

# THE *UNEXPECTED* DANCE



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--- Choreographic projects and research 2017 / 2021 – Marie Houdin

# THE UNEXPECTED DANCE

--- *Unexpected,  
unpredictable,  
the dance of the unpredicted.*

Choreographic projects and research 2017 / 2021 | Marie Houdin | mhoudin@engrenages.eu  
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## MARIE HOUDIN

Dancer and choreographer, trained in hip-hop/funkstyle, Marie Houdin has been creating and performing stage shows and street shows, since 2004, within Engrenage[s] (Rennes). In 2010, she began to take interest in the functions of hip-hop dance and the different ways of performing them. This led her to favour more and more the creation for public space. Today she redirects her approach by starting a new project, at once very personal, almost intimate, and very open to the world. A project fueled by choreographic researches around her dance, that she defines as “creole”, seen through the lens of dances stemming from the african diaspora.

### -- Video

Improvised performance

## FROM NOW TO 2021,

--- *This project will generate  
4 constructions or “works in progress”*

### 1# Le Bal du «Tout-Monde» - 2018

> (literally “The whole-world Ball) participative performance - Itinerant ball for the public space for 4 dancers and 1 DJ

### 2# «Unexpected» - 2019

> dance solo in dialog with a musician and for a circle of spectators in public space

### 3# Research, dance collection and choreographic exchanges trips

> in Cuba, Senegal, and New Orleans- 2018 /2019 creation of an artistic web between the continents and creation of multi numeric projects like a diary journal and a tool for sharing the dances, images and songs collected during those trips.



Masterclass *The Unexpected Dance*, Le Funk Prend les Rennes 2017  
© Thomas Guionnet

This work is nourished by what it also fuels : a personal journey of training and researches, as well as the creation of networks of co-workers and a reflection on the skills training of the dancer.

# THE CHOICE OF A NAME

« The Unexpected Dance », title of this project, was inspired by the work of the author Édouard Glissant (1928–2011), native of the island of Martinique in the French West Indies. He was the first to define the concept of « creolisation » as a *métissage* (french word for « racial mix ») that produces the unpredictable and which is to him the perpetual motion of cultural and linguistic interpenetrability that comes along with the cultural globalisation. The word « Unexpected » alone points out three aspects that are complementary and fundamental for Marie Houdin : unexpected, unpredictable, dances of the unpredicted. To her, these aspects seem guaranteed by the social dimension in which these dances are still expressed and developed today. This reflection is at the heart of her project and gives rise to several artistic interventions (sound, visual art, dance), which all stem from countries that were part of the triangular trade path.

*« Creolisation is putting in touch several cultures or at least several elements of different cultures with one another, in one place of the world, leading to a new data, totally unpredictable whether adding up or simply synthesizing these elements. [...] Why creolisation and not métissage (french word for race mix) ? Because creolisation is unpredictable whereas we could reckon the effects of a race mix. We can reckon the effects of a race mix of plants with cuttings or of animals with cross-breeding [...]. But creolisation is the métissage with an added value which is unpredictability. [...] Creolisation rules over the unpredictable compared to race mix; it creates in all Americas, absolutely unexpected cultural and linguistic microclimates, places where repercussions of languages on one another or of cultures on one another are abrupt. » Édouard Glissant*



Ellyna Tatum at Jazz Fest © S. Byrel

Copyright Byrel 1980



« A little island of energy » © Chris Steel

## ARTISTIC INTENTS

**--- Researching and aiming to affiliate « hip-hop » dances with others dances stemming from the african diaspora.**

While I was aiming to understand hip-hop dances, an approach that is both parallel and crosswise, of history, music and dance imposed on me. These dances can not be dissociated from the musics that were witnesses to their birth and they are the reflection of the communities that created them. They are testament to a past history, present fights and dreams to come. Hip-hop culture is both the expression of a “globalness” and the cry of a community who dances its way up to an elevation. Dancing on the ashes of a burned out history that has all at once molded the New World, made Europe rich, and influenced the state of globalisation as we know it.

In France we call hip-hop dances a set of forms of social dances born in different great cities of the USA, since the 70's, in a post civil rights mouvement context, where african-american and latino-american disillusioned minorities were forced to reinvent themselves. Up until today, some dances take form and grow roots in different musics, different cities, but also different contexts within different communities, gathered with and through their differences.

