



# Qudus Onikeku

## Re:INCARNATION

The creation was initially planned in September 2020 at the Biennale de la Danse  
It had to be postponed to 2021, January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>,

at the Centre Georges-Pompidou in Paris

Europe tour from January to June 2021

2021, June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>: Biennale de la Danse de Lyon

THE **QDANCE**  
COMPANY



# Re:INCARNATION

Afro-urban dance piece for 10 dancers and 1 musician

**QUDUS ONIKEKU**

Artistic direction

with the dancers and collaborators

Adila Omotosho

Ambrose Tjark

Angela Okolo

Bukunmi Olukitibi

Busayo Olowu

Faith Okoh

Joshua Gabriel

Obiajulu Sunday Ozegbe

Patience Ebute

Yemi Osokoya

**OLANTUNDE OBAJEUN**

Live Music

**MATHEW YUSUF**

Lights

**WACK NG**

Costumes

Production

**THE QDANCE COMPANY LAGOS**

Production déléguée France

YK Projects

Coproduction

Biennale de la danse - Lyon

Les Halles de Schaerbeek - Bruxelles

Les Spectacles vivants - Centre Pompidou

Théâtre Paul-Éluard - Bezons

Escales danse en Val-d'Oise

Théâtre national de Bretagne

## Production & Booking

> Anne-Sophie Dupoux - Etat d'Esprit Productions

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## INTENTION

This piece is the result of five years continuous movement research around body memory with young dancers in Nigeria, all undertaken since my return from Paris to my hometown Lagos.

There, I ventured to train, inform and inspire a new generation of dancers, with whom we have built strong trust relationships, strong enough to create a collective piece that will showcase the depth of the west African youth culture and its pure and uncompromising joy.

re:incarnation is the work of this brand new generation of Lagosian artists and young dancers. Without any classical or occidental training, it will be marked by the urban chaos of the Nigerian economic capital, Lagos the mega city, and take as a point of departure from the current Afrobeats Dance and Music, that is presently in motion, initially from Nigeria and quickly becoming a global phenomenon.

Afrobeat music plays a leading role here. The afrobeat that is best known in Europe is the one that emerged in the 70s from the meeting of jazz, soul-funk and high-life with the traditional West African music, thanks to Fela Kuti - a musician that was cradled by the Black Power and panafricanism movements.

Today, afrobeats bares new influences from different inspirations. Dancehall, hip-hop and funky house have started off a musical revolution that flows into the bodies. Imagine an orchestra: the basic tempo inexorably comes back. Inside this undisturbed cycle, the groove plays with a different temporality. Paying tribute to this richness, choreography will be written with a highly musical structure.



I found it interesting that these young people re- appropriate this energy of the 60s and 70s, to reactivate it, renew it, re-incarnate it in the present, consciously or unconsciously loaded with past and current social struggles.

This piece is a way to continue my quest into body memory and to seek a contemporary choreographic vocabulary that is peculiar to this new generation of dancers. Coming from the Yoruba culture and philosophical approach, I would like to place at the core of the piece the Yoruba central concept of re:incarnation (birth, death, re-birth) which offers a distinct way of thinking about time and space in a cyclical manner. The temporality will thus be based on points of intensity rather than a chronological progression.

With this piece I want to gather nine dancers from different cities in Nigeria, those that I have worked with the past years and identified in the course of the three editions of DanceGATHERING Lagos, so as to let this new generation of Nigerian dancers come together around a shared creation process - while I continue my mentorship with them in practical terms.

Qudus Onikeku, December 2018





Angela Okolo



Olowu Busayo



Joshua Gabriel



Yemi Osokoya

## TEAM

After several days auditioning, team is now complete with 10 dancers and 1 live musician.

Those pictures were shot in Lagos' streets in September 2019 by Bamiphotography, with costumes designed by famous fashion designer (and dancer of the cast) Ambrose Tjark, and Wack Ng.



Adila Omotosho



Ambrose Tjark



Olukitibi Bukunmi



Faith Okoh

## CREATION & TOUR DATES

**August 2019**

Workshop / Auditions of the dancers  
The Qdance Center - Lagos

**September 2019**

4-week residency  
The Qdance Center - Lagos

**February 2020**

3-week residency  
The Qdance Center - Lagos

**July 2020**

5-week residency  
The Qdance center - Lagos

**January 2021**

Creation at the Centre Georges Pompidou - Paris

Tour dates available here :

<https://etatdespritproductions.com/productions/reincarna>



Tour was initially planned from September 2020 to January 2021.  
It is postponed from January to May 2021.

## TOURING TEAM

15 persons

- > 1 choreographer
- > 11 dancers and musician
- > 2 technical directors
- > 1 production manager





## Qudus Onikeku

Qudus Onikeku is a movement artiste made of diversity. Over the decade, he has established himself as one of the preeminent multitalented artistes, working today with different media : performance, installation, curating and community organizing. Onikeku's international artistic research intersects between his interest in body memory and finding new vocabularies for performance, embracing an artistic vision that both respects and challenges Yoruba culture and contemporary dance.

He has created a substantial body of critically acclaimed work that ranges from solos to group works, as well as artist-to-artist collaborations with visual artists or architects, musicians or writers. Qudus Onikeku has participated in major exhibitions and festivals across 56 countries including Venice Biennale, Biennale de Lyon, Festival d'Avignon, Roma Europa, TED Global, Torino Danza, Kalamata Dance Festival, Dance Umbrella. He is a visiting professor of dance at the University of California and Columbia College Chicago.



The work of Qudus focuses on Africa and the culture of its populations - but nevertheless willing to universalize its message.

He is interested in the colonial power and the African migrations, as well as its esthetics and plural identity. Those contemporary issues inspire a brand new African dancers generation and brings a new depth to dance.

The Yoruba philosophy from South-West Nigeria is also important as a way to look at the body as a mean to reunite the sacred and the human.

Qudus associates in a subtle manner traditional Nigerian dances, hip-hop, capoeira, contemporary and acrobatic languages, and brings new sensorial languages to the audience.

## WORK

### SPIRIT CHILD (2019)

Solo piece with 3 musicians

### YUROPA (2018)

Piece for 3 dancers and 1 musician

### Infinite nowness (2017)

Piece for 1 performer (Venice)

### Right here Right now (2017)

Performance video installation

### Rainmakers (2017)

Piece for 7 dancers

### We almost forgot (2016)

Piece for 6 dancers and 1 actress

### Africaman original (2015)

Piece for 1 dancer and 1 video maker

### Iwa Lewa (2015)

Piece for 10 dancers and 5 musicians

### Qaddish (2013)

Piece for 1 dancer and 4 musicians

### Still / Life (2011-2012)

Piece for 1 dancer and 2 musicians

### My Exile is in my head (2010)

Piece for 1 dancer and 1 musician

### Lost face (2004-2006)

Piece for 1 dancer





## THE QDANCE CENTER

Qudus Onikeko also created the Qdance Center, a creative organization and resource center located in Lagos and dedicated to promote dance and theater in Nigeria, through developing activities for the amateurs and the professionals.

The place offers all-levels dance and fitness classes, promoting dance as a lifestyle.







## FESTIVAL DANCEGATHERING

The DanceGATHERING festival was created by Qudus Onikeku and Onye Ozuzu. It takes place yearly. It is a pluridisciplinary performance and research lab that gathers many artists and creative thinkers. Those encounters end with an open-to-all weekend event on Broad Street, one of Lagos' main streets.

