

AND...

FOCUS ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Tichêlbè – Kettly Noël, *Sans repères* – Nadia Beugré and Nina Kipré, *Figninto - l'œil troué* – Seydou Boro and Salia Sanou, July 9-15, Théâtre Benoît-XII
Basokin – les Basongye de Kinshasa, July 16, Cour du collège Vernet
The Last King of Kakfontein – Boyzie Cekwana, July 17-23, La Chartreuse de Villeneuve lez Avignon
Kalakuta Republik – Serge Aimé Coulibaly, July 19-25, Cloître des Célestins
Dream Mandé - Djata – Rokia Traoré, July 21-24, Cour du musée Calvet
Femme noire – Angélique Kidjo, Isaach De Bankolé and their guests Manu Dibango, Dominic James and MHD, July 25 and 26, Cour d'honneur du Palais des papes

THE WORKSHOPS OF THOUGHT

Women's bodies as war zones – International committee of the red cross, with Dorothée Munyaneza and Yves Daccord, July 8 at 11:00, Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université

CINEMATIC TERRITORIES

Aujourd'hui by Alain Gomis, encounter with Dorothée Munyaneza, July 12 at 11:00, Utopia-Manutention

NAVE OF IMAGES (screenings)

Sans retour by François Verret (2006) with Dorothée Munyaneza, July 13 at 14:30, Église des Célestins

ÇA VA, ÇA VA LE MONDE ! – RFI, July 15-20, Jardin de la rue de Mons

TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- July 18-19, 2017, Athens and Epidaurus Festival, Athènes, Francedanse Orient-Express
- August 23-24, Tanz im August/HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin
- September 15-17, Time Based Art Festival, Portland (USA)
- September 21-22, Baryschnikov Arts Center, New-York
- September 26-27, Festival de Princeton (USA)
- October 5, MESS Festival, Sarajevo, France-danse Orient-Express
- October 18-21, Le Monfort, Festival d'Automne à Paris
- October 25-26, BIT Bergen, Meteor Festival (Norvège)
- November 11-12, Festival Roma Europa, Rome
- November 21-22, Théâtre de Nîmes
- November 24, Théâtre du fil de l'eau, Pantin, Festival d'Automne à Paris
- November 28-December 1st, Le Centquatre, Festival d'Automne à Paris
- December 5-6, Bois de l'Aune, Aix-en-Provence
- December 12-13 Hexagone Scène nationale de Meylan
- January 30, 2018, Théâtre Paul Éluard, Bezons, Escales danse en Val d'Oise
- February 2nd, Espace Germinal, Fosses, Escales danse en Val d'Oise
- February 6-7, L'Apostrophe Scène nationale de Cergy, Escales danse en Val d'Oise
- February 13, Centre national de danse contemporaine, Angers
- March 1st, Forum Meyrin, Genève
- March 15, Le Quartz Scène nationale de Brest, Festival DañsFabrik
- March 23, Théâtre Liberté Scène nationale de Toulon
- March 27-28, Comédie de Valence Centre dramatique national Drôme-Ardèche
- April 5-6, Théâtre de Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines Scène nationale
- April 10-11, Pôle Sud Centre de développement chorégraphique, Strasbourg
- April 16-18, Maison de la culture de Bourges Scène nationale
- May 3-5, Théâtre Garonne Scène européenne, Toulouse

UNWANTED

Dorothée Munyaneza is 12 when, after miraculously surviving genocide, she leaves Rwanda. It is a wound she evoked and transformed once already with *Samedi Détente*, by giving a voice and a body to a generation annihilated by violence, hers. With *Unwanted*, the choreographer focuses on the stories of women victims of rape. Rape as a weapon of mass destruction, one still used in war zones today. Rapes that gave birth to children traumatised by their own family history and ostracised because of the taboo of their origins. To write those stories, Dorothée Munyaneza met with those rejected mothers, those wounded women, asking them always the same question: "Have you accepted yourself?" An intimate counterpoint to History, *Unwanted* delves into the heart of the unspeakable, and the choreographer, with her raw energy, embodies it without pathos or subterfuge, accompanied in this work that aims to break down the boundaries between genres by musical improviser Alain Mahé, musician Holland Andrews, and by the British visual artist Bruce Clarke...

DOROTHÉE MUNYANEZA

Born in Rwanda, Dorothée Munyaneza left Kigali in 1994 when she was 12 for England, where she studied music at the Jonas Foundation in London and social sciences at Canterbury Christ Church University. In 2004, she composed and performed the original soundtrack for Terry George's *Hotel Rwanda*, before appearing a year later on the album *Anatomic* by Afro Celt Sound System. In 2006, without any formal training, she danced for the first time in François Verret's *Sans Retour*. After performing in several of the French choreographer's creations, Dorothée Munyaneza worked alongside Mark Tompkins, Robyn Orlin, Rachid Ouramdane, and Alain Buffard. In 2013, she founded her own company, Kadidi, and in 2014, she created her first show, *Samedi Détente*, which evoked the Rwandan genocide by returning to those moments of laughter that punctuated life before the tears of war. A singer and a musician, a dancer and an actress, a writer and a choreographer, Dorothée Munyaneza has established herself in the French cultural landscape as a unique artist who refuses boundaries and speaks out "to force us to listen to the silences and see the scars of History."

71st
EDITION

In order to bring you this edition, over 1,750 people, artists, technicians, and organisational staff, have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically for months. More than half of them are state-subsidised freelance workers.