The slavery system, in its unthinkable and extreme violence, has forced men and women to resist and re-invent themselves. The resilience these generations have shown is unprecedented. The singular cultures that were born from this fracture and have supported or accompanied the emancipation of the peoples gave birth to new and free identities. Identities that are rich of the complex mosaic rootstocks that travel across them. Cultures with ingredients at once africans, euro-peans and native americans; religious, social and cultural; contextual. Sacred and ritual dances that become urban and social dances.

My approach has lead me to feed my dance with research and to train in different forms of dances rooted in the African Diaspora. Dances from West Africa, dances from the Caribbean, african-american dances. This work has nurtured and structured my dance and my choreographic vision little by little, putting the notions of identity construction and of resilience at the heart of my reflection about hip-hop.

And so, if the idea of a *Black Dance* was born in the plantation, it has, I think, freed itself from any segregationist notion to proudly rise and bloom in all its « creolised » magnificence, plural, unexpected and unpredictable. From France, this caribbean, west-indian, concept of « creolisation » echoes in me. If it initially concerned the linguistic field first, it has grown within the people of french West Indies, and spread to a universal dimension especially through the sweep of today's social and urban musics and dances.



## --- **Aiming to define and analyze fundamental elements linking these dances**

It is with a tidy and confined, very « french », approach of hip-hop dances that my dance has figured its limits. I could only feel free in some *orphan* improvisations, expressed in a parallel and private space, as if this dance was illegitimate because it was not codified. Then, as in a ricochet, the limits of my dance have found an echo to some limits in the representation that I wanted to show of it, and in the way I wanted to hand it over. Meeting the african-american cultures in New Orleans has shaken everything up. Even before I knew what the music played by the Brass Bands was fitting in, I had let my body venture to it. It was coming out as an unexpected and unpredictable dance, with several bodyprints and marks. But above all, I was coming back to the main thing : I had the impression that I was at the crossroads of many influences, in a place where they could all get together. I felt that it was right there, at this crossroads, that my dance was and would be able to evolve.

There are in the West-african dances and in the dances that stem from slavery, born on the american continent, fundamental elements which lead to all these forms of dances and can most importantly enable to create more. Many dancers, choreographers, anthropologists of dance, ethnomusocologists such as Katerine Dunham, Germaine Acogny, Lena Blou, Emmanuel Parent, Alphonse Tiérou, Michelle Gibson, for example, have worked and are working on this filiation, building and passing on methods, techniques, essential analysis, in both Americas, in the Caribbean, in Europe and in Africa. By exploring and getting to know dances from the African Diaspora, in line with their anthropological, social, cultural dimensions, and considering the existing choreographic an teaching repertoire, I am aiming to explore the fundamentals that link these dances to one another, and so define and develop the ones that feed my dance. This approach leads me to develop a choreographic writing and a teaching and passing on method which are both mine and part of a history, a common heritage.



Photograph excerpted from the documentary « Bouncing Cats » © Nabil

***--- Play with the codes,  
create new ones,  
free yourself from them...***

All the specific forms, characteristic of styles of dances, come from the fundamentals that fuel them as well. So we can approach them this way. I think that one of the fundamental elements, common to all the dances of the African Diaspora is : the « groove ». In a ritual or social function of dancing, the « groove » is often repetitive, and leads to « letting go » or trance. In a choreographic research around these dances, the isolation of these grooves, then their combination, perhaps their fusion, allow hybrid and singular dances to spring out. As for the improvisation spaces, they are vital. They are the places where singularities express. Yet these fundamentals which feed the singularity of a dancer are truly common to all. I find them in the dances of New Orleans' Second Lines, as well as in the hip-hop dances that I've been practicing and studying in depth for more than fifteen years, or in the african dances. It is these fundamentals that then lead you to glide towards a color, or a style of dance. This way, the accuracy of a motion is not about its shape but about its origin, its root, what feeds it. A dancing improvisation can not be faithful unless the dancer is in a full awareness and increased listening of his body, but also of his leaning points, of music, of his environnement. This improvisation is fueled with knowledge, with understanding, and with the historical and cultural heritage of which dance is a part of. Adding constraints to it should enable the dancer to develop, to dig deeper, but never to decrease.

