edward T. Hall identifies four bubbles in the defence of one's own personality in any communication.



By metaphor, we can extrapolate this notion from the relationship between individuals to the relationship between communities. We can see the other's assigned identity, a kind of implicit imprisonment. Or even the fears linked to what is perceived as the invasion of a reserved space.

Finally, I link this idea of fear of the other to that of the monster within us or facing us.

The 'monstrous insect' of Kafka's Metamorphosis, Eugène Ionesco's rhinoceroses. One atmosphere that inspires me a great deal is that which develops in a style of written and oral literature from the Caribbean known as "marvellous realism".

I'm thinking in particular of the monstrous figures in Caribbean fairy tales : the she-devil (a seductive woman with a human foot and the leg of a donkey), the soukougnan (an individual who transforms into a ball of fire). The idea is not to repeat these characters identically, but to create a relationship based on illusion between someone who represents the norm and 'the monster'. The presence of video multiplies the possibilities.



Photo : Nathalie Stemalski

In this sense, Masonn is a play for all audiences that offers a double reading: while the starting point is serious and alludes to the human distress that unfolds daily before our eyes, the treatment is reminiscent of the dreamlike world of fairy tales.

ARTISTIC PURPOSE

The argument

Four performers (two young women and two young men) share a balkanised space that seems to be a series of micro-territories in which each of them evolves. When one of the four breaks through the wall, a movement begins in which everything is an illusion. The projection of images of places and characters in movement amplifies these illusions.

Video-scenography

The video serves to amplify this notion of territoriality, from the dancers' physical space to a kind of space of all possibilities. The device created by projecting still or animated images onto different media suggests a dialogue or non-dialogue between imaginary worlds. It is also a device that explores visual illusions via the triptych of body-on-stage / lights / video. Realistic images, distorted images, poetic images, images twisted to the point of abstraction. These are all signifiers that 'travel' through a variety of meanings, confronting the spectator with his or her own representations and even conditioning.



Photo : Nathalie Sternalski

THE MUSICAL CREATION

For this creation, composer Rico Toto brings his own personal touch to electro-acoustic music, with an unusual combination of melodies from the Gwoka range and accents of urban music (including house). The performers are Jaklin Etienne, Nathalie Jeanlys, Franck Nicolas, Olivier Juste and Rico Toto.

The added touch of this style is its percussive dimension. The ka* drums are used as ostinatos, in silences or as jets in short solos. Some traditional Gwoka rhythms are revisited or even suggested by the bass and electronic instruments. The voice is present both melodically and as a percussive onomatopoeia.

Rico Toto's electronic approach is to make the machines more human through the choice of sample timbres and the lively presence of the performers.

** Ka: traditional guadeloupean drums used to play Gwoka music.*

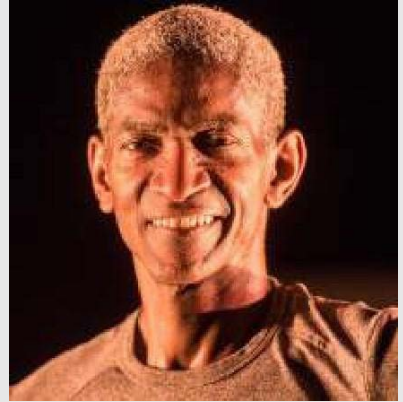


Photo : Nathalie Sternalski

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Max **DIAKOK** Choreographer

Max Diakok discovers dance as a teenager in the universe of Léwòz evenings , which take place in the rural areas of Guadeloupe. Masters of gwoka initiated him, and guided him by immersion. Rapidly, he expressed himself in the “wonn” (circles) formed by public and musicians during traditional events.



Whilst pursuing this research with musicians of modern Gwoka for whom he dances solo, he also studied other styles : modern jazz, modern ka with Léna Blou, modern jazz in Paris, (School of Rick Odums), Contemporary Dance, Guinean dance. Later he becomes a member of contemporary dance companies like those of Germaine Acogny, Christian Bourigault, Norma Claire, and takes part in a choreographic show by Jean-Francois Duroure.

Max Diakok develops his own gestural approach in a contemporary style with the Company Boukousou created in 2001. He draws on the Gwoka, the dance serving as an outlet created at the time of slavery, to find his own energies to express the language of the body and his feelings. He is inspired by the Léwòz evenings , by the theatricality of the gestures of the deep countryside, by History, by the words of the ancestors, and by a rich imagery, which is at the same time caribbean and universal.

