

# DANSER CASA

**Choreography :**

**Kader Attou and Mourad Merzouki**

Created in 2018

On tour



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**HIP HOP DANCE TAKES THE STAGE IN CASABLANCA**

# HIP HOP DANCE TAKES THE STAGE IN CASABLANCA

**Artistic direction :** Kader Attou and Mourad Merzouki

## Piece for eight dancers

### Featuring

Ayoub Abekkane  
Mossab Belhajali  
Yassine El Moussaoui  
Oussama El Yousfi  
Aymen Fikri  
Stella Keys  
Hatim Laamarti  
Ahmed Samoud

**Music :** Régis Baillet-Diaphane  
et musiques additionnelles

**Lighting :** Madjid Hakimi

**Costumes :** Emilie Carpentier

### Assistant choreographers :

Virgile Dagneaux et Christophe Gellon

**Created** in Casablanca in April 2018

French Premiere in June 2018 at the Festival  
Montpellier Danse 2018

On tour 2018-2019

**Duration :** 1 hour

**Co-produced by :** Etat d'Esprit Productions, Casa events et animations- Casablanca, Fondation Touria et Abdelaziz Tazi, l'Uzine - Casablanca, l'Aparté, Centre chorégraphique national de Creteil et du Val-de-Marne, Centre chorégraphique national de La Rochelle, Festival Montpellier Danse 2018, Théâtre du Vellein, CAPI-Villefontaine, Théâtre de Chartres.

With support from Institut Français du Maroc, studio des arts vivants – Casablanca



**Production :** Etat d'Esprit Productions,  
directed by Anne-Sophie Dupoux

+33 6 60 10 67 87

[annesophie.dupoux@etat-desprit.fr](mailto:annesophie.dupoux@etat-desprit.fr)

# DANSER CASA, THE SHOW



May 2017

## Artistic direction and choreography :

Kader Attou and Mourad Merzouki

**DANSER CASA** is an evocation of Casablanca, where our two international hip-hop stars, Kader Attou and Mourad Merzouki, reconnected. Except for a joint project in 2003 in Algeria with Mekech Mouchkine, 20 years had gone by since their last choreographic collaboration. In the interim, each artist developed his unique creative style and was appointed to head a national choreographic institute. In **DANSER CASA**, together they rose to the challenge of a joint creation designed to showcase the talent of Moroccan dancers. The show's eight dancers – one woman and seven men from different backgrounds and cities – are proud to have been selected from the 186 hip-hoppers who auditioned. Each was chosen for his or her talent, personality and ability to make creative proposals for this artistic adventure. While following the traditional creative process consisting in the audition, rehearsal residencies and tours in Morocco and abroad, the production also had the distinctive feature of spanning a one-year period to professionalize the dancers.

In the final creative phase, the choreographers drew inspiration from each dancer's personality and from Casablanca's creative urban vibe to concoct this new performance.

**DANSER CASA** conveys the burning desire of its young dancers. Featuring captivating music and breathtaking choreographies, it depicts the tension of Casablanca, wavering between latent violence always on the verge

of exploding, and a fierce love that is never spoken. Sometimes the dancers size each other up, confronting one another in spirited duels, sometimes their intertwining bodies exude the energy of atomic fusion. The brute force that lifts them up, the sudden animality that invades them, the risks they take in their acrobatics – all of this helps to create a tense climate of imminent danger from which suspended instants of pure beauty emerge at the very last moment, whose gentle grace enhances the passionate outburst that came before. One can feel the competing egos, the desire to come out on top, the need to put one's life in danger, the detente that occasionally results from humour, and finally the relief brought by celebrating and singing. The performance captures every aspect of humanity, with its contradictions and complexities, given over to an infectious, overwhelming lust for life. The vital energy delivered to the audience is the intense emotion of Moroccan youth, the violence of their condition, the breath of their desire.