It's within their social, improvised and circular dimensions that these dances melt together and stay alive. Here the audience is also a community. The spectator is an actor, an initiator. Therefore, to me, putting these dances in the distant and frontal relation of the theater stage and adapt them to the european choreographic writing, seems complex, risky, and sometimes even foolish. This approach feeds the reflections I have about the choreographic writing, about the spaces of dance on stage, in the street, in the public space. It also feeds the evolution of my vision of battles, and of the way hip-hop dances are or should be taught.

**-- Video**  
**The Unexpected Dance**  
**Archives**



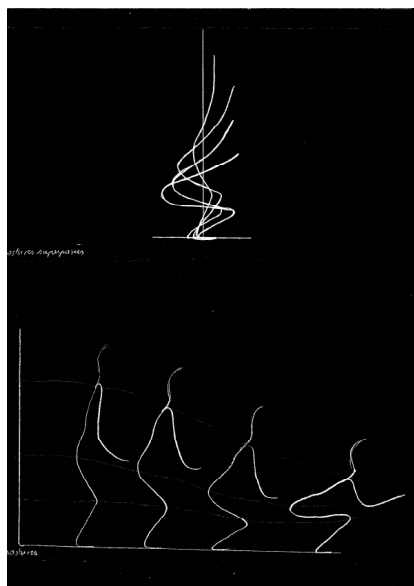
Black Indians Mardi Gras (with Eagles gang) © Bernard Hermann

# --- Here is a succinct development of some of these fundamentals :

## THE ANCHOR

*Pelvis, Backbone, Rib Cage*

Together they form the anchor of the body. They are responsible for its stance, its motion, its spread. The pelvis is the leading part, it plays with its weight, carries and leads. With the backbone, they seem to be dancing a tango. Together, this duet is moving, undulating. They both found and unpack, carry and release. The sternum, suspended from the rib cage, is like the heart of a sun that only wants to stretch out. Its heat slightly opens the intercostal spaces and makes its way through it. Splaying dorsal and cervical vertebrae, shoulder blades, elbows, wrists, all of them become light and sensitive. In the pelvis, the hips are both linked and dissociated, they influence the knees, then the ankles, and therefore the leaning points and the mobility of the feet and of the whole legs. Chains of joints, crossed chains, stances, all deeply linked to the center of gravity and to its moves. A second center of gravity, at the heart of the rib cage, offers a relay to the upper body.

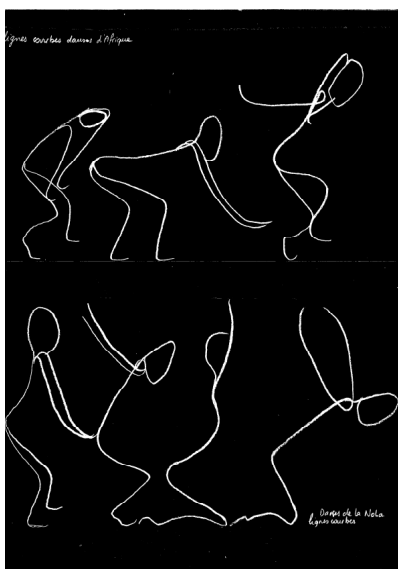


Sketches *Unexpected Dance*, « chains of joints and fundamental postures »  
© Marie Houdin

## THE FEET

*Driving forces*

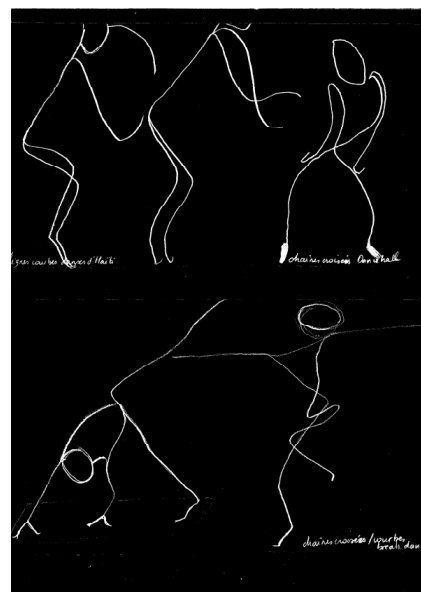
The feet lead the dance. That is a point many dances from Africa, Caribbeans, and african-american dances, have in common. The feet reveal relations to the leaning points, to the music, to the chains of joints, but also to the intents. Virtuoso feet, of the Zaoulis people in Ivory Coast, of Tap Dance and House Dance in the US, of european Jazz Fusion dance. Pounding feet, as in New Orleans' Second Line, or in Juba, a percussive dance born in slavery and inherited from the Yoruba people. This idea of leaving footprints behind is like a call on memory. These walks are echoes of ancestors hammering beats but also of more recent events, from social protest marches to hard labor, and through far away ritual dances.



