

Germaine Acogny

Senegalese and French, Artistic Director of MUDRA AFRIQUE in Dakar until 1982, created by Maurice Béjart. She travels around the world to teach, to perform, to choreograph and becomes a true emissary of African Dance and Culture. With her husband Helmut Vogt, she created in Toulouse the »Studio-Ecole-Ballet-Theatre of the Third World«. In 1995 she decided to return to Senegal and built an International Centre for African Dance as a place of exchange between African dancers and dancers from around the world and a place of professional education for dancers from all over Africa in order to guide them towards a Contemporary African Dance. Between 1997 and 2000, Germaine Acogny was artistic director of the dance section of »Afrique en Créations«/AFAA (French Association for Artistic Action) and of the Contemporary African Dance Competition.



Sophiatou Kossoko

Dancer and choreographer from Benin, Sophiatou Kossoko studied in Copenhagen at the Doug Cruchfield School. She worked with many different choreographers: Doug Cruchfield, Alvin Ailey, Germaine Acogny, Gerard Gourdot, Julie Dossavi, Heddy Maalem, Philippe Jamet;

Xavier Orville

Writer and poet born 1932 in Martinique, who died in august 2001. Former cultural adviser of the Senegalese President Leopold Sedar Senghor and his successor Abdou Diouf until 1983. Close to Aime Cesaire, influenced by surrealism and Latin-American authors, his whole work shows his engagement towards his country as well as a beautiful intellectual independence allowing the artist a total freedom.

Christian Remer

Stage director, former student of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art Dramatique in Strasbourg (France), of the Centre de Recherches Théâtrales in Nancy (France) and of the Pantomime Theatre of Wrocław (Poland) with Tadeusz Kantor. Actor-dancer within the GRCOP with Carolyn Carlson. Many stage productions in France, Martinique, Congo, Guinea and Russia.

Etienne Schwarcz

Composer, musical creations, and realisations. Workshops on the relation between music and dance, artistic director of »La Chapelle«, a place for artistic experiments and creations in Montpellier (France). Discography: Angel, Long time before the end, Music for Dance, Symphonie pour une femme seule, Strange movements, Berechit,...

Zbigniew Wieckowski

Painter and scenographer from Poland. Former student of the Academie des Beaux Arts in Cracow, Master's degree in Art History and Scenography. Theatre sets and costumes for more than 50 theatre pieces. Many individual exhibitions in Brazil and Poland. Participates in France at various collective exhibitions.

Concept & dance Germaine Acogny
Choreography Sophiatou Kossoko
Director Christian Remer
Musical creation Etienne Schwarcz
Poetic creation Xavier Orville
Creation Noh Mask Mitsuo Sasaki
Costumes Laurence Alquier
Stage design Zbigniew Wieckowski
Lighting Horst Mühlberger
Producer Helmut Vogt

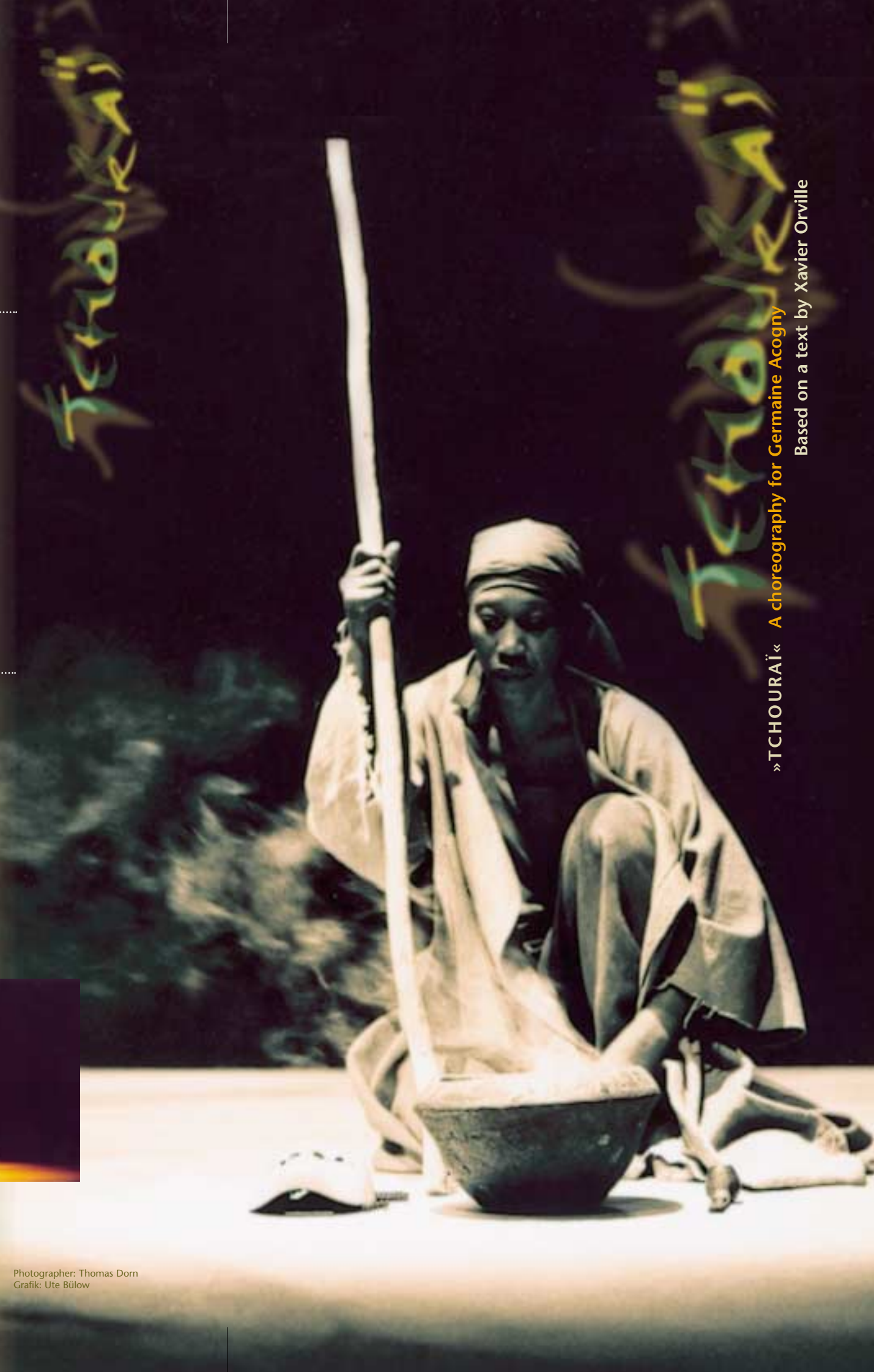
Musicians Oumar Fandy Diop [PERCUSSION]
Ndeye Seck [PERCUSSION]
Abdou Rakhame Diop [PERCUSSION]
Ousmane Sene [PERCUSSION]
Mamadou Traoré [PERCUSSION]
Khar Seck [PERCUSSION]
Djibril Bã [RITHI]
Issa Diao [PEUL FLUTE]
Delphine Chomel [VIOLIN]
Claire Menguy [CELLO]
Marion Diaques [ALTO]
Eric Vaquer [SOUND MIX]
& the women from the village Toubab Dialaw

