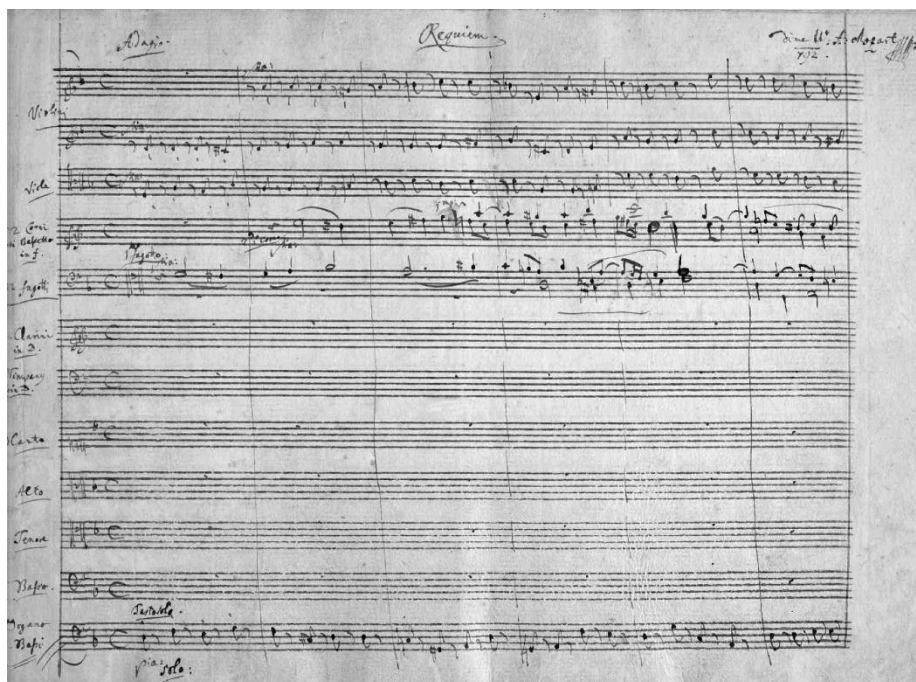




les ballets C de la B

Requiem pour L.

les ballets C de la B, Festival de Marseille, Berliner Festspiele
Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel



les ballets C de la B vzw

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World premiere:

18 January 2018 - Berliner Festspiele (DE)

duration: 1h40 (no interval)

Requiem pour L.

Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel

les ballets C de la B

les ballets C de la B (Ghent-Belgium) was founded by Alain Platel in 1984. Since then it has become a company that enjoys great success at home and abroad. Over the years it has developed into an artistic platform for a variety of choreographers. The company still keeps to its principle of enabling artists from various disciplines and backgrounds to take part in this dynamic creative process. As a result of its 'unique mixture of artistic visions', *les ballets C de la B* is not easy to classify. It is nevertheless possible to discern something like a house style (popular, anarchic, eclectic, committed), and its motto is **'this dance is for the world and the world is for everyone'**.

www.lesballetscdela.be

Festival de Marseille

Each year at the beginning of the summer, the Festival de Marseille, a major festival devoted to dance and other arts, combines a whole range of genres and cultures. Dance shows, plays, concerts, installations, performances, films, public events and parties form an intense summer programme that takes place across the city: 3 weeks of events relating to the work of highly committed artists, providing fascinating insights into their approaches and worldviews. Diverse, festive and international, the Festival de Marseille reflects the energy and vibrancy of the City of Marseille.

www.festivaldemarseille.com

Berliner Festspiele

Berliner Festspiele stand for a cultural programme where the new becomes visible. All year round, they host a multitude of festivals, exhibitions and individual events in two houses – the Haus der Berliner Festspiele and the Martin-Gropius-Bau. The combination and network of a festival house and an exhibition hall bears special potential for interdisciplinary project formats and the interaction of different forms of art. With the world premiere of "Requiem pour L.", Alain Platel and Berliner Festspiele continue a fruitful collaboration of several years

www.berlinerfestspiele.de

Requiem pour L.

Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel

Fourteen musicians from across the world come together around Mozart's *Requiem*. In reconstructing that *Requiem*, they merge their own musical influences with genres including jazz, opera and popular African music.

Appointed musical director, composer Fabrizio Cassol continues to write a personal artistic history in which he brings together different musical cultures around a theme. Again and again, he looks for ways to write new stories with existing work, with oral and written traditions. For the *Requiem*, he brings together musicians whom he previously worked with (in *Macbeth* and *Coup Fatal*, among others) with artists for whom this is their first collaboration.

On a theatrical level, director Alain Platel and the group look for a visual and physical translation of the images and associations that a *Requiem* conjures up: from the requiem mass to the mass grave into which Mozart was himself dumped.

Cassol and Platel find each other in the way *métissages*, the blending of cultures, manage to create a new universe. They previously collaborated on Monteverdi's Vespers for the Blessed Virgin Vespers - *vspr*, 2006), Bach's St Matthew Passion (*pitié!*, 2008) and the western baroque repertoire (*Coup Fatal*, 2014).



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Requiem pour L.

Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel

Cassol has made it abundantly clear that this reinterpretation of Mozart's *Requiem* is the most perilous musical undertaking he has ever attempted.

This artistic adventure began some three years prior to its performance in Berlin (18 January 2018) when Cassol and Platel began to think about the next stage in their long-standing collaboration. It must have been conceived during the *Coup Fatal* tour, an encounter between 13 Congolese musicians and the European baroque repertoire, for which the two had joined forces to complete the finishing touches. Their very first collaboration, however, was more than ten years ago. This would normally have been the choir project with which the KVS in Brussels opened its renovated theatre. However, due to delays in the renovation work, *VSPRS*, based on Monteverdi's *Vespro de la beata vergine*, came out first. Then came *pitié!*, whose final performances in Kinshasa could be described as pretty historic. These created a strong link with the Congo that still resonates today.