Sketches *The Unexpected Dance*  
« Africa Nola curves »  
© Marie Houdin

## UNDULATION, BOUNCE, SWING, VIBRATION, CONTINUAL GROOVES

My experience in hip-hop dances and in some dances from West Africa lead me to place one of the driving forces of the body motion in what is usually called « groove » or « feeling » in hip-hop dances. The « grooves » put the body in a state that fuels and changes the form of the motion. They all come from a circulation within the articular chain that links the feet to the head and arms, meaning the knee-pelvis-backbone-rib cage chain. Depending on the amplitude, the speed, the weight, the direction of the motion and the chosen « articular section », these grooves can change their aspect. In the modern social dances (hip-hop, funkstyle, clubbin'...), these grooves define forms, or even styles. They are often either continuous or back and forth, global or isolated. And so they take root in the motions of trance dances, that we can find in the sacred and ritual dances in Africa or in the Caribbeans. For now, I gather them under four « families » : undulation, bounce (or rebound), swing (or swaying), vibration.



Croquis *The Unexpected Dance*  
« 3 lignes courbes haïti chaines croisées dance hall courbes et croisées break »  
© Marie Houdin

## -- Video The Unexpected Dance Montages d'improvisations

# THE STEPS OF THE PROJECT

## --- A work-in-progress through several connected sections

*Index cards for each project available on demand*

### **Bal du «Tout-Monde»** (\*literally, The Whole-World Ball)

2017-2018 | Participative performance – Itinerant ball for the public space /  
4 dancers and 1 DJ.

### STEPS

December 2017 | Step #0 / Test Piece

Carte Blanche entrusted to Marie Houdin by the Très Tôt Théâtre of Quimper,  
16 december 2017

25 march 2018 | « U.S.A version »

Carte Blanche entrusted to Marie Houdin at the Capucins in Brest as part of  
the « Renc'arts Hip Hop » festival

8 and 9 september 2018 | « Bal du Tout Monde » Premiere at the « Les Ac-  
croche-Coeurs » festival in Angers

Coproducers | Renc'Arts Hip Hop (Brest), Tombées de la Nuit (Rennes),  
Centre Culturel l'Hermine (Sarzeau)

### CONCEPT

*Duration : 2h30 / For all audiences, from about age 10*

*Preferable in the late afternoon, in the evening, at night and in sneakers*

«« The Tout-Monde therefor points out the new presence of both human  
beings and things, a state of globalness where Relation rules. »

Édouard Glissant

« VIENS »... « VEM »... « YAKA »... « COME ON »... « VENGA »... «  
NIOWËL »... « YAKATOBINA »... « VAMOS DANCAR »... « KAYFÈTCH  
»... « ON VA DANSER »... « LET'S DANCE ! »... « VAMOS A BAILAR »...  
« NIOUNE NIËP »... « TOGETHER »... « ENSEMBLE »... « JUNTOS »... «  
ELONGO »

*Welcome aboard the « Afro-merica-ribbean » flight to the « Whole – World »  
archipelago. No need to fasten your seatbelts because in here, the groove is  
king. The « Tout – Monde » family will be your guide in this dancing road trip  
From one stopover to the other, you are invited to a journey towards islands  
and continents. Dressed in your most beautiful clothes - the inspiration being  
SAPE, the Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes (Society  
of Posers and Elegant People). Embrace the music, let yourself be carried  
away and “laissez le bon temps rouler” ! (let the good times roll).*



Sabaar Dance, Senegal, photograph ex-  
cerpted from the documentary « L'appel  
à la Danse » © Diane Fardoun, Hugo  
Bembi, Pierre Durosoy, Julien Villa



The « Bal du Tout – Monde » is an invitation to discover and share sacred, social, couples and club dances from the great African kingdoms to the Taïno (caribbean) Islands with stopovers in some United States cities. The « Tout-Monde Ball » invites everybody to dance, and sometimes to watch and/or listen. During the ball, the audience and the artists, beginners and advanced, they all form a same community, a « Whole-world » that feeds itself with the relation between music and dance, between dances that seem different, between the ones and the others, between the images and the words. A multiple relation, that circulates and rebounds, that links us to one another. It is an homage to the creole dances stemming from the African Diaspora.. The goal is to take possession of the public space, to transform it for the duration of the ball and to sail towards West and Central Africa, Haïti, Cuba and the United States.

