



An Immigrant's Story

Wanjiru Kamuyu

WKcollective | Production camin aktion

Solo performance
Dance, spoken word, chant
Created October 2020
Duration: 55 minutes

*This work is made possible by the season Africa2020
(France).*

Wanjiru Kamuyu is engaged in questioning the notions of place, belonging and otherness. A cosmopolitan on three continents - Africa, North America and Europe – wherever she decides to set up home is she considered an immigrant?

Her dance, a migratory map of encounters, starts with ballet, studied during her childhood in Kenya, to contemporary dance, discovered after her parents move family to the USA; and enfolded into her career journey's delights in dances from the African continent and diaspora as well as butô.

Her body is a constantly shifting map.

Her solo interrogates the gaze upon the "foreigner" in a new space, new society. The work, through satire, offers a critical eye on the notions of place and placement that are prevalent in today's political discourse.

Choreographer & performer | Wanjiru Kamuyu

Dramaturge & producer | Dirk Korell

Writer | Laetitia Ajanohun

Original music composition | LACRYMOBOY

With the voices of | Sherwood Chen, David Gaulein-Stef,
Naïs Haidar, Karine Hanselmann, Wanjiru Kamuyu, Dirk Korell,
Crystal Petit, Monika Schwarzl, Sean Seago
& testimonies of | Tout-Monde

Costume design | Birgit Neppl

Lighting design | Cyril Mulon

Intern | Yvan-Loïc Kamdem Djoko

Special thanks to | Robyn Orlin, Jean Gaudin & David Gaulein-Stef

Executive production | camin aktion

Co-production | Espace 1789 de Saint-Ouen, scène conventionnée de Saint-
Ouen | La Manufacture CDCN Nouvelle-Aquitaine Bordeaux • La Rochelle |
L'échangeur – CDCN Hauts-de-France |
Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration | Théâtre de la Ville - Paris |
micadanses, Paris

Funding | Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France |
Région Ile-de-France | SPEDIDAM

Residencies | Direction des Affaires Culturelles de la Ville d'Aubervilliers –
Espace Renaudie | SUBS, Lyon, Saison 2019-20

Studio space | L'échangeur – CDCN Hauts-de-France |
La Manufacture CDCN Nouvelle-Aquitaine Bordeaux • La Rochelle |
La Place de la Danse - CDCN Toulouse/Occitanie

...as well as | Atelier de Paris / Centre de développement chorégraphique
national | Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers | CN D Centre national de la danse,
Pantin | micadanses, Paris



"Having lived on three different continents – Africa, North America and Europe - has provided me the privileged space and time to absorb diverse cultures and worldviews.

The current critically sensitive (im)migration issue at the forefront of worldwide political debates has inspired me to re-examine my personal (im)migration stories and consequentially cultivated a desire to examine the notion of and politics surrounding the privileged vs. unprivileged (im)migrant.

Summer 2017, in France, I worked on a community engagement project with 65 young aspiring artists from Eastern Europe and 11 Middle Eastern and African refugees. The refugees' audacious stories remained with me. Further exploration of the core underpinnings causing the current flux in (im)migration serve as points of inquiry for my *An Immigrant's Story*.

Waniiru Kamuyu

Booking conditions

Duration

55 minutes

Touring team

- Wanjiru Kamuyu (performer, choreographer)
- Cyril Mulon (lightning design & manager, technical direction)
- Jean-Philippe Barrios (composer, sound engineer)
- Dirk Korell (producer, dramaturge)

Travel costs

- 2 round trips Paris
- 1 round trip Aix-en-Provence
- 1 round trip Montpellier

Local transports for the costume
(suitcase travels with our team)

Hôtel*** with breakfast for 4 persons
(1 double, 2 single rooms)

Per diem (French union fee) / 4 persons

Royalties (SACD, France)

Set up

Set up the day before the performance at 14:00
with a pre-set up realized but the venue team.

Scenography

The scenography consists of 35 black chairs,
provided by the venue.

Please consult our technical rider for specifications.

"I have just left a colorful country,
A flavorful country, against my will

Nililazimishwa « I was forced to »

My parents decided to up and change their
lives while destroying mine.

Don't worry, I am not here to whine, it's really
not my style.

I just want you to understand that....

I may never again eat Mama Wawira's *ugali*
na sukuma wiki,

And I may never again hear spoken *giriama*,
gusii, kisi, kamba, kuria, luyia, bukusu,
maragoli, nvole, wanga, kimeru, kikuyu,
kiambu, kiswahili, luo, maasai, samburu,
pokot, turkana, borana, gujarâtî, hindi, nubi,
sheng,

And that's tragic."

Extract from text written by Laetita Ajanooun, translated by Wanjiru Kamuyu

"Who are these men

who reveal

History?

Huh!?

Because it is

important

to understand

who affirms what?

Who is this "WE"?"

Extract from text written by Laetita Ajanohun, translated by Wanjiru Kamuyu



"Cameroon - Niger - Nigeria - Algeria - Morocco - Spain - France

14 1/2 years old. Solitude this I know.

Follow the man that holds out his hand.

A boat. The sea.

A dream that keeps me going?

One day I will paint airplanes and boats."

Testimony Yvan-Loïc

"Dallas - Los Angeles - Washington DC - Abidjan - Bogota - Juba - Ankara - Paris

Did you know that in Turkey, they believe if you touch black skin it brings you good luck?

Did you know that outside of the United States, being African American, is actually mega chic? Did you know that in Paris making friends is really quite difficult?"

Testimony | Marie

"Normandy - Paris

A journey towards freedom.

Freedom to be all of me."

Testimony | Clément

"The surprising traveler."

Philippe Noisette | Les Inrocks | *Dance Review*

"'An Immigrant's Story', a story of humanity,
vibrant and disturbing...

If there was a reason to stand up and say how a
singular form deeply moves, one would find
themselves evoking performer and conceptual
designer, Wanjiru Kamuyu, and the embodiment of
her project.

(...)

Rendering present the propensity to despise the
migrant, a *subclass* of humankind, she escapes the
stage, a circumscribed performance space, to rush
into the stands thus including the audience in her
caustic interrogation.

Who is this 'We' who speaks with sufficiency,
offering a presumed universal 'History'?

(...)

How can one not be won over by the intelligent
foresight projected with so much
conviction and sincerity?"

Yves Kafka | La Revue du Spectacle | *Dance Critic*



Contact

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Production & bookings

camin aktion

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<https://caminaktion.eu/en>

Information

Trailer, dossier, technical rider, press review/critics:

<https://caminaktion.eu/en/immigrants>

Collection of migration/travel stories:

<https://caminaktion.eu/stories>

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