



# Samedi détente

Conception and choreography **Dorothee Munyaneza**



# Foreword

How to speak about the unspeakable ?

How to speak about departing from the place once cherished ? Or about the circumstances under which, we had to leave the childhood nest, one day, hidden, moving in the streets where bodies, blood and silence abound ? How to speak about the heat consuming our bodies under the weight of layers of clothing, « mugondo », that we couldn't carry around in suitcases as they would have been too heavy and cumbersome during the exodus ? How to speak about the daily walks, the thirst and hunger that kept us company ? How to speak about lice, or sleep on a piece of tarpaulin in the middle of the forest, or waking up under a rainstorm in the middle of the night out in the fields ? How to speak about fleeing among coffee fields during the night on a full moon ? How to speak about the laughter, the songs, the psalms and dances ? How to speak about the golden honey so sweet and so rare when meat was being sold almost for nothing and flesh was rotting on the thousand hills ? How to speak about the months spent without seeing one's own mother ? How to speak to those who were over there, far from us, where the information circulated superficially about a genocide that was devastating Rwanda entirely ?

Little has been said about this genocide. And when occasions arose for things to be said, they were said the wrong way.

I would like to stress artistically an historic event of which so much is still yet to be said.

Nineteen years have passed by, nineteen years spent far from my country, nineteen years during which I have learnt to start living again, taking the time to grow, to think and to finally write.

On various occasions I have had the opportunity to return to Rwanda and to see members of my family who are still alive. I have lived through the void left by those who died. I have heard the testimonies of relatives or even of those to whom one lends an attentive ear. I recorded certain testimonies. I saw the physical scars left by machetes and those that are not visible to the eye but that one recognizes when one meets another that walked through the same dark valley.

Dorothee Munyaneza

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With Nadia Beugré or Amaël Mavoungou, Alain Mahé and Dorothee Munyaneza

Outside point of view : Mathurin Bolze

Lighting Design : Christian Dubet

Set design : Vincent Gadras

Costumes : Tifenn Morvan

Stage Manager : Marion Piry

Lights Manager : Marine Le Vey

Sound Manager : Valérie Bajcsa or Camille Frachet

Production director Emmanuel Magis, Anahi assisted by Clémence Piere [www.anahiproduction.fr](http://www.anahiproduction.fr)

Producer : Kadidi Company with the support of Anahi/Emmanuel Magis Coproduction : Théâtre de Nîmes—scène conventionnée pour la danse, Théâtre La Passerelle—scène nationale de Gap et des Alpes du Sud, Bois de l'Aune-Aix-en-Provence, Théâtre des Salins—scène nationale de Martigues, L'Onde—Théâtre Centre d'Art de Vélizy-Villacoublay, Pôle Sud—Strasbourg, Théâtre Jacques Prévert—Aulnay-sous-Bois, Le Parvis—scène nationale de Tarbes, Théâtre Garonne—Toulouse, Réseau Open Latitudes 2 with the support of the Cultural European Programme, Théâtre de Liège, Théâtre de la Ville—Paris, BIT Teatergarasjen—Bergen. With the support of Théâtre Le Monfort—Paris, of Friche Belle de Mai—Marseille, of DRAC (Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs) PACA- Ministry of Culture and Communication, of SACD, association Beaumarchais, Arcadi Ile-de-France, ADAMI and Mairie of Paris.

Duration 1h15



## SAMEDI DETENTE

In Rwanda, Samedi Détente was THE event of the week. A radio programme broadcast on Saturday during which we listened to different kinds of music from abroad. We danced, we sung, we memorized them despite the fact that we didn't understand half of what the lyrics meant. The following Monday, a competition of the best performance would be organized in the playground. A true ritual.

Since the 6th of April, when life turned upside down, I ceased to listen to Samedi Détente, but sometimes I happen to hear songs that used to be played during the broadcast and it all comes back to me, I see my friends, I see the neighbourhood of my childhood, I relive the music and my body begins to move, but most of those friends and family members with whom I used to dance are dead.