### **Coproducers |**

Très Tôt Théâtre, scène conventionnée jeune public (Quimper), Les Renc'Arts Hip Hop (Brest), Les Tombées de la Nuit (Rennes), le Musée de la Danse / CCNRB (Rennes), Centre culturel l'Hermine (Sarzeau), MJC de Pacé, le dancing d'Ocus (St-Germain-sur-Ille), la Tour d'Auvergne (Rennes)

### **Artistic Team |**

Writing and choreography \*\*: Marie Houdin

\*\* except the dance executed on the song “La Habana Buena” de Palo !, composed by Vanessa Neira

Dancers : Marie Houdin, Gabriel UM, Vanessa Neira, Andrége Bidiamambu

DJ : DJ Freshhh

Stage management and Lights : Stéphane Le Tallec

Sound management : Baptiste Tarlet

Outside view : Christine Corday

Costume designer : LeSoleilNoire

Scenography elements : Alexandre Lemagne

Distribution and diffusion : Cécile Marchand for Engrenage[s]

Production : Agathe Jeanneau for Engrenage[s]



# **Unexpected Dance** 2019 | Dance solo in dialog with a musician and for a circle of spectators in public space

First representation on June 15 2019, at the Triangle - Scène conventionnée pour la danse de Rennes- as part of the “Tablées fantastiques” show.

Co-producers - We are still looking for co-producers - | MUSEE DE LA DANSE - CCNRB (RENNES) , LE TRIANGLE, SCÈNE CONVENTIONNÉE DANSE (RENNES), SALLE GUY ROPARTZ (RENNES) SOUTIENS : L'HERMINE (SARZEAU), L'ÉCOLE DES SABLES (TOUBAB DIALAW - SENEGAL), CONVENTION INSTITUT FRANÇAIS-RÉGION BRETAGNE.



Edungun Dance, Benin © Matthieu Portier

## **CONCEPT**

A performance designed for public space. (adjustable to the stage on condition) Duration : between 30 and 40 minutes

Unexpected. Unforeseen. Unpredictable. Improvised. As are dance, music and life.

In the middle of a circle composed by the spectators, a dancer and a musician tell each other's story. Au cœur d'un cercle de spectateurs, une danseuse et un musicien se racontent l'un à l'autre, et l'un par l'autre. At the heart of the circle where everything circulates, the organic dominates. Breath, pulsation, surge, undulation, beating, life. Earth and sky. In the birth and in the death, all the traditions converge. Always and all around the world, the dance is at the heart of the life and the social dimension is at the heart of the dance.

«I am opening a window on a body's journey, my body's journey. By telling it's story, I am telling mine and maybe ours. An intimate feeling that feeds on relations and develops in connection with the music, the visual and the environment. The opening of the circle as a crossroads of the World in which we hear echoes of yesterday and today, of all the stories that make our present. The circle contains the dream of abolished borders and brought together lands. It is a way of opening to a world that dances on the ashes of a burned out history. It is a dance diary, a musical diary full of both adopted and personal stories that connects us to one another. It is the first solo in my 15 years of choreographic career so I have a lot to tell and to share...» Marie Houdin

## **Artistic Team |**

SCENIC WRITING, RESEARCH, CHOREOGRAPHY, INTERPRETATION : MARIE HOUDIN

UPSTREAM RESEARCH, DANCE, IMAGES, LOCAL SOUNDS AND VIDEO COLLECTION : MARIE HOUDIN & JULIEN DURAND

MUSICAL WRITING, LIVE MUSIC (POLYPHONY, POLYRHYTHM, BEAT BOX, VOCALS, SAMPLES) : KRIS NOLLY

STAGE MANAGEMENT : CURRENT VACANCY

COSTUME DESIGN & ACCESSORIES : CURRENT VACANCY

OUTSIDE VIEW TO THE CREATION : TO BE DEFINED

COACHING : PATRICK ACOGNY, JANT-BI COMPANY / ECOLE DES SABLES (TOUBAB DIALAW- SENEGAL)

**Coproducers |** MUSEE DE LA DANSE - CCNRB (RENNES) , LE TRIANGLE, SCÈNE CONVENTIONNÉE DANSE (RENNES), SALLE GUY ROPARTZ (RENNES) SOUTIENS : L'HERMINE (SARZEAU), L'ÉCOLE DES SABLES (TOUBAB DIALAW - SENEGAL), CONVENTION INSTITUT FRANÇAIS-RÉGION BRETAGNE.