## Chaîne Youtube **DANSER CASA** :

 <https://bit.ly/2jWQ5LS>





# INTERVIEW

## WITH KADER ATTOU AND MOURAD MERZOUKI (MAY 2017)

### What motivated your desire to work with Moroccan dancers?

**Mourad Merzouki :** This project is an integral part of what drives us, so accepting the proposal was quite simple. We want to pass along our experience in the hope that these dancers will continue to grow. Personally, this project speaks to my innermost self because many aspects are related to my own story and to what these dancers are and represent.

**Kader Attou :** These projects give us a better understanding of why we're in dance and how dance is like an opening and a liberation. And, in our own journeys, there have been people, mentors, who believed in us and helped us get to where we are today. Now, we also belong here, and it is our turn to be the mentors.

### How did you feel in December 2016 during the audition that attracted more than 180 Moroccan dancers?

**Mourad Merzouki :** The audition was a surprise! When you see all these young people, their talent, their will to exist and to share, you can't help but be affected. This positive energy is the opposite of what we're going through in France. It offers the best response to the prejudice some Westerners feel toward the Arab world.

**Kader Attou :** Hip-hop has a universal, global dimension, but is nourished by its immediate surroundings, its culture and geographical location. At the audition, we discovered Moroccan dancers with excellent technical skills and loads of spontaneous energy.

### Following a week of rehearsals with the dancers last May, what is your approach to working with them?

**Mourad Merzouki :** It's an open project taking place over a one year period, which leaves plenty of time to get to know one another. It's built around dancers who want to transition from the street to the stage and go beyond their limits. In addition to giving them the opportunity to change their fate, it's an artistic challenge as an artist. What can we do with these bodies, this energy, this history and this culture? How can we convey all of that in a performance?



**Kader Attou :** Even though they're not seasoned dancers, they are nevertheless seasoned in their state of being and their generosity. We enjoy exploring their strengths and vulnerabilities. And the whole point of this creation is to lead them elsewhere, beyond their respective techniques, to embody a choreographic vision as interpreters on stage.

### You last worked together in 2003, with a show performed in Algeria based on pieces from your respective repertoires. Today, how do you approach your collaboration?

**Mourad Merzouki :** Kader and I want an experience of sharing and exchanging. We want to create together and show that it can be done. Even though we went our separate ways more than twenty years ago, we are thrilled to be working together again to tackle this new challenge.

**Kader Attou :** We're sharing an adventure built around the dancers. We're sure it will lead to a performance. Already, after five days of rehearsals, we can see a real difference between the first and fifth days, which says a lot about their expectations, their investment and our ability to invent with them. ■

# THE CHOREOGRAPHERS

## Kader Attou



Today's hip hop creative works, independent and new dance scene creations, convey an image of French culture throughout the world. Kader Attou can claim to be an integral part of this new dance scene. He is one of the major representatives of French hip hop, and Accrorap is an iconic company. With a contemporary blending of cultures and humanistic commitment, Kader Attou creates modern-day dance performances where encounters, dialogue and sharing are the driving forces and creative sources. With the exciting discovery of break-dance in 1989, and Accrorap's first shows, a desire was born to examine in depth the question of meaning and develop an artistic approach. In 1994 Athina marks Accrorap's on-stage debut at the Dance biennale in Lyon. Created in 1996, Kelkemo, a tribute to Bosnian and Croatian child refugees, is the fruit of a powerful experience in the Zagreb camps in 1994 and 1995. *Prière pour un fou* (1999), a pivotal piece in the choreographic universe of Kader Attou, attempts to re-establish the dialogue that the Algerian drama was making increasingly and painfully less probable. Then Accrorap broadened its scope, inventing dance that is rich and full of humanity with *Anokha* (2000), at the crossroads between hip hop and

