

## Nadia Beugré // LEGACY (Adibjan | Montpellier)

Im Dezember 1949 protestieren Frauen im ivoirischen Grand Bassam friedlich gegen die Kolonialherrschaft und für die Freilassung ihrer Ehemänner und Brüder aus politischer Gefangenschaft. Sie marschieren in einer stetig wachsenden Gruppe über eine Distanz von 30 Kilometern und bedienen sich hierbei des 'Adjanou', eines Rituals, zu dessen zentralen Elementen Gesang, Tanz und das Entblößen des weiblichen Körpers zählen. LEGACY ist die künstlerische Übersetzung dieser politischen Form und überträgt eine extrem physische Art des Protests in eine Tanzperformance. Die Tänzerinnen Nadia Beugré und Hanna Hedman sowie die Musikerin Manou Gallo tun sich mit zehn Münchnerinnen zusammen. Gemeinsam zeigen sie sich rennend, schwitzend und erzählend, verbünden sich miteinander ebenso sehr wie mit den Zuschauer\*innen und lassen einen kraftvollen Raum weiblicher Solidarität entstehen. So wird LEGACY zur Hommage an die unzähligen Frauen, die weltweit für Rechte, Freiheiten und Menschenwürde kämpfen – ihre eigenen ebenso so sehr wie die ihrer Familien und Communities.

**Nadia Beugré** wurde 1981 in der Republik Côte d'Ivoire geboren. Sie wurde zuerst in traditionellem Tanz ausgebildet und dann Gründungsmitglied des bahnbrechenden, nur aus Frauen bestehenden Ensembles *TchéTché* von Béatrice Kombé, mit dem sie durch Afrika, Europa und Nordamerika tourte. Später widmete sie sich dem modernen Tanz und nahm Choreografieunterricht bei Germaine Acogny in Senegal sowie am Centre Choréographique National de Montpellier. Bald brachte sie eigene Produktionen auf die Bühne, tanzt aber auch in Arbeiten von anderen Choreograf\*innen, z. B. bei Seydou Boro, Alain Buffard, Dorothee Munyaneza und Boris Charmatz. 2017 begann Nadia Beugré eine fünfjährige Künstlerresidenz am De Vooruit in Gent.

4.11. 21 - 22 Uhr

5.11. 20 – 21 Uhr

Muffathalle

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# LEGACY

## Nadia Beugré

**The Washington Post**

**'Voices of Strength' allows African women to express themselves in movement**

October 6th, 2012

In that piece, she had picked her way down one of the Terrace Theater's aisles and onto the stage wearing stilettos and a minidress, microphone in hand, singing a gentle folk tune. But she didn't bear the diva trappings easily – her discomfort (which soon became our discomfort) was the point. During her stumbling progress in those heels, the microphone cord, which Beugré wore around her neck like a coil of rope, soon became a stifling noose. Stripping to her underwear didn't free her from entrapment. At that point we watched Beugré slowly stuff a large plastic trash bag in her mouth, inch by gagging inch.

These and other moments from the program "Voices of Strength: Contemporary Dance and Theatre by Women From Africa" were uncomfortably and unforgettably visceral. The grinding inequalities and cruelties of the artists' lives were front and center, particularly in Beugré's work. She threw herself onto heaps of plastic bottles, and shared some of that sense of mistreatment with the audience through direct confrontation, proffering her microphone – or just a mute, unsettling stare – to patrons in their seats.

"Correspondances," created and performed by Kettly Noel, from Haiti and Mali, and Nelisiwe Xaba, from South Africa, was more playful, drawing on the two women's comic interactions, though it had its sharp edges, too. Speaking to the audience about all the things money can buy, Noel adds that "with money in Africa, you can take babies, little boys, little girls..." To a sendup of stereotyped aspects of femininity – fragility, preoccupation with mirrors and men – the performers added bulging, leaky rubber udders, which descended from the rafters. The women drenched themselves in the milky liquid and slid around the stage like children playing — or drowning.

Watching these two works, I was reminded of how war is often described, as stretches of dullness punctuated by searing havoc. In both pieces, the emotional tension was only fitfully maintained, and they cried out for a director's discerning eye. But I'm not sorry I saw them. It's been a long time since I've seen performance artists abandon themselves to this extent. Are American artists less angry or outspoken now than in, say, Karen Finley's heyday in the late 1980s (when chocolate-smearing entered the act), or have artistic trends simply changed? Are these African women making their own way through somewhat similar thematic territory, or are they mining a new vein of contemporary dance-theater expression? This is a movement to keep one's eye on.

## **Chicago Tribune**

### **A fiery evening of dance from modern Africa**

September, 14th 2012

A provocative glimpse of the artistry of modern African women is now on view via «Voices of Strength» at the Dance Center of Columbia College, a touring program starring a handful of contemporary dancers and their bold, arresting work.

Judging from this sampling, these are days of brash, in-your-face theatrics and embracing various international aesthetics. Two separate programs make up the package, including performances Saturday featuring Mozambique's Maria Helena Pinto and Bouchra Ouizguen's work turning on traditional Moroccan vocals. Thursday and Friday saw a different line-up, one alternately startling and witty in impact, leaving you begging for more visitors from this apparent cultural renaissance. «Correspondences» boasted South Africa's Nelisiwe Xaba and Haitian-born Kettly Noel, who now works in Mali, in a sometimes tart, sometimes bold exploration of modern womanhood and friendship.

«Quartiers Libres» is performed by Nadia Beugré, a fiery, zealous, compelling soloist from Cote d'Ivoire, who practically intimidates the audience into submission, a confrontational stance rarely employed this forcefully – or effectively – in dance.

Both works embrace heavy doses of performance art and theater. Beugré's countless plastic water bottles hang in part like a shimmering polyurethane curtain, while the rest are placed toward the rear as an orblike cluster. Beugré obeys the old theatrical rule of not letting them just sit there: Eventually, she attacks the curtain and collapses into its midst. The cluster she dons as a cartoon tutu, a crackling cushion enabling her to collapse violently and repeatedly near the end.

But that arty set play is in juxtaposition to Beugré's otherwise ferocious and neo-primitive solo style, one given to spare mythic images, to be sure, but based in raw emotion and commanding personality. She wanders the audience, stopping to stare down some patrons, while her moves, persona and vocal sounds are fraught with pain and horror. She stuffs a garbage bag grotesquely into her mouth; elsewhere she shimmies with sly sex and irrepressible defiance.

«Correspondences» is a series of images and tropes, some more effective than others. But Xaba's witty opening is a sly satire on fashion consciousness and oppression, Noel's soliloquy on women is pertly socioeconomic and the stunning finale is a mini-spectacle with the women swimming the floor amidst an ocean of mother's milk.

*Sid Smith*