An adaptation of Mozart's *Requiem* was what most appealed to Platel. This is probably because during that period, death had crossed his path a number of times: he had had to bid farewell to his father, had lost his faithful dog, and had sat at the deathbed of his mentor Gerard Mortier. For Cassol, the knowledge that Mozart had not finished the *Requiem* opened up the possibility of relating to it as a composer. Others had added to it, in different eras. Why not a fresh interpretation for a time in which the world has become so much bigger and the distances so much smaller?

Cassol found a beautiful edition of the *Requiem* in the library of the conductor Sylvain Cambreling and set about studying it. The variations in handwriting enabled him to distinguish the parts that Mozart had written from the additions made by others. However, it would be misleading to suggest that Cassol stripped away the additions and only retained pure Mozart. The original has also been reworked. Cassol has made sketches of it; an imaginary distillate that contains the essence of Mozart's writing and will always be recognised as Mozart. The texts have been reduced to their essence.

Equally, it would be simplistic to think that the additions are African. As Cassol reiterates: there is little that is African about the added rhythms or harmonies. For him, it is all part of a musical world of sound that he has always advocated and which is fuelled by specific musical traditions (pygmy, India, Mali) that have always been linked to equally specific forms of spirituality. Herein lies the great challenge for Cassol: imagining a different kind of ceremony for mourning that is neither Western nor African. It is likely that this need in him was also fuelled by a serious loss in his own private life, by an acute need for nourishing vitality.

What else did he do in terms of reworking? Anyone familiar with the *Requiem* will immediately think of mass choral singing. Cassol has replaced the masses with individuals, thus creating an alternative expressive space where the melodies follow on from one another. Consecutive vocal parts then become a clarification between people, thus making the *Requiem* something 'of the people'. Because of these vocal parts – often the only thing by Mozart that remained – Cassol needed a number of lyrical voices. For this he initially looked to South African opera singers that he had got to know through his work with Brett Bailey, for whom he adapted Verdi's *Macbeth*.

Generally the vocal distribution rests on a solid foundation of four voices: soprano, alto, bass and baritone. Cassol deliberately opted for triangles, omitting the bass. This allows for greater flexibility, whilst also creating a kind of instability. Across from the trio of lyrical singers stands a trio of black voices that hail from the oral tradition: the Brussels-based Fredy Massamba, alongside Kinois Boule Mpanya and Russell Tshiebua, the backing singers who already worked themselves into the foreground in *Coup Fatal*, and were also part of the Platel production *Nicht schlafen*. However, the voices do not always sing together and therefore cannot always seek support

from one another. For Cassol, this is an extension of the idea of the fugue, which makes the music more joyful.

Mozart's score does not include an end for the *Requiem*. Generally, the end goes back to the beginning (Dies Irae), but for what Platel had in mind this would prove impossible. That's why Cassol gradually allows the *Requiem* to merge into the *Mass in C*. The *Requiem* is in D, which for Cassol means the most open, radiant tonality: joy that slowly slides into the heavier, darker and more dramatic C.

Cassol regards himself as the architect of this music. But let us not forget that the work is also informed by the input of the musicians during rehearsals. Thus the Latin texts of the *Requiem* or the *Mass in C* have their counterparts in Lingala or Swahili, with here and there a touch of Tshiluba or Kikongo. Russell Tshiebua often acts as a translator and text producer. Massamba recites in his mother tongue, Kilari from Brazzaville. Sometimes the translation comes first and the music second; sometimes there are first notes and only then the language that best suits them. However, the translations never differ fundamentally from the Latin texts.

The most difficult are the often-abrasive harmonies that are stacked up against one another in such an idiosyncratic way. This is most unlike the Congolese' or Africans' usual way of doing things and it requires a different cultural response; pretty complicated if you have to learn everything by ear, for in many places the score goes against what musicians are familiar with. It only falls into place when all the voices are filled in, which is why the musical rehearsals took so long (the first rehearsals date back to April 2017). It is not only a formidable challenge to bring together musicians with these different backgrounds; it is also important that these musicians are able to express their way of life in the music.

The figure three has always had a special place in masonic rituals. In order to pay tribute to Mozart and his freemasonry, not only are there triangles in the voices, but also three likembes (or thumb pianos). At times, the music becomes somewhat Cubist: in *Confutatis*, rhythms, influences and worlds collide to create a multifaceted image. Luckily Rodriguez Vangama, Cassol's right-hand man, is on stage, the orchestra leader of Coup Fatal who continues to exert such tight control on the band now. The euphonium or tuba (Niels Van Heertum from *En avant, marche!*) seems to belong to the angel of death, launching his appeal in *Tuba Mirum*; in *Hostias* it is as though it is creeping into the head of the dying L. The accordion underpins and undermines the vocal harmonies in equal measure, and the percussion acts as the proverbial knock on the door. We reach the borders of what is expressible. The one question left for Cassol to answer after this *Requiem pour L* is: after this, what is there left to do? There is a sense that it is finished.

Hildegard De Vuyst, dramaturge – January 2018



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Requiem pour L.

Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel

Music

Fabrizio Cassol after Mozart's Requiem

Direction

Alain Platel

Conductor

Rodriguez Vangama

With and by

Rodriguez Vangama (guitar and electric bass)

Boule Mpanya, Fredy Massamba, Russell Tshiebua (vocals)

Nobulumko Mngxekeza, Owen Metsileng, Stephen Diaz/Rodrigo Ferreira (lyric vocals)

Joao Barradas (accordion)

Kojack Kossakamvwe (electric guitar)

Niels Van Heertum (euphonium)

Bouton Kalanda, Erick Ngoya, Silva Makengo (likembe)

Michel Seba (percussions)

Dramaturgy

Hildegard De Vuyst

Musical assistant

Maribeth Diggle

Choreographic assistant

Quan Bui Ngoc

Video

Simon Van Rompay

Camera

Natan Rosseel

Set design

Alain Platel

Set realized by

Wim Van de Cappelle in collaboration with scenography atelier NTGent

Light design

Carlo Bourguignon

Sound design

Carlo Thompson, Guillaume Desmet

Costume design

Dorine Demuyne

Stage manager

Wim Van de Cappelle

Photography

Chris Van der Burght

Production managers

Katrien Van Gysegem, Valerie Desmet

Direction assistant and tour manager

Steve De Schepper

Trainee performing arts

Lisaboa Houbrechts

Trainee theatre engineering

Ijf Boulet

Thanks to Isnelle da Silveira, Filip De Boeck, Barbara Raes, Griet Callewaert, atelier NTGent, Mevrouw S.P., Juffrouw A.C., Fondation Camargo (Cassis, France), Sylvain Cambreling, Connexion vzw

We are sincerely grateful to L. and her family for their exceptional candour, their deep trust and the unique support to this special project.

In dialogue with dr. Marc Cosyns

Production

les ballets C de la B, Festival de Marseille, Berliner Festspiele

Coproduction

Opéra de Lille (FR), Théâtre National de Chaillot Paris (FR), Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg (LU), Onassis Cultural Centre Athens (GR), TorinoDanza (IT), Aperto Festival/Fondazione I Teatri – Reggio Emilia (IT), Kampnagel Hamburg (DE), Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele (DE), Festspielhaus St. Pölten (AT), L’Arsenal Metz (FR), Scène Nationale du Sud-Aquitain – Bayonne (FR), La Ville de Marseille-Opéra (FR)

Distribution

Frans Brood Productions

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Requiem pour L.

Fabrizio Cassol, Alain Platel

Fabrizio Cassol

° 1964, Ougrée (BE)

For twentyfive years, Fabrizio Cassol is the composer and saxophonist of the band Aka Moon. He has often worked with choreographers such as Alain Platel (les ballets C de la B – *vsprs, pitié!*, *Coup Fatal*), Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker (Rosas), the Samoan Lemi Ponifasio (Mao Company), the Congolese Faustin Linyekula (studio Kaboka). In opera, he already worked with Philippe Boesman-Luc Bondy, in theatre with Tg Stan.

His close collaboration with KVS, the Flemish Royal Theatre, when led by Jan Goossens, was followed by an artistic residence in the opera De Munt La Monnaie (Brussels) led by Bernard Foccroulle.

Since 2012, he has been artist in residence at the Fondation de l'Abbaye Royaumont near Paris to continue studying world cultures. His particular interest in non-European music started after a trip to the Aka pygmies in Central Africa in 1992 and expanded to Asia (especially India) and Africa where he worked with the diva from Mali Oumou Sangare, the Griot Baba Sissoko and the Black Machine, the Indian master of percussion U. K. Sivaraman and the Senegalese Doudou N'Diaye Rose. As for the improvised music scene, he worked with Marc Turner, Robin Eubanks, David Gilmore, Magic Malik, Marc Ducret and Joe Lovano.

Together with DJ Grazzhopa, he created the first big band with 14 DJs and participated in the concept of the aulochrome, a new polyphonic and chromatic woodwind instrument built by François Louis.

He passes on his extensive knowledge of music from oral and written traditions, of chamber music or symphonic work in workshops and master classes all over the world, such as: at the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris, the Royal Academy in London, the Conservatory in Jerusalem, in Alger, Beijing, Berlin, Chennai, Tunis and Royaumont.

In 2017 he released with Aka Moon a collector box as celebration of their 25th anniversary, inclusive the new album 'Now' that returns to the roots of the group, presenting the original trio playing together.

Alain Platel

° 1956, Gent (BE)

Alain Platel is trained as a remedial educationalist, and is an autodidact director. In 1984 he set up a small group with a number of friends and relatives to work collectively. *Emma* (1988) signalled his concentration on directing. He was responsible for *Bonjour Madame* (1993), *La Tristezza Complice* (1995) and *Iets op Bach* (1998), with which les ballets C de la B (as the group was now called) rocketed to the international top. In the meantime his collaboration with Arne Sierens had a similar effect on the Ghent youth theatre company Victoria, with the three plays *Moeder en Kind* (1995), *Bernadetje* (1996) and *Allemaal Indiaan* (1999).

After *Allemaal Indiaan* he announced that he was stopping making productions. But shortly afterwards Gerard Mortier persuaded him to do *Wolf* (2003) based on Mozart for the Ruhrtriennale. The choir project for the opening of the new KVS marked the start of close collaboration with the composer Fabrizio Cassol. *vsprs* (2006) proved to be a turning point in his career. So far his work had been exuberant in both the diversity of performers and the themes, but now it became more profound and intense and revealed a world of passion and desire. And violence, as in *Nine Finger* (2007) with Benjamin Verdonck and Fumiyo Ikeda.

After the baroque *pitié!* (2008), *Out Of Context – for Pina* (January 2010) is an almost ascetic reflection of the movement repertoire of spasms and tics. Platel consistently continues to search this language of movement for incarnations of feelings that are too vast. The yearning for something transcending the individual is becoming more and more palpable.

