

Supplement:

The composers

Góo Ba (Senegal, 1960) set up a theatre group through a cultural association in his neighbourhood in Dakar. He was responsible for the *mise en scène* and wrote the plays. Following his training at the art school in Senegal, Góo Ba has developed as an actor, singer and musician.

Ze Manel (Guinea Bissau, 1960) is a singer, composer and multi-instrumentalist. He has played various percussion instruments and the acoustic guitar since the age of seven. He rapidly became the main attraction of the band Super Mama Djombo, which played an important role in the 1970s in the struggle for independence from Portugal. When the political situation in Guinea Bissau became unstable, Manel left the country and, after living in Portugal and France, has finally settled in America where he still lives and makes music.

Tunde Jegede (Nigeria, 1972) played percussion in his father's band from an extremely early age. He then studied cello in London under various well-known teachers and rapidly forged a link between African sounds and harmonies, and European classical music traditions. Jegede was introduced to the kora (an African stringed instrument) by virtuosos such as Bouly Cissokho and Amadu Bansang Jobarteh, both of whom come from Mali.

Nawal (Comoros, 1965) comes from a family that migrated from the Sahel region to the Comoros. She grew up in France but returned to the Comoros in 1985 where she discovered her musical heritage, which she decided to develop. Nawal researched the styles of her cultural backgrounds and combined them to form a new sound.

The artistic team

Wasis Diop (Senegal), musical direction

Wasis Diop has built up an international reputation with his refined compositions and subtle guitar playing. His music has been particularly influenced by the time he spent in Japan and Jamaica.

Germaine Acogny (Senegal), choreography

Germaine Acogny is a dancer and a leading African choreographer. Acogny is the artistic director of the *Jant-Bi* dance group, which focuses on a symbiosis of traditional and contemporary African dance. Last autumn *Jant-Bi* brought *Faagala* – a production about the Rwandan genocide – to the *Muziektheater* in Amsterdam. Acogny is also the founder the *École des Sables* dance school in Toubab Dialaw (Senegal).

Oumou Sy (Senegal, 1952), costumes and stage sets

Oumou Sy is one of the most famous fashion designers of Africa. She presents her collections throughout the world and teaches designers and models at her studio in Dakar. Oumou Sy was granted a Prince Claus Award in 1998 for her social engagement and commitment to the African fashion industry. For the Sahel Opera she is designing not only the costumes but also the stage sets.

Jean-Pierre Leurs (Senegal), actors' training sessions/direction

Jean-Pierre Leurs was already active in the theatre world before he had even completed his training. He worked for the *Théâtre Daniel Sorano*, was the director of the national theatre group and also the director of the national ballet company. He is responsible for the Sahel Opera's *mise en scène*.