FESTIVAL-AVIGNON.COM



#FDA17

#UNWANTED

#DOROTHÉEMUNYANEZA

FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 71^e

JULY 7 8 9 | 11 12 13

CHARTREUSE DE VILLENEUVE LEZ AVIGNON

INTERVIEW WITH DOROTHÉE MUNYANEZA

The subject of this new show is once again war, or rather bodies in the aftermath of war. Here, you focus on the violence against women, on rape as a weapon of war. You also talk about the children born of those rapes. What was the starting point of your reflection?

Dorothee Munyaneza: I've always been interested in women's bodies, in their place in the world. I wonder about what those bodies tell us, and more precisely about how my own body reveals itself. For this show, I looked for examples throughout the history of humanity—and not only in Rwanda—where women's bodies also became, in time of war, battlefields of their own: a place men invaded with weapons, through torture or rape. While working on that research, I read *War Does Not Have a Woman's Face* by Svetlana Alexievitch, the Belarusian writer who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2015. In that documentary essay, she studies the history of Russian women who were sent to the front to fight against the Nazis. She describes in particular how their bodies were transformed to serve as war machines. I was also strongly affected by *The Man Who Mends Women*, Thierry Michel's film about Doctor Mukwege, who has taken care of thousands of women raped in the Congo over the past twenty years. I also learnt a lot from Benoît Dervaux and André Versaille's *Rwanda, la vie après, paroles de mères* [Rwanda, life after, mothers' words], a documentary about Tutsi women who survived the genocide and who talk about the rapes they were subjected to at that time, and about the children born as a result. Those children, Marine Courtade and Christophe Busché filmed them for *Mauvais souvenir* [Bad Memory], an investigation into the malaise of 20-something Rwandans. I also wanted to talk about that reality by going further than in *Samedi Détente*, especially since those subjects are still taboo. I wasn't raped, but I've met women who were, as well as children born of those crimes, who've told me their stories. I wanted my body to become a vessel through which I could tell their stories.

To talk about it, you went to Rwanda to hear testimonies by women and children. How did the interviews take place?

Once there, I met Godeliève Mukasarasi who, in 1994, founded Sevota, an association that seeks to help Tutsi women victims of rape during the genocide. She helped me meet those women who gave birth to the children of their rapists, who live with HIV, in poverty and exclusion. Every month, those women meet and talk about what happened to them, and about their lives today. I came to those meetings and introduced myself, I told them my story, and I asked them a question: Have you accepted yourself? I was surprised to see them start talking in turn easily. I think that the fact that I'm a mother myself helped create a real sense of complicity. I was afraid I was going to meet destroyed women, but I was moved by their softness, their smile, their beauty, their dignity. I was faced with women who still suffer but who are trying to reclaim their own sullied, mutilated, and abused bodies, in order to be reborn. That's what the show is about: those women who are still being rejected, whose lives are silence and pain, about their dignity, their rebellious beauty. Because they learnt relatively late about the fact

that their mothers had been raped, it was harder to talk about it with the children. Still on Godeliève Mukasarasi's initiative, Rwandan children born of rapes meet, once a year or more, to talk about their history. It's beautiful because, for several days, they live together and share times of reflection, write and draw about what they're feeling, what they've accomplished, about their fears and hopes. They carry the same wounds as their mothers, but those children are the future: they want love, they want joy. If we don't want the victims of today to become tomorrow's torturers, we have to teach them self-confidence and trust in each other and in life, and put an end to the cycle of violence.

In 2008, the UN recognised rape as a constitutive element of genocide, giving it a specific international status. Did that help those women and children to assert their rights in Rwandan society?

Not long after the genocide, rape was a simple demeanor. Rwandan feminists fought to have rape recognised as a crime almost as violent as genocide itself. In 1998, their rights were legally recognised by the country's institutions. Yet those women are still very often stigmatised and treated like outcasts. They receive financial help from the *Fonds national d'assistance aux rescapés du génocide et des massacres* (FARG) [National Fund for the Survivors of Genocide and Massacres], but only because they are considered survivors. It's still very difficult to talk about the topic of rape, including for the children born of rape who have never known love—except the love of their mothers, who had to learn to love them—and who never talk about the context of their births...

How did you turn those testimonies, this topic, into art?

At first, I intended to create a solo, to be alone onstage with those women I'd met, with their presence, their words. Then I met Holland Andrews, a young African American with amazing vocal skills. Her voice is deep and husky, but it can also go very high. Thanks to her loop pedals, her singing is at once unique and full of contradictory meanings. Working with musician Alain Mahé, we tried to find a sonic space those women could inhabit, with solo voices sometimes rising above the rest. The texts of the songs are the stories I wrote down so that we could all carry those words together. Similarly, they also helped me compose movement. The show is like a danced concert, punctuated by testimonies that take shape on the stage. It allows us to tell a story that's bigger than just ours, a story of humanity. Beyond the music, the work on sound, the text, the choreography, I want the audience to feel closer to those women. I asked London-born South African visual artist and photographer Bruce Clarke, whose work focuses on contemporary history and its writing and transmission, to come up with ways to symbolise them. He created a woman on a structure of corrugated iron that spins round and round and lets you see her evolution: a woman who's changed, who's changing, like I change, again and again. A woman who becomes monument, who's no longer unique, who echoes the women victims of rape. A woman with whom I interact, with whom my goal is to reveal, or to re-enact, that violence.

— Interview conducted by Francis Cossu and translated by Gaél Schmidt-Cléach