Indian dance; East and West. Composed of sketches where performance, emotion and musicality intermingle, *Pourquoi pas* (2002), enters a universe of poetry and lightness. *Douar* (2004), created within the scope of the year of Algeria in France, queries the issues of exile and boredom, echoing the concerns of young people in neighborhoods and housing estates/communities in France and Algeria. *Les corps étrangers* (2006), an international project involving France, India, Brazil, Algeria and the Côte d'Ivoire, evokes the human condition and searches for possible meeting points between cultures and aesthetic styles to construct, via dance, a space for communication to query the future. *Petites histoires.com* (2008), acclaimed by critics and the public alike, tells of Everyman's France through burlesque sketches while maintaining a sensitive and committed approach. In 2008, Kader Attou was named Director of the CCN (National Centre for Choreography) in La Rochelle and the Poitou-Charentes region, thus becoming the first hip hop choreographer to lead such an institution. *Trio (?)* (2010) takes us back to the world of the circus. *Symfonia Pieśni żałosnych* (2010) is a performance of the entire Symphony No.3 also known as the Symphony of Sorrowful Songs by the Polish composer Henryk Mikołaj G.recki. This creation explores all compositional aspects, is carried away by soaring vocals, penetrated by melodic forces to join/send a message of hope the message of hope.

In 2013, Kader Attou returned to the source of hip hop, to his very first sensations. *The Roots* is a human adventure, a journey, a dive into his poetic universe. Eleven of the most skilful hip hop dancers perform the piece; they form a group that is in complete symbiosis. Created in August 2014 for the 10th edition of the Nuits Romanes in Poitou-Charentes, *Un break . Mozart*, born of the encounter between the CCN of La Rochelle and the Champs-Élysées orchestra, presents a genuine dialogue between contemporary dance and music of the Enlightenment with a major musical work: Mozart's Requiem. In September 2014 for the Dance biennale of Lyon, Kader Attou created *OPUS 14* for sixteen male and female dancers combining power, otherness, commitment and corporeal poetry in a fundamentally hip hop piece. With *Un break . Mozart* as a base, the premiere of *Un break . Mozart 1.1* – a new creation by Kader Attou for 11 dancers and 10 musicians from the Champs Élysées Orchestra – was performed in November 2016 at La Coursive in La Rochelle. This performance was part of the event "Shake La Rochelle !", the first edition of CCN's Hip Hop festival. In January 2013 Kader Attou was made Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) and in the New Year's honors list of 2015 was appointed Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur (Knight of the French Legion of Honour)■

# LES CHORÉGRAPHERS



## Mourad Merzouki

Major figure on the hip-hop scene since the early 1990s, choreographer Mourad Merzouki works at the junction of many different disciplines. He adds circus, martial arts, fine arts, video and live music to his exploration of hip-hop dance. Without losing sight of the hip-hop movement's roots, of its social and geographical origins, this multidisciplinary approach opens up new horizons and reveals complete new outlooks.

Beginning at the age of seven, Mourad Merzouki was trained in the circus school of St Priest, in Lyon's eastern suburbs, while also practicing martial arts. At fifteen, he gravitated towards dance through inspiration drawn from hip-hop culture. From there, he began working on choreography and soon created his first dance company, Accrorap, in 1989, with Kader Attou, Eric Mezino and Chaouki Saïd. With Accrorap, he further developed hip-hop movements while simultaneously exploring other dance genres with his contemporaries Maryse Delente, Jean-François Duroure and Josef Nadj.

Accrorap performed *Athina* during the 1994 Dance Biennial in Lyon and was acclaimed for bringing hip-hop from the street to the stage, enabling the troupe to perform internationally. It was during a performance in Croatia at a refugee camp where Mourad Merzouki saw the power of dance to communicate and express emotion.

In 1996, Mourad Merzouki decided to found his own company to expand artistically. Naming the company after his inaugural piece, *Käfig* which means "cage" in Arabic and German, he set a symbolic tone that represents his openness and refusal to become locked into a single style.

From 1996 to 2006, Mourad Merzouki created 14 pieces that explore the world of dance through a multitude of styles. He was also instrumental in the creation of the Pôle Pik choreography center in Bron as well as the Karavel festival.

In June 2009, Mourad Merzouki was appointed director of the National choreography center of Créteil and Val-de-Marne, where he developed a project called "Dance: a window on the world" with a central focus on "openness". While continuously creating and performing new works, Mourad Merzouki also provides training and supports the choreographic arts and independent groups through unique awareness experiences. In 2013, he created the Kalypso festival, bringing the mainstream promotion of hip-hop dance companies to Paris.