# Research, collection and choreographic exchanges trips

From 2018 (undetermined period) | digital (videos and recordings) project

By taking a profound interest in the Afro American social dances born in the seventies and collectively known in France as 'Hip hop' dance, Marie Houdin immersed herself in their history and roots.

What is the common foundation of those dances and what are the links and relations between them : their social and political contexts of birth and development ? In which cultural heritage do they enroll ? What traditional element survived in them and are transmitted through them ? All those questionings underlie Marie Houdin's transversal approach. The idea appeared gradually that all those dances, while being singular and community-based, are also related and have an universal dimension. That dimension is their stemming from the African Diaspora and their social nature.

"My professional and inner path brings me to question that dimension at the heart of my artistic, choreographic and pedagogic process. Social dances are born everyday and spread out in the big cities and ports that took part in the triangular trade. Those forms of dances attest of a living dancing heritage and prompts us to ask questions about the place and the function of the dancer and the choreograph in our societies. They also are an invitation to rethink our identities and the sense of the words "nation" and "community" and "tradition". Those artistic practices mirror the dynamic artistic circulation that takes place between the continents. That kind of globalization makes me optimistic. Leaving Europe and getting out to meet those dances where they were born is to personally experience their communitarian and universal dimensions. « Marie Houdin

Between fall 2018 and spring 2019, Marie Houdin is planning 3 research, collection and choreographic exchanges trips in Cuba, Senegal and New Orleans. Three territories that are linked by their shared history land on which the circulation of the dances is significant.

Marie Houdin, will be accompanied by a videomaker (Julien Durand) or a cameraman and sound recorder (Kris Nolly). She will go to the clubs, the streets, the schools. She will meet dancers, amateur dancers but also researchers and regular people from all generations and backgrounds. She will develop meetings, exchanges, times of creation and performances and workshops.

In the long-term, this project should take several forms to reflect the artistic approach described above including but not limited to:

- the activation of an artistic and creative web between the continents
- the creation and display of one or several digital tools that will allow to share the videos, images and recordings of this collection and the diary of the journey

## ARTISTIC TEAM

Research, choreography, interpretation : **Marie Houdin**

Upstream research, dance, images, local sounds and video collection in cuba : **Julien Durand**

Cameraman and sound recorder in Senegal and New Orleans: **Kris Nolly**

**FINANCIAL and LOCAL SUPPORTERS:** Institut Français, Ecole des sables (Sénégal)

In the long term, the digital data might take the form of a database and a web documentary or documentary series

The goals of the database project are

- To favorise and encourage the circulation and characterisation of the dances
- To bring forward and create connexions between choreographers, dancers, musicians et researchers
- support amateur dimension in the day to day creation of social dances

-- **Video**  
**Unexpected Exchange**  
**w/ Andrienne Broh Zokou**



Membros Brasil © Toma Swan



# WORK LEADS

## ***--- Track back the never-ending loop of the triangular trade.***

The triangular trade has contributed to seal the destiny of the people within a common and tragic history. It has contributed to mould the geopolitical relations in which we live today, and in which the african continent remains « the big loser ». It produced a colonial system which has engraved dissociating markers in the foundation of our democracies, but also in our perception of the other and of ourselves, thereby distorting links and relations. The social dances born in slavery, especially in the US and in the Caribbean, have influenced and still influence the world, Europe and Africa, from where they somehow « left ». There, the youth of the big cities recycles the slightest move, making the African continent the new leader in this matter. The African Diaspora is scattered and its youth was born in a time of images and globalisation. Information travels and is delivered so fast, same goes for music and dance. Regarding cultural representation, United-States are the king of the world, but the 3 continents observe and answer to one another. Dances transform, mutate and travel from America to Africa, to Europe. Following the itinerary of the slaves in one way or the other, and beyond. Growing richer with the propositions of a community that has become plural and universal, all at once, worldwide. Thereby, this multiple creolisation seems to make the initial dream of the nation of hip-hop come true. These thoughts lead me to place my researches within this never-ending loop that the triangular trade path draws and which today appears to me as a living rose, full of circulations. And leading with this cartography, I aim to observe, get to know better and learn from different dances that stem from the African Diaspora :