In 2014, for the 20th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, I am going to create a new Samedi Détente that will bring back to life those that are gone. The testimony that I am writing is going to be its guiding light. The word will precede the movement, the word will proceed the movement, but the word will not be the only means of expression. In the beginning will be a song. A song that I will sing under a white sheet. A shroud.

I will work with a table and a tarpaulin. Tables and tarpaulins served us as a hiding place and a place of rest. When bullets were flying above our heads, we hid under the table. When we laid down after a long day of walking, the tarpaulin welcomed our weak bodies, each one having an allocated place in the sky blue plastic paradise. I want to use these two objects as central pieces of the set and amplify them in order to create a particular soundscape. I want the table to be unbreakable so that Nadia Beugré and I can dance upon it, as on a metallic dancefloor, a podium, a stage on a stage, and that our treading may be broadcast and transformed. Our dance will be that of animated beings, of survivors, our dance will give life to those bodies left to die, to the forgotten ones.

Moreover, I give a fundamental place to the clothing. I want the work concerning the costumes to be based upon those layers named « mugondo ». The clothes will play an important role like in 94. Our clothes – our shield. Our clothes - our creator. Mugondo amused us, as full of lice as they were, we spent our spare time outdoing each other in lice killing competitions, hiding in our clothes. Often during those moments, we laughed and forgot for a moment that we were going to sleep outside, with an empty stomach. We became children anew. Indeed children we were. On stage, I would like Nadia Beugré and I to wear layers of clothing, the armor, the cocoon, which we would gradually take off, to reveal the carnal being, living and vibrating.

Alain Mahé is the third person in the picture. Together, him in the middle of his machines and resounding stones, and I, we will create a new Samedi Détente that, will shuffle sound archives, classics from my childhood in the 90s and original music that I composed for this new programme.

Last Samedi Détente. Nineteen years ago, Rwanda, my motherland, sunk under machete blows and in blood. In 1994, I was going to turn 12. I remember. I am ready to speak about it and to face what happened. Back then, no one intervened, neither the Western countries settled in Rwanda with military and diplomatic means, nor the neighbouring African countries nevertheless concerned by the massacres taking place at their borders, nor the others. Some turned the blind eye and others turned their back on us.

Therefore, it is by inviting Alain Mahé, a composer, an improviser, from France, and Nadia Beugré, a dancer, African, from Ivory-Coast, that I would like to embody that absence in creating a dialogue with those who turned their backs on us.

The tragic tone will cohabit with a humor that will occupy its rightful place.

« Samedi Détente » will talk about those moments of peace before war breaks, of those moments of life before death strikes, of the memory, with which one lives, sometimes even happily, but whose remembrance remains and at times surfaces at the sound of a song or mere mention of a name of the one who is no longer.

Dorothee Munyaneza, november 2013.



## EXCERPTS

The text that I have written over the past year will evolve in the course of rehearsals, it is going to be more of a material. I will give the texts to my team members as they come into being over time so that they can read them, chew them, spit them out, and I will then see what remains of them once every word has been absorbed and rejected... It resembles how we used to work with François Verret, with whom we used to spend a long time reading books and book passages, dissecting them until the day he would tell us to no longer open the books and to start working with the memory of what remained. I enjoyed that.

Dorothee Munyaneza

On the road, they called us all Tutsis. All the children, the adults, my cousins and I. My father, at each barrier, to those who searched us and killed anyone at will, would say to them « do you not see my father here with me ? Look at his identity card and take a look at mine ».

On the road back home, the 'inkotanyi' (the troops of the Rwandan Patriotic Front RPF) would ask aunt Alphonsine, the youngest sister of my father, « ariko wowe wacitse ute ? How did you survive ? Because of her narrow nose. »

...

« What's this ?

A sewing machine.

What's this ?

A radio.

What's all this ?

Diplomas.

What's this language ?

German.

Where's your wife ?

In England.

IKITSO – a spy, isn't she ?

There were always white people coming in and out of your house, you knew, you had been informed, that is why she fled ! SPEAK UP !

Indangamuntu ! Identity cards ! »

...