In collaboration with director Frank Van Laecke, he created *Gardenia* (June 2010), a production in which the closing of a transvestite cabaret affords us a glimpse into the private lives of a memorable group of old artists. In 2015 Alain Platel and Frank Van Laecke renew their

collaboration, this time joined by composer Steven Prengels, for *En avant, Marche !* a performance about a society inspired by the tradition of fanfare orchestras and brass bands. *C(H)ŒURS* (2012), so far Platel's biggest project, is created on demand of opera director Gerard Mortier. He got to work with the famous choral scenes from Verdi's operas, later on he added pieces of music from Richard Wagner's works. In *C(H)ŒURS* he examines –together with his dancers and the Teatro Real choir – how 'dangerously beautiful' a group can be. The political connotation in performances such as *tauberbach* (2014) and *Coup Fatal* (in collaboration with Fabrizio Cassol 2014) lies in the joie de vivre and energy that is displayed on stage to show how people sometimes live or even survive in undignified circumstances (a landfill in *tauberbach* and the real living conditions of the musicians from Congo in *Coup Fatal*). "Lust for life" as a way of rebellion. It's this lust for life that pushes the dancers in searching the possibility for transformation in *nicht schlafen* (2016), a performance on music by Mahler, that carries the restlessness and sense of foreboding doom of an accelerating society.

But let it be clear, Platel is not just into large scale projects nowadays. In the recent past, he worked on small projects such as *Nachtschade* (for Victoria in 2006) and coaching work for amongst others Pieter and Jakob Ampe and their production *Jake & Pete's big reconciliation attempt for the disputes from the past* (in 2011). Two projects which have had a significant influence on his way of perceiving theatre.

He also almost surreptitiously entered the arena of the dance film together with the British director Sophie Fiennes (*Because I Sing* in 2001, *Ramallah!Ramallah!Ramallah!* in 2005 and *VSPRS Show and Tell* in 2007) and solo with *de balletten en ci en là* (2006), an impressive view of what goes on in a twenty-year-old dance company, taking us all the way to Vietnam and Burkina Faso, but also and mainly being an ode to his home town Ghent.

Rodriguez Vangama

° 1985, Kinshasa (COD)

Rodriguez Vangama is an artist musician, born in Kinshasa. As a brilliant guitar player, he is often solicited for his talents as a musician, arranger or producer by famous stars such as Papa Wemba, Werrason, Jean Goubald and Monik Tenday. He played with the jazz band J'Affroz and has worked with artists such as Pierre Vaiana and Baloji, more specifically for the recording of his album "Kinshasa Succursale". Rodriguez has toured extensively in Africa and in Europe with Lexus Legal. With his own band, "Les Salopards", he infuses popular Congolese music with flavours of jazz and of rock. He founded le Guez Arena: a cultural centre in Kinshasa for educating and producing different artists under his label Arena Music.

Boule Mpanya

° 1987, Kinshasa (COD)

Boule Mpanya grew up in Kinshasa. His father loved to play music at home and at parties, where Boule accompanied him as a dancer. He gave Boule every encouragement to develop his artistic talent. Boule joined a church choir as a singer. Then, together with his elder brother and some friends, he set up a group which combined pop music and hip hop. His singing talent also led to other horizons and discoveries, from a singer in a gospel choir or member of an alternative music group to collaboration with the music group Washiba. Shortly afterwards, he met Paul Kerstens, co-ordinator of the Africa operation in Congo from the Royal Flemish Playhouse in Brussels (KVS), who suggested to him that he should devote his knowledge to the *Coup Fatal* project with Fabrizio Cassol and Alain Platel. For more than two years, he did a world tour with *Coup Fatal*, which included over a hundred performances. The collaboration with Alain Platel continues in 2016 with *nicht schlafen*, a performance inspired by the work of Gustav Mahler. Boule Mpanya has worked together with scores of artists in his native land, mainly Christians, but also with international musicians such as Rokia Traoré, Marie Daulne, Fabrizio Cassol, and Fredy Massamba. Of all the styles of music which he listens to and likes, his favourite is salsa. Apart from his musical activities, Boule Mpanya has also developed an acting career, including a role in a Congolese TV series. At the same time, he has done a course in interior architecture at the Academy of Fine Art in Kinshasa.

Fredy Massamba

° 1971, Pointe-Noire (CGO)

Fredy Massamba grew up in Congo-Brazzaville and currently lives and works in Brussels. His parents instilled the love of music in him and he discovered Congolese rumba by listening to the radio. At the age of fourteen, he joined a choir, singing and playing percussion. In 1991, he was one of the founding members of the Tambours de Brazza, who went on to achieve international success. He collaborated with Zap Mama, Didier Awadi and Manou Gallo, to name but a few. In 2011, he released his first solo album, *Etnophony*, which was nominated for the African Kora Awards 2012 in Abidjan and was picked up by the European music scene. *Makasi*, the second album, followed in 2013. Fredy Massamba is a singer-songwriter whose work combines elements of soul, funk and African polyphonies.

Russell Tshiehua

° 1993, Mbuji-Mayi (COD)

Already at the age of 20, TK Russell has made an impact in the music world of Kinshasa. Author, performer, singer, and show man, Russell makes music which is very much his and his alone. A gifted composer, he started to write and compose music for himself and for others as early as the age of nine. And so, with original music, served by a powerful voice and stage presence, Russell dreams of letting his voice be heard and sharing his musical universe with the entire planet.

After working and collaborating with several national and international artists who have helped him to develop, such as Lokwa Kanza, Jean Goubald, Tshala Muana, Papa Wemba, Salif Keita, Rokia Traoré, Fabrizio Cassol, Fredy Massamba, the group Puggy, les Washiba, and such like, he started to put on his own concerts, which people will discover thanks to the group SADI at the time of the acoustic evenings at the Halle de la Gombe in Kinshasa.

This young artist has become a messenger of hope for his generation. Demanding and industrious, he searches constantly for new tones and doesn't have to worry about copying anyone. His roots are a distinctive feature and his open and creative spirit which feeds on rock, funk, techno, pop, RNB, and flamenco is a strength.