Max Diakok presents his work in Paris (Théâtre contemporain de la danse, Théâtre de l'Épée de Bois, Maison des Cultures du Mondes, Unesco, Cité de la musique, Musée de l'Histoire de l'immigration), in the Scenes Nationales of Martinique and Guadeloupe, in international festivals in Liverpool, Brighton, Dakar, Budapest, Vibrations Caraïbes, rencontres de danses métisses de Guyane, Festival International de Ouagadougou (FIDO), Festival off d'Avignon at La Chapelle du Verbe Incarné and at the Théâtre Golovine, the Opera of Saint-Etienne.

Most of his creations are conceived like quests of initiation which conduct the performers, thrown off balance by diverse forces, to access a contagious or disturbing force. The idea of corporal memory occupies equally an important place.

Claudio CAVALLARI video and set designer

Film-maker and graphic designer, Claudio Cavallari has been working for 20 years creating images for cinema, documentaries, commercials, and live performances. He lives in Paris where he is artistic director of Lumina with Fabrizio Scapin.

He specialises in “living frescoes” and has worked on projects by Peter Greenaway, Eve Ramboz, Blanca Li, Lionel Hoche and Gérard Lesne. His monumental projections have taken him to Mexico, Chile and Russia.

Rico TOTO Composer

Rico Toto is at the same time musician, sound engineer, composer and Sound Designer. He proposes an analysis and transmission of Edgard Varese’s Electronic Poem. Computer and Synthesizer are his instruments of choice both for research and for composing. With Moundjahka, in 1992 he has created the bases for a reflection to elaborate new musical concepts, designed to establish bridges between tradition and modernity, and enrich the caribbean imaginary..

THE PERFORMERS

On stage, two dancers from different cultural backgrounds, with a common interest in urban dance.

Omar CRETILLA

Omar discovered dance at the age of 16 in his native Tuscany. He attended various hip hop dance classes to acquire the essential vocabulary needed to express himself in different styles. He got his first taste of crews when he joined D. Side Crew and won 1st place in 2 choreography competitions. A few years later, to pursue his dream of dancing professionally, he decided to move to France to further his training. After 3 years’ training, during which he worked on locking, break-dance, house dance, popping and jazz rock, he graduated from the Juste debut school. His favourite styles are hip hop and house. At the same time, he took part in television shows for France 2 such as Le grand échiquier, choreographed by Bruce Ikanjy. He has also performed in choreographies by Ricky Soul and Rabah Mahfoufi..

Eva JULLIERE

Born in Metz, Eva began dance at the Conservatoire in a classical and contemporary curriculum. After a degree in Applied Foreign Languages, she decided to devote herself entirely to dance.

Admitted to Anne-Marie PORRAS's EPSE DANSE school, she joined the school's junior ballet and obtained her contemporary EAT as well as the choreographic interpretation diploma.

During her studies, Eva became interested in hip hop culture, particularly floorwork. Her movements are a blend of lively, muscular, fluid and articulate.

In 2018, she danced for Didier Théron's company and in "For Love" by Groupe Noces. She then joined the So.K company in "G.E.S.S" and choreographed the piece "Neok" for the company in 2020.

Yann BRELLE (known as Presher Blue)

Presher was born in Paris and trained at the Paris Dance School, where he explored a variety of styles, including classical dance, modern jazz, hip hop and contemporary dance.

He has worked with a number of companies, including The Soul Soldiers, JCM Project in Jean-Claude Marignale's Histoire d'Homme, and Valery Rodriguez's musical The Black Legends Show at the Théâtre Bobino in Paris.

He has also danced in concerts and music videos for artists such as Amir, Nicky Jam at the Zénith in Paris, and Farruko at the Zénith in Switzerland, as well as for programmes such as "N'oubliez pas les paroles" on France 2, "Le Petit Journal", "Touche pas à mon poste", "Culture Box", and for Arielle Dombasle's film. At the same time, he took part in the "Juste Debout" battles at Bercy. He finished in the top 8 of the "Juste Debout House" in Italy.

He choreographs for Cie Union and Cie Future, in particular for the Yamass Cabaret show. He teaches at the Paris Dance School.

Esther TRUSENDI

Born in Gabbro, a small village in Tuscany, Esther began dancing at the age of 4 (classical and modern). Her passion for music led her to study piano. She then went on to study dance at the Opus Ballet professional training school in Florence.

After completing this training, she worked with Livornese choreographer Endro Bartoli, before attending another professional training school: the Juste Debout School in Paris. There she deepened her knowledge of Hip Hop and discovered her passion for House culture.

At the end of her internship with Compagnie Boukousou, to validate her final year of training, she discovered Gwoka dance and the contemporary Afro-Caribbean dance of

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