It was boiling hot. We walked very fast. The lice were devouring every bit of us. We had so many of them buried in our hair and the folds of our skin and clothes, so much so that each time we sat to rest, we would start killing them. They were plenty and they were everywhere. The hair on our heads as well as any other part of our bodies and our clothes were the true kingdoms of the lice. We even held lice killing competitions to see who could kill the most lice in the least amount of time.

ONE, TWO, THREE, GO ! Each child, king of his or her own layers of clothing, taking it out on these small insects, and when one had sufficiently killed one's own insects, would pursue the work by attacking the layers of clothes of another child.

Games.

Massacres.

Massacres all around.

I was going to turn 12.

A child and an adult, both at once.

I did not go through a teenage crisis.

I was taking care of David and the honey.

...

Upon our return to Kigali, there were dogs on every side of the streets. The fat kind. Nice and plump. There were vultures too. More than satiated. In the streets of Gikondo, pictures were scattered, some in colour and some in black and white. A kind of installation of dead bodies decomposing in the heating sun and shots of the lives set and annihilated over night.

...

Before 94, we spent most of the time playing outdoors in the dusty streets of Gikondo. Sometimes we would think that we were making a Hollywood war movie . We became Rambo, Commando, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Chuck Norris. We would even reproduce the slow motion falling. We would crawl, we would jump, we would laugh our heart out, we would cry, we would shout. Takatakatakatakataka. Bullets. Takatakatakatakataka. We didn't know. We knew nothing at all. Some days the grown ups would say that our games were a bad omen, « Bana murakungura ».

...

At the beginning I thought they were stars shining high from above, but then my father told us all to carefully observe them. « Stars do not move », said he. Those are artificial satellites. It was almost night time.

We were laying on a tarpaulin upon an ochre earth. Outdoors. All night long I looked at them. Inwardly, I hoped that my mother would see us. I hoped that the whole world would see us.

...

« Et je pense à toi le jour,  
Et je rêve de toi la nuit.  
Me reviendras-tu un jour mon amour.  
Je t'aime à l'infini. »

This French song was often broadcast on the Samedi Détente radio programme and my friend Pierrot would sing it to me whilst we hid under the table, bullets flying above our heads.

On the radio, they would call people to go and seek where the inyenzi, the cockroaches were hiding. I remember heading to a cupboard. Why were they asking people to use machetes when a good sweep up with a broom would do? A bullet or a machete. The choice was an easy one. Either way death was at the finish line. At the beginning one could pay to be killed by a bullet. A machete blow however was for free. Dying was sometimes costly.

...

We bathed behind the house, in the afternoon or morning sun, I enjoyed watching my cousin applying soap, cleansing, rinsing, drying and spreading lotion on her beautiful cocoa skin, and then putting on her clothes. I would say to myself that if we survived, I would do the same and I would look like her, she had a body of a woman, with beautiful thighs and legs. I contemplated her in the sun and dreamt myself a woman, I, whose breasts were but a bud !

Then one day we were told to bathe at night as people were observing us. We were being watched. They said that we were hiding the inyenzi.

...

RWANDA RWACU  
RWANDA GIHUGU CYAMBYAYE  
NDAKURATANA ISHYAKA N'UBUTWARI...

« Dear Rwanda,  
dear country that bore us,  
I will boast about you with zeal and courage ».  
The rest of the national hymn is buried deep inside, it fled in 94.

...

« - In the corridor, QUICK! - Why? »

Children, always asking why. President Habyarimana's plane had been demolished, shot. I thought about the games we had been playing the previous weeks and what the grown ups had said to us. We no longer were in Delta Force, no longer was there even a shadow of Arnold Schwarzenegger lurking in our memories. Neither the Americans, nor the English, nor the French, nor the Belgians, nor the Swiss remained, no longer were there any foreign citizens. They all disappeared, and left us alone to drown in deep shit and cold blood.

## **DOROTHEE MUNYANEZA**

### **SINGER, WRITER, CHOREOGRAPHER**

Originating from Rwanda where she spent her childhood, and now of British nationality and living in Marseille, France, Dorothee Munyaneza is a young singer avid for encounters and who finds fulfillment through personal musical projects and the consistent participation in contemporary dance shows.