Alongside his individual work, Russell also participates in joint projects such as *Sadi-Echos* (a project to raise awareness concerning conservation of the natural biodiversity of the Congo basin, which is maintained by the WWF) as artistic director, composer, and interpreter of the songs on this album; he has also taken part in the creation of the tour for the show *Coup Fatal* created by Alain Platel, including a world tour which has been in progress for two years as a singer, dancer, and percussionist. The collaboration with Platel continues in 2016 with *nicht schlafen*, a performance inspired by the work of Gustav Mahler. His passion for music knows no bounds because it is for him a way of life.

Nobulumko Mngxekeza

° 1981, Queenstown (RSA)

Nobulumko Mngxekeza was born in Queenstown on 9 January 1981. She was introduced to music when she joined her high school choir at Kwa-Komani High. In 2001 she enrolled at the University of Cape Town's College of Music and trained under Virginia Davids, Sidwill Hartman, Marisa Mavchio and Angela Gobatto. In her young career she has performed in *Carmen* as Micaella, as Bess in *Porgy and Bess*, as Pamina in *Der Zaubeflute*, as Anna in *Nabucco* - as well in *Rusalko* and *I'll Mulatto*. Nobulumko has worked for Isango Ensemble where she performed in the following productions, *Impempe Yomlingo* (The Magic Flute), *Abanxaxhi* (La Boheme), *Aesop 's Fables* and *Ragged Trouser Philanthropist*. Nobulumko has also travelled internationally with various productions for Cape Town Opera where she was previously a Studio Member. Between 2014

and 2017 - Nobulumko played Lady Macbeth in the internationally acclaimed Third World Bunfight production of MACBETH, directed by Brett Bailey and music adapted from the Verdi by Fabrizio Cassol.

Owen Metsileng

° 1987, Manamakgotha (RSA)

Owen Metsileng was born in 1987 in a village called Manamakgotha in Rustenburg, South Africa. He comes from a musical family and started singing at an early age in church and school choirs. While in secondary school, he was introduced to classical music. He started competing in the Tirisano Choral Eisteddfod Competition and was the National Champion in the 2007 SACMA Competition. Owen was a member of the Black Tie Ensemble from 2006 to 2008 and joined the Cape Town Opera Studio in 2010. For CTO (Cape Town Opera) he has sung Le Dancaire in *Carmen* and Barone Douphol in *La traviata*, while also understudying the role of Giorgio Germont. He also sang the role of Marcello in *La bohème* for CTO, as well as Jake in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* on a UK Tour. In September 2012, Owen performed in Cape Town Opera's Gala Concerts with Orchestra Victoria at the Hamer Hall in Melbourne. He also took part in the Belvedere singing competition and was chosen to compete in the finals in Amsterdam in 2014. Owen played the lead in Third World Bunfight's reworked MACBETH with music by Fabrizio Cassol adapted from the Verdi to great acclaim from 2014 to 2017.

Stephen Diaz

° 1988 (RSA)

Stephen Diaz Stephen Diaz was born in South Africa, but embarked on his singing journey in 2004 when he joined the Auckland Youth Choir in New Zealand. In the following years Diaz moved on to the National Youth Choir and then the Auckland Chamber Choir at the University of Auckland where he was pursuing a Bachelor of Music, under the tutelage of Morag Atchison. He was accepted in to the Dame Malvina Major PWC emerging artist program with New Zealand Opera, at this point he had already been successful in competitions and placements for schools such as the New Zealand Opera School, which he attended 3 times from 2010 and masterclasses with the likes of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Sir Andrew Davis. In 2012 Stephen was runner up in the Lexus Song Quest and winner of the New Zealand Aria competition, he was also the recipient of the Circle 100 scholarship. Diaz has been learning and performing with Frances Wilson at the Auckland Opera Studio for the past 6 Years. Over the years Stephen has performed recurrently various companies and musical societies around New Zealand.

Rodrigo Ferreira

° 1980, São Paulo (BRA)

Born in São Paulo, Rodrigo Ferreira currently resides in Paris where he works with Christiane Patard. He completed his training in 2007 at the Département Supérieur pour Jeunes Chanteurs (CRR de Paris - Superior Department for Young Singers) created by Laurence Equilbey. He sings under the direction of Gustav Leonhardt, George Benjamin, Kazuchi Ono, Susanna Mälkki and Franck Ollu. He works closely with harpsichordist Ronan Khalil, founder of Ensemble Desmarest, who are artists in residence at the 2012 Ambronay Festival, where they perform together. As an HSBC Laureate of the International Academy of Aix-en-Provence Festival 2012, he participates in the creation of "Thanks to my Eyes" by Oscar Bianchi and Joël Pommerat. This is followed by other contributions to the contemporary repertoire, as well as roles in the baroque repertoire (Purcell, Vivaldi, Gassman, Schütz ...). He is particularly fond of ancient music in the one per voice style.

As a lover of the performing arts, Rodrigo has been involved in numerous theatre shows (musical / dance) with a number of companies since 2006, including Le Théâtre Décomposé (Éric Durand), C'Interscribo (Tatiana Julien), Robin Orlyn and LOD music theatre.

Joao Barradas

° 1992, Tomar (PT)

João Barradas was born in Porto Alto, in the parish of Samora Correia. He initiated his accordion studies at the tender age of six at a small music school in Samora Correia. His growth as an artist has taken place simultaneously with thorough training. In addition to this training, the passion for his instrument, made him find out about the history of the accordion. On this impulse, he went through a great deal of literature about this musical instrument, from Variété music from the 60s, 70s and 80s, to the contemporary compositions by Sofia Gubaidulina.