In March 2016, he was appointed artistic advisor for "Pôle en Scènes" in Bron, where he brings together the Pôle Pik choreography center, the theater Espace Albert Camus and the Fort, leading to one common goal of training, creating and promoting performing arts. He stays true to his artistic approach by creating bridges between disciplines, opening the spaces to an ever wider audience. Mourad Merzouki is member of the support committee to choreographic art of the French ministry of culture (DRAC Île-de-France) and the sponsorship committee for dance of Caisse des Dépôts. He is sponsor to the organization Laka Touch, using dance to improve the health of disabled and isolated people. He is often a guest jury member for the Grand Prix de Paris Let's Dance. ■

# DANCERS



From left to right : Ayoub Abekkane, Mossab Belhajali, Yassine El Moussaoui, Oussama El Yousfi, Aymen Fikri, Stella Keys, Hatim Laamarti and Ahmed Samoud

@Guillaume Mollé



**Ayoub Abekkane**, 26, lives in Casablanca and has been dancing since 2007. He also studies cinematography. His styles include new style, house, breakdance and contemporary dance. He dances alone or with friends and attends workshops and training courses, including a train-the-trainer course with Anthony Eg.a through a programme co-organised by the Institut Français de Casablanca and the Goethe-Institut.

**Mossab Belhajali**, 29, divides his time between Sal. and Casablanca and has been dancing since 2003. He began with breakdance and new style. After discovering acrobatics on the beach, he completed a professional circus arts training course, specialising in aerial straps. During the course, he discovered contemporary dance and joined companies such as Les 7 Doigts de la Main and Le Cirque Jules Verne in France, as well as dance companies in Morocco including Motion Crew and Black Panthers.

**Yassine El Moussaoui**, 31, lives in Rabat and has been dancing since 1999. He is also a graphic designer. He started dance with his twin brother, with whom he created the group TWAN which was recognised as one of Morocco's best dance groups in 2007 and won its first award at the Mawazine music festival. He also worked in 2009 with S.bastien Lefrançois's company Traffic de styles.

**Oussama El Yousfi**, 21, lives in Casablanca. He started dance at the age of 13 with his brother. Together they created a group of dancers, then a duo. Dancing with his brother, he has won nine battles. He is also studying on-board diagnostics for the automotive industry.

**Aymen Fikri**, 22, lives in Rabat. He has been performing street dance since 2009, which he learns on the web. His styles are popping and locking. He often participates in battles, and has won several competitions both in Morocco and abroad. He attends many workshops, particularly with popping trailblazers such as Mr. Wiggles, Junior Boogaloo and Popin' Pete.

**Stella Keys**, 25, is Congolese but settled in Casablanca four years ago, after spending a year in Russia. She learned to dance with her brother in Brazzaville and practices a range of styles. She also teaches dance in Casablanca.

**Hatim Laamarti**, 26, lives in Meknes. He discovered dance on the internet and specialises in popping. An encounter with contemporary dance gave him the desire to continually try new experiences. He teaches dance and is taking a train-the-trainer course with Anthony Eg.a through a programme co-organised by the Institut Français de Casablanca and the Goethe-Institut.

**Ahmed Samoud**, 24, lives in Casablanca. Before dancing, Ahmed started his career in acrobatics, winning the 2012 Parkour/ Freerunning championship in Meknes. In 2010, he started break-dancing in the street. He is also studying English at the University of Casablanca. ■



# TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS



## Tour requirements

### Touring team : 12

- 8 dancers
- 1 rehearsal director
- 2 stage managers (general and stage/driver)
- 1 tour manager

### Additional expenses

- Round-trip travel from Casablanca, Rabat or Meknes for 8 dancers
- Round-trip travel from France for the rehearsal manager and technical team
- Set transportation by van

### Technical aspects

- Set up one day before the performance: 2 to 3 shifts; arrival of stage managers
- Arrival of artistic team the evening before the performance
- Same-evening dismantle
- Optimal stage dimensions, adaptations possible:  
Proscenium width = 10 m  
Stage width = 14 m  
Stage depth = 10 m  
Height to grid (from stage level) = 6 m

## Financial aspects

You will be sent a detailed quote taking account of the number of performances, the venue and any opportunities to share travel expenses with other venues.