Her style of creating and performing on stage is directly inspired by what life has so intensely given her. Her artistic research draws from the diversity of her cultural heritage – her extended family in Rwanda, the experience of the 14 years spent in London, her move to Paris followed by her settling in Marseille – but more so by her appetite for encounters. In all her projects, the human dimension is especially of great importance, and even more so today, Dorothee sustains that inspiration by taking time to absorb other humanities, such as teaching music at the Zip Zap circus school, a social circus school in South Africa.

Dorothee sings since her childhood, but it's in England at the Jonas Foundation in London, then in Canterbury where she studied music and social sciences, that she became certain that music would also be her career. Her first professional realizations were her taking part on the AfroCelt Sound System's Anatomic album and composing and singing part of the original soundtrack for the film « Hotel Rwanda ». In 2010, her first solo album produced by Martin Russell is released and collaborates with an English composer James Brett on an album entitled « Earth Songs », released on itunes in December 2012.

Then her encounter with François Verret in 2006 permitted her entry on the contemporary dance scene. Dorothee's artistic curiosity and her interest for a dialogue between music and other modes of expression blossomed through her participation in four of François Verret's shows (« Sans Retour », « Ice », « Cabaret » and « Do you remember, no I don't »), and in Kaori Ito's « Noctiluque » piece.

Today, she works with other artists and choreographers such as Nan Goldin, Mark Tompkins, Robyn Orlin, Alexandra Badea, Alain Buffard and Rachid Ouramdane and she ventures between danse, poetry and experimental music with Seb Martel, or with Alain Mahé, Jean-François Pauvros and Ko Murobushi.

In 2013, she creates her artistic company, Compagnie Kadidi in order to start developing her own work and « Samedi Détente » is the first piece of Dorothee Munyaneza as a choreographer.

## **ALAIN MAHE**

### **COMPOSER, IMPROVISER**

Alain Mahé develops electroacoustic and electronic music. He founds the music group Bohème de chic and since then plays and composes with Jean-François Pauvros, Carlos Zingaro, Carol Robinson, Kamal Hamadache, Thierry Madiot, Pascal Battus, Emmanuelle Tat, Patrick Molard, Keyvane Chemirani, Dorothée Munyaneza, Hélène Breshant, Bao Luo...

Alain Mahé composes « La Marée fait flotter les villes » - Paul Klee. He creates radio programme pieces : « Chien de feu », « La marée fait flotter les villes », « (for a) Paso Doble (sound) » with Kaye Mortley.

Alain Mahé composes music and sound for live performance shows. He works with stage director François Tanguy and the choreographers Carlotta Ikeda, Ko Murobushi, François Verret, the painter Miquel Barcelò and Josef Nadj on Paso Doble, with Nan Goldin on « Soeurs saintes & Sybilles » and « Scopophilia ». He collaborates with Pierre Meunier since 1999 on « Le chant du ressort », « Le Tas », « Les Egarés »... He plays an important role in making the collective Ultimo Round project see the day, composes and plays with Michel Caron a plastic artist and Vincent Fortemps a designer.

## **NADIA BEUGRE (or AMAEL MAVOUNGOU)**

### **DANCER, PERFORMER, CHOREOGRAPHER**

Nadia Beugré takes her first steps in the heart of Dante Theatre where she explores traditional dances from Ivory Coast. In 1997 she founds the dance company Tché Tché. The company receives many awards, performs and hosts workshops in different countries where it is invited. She creates her solo « Un espace vide : Moi » showcased in England, France, Burkina Faso, Tunisia and the United States of America. Nadia Beugré takes a training course « Outillages chorégraphiques » (Ecole des Sables of Germaine Acogny, in Senegal) and in 2009 she follows an artistic training Ex.e.r.ce « Danse et image » (artistic director Mathilde Monnier), where she begins to work on her solo « Quartiers libres ». Currently she works with Seydou Boro and Alain Buffard.