Producers SEBT 3ème Monde, Toulouse/
Association Jant-Bi, Dakar
Co-Producers Théâtre de la Ville, Paris
CND Centre National de la Danse, Paris
Aarhus Festival, Denmark-Festival
»Voix de Femmes«, Belgium
With the support of Arts International, New-York
Conseil Régional Midi-Pyrénées
Ville de Toulouse
Ballet Atlantique Regine Chopinot.

Duration: 55 minutes



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»TCHOURAI« A choreography for Germaine Acogny
Based on a text by Xavier Orville

TCHOURAÏ

TCHOURAÏ is the name of a natural incense burnt by the Senegalese women to purify the house, to give it a beautiful smell. It penetrates her clothes and is supposed to attract and seduce her husband, to carry him away into another world.

GERMAINE ACOGNY

who still feels she has a lot to express with her body, with her dance, is taking the spectator on an imaginary journey through important moments of her life. Moments which have formed her, which have left traces in sand, wind and gestures, which appear and disappear, which she tries to catch again to give her stability and orientation. Past, present and future are melting together, take possession of the being and the dancer Germaine Acogny, who says through the words of the writer Xavier Orville: ...»When I dance, I dance in prose for weekdays, in verse for all Sundays and Feast days...«

Germaine guided by Sophiatou Kossoko, a young choreographer from Benin, living in France and inspired by the beautiful poetic text from the writer and poet Xavier Orville, especially written for Germaine, she shows once more all the beauty, strength, energy and symbolic language of a dance which is deeply rooted in Africa and which Germaine represents in her unique way. »I am trying to find all the nuances a body can feel and express: dawn – noon – and dusk of a life, a culture, a single individual. My body becomes again my quill to write a new poem designed in space.«

THE TEXT BY XAVIER ORVILLE

The poet and writer Xavier Orville has written a text in which he tries to catch in a poetic and symbolic way important moments in the life of Germaine Acogny. The images he created served Sophiatou Kossoko and Germaine Acogny as a basis for the choreographic work. Some extracts shall give an impression:

[FIRST MOVEMENT]

... When I dance, I dance against malevolence, against arrogance and stupidity, against toothache and heartache, dances escorted by several moons, dances which have crossed oceans, pierced fortifications and which prove the strength of their emotional impact by the tears they wrest from the unfaithful. Therefore some call me mad, but I'm not mad, I'm merely a little anxious and I do love dancing.

... I felt that I was getting to know the world through movement. Its sights and sounds nourished my blood with intoxicating rapture, tossed me up to the moon in a vertigo of leaps and bounds. Having danced my way for so long through the plates of encyclopaedias, I thought I knew all about life, about the stars, about animals and humans, until one day Abdoulaye stripped me of my innocence, leaving me with only my eyes to shed tears. And I realized then that I knew nothing at all.

[SECOND MOVEMENT]

... I walked straight ahead, not knowing whither. A voice was saying »whenever you don't know where you are going, look back to where you come from«. But I could not see where I had come from, because the heat and the dust which had robbed me of everything made the landscape quiver at all four cardinal points.

... They taught me the alphabet of signs, they unriddled for me the faces, the smells, the colours, the stories, the watch words. They made me go up and down the gamut of adaptation hundreds of times, before leaving me at the bottom of the stone stairs, where my fate awaited me, threatening to scorch my eyes.

[THIRD MOVEMENT]

... Gods and masks surrounded me, imprinting my movements with the natural continuation of the cadence that lives in life and religion. With them to guide me I found my way back to the sacred forest. With them I reassembled the structures of tradition from the pearly scales of memory still shining in the shadow, to build a bridge from yesterday's Africa to the future: I shall not cease until I have seen the arrow fly away and which will pierce the very heart of creation.