- *Ritual, sacred dances*
- *Social dances*
- *Choreographed dances*



Edungun Dance, Benin © Matthieu Portier

## **--- "I would like to set up a « breeding-ground » "**

I would like to set up a « breeding-ground » (field and network) for researches between France, West Africa, the Caribbean and the United-States. Concurrently to a continuous research, already initiated years ago, gathered in readings, listenings, archives, and to a personal research, fueled with training courses in particular, I would like to pursue, between 2017 and 2021, a serie of research travels that I started in 2014. Because going to meet these dances, where they were born, or where they live, is at the same time putting to the test the contradictory idea that these dances are both community dances and universal dances and it's above all experiencing the sensation of how and through what the dance arises, expresses and what founds it.

Each travel will be built around 3 questions (temporary) :

- *Which dances that stem from the African Diaspora were born in this place ?*
- *What are their fundamentals ?*
- *What did they become today ?*

This « breeding-ground » and these travels can be an occasion to develop in situ projects, feeding at the same time my artistic work but also network, artistic, cultural and/or educational projects and finally, the cornerstone of this documentary project. The cities and countries in particular which could constitute my research ground are : New York, New Orleans, Cuba, Haiti, Guadeloupe, Benin, Senegal, Ivory Cost or Cameroun. Between this project of travels, the network I already have, and the one I intend to develop from France, I want to spin little by little the web of the international network I mentioned earlier about the share inventory.



Dancers in Burkina Faso © Toma Swan

### **--- An approach at once artistic, choreographic, of research and educational**

The question of transmission is originally inherent and central in the hip-hop culture. It exists apart from any academic framework, because it is about welcoming people in the community, developing the movement and making it last. It is about guiding an individual to grow and develop in a parallel, marginazised, « underground » world. Passing on hip-hop dances in the « academic » frameworks in France, leads me to search the fundamental elements, depending on ages and experiences, to pass on this philosophy that aims to enable everybody to become aware of their self-taught potential and cultivate it, within the group. Inventing yourself is different from reproducing. It is fundamentally contrary to the the idea of consuming culture and art. For many years now, my choreographic, artistic and research approach has led me to develop an educational approach of skills training but also of the professionalization of the dancer and trainer. Therefore I now work on building and asserting a technique of transmission of hip-hop dances within their “creolity”, and their filiation to other forms of dances that stem from the African Diaspora. Starting from the ritual and social dances that form the repertoire of this family of dances, but also through the transmission techniques that already exist, especially based on dances from the Caribbean, and then crossing this knowledge with my approach, I am now building, step by step, a teaching/training technique of my own. This technique influences the construction of the dancer, his or her progression, fulfillment and potential professionalization. This technique also feeds my role as a choreographer, it enables me to accompany the different performers I work with and imagine a skills training program on an international level for french dancers.



Masterclass *The Unexpected Dance*, Le Funk Prend les Rennes 2017  
© Thomas Guionnet

### **--- Think this constructions works in terms of living, interactive and connected spheres**

My approach has many dimensions and crosses different fiels, grounds and levels :

- *artistic*
- *educationnal*
- *anthropological / personal*
- *collective / community*
- *universal, in terms of both destination and origin*

Each element observes and answers to each other, feeding themselves in complementarity and from the complementarity. The research feeds what I grow and nourishes my vision of dance. Trying to pass on this vision of dance, to look to the future through it, and to choreograph it, brings me to actually develop it to observe it again and, finally, go back to research.

# GENERAL TOOLS

## --- **Dance**

Dance is the heart of my researches, therefore of my projects and of the encounters that feed them. The function given to dance – sacred, ritual, social, choreographic – is fundamental. It will determine the space or spaces of the artists, and audience but also the context of diffusion of my projects.

## --- **Sound**

Throughout this project I will use live musics and collected musics and/or live recorded sounds, radio sounds, television sounds, or sounds recorded in places where the communities live and express. The music collection will go with the collection of dances, because dances and musics are intimately related.