João Barradas is one of the most reputable and widely acknowledged European accordionists, working simultaneously between classical music, jazz and improvised music. He has won some of the most prestigious international contests of which, among others, the World Accordion Trophy, which he has won twice, the Coupe Mondiale de Acordeão, the International Castelfidardo Contest and the Okud Istra International Competition, stand out.

João Barradas is one of the most outstanding musicians in Jazz accordion, having recorded for the New York record label Inner Circle Music and collaborated with various renowned musicians, namely Greg Osby, Mike Stern, Gil Goldstein, Fabrizio Cassol, Mark Colenburg, Jacob Sacks, Mark Turner, Miles Okasaki, Rufus Reid, Jerome Jennings, Sérgio Carolino, Pedro Carneiro, among many others.

In 2016, he records his first album as leader with the New York label Inner Circle Music.

"Directions" is produced by Greg Osby and features Gil Goldstein and Sara Serpa. The group is formed by João Barradas (accordion), André Fernandes (guitar), João Esteves da Silva (piano), André Rosinha (double-bass) and Bruno Pedroso (drums). "Directions" was praised highly by the critics all over the world and made to the restrict Downbeat's Best Albums Of The Year.

Kojack Kossakamwve

° 1978, Kinshasa (COD)

Kojack discovers his talent for music in 1986, as a member of a children's choir. Some years later, on a Saturday after school, he visits a friend, son of a preacher. Upon arrival, he finds a group of children, all playing on a music instrument. Surprised by what he sees and hears, he sits down quietly and observes. When the preacher arrives, he says to the children: "Why do you leave this friend here on his own? You could at least learn him how to play an instrument." His friend take a guitar and shows Kojack a simple melody of a few notes. After many years of exercising, Kojack plays in several groups of his generation and joined some projects, as there are: Kwata Vibra (1998), Wenge Muzika Maison Mère (200-2003), project Losangania (2009), the show Basali Ya Ba Zoba (2010), a tour with Maryse Ngalula and Elie Kamano for 'Visas pour la création' (2013), a tour Franco na Biso in Africa and in Europe (2014), recordings of albums and concerts with Amine AUB (2013) and the last big project of Papa Wemba ('la passion du maître', 2015) with Kojack as musical director.

Niels Van Heertum

°1990, Turnhout (BE)

Niels started to play the euphonium when he was 8. After having been active in the jazz circuit for a few years, he started studying at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. He studied there under John Ruocco, Stephane Galland, Jeroen van Herzelee and Kris Defoort among others. He also followed masterclasses and private lessons by Chris Speed, Ellery Eskeli and Samuel Blaser.

Six years ago, Niels and some musical friends founded the band Ifa y Xango. Ifa y Xango wan the prestigious Gent Jazz Contest in 2011 and played the year after at the Gent Jazz Festival. In 2012 the band released its first album called *Abraham*. *Abraham* was very well received and chosen best debut album of the year by New York City Jazz Magazine.

Niels worked with bands such as Mount Meru, MikMaak, Jens Maurits Orchestra and the international version of the Brazilian live band DJ Tudo e sua gente de todo lugar. He also

worked with people such as Steve Swell, Marc Ducret, Joachim Badenhorst, Eric Thielemans, Jef Neve, Teun Verbruggen, Riccardo Luppi, Lynn Cassiers, Marek Patrman and Manolo Cabras.

Bouton Kalanda

°1992, Kinshasa (COD)

Bouton was born and raised in Kinshasa. His elder brother is a dancer and Bouton also began dancing from a young age in a traditional performing arts group. He later learned to play the likembe thanks to his friend and teacher, Erick Ngoya. After a number of years, he joined the Ngoya Jazz group in which he currently dances and plays percussion and the likembe. He also works alongside the percussionist 36 Seke, including at Chez Starlette. Also in Kinshasa, he joined a group of musicians who were inspired by the baroque repertoire, enriched the occidental material and presented in 2014 *Coup Fatal*, collaboration between Fabrizio Cassol and Rodriguez Vangama and Alain Platel. During more than two years, *Coup Fatal* was performed more than a hundred times on a world tour in which Bouton was playing likembe and dancing. He aims not to restrict himself to traditional music but rather to expand his musical horizons as far as possible.

Erick Ngoya

° 1988, Kinshasa (COD)

Erick plays the likembe and guitar, as well as being a singer and composer. He grew up in a family of musicians. His father, a guitarist, founded the Ngoya Jazz group, inspired by the traditional music of Bas-Congo. Today Erick too is a member of this group. He also teaches the likembe. In Kinshasa Erick joined a group of musicians who were inspired by the baroque repertoire, enriched the occidental material and presented in 2014 *Coup Fatal*, collaboration between Fabrizio Cassol and Rodriguez Vangama and Alain Platel. During more than two years, *Coup Fatal* was performed more than a hundred times on a world tour in which Erick was playing likembe and dancing.

Silva Makengo

°1973, Kinshasa (COD)

Sylva was born and raised in Kinshasa. Although his father was a likembe player, Sylva is self-taught. At the age of 12 he joined a folk group from Bas-Congo in which he sang, played likembe and composed music. He went on to create his own group, Touzolana, which is very popular for celebrations and parties. They have already released 2 albums. He has also been asked to work as a soloist for Eddy Mboyo's group, La Sanza. He is still playing with Touzolana and teaches likembe.

Also in Kinshasa, he joined a group of musicians who were inspired by the baroque repertoire, enriched the occidental material and presented in 2014 *Coup Fatal*, collaboration between Fabrizio Cassol and Rodriguez Vangama and Alain Platel. During more than two years, *Coup Fatal* was performed more than a hundred times.