## --- **L'image**

One of the bridges that I want to set up to link the artistic work to my research and to my intention, is the relation to image. My research will fuel all the artistic works and it could be passed on through different forms such as video, pictures, drawings or paintings...Image as a mirror, image as a metaimage, image as a « window opened on », image as a comparison, image as a scenery, as a context, image as a memory. In the different artistic forms given below, in the documentary film project, in the flip book idea, image will be present and leading. Therefore I will work with visual artists, video makers, photographers, painters...

## --- **Collections**

The idea of collecting is central to my approach and comes to feed each project while it generates new ones. France is Marie Houdin's birthplace and home and it also played a major and horrible part in the transatlantic slave trade and in the colonisation process. Its population movement and diversity makes it a creolised and mixed nation. But it is also an amnesic nation that tends to forget all of the stories that made it the way it is.

“ For example, the test-piece version of the « Tout-Monde Ball » that took place in Quimper on December 16th 2017 was an opportunity to start a collection of dances and songs with the inhabitants. Communities that form France are full of ancestral dances, that we sometimes have to take out of the grandparents' closet of course, full of dances with foreign flavors, of dances freshly invented in the bathroom or at a party the night before. In these ritual or social functions, dance is intimately related to music and songs that together shape cultural living heritages and make them evolve. These heritages become creole when they get in contact with each other. And so, if the Tout-Monde Ball will make people travel through the heritage of ritual, social and creole dances stemming from the African Diaspora, its coming to Cornouaille (a part of the region of Brittany) was an opportunity to bring to light the heritage of dances, musics and songs to dance of the community that form the city of Quimper and its surroundings. Another example, the construction of a « inventory » dance solo for the 2017 edition of Fous de Danse in Brest brought me to collect samples of radio jingles and programs of the different places of the world where the dances I chose to show came from. Nothing is lost, everything is transformed and recycled, and the world is also shaped by history, by the people who came before us. We are only passing by and I like the idea of being a relay dancer. Behind this collection approach, one can see ideas of sustainable development, as well as memory duty, or the spreading of a resourcefulness more than well known in Africa, where nothing is lost but everything is transformed, and that gave birth on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean to dances that seduced me here in Europe” Marie Houdin

## --- **The audience**

The image we have of a dance show in Europe has created a dividing line between the ones we call the audience and the ones we call the artists, a line that did not exist at the beginning in ritual and social dances, because it's in the relation and in the belonging to a same community that we dance, together. We surround, seduce, face, seek, follow, carry. In France, the word « community » quickly leads to communalism and/or communitarianism, in a confining way. Whereas it can be reassuring, open and supporting. And so, in the street, the club or in public space, the audience forms a comforting and supporting community which I can also be a part of. In its function of community, the audience can neither be passive, nor one, but on the contrary it can be plural and connected. So then, the temptation of dancing becomes irresistible. I think that dancing, in its social function, must let each of us be both free to feel but also to react.



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# PARTENAIRES & COPRODUCTEURS

(En cours)

## 2017

**BAL DU TOUT MONDE #0** | Coproduction avec le Très Tôt Théâtre, scène conventionnée Jeunes Publics (Quimper)

## 2018

**« BAL DU TOUT MONDE FOCUS U.S »** | Coproduction avec Les Renc'arts Hip-Hop (Brest)

**« BAL DU TOUT MONDE »** | Coproduction avec les Tombées de la Nuit (Rennes), Centre Culturel l'Hermine (Sarzeau)

**ACCUEIL EN RÉSIDENCE** | Le Quartz, scène nationale (Brest), le Musée de la Danse / CCNRB (Rennes), Cie Ocus (St Germain sur Ille), Centre Culturel l'Hermine (Sarzeau), MJC de Pacé, MJC Bréquigny (Rennes)

## 2018 / 2019

**UNEXPECTED DANCE** | Coproduction avec le Musée de la Danse / CCNRB (Rennes)  
Coproduction avec le Triangle (Rennes)

**UNEXPECTED** | Soutiens : l'Hermine (Sarzeau), l'Ecole des sables (Toubab Dialaw-Sénégal), convention Institut Français-Région Bretagne, Ville de Rennes (Salle Guy Ropartz)



musée de  
la danse



· Générateur de projets artistique

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