Michel Seba

° 1973, Brussels (BE)

Michel Seba was born in 1973 nearby Arlon and grew up there amidst a family of passionate musicians. The sounds of his childhood are the bagpipe and the hurdy-gurdy. He starts his education with many traineeships at the Academie Internationale d'Été thanks to Chris Joris and Didier Labarre. After he finishes secondary school, the next logical step for him is to leave the south of Luxemburg and to go the Royal Conservatory in Brussels to study under the direction of Frank Michiels and Diederik Wissels.

His ability to mix different styles and his growing talent make him famous in no time and he is

asked to join the greatest: Eric Legnini, Eddy Louiss, Toots Thielemans or even Eric Truffaz, Paco Sery and many others. He feels comfortable in every register, whether it is jazz, folk or world music. He proves that regularly when participating at festivals such as the Jazz Festival in Montréal, the Jazz Marathon in Brussels or the very famous Montreux Jazz Festival. Having gained his place in the Belgian music scene, he is often asked to give classes and workshops in Belgium at the Aktd of Libramont and abroad, more particularly in Burkina Faso and Vietnam. As he is such a diverse musician, he was also asked to play and/or record with Maurane, Axelle Red or Adamo, and to join the orchestra of “The Voice” Belgium. He also recorded several film tracks and commercials. He was part of many cross-over projects such as in theater and the contemporary circus of Féria Musica. Never shying away from any musical challenge, Michel was also part of the group Soledad inspired by classical music and tango nuevo. His participation in the latest creation by Fabrizio Cassol and Alain Platel, *Requiem pour L.* is yet another example of the artistic diversity that Michel appreciates so much.

Michel has also his own projects such as the music group Slang with François Garny and Manuel Hermia. This “ethnic-coltranian” jazz trio has recorded 5 albums yet and has been touring in every corner of the planet.

Hildegard De Vuyst

° 1963, Aalst (BE)

“Late ’94, I made my first tentative steps as a dramaturge, working for Het muziek Lod. When Lod started a coproduction in ’95 with les ballets C de la B for *La Tristezza Complice*, this was to launch a longstanding collaboration with director Alain Platel. I’m very proud of *Iets op Bach*, *Wolf* and *vspr, pitié!* and *Out of Context – for Pina*. As a freelancer, I also worked with different choreographers from the same stable: Koen Augustijnen (*To crush time*) and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (*Rien de rien*). In the interim, I taught workshops (dance dramaturgy) in Amsterdam, Lublin and Aarhus; I taught at the Rits, the Brussels-based college for actors and directors; I set up a publication on the arts centres in Flanders (*Alles is rustig*) together with the Flemish Theatre Institute; I walked out on the X-group at P.A.R.T.S., etcetera...

Starting in 2001, life took on a fresh turn: the Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg (KVS for short) in Brussels came under new management and I started work there as a dramaturge. The challenge to turn this dormant repertory theatre into a lively place that would attract the whole city was considerable. The efforts we brought to bear were enormous and the satisfaction was duly proportionate. In 2006, the new infrastructure that was rebuilt from scratch was ready for operation and inaugurated by the choir project in collaboration with Alain Platel and Fabrizio Cassol. This enables us to make an even bigger imprint on the heart of the city. Still, however far-reaching my commitments to the KVS may be, when Platel calls, I come.

It is also Alain Platel’s fault that I went to Palestine for the very first time in 2004. It has led to PASS (Performing Arts Summer School) a long term project that I coordinate with young Palestinian performers in collaboration with KVS, les ballets C de la B and the A.M. Qattan Foundation in Ramallah. The absolute highlight of this adventure is *Badke*, a production with ten Palestinian dancers, that will perform in Palestine in spring 2014.

Since September 2016 I joint the team of les ballets C de la B and am as dramaturge also part of the Festival de Marseille.”

Maribeth Diggle

° 1979, Torrington (USA)

The American soprano, having performed in major venues around the world including Sadler’s Wells, Het Concertgebouw, Théâtre de la Ville, Götteborg Opera, Opera North, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Staatstheater Mainz, Stadttheater Ulm, Ruhr Triennale, Mercat de les Flors, Seoul LG Arts Center, and Wien Tanzquartier, received her vocal education from the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the Musik Hochschule Luzern, the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and graduated with cum laude from the Dutch National Opera Academy. Her repertoire includes roles such as Cherubini’s *Médée*, Die Frau (*Ermartung*), Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Cio cio san (*Madama Butterfly*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Tatjana (*Eugene Onegin*) and the title

role in Aida. She has performed with the ASKO/Schönberg Ensemble, Limburgs Symfonie Orkest, 18th Century Orchestra, the Azerbaijan National Philharmonic, and is a frequent guest with the Vertixe Sonora Ensemble.

Maribeth toured as a soloist with Les Ballet C. de la B., having performed "VSPRS" and "Pitié!" under the musical direction of Fabrizio Cassol in theatres throughout Europe, as well as performances in Japan, South Korea and the Democratic Republic of Congo. "Pitié!" can be seen in a documentary entitled "Passion, Last Stop Kinshasa" (Nachtaktivfilm), which was presented on ARTE TV in May in 2010. Together with members of the company, she has also taken part as an artistic coach during the International Sommerlabor (Frankfurt am Main) and continues to coach dancers at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln and Les Ateliers C de la B summer workshops.

Future performances include her own creation "Falling" together with Ezequiel Menalled, will sing the title role in Aida at the Opera Spanga Festival and can be seen in "The Jewish Connection" (Lisi Estaras/Ido Batash), having had their premier at the Jerusalem International Dance Week.

Quan Bui Ngoc

° 1976, Hanoi (VN)

Quan Bui Ngoc starts his dance training as a child at the National School of Vietnam, joining until 1996 the Ballet of the Hanoi Opera. In 1997 Bernadette Tripier invites him to France at Istres dance school. He met Alain Platel in 2002 to start working with him for *Wolf*. He continued this collaboration with *vsprs* (2006), *pitié!* (2008), *Out of Context-for Pina* (2010), *C(H)OEURS* (2012). He collaborated with Lisi Estaras as a dancer in *Bolero* (2009) and as a co-director in *I know a place* (2009). He created *Jump or fall* (2009) with Juliana Neves and Samuel Lefevre. In 2011 he joined the Australian Dance Theatre for the tour of *Be Your Self*. Recently he created with Daniel Hellmann K. and *Untold* with 3art3 from Zürich. Also he created pieces with specific dancers, he choreographed a memorial piece with 200 children for the city of Ieper, he created a show *Parallell Lines* with prisoners in Bruges and he created the performance *The Roof* for the Ho Chi Minh Opera in Vietnam. Quan regularly gives workshops in different countries and works as a coach for other dancers and companies.

Steve De Schepper

° 1966, Gent (BE)

Steve De Schepper, an actor, director and singer from Ghent, has been working at les ballets C de la B as a tour manager, resident director and artistic assistant of Alain Platel since 2012. He has contributed to 'Au-delà', 'tauberbach', 'En avant, marche!', 'nicht schlafen' and, now, 'Requiem pour L.'

In addition, he does a lot of freelance acting. In 2017, he appeared in 'Many heavens above the seventh', a film by Jan Matthys, he acts and sings in Les Quatre au Quai: 'Scène sur Seine' and 'Alors on Chante', two self-produced performances, and he can be seen playing the king in 'De Koning zonder Schoenen' (The King without Shoes) by children's theatre company 4Hoog Producties. He has an adaptation of Mieke Maaiké's *Obscene Fabels* and a couple of music theatre productions lined up for the near future.

Simon Van Rompay

° 1985, Leuven (BE)

Simon Van Rompay graduated at the school of arts, RITCS, in Brussels in 2009. Since then he has been working on various audiovisual projects for television, artistic projects and theater. He made several documentaries about music and art, screened in various festivals around the world. His interest lies in the interaction between music, video and spectator. Since 2012 he has been working at La Monnaie/opera house in Brussels where he worked on numerous opera's.

Carlo Bourguignon

° 1962, Tienen (BE)

Carlo Bourguignon worked at the Kaaaitheater for five years before he went on to join KVS for a seven-year term, working as an assistant to the director, as a stage manager and as a production assistant. At P.A.R.T.S. he was giving technical support to the student's projects. In 2000, he joined les ballets C de la B, where he created the light design for *Wolf, vsprs, pitié !*, *Out of Context-for Pina*, *C(H)ŒURS*, *tauberbach*, *Coup Fatal*, *nicht schlafen* (Alain Platel), *En avant, marche!* (Alain Platel & Frank Van Laecke), *Tempus Fugit* (Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui), *Just another landscape for some juke-box money*, *bâche*, *IMPORT EXPORT* (Koen Augustijnen), the project *1,2,3 / Propositions*, *Patchagonia* (Lisi Estaras), *Asobi* (Kaori Ito) and *Untold* (3art3 Company).

Bartold Uyttersprot

° 1976, Brussel (BE)

He studied oboe, contrabass and piano in art high schools in Louvain and Brussels. After that he followed audio engineering at the SAE Institute in Amsterdam. Since 2008, he has been working for les ballets C de la B and engineered the sound of *Asbes* (Koen Augustijnen), *primero*, *Monkey Mind* (Lisi Estaras), *La Esclava* (Lisi Estaras/Ayelen Parolin), *Pénombre* (Rosalba Torres Guerrero/ Lucas Racasse), *Gardenia* and *En avant, marche!* (Alain Platel/Frank Van Laecke), *Out of Context – for Pina*, *C(H)ŒURS*, *tauberbach*, *nicht schlafen* (Alain Platel), *Asobi* (Kaori Ito).

Carlo Thompson

° 1983, Cape Town (ZA)

“The inexpressible depth of music, so easy to understand and yet so inexplicable, is due to the fact that it reproduces all the emotions of our innermost being, but entirely without reality and remote from its pain...Music expresses only the quintessence of life and of its events, never these themselves.” (Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*)

Dorine Demuynck

° 1968, Torhout (BE)

Dorine Demuynck studied painting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent and has been making light and fabric sculptures, installations and performances since 1992. She also works as a freelance props manager, and as a costume and set designer she has been involved in several short films and has collaborated with a number of theatre companies: 4 Hoog, Bart Vanneste's comedy theatre *Tai'm outh* and *Zoe Bizroe* and Wim Willaert's *De grote Boodschap*; she designed costumes and accessories for Kommil Foo's performances *Lof der vaanzin*, *Spaak*, *Het Bestand*, *Duizend man sterk* and *Schoft* and for Mich Walschaerts and Ineke Nijssen with *Zonder u*.

She worked as the costume assistant for *Je suis sang* by Jan Fabre and was the costume designer for creations by Hans Van den Broeck (*Lac des singes*, *Almost Dark* and *En servicio*) and by Patrick Corillon (*De Blinden*).

Dorine Demuynck worked as a costume designer for les ballets C de la B: in *Patchagonia*, *Bolero*, *primero-erscht*, *Dans Dans* and *La Esclava* (Lisi Estaras) and *Out of Context-for Pina*, *C(H)ŒURS* and *Coup Fatal* (Alain Platel). In collaboration with het KIP, she was the dresser for *Ladycock*. Also for some productions of Compagnie Cecilia she designed the costumes: *The broken circle breakdown* and *Giovanni* (Johan Heldenbergh), *Ensor* (Arne Sierens), as well as for Circus Ronaldo in *Fidelis Fortibus*.

In addition she is style advisor for several singers and musicians and she took part in various events and exhibitions. In 1999, her installation *Geofferd aan de straatstenen* won the public award at the Art salon of Ghent.



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