### Production

#### Anne-Sophie Dupoux - Etat d'Esprit Productions

With fifteen years of experience administrating the Theatre de Suresnes and developing productions and tours for the Suresnes Cites Danse festival, Anne-Sophie Dupoux has built a personal network of professionals in all fields of the performing arts. Today she is devoting her skills and connections to the [DANSER CASA](#) project – a project grounded in creation and mentorshi. ■

### Contact :

Anne-Sophie, DIRECTION :  
+ 33 (0)6 60 10 67 87 –  
[annesophie.dupoux@etat-desprit.fr](mailto:annesophie.dupoux@etat-desprit.fr)  
Samira Bentahar, TOUR MANAGER :  
+ 33 (0)6 09 69 27 40  
[samira.eep@gmail.com](mailto:samira.eep@gmail.com)



# TOUR SCHEDULE

2018

## SATURDAY 23 JUNE

MONTPELLIER DANSE 2018  
Théâtre de l'Agora, *Montpellier*

## SUNDAY 24 JUNE

MONTPELLIER DANSE 2018  
Théâtre de l'Agora, *Montpellier*

## MONDAY 25 JUNE

MONTPELLIER DANSE 2018  
Théâtre de l'Agora, *Montpellier*

## THURSDAY 28 JUNE

FESTIVAL ESTATE REALE TORINO 2018  
Première en Italie, *Vignale (Italie)*

## FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

FESTIVAL DE DANSE, *Düsseldorf*  
Première en Allemagne

## SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

FESTIVAL DE DANSE, *Düsseldorf*

## THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER

Le Tandem - Scène Nationale, *Douai*

## FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER

Le Tandem - Scène Nationale, *Douai*

## FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER

Le Toboggan, dans le cadre du festival  
Karavel, *Décines*

## FRIDAY 14 DECEMBER

Théâtre de la Maison du Peuple,  
*Millau*

## SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER

Théâtre La Baleine,  
*Rodez*

## TUESDAY 18 DECEMBER

Le Sémaphore, *Cebazat*

2019

## SUNDAY 13 JANUARY

Théâtre de la Fleuriaye,  
*Carquefou*

## TUESDAY 15 JANUARY

Théâtre le Rive Gauche,  
*St Etienne du Rouvray*

## WEDNESDAY 16 JANUARY

Théâtre le Rive Gauche,  
*St Etienne du Rouvray*

## TUESDAY 22 JANUARY

Quai des Arts, *Argentan*

## FRIDAY 25 JANUARY

L'Arsenal, *Val-de-Reuil*

## FRIDAY 1<sup>ER</sup> FEBRUARY

FESTIVAL SURESNES CITÉS DANSE,  
*Suresnes*

## SATURDAY 2 FEBRUARY

FESTIVAL SURESNES CITÉS DANSE,  
*Suresnes*

## SUNDAY 3 FEBRUARY

FESTIVAL SURESNES CITÉS DANSE  
*Suresnes*

## WEDNESDAY 6 FEBRUARY

Le Fanal - Scène Nationale,  
*St Nazaire*

## THURSDAY 7 FEBRUARY

Le Fanal - Scène Nationale,  
*St Nazaire*

## SATURDAY 9 FEBRUARY

L'heure Bleue,  
*St Martin D'hères*

## TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY

Salle Jacques Brel,  
*Pantin*

## THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY

Théâtre Romain Rolland,  
*Villejuif*

## FRIDAY 15 FEBRUARY

Théâtre Romain Rolland,  
*Villejuif*

## SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY

Théâtre Paul Eluard,  
*Choisy le Roi*

## TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY

Centre culturel,  
*Fontenay sous Bois*

## THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY

Espace 1789, *St Ouen*

## FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY

Espace 1789, *St Ouen*

## TUESDAY 5 MARCH

Théâtre d'Auxerre, *Auxerre*

## THURSDAY 7 MARCH

Centre culturel,  
*Cesson Sévigné*

## FRIDAY 8 MARCH

Théâtre de Chartres, *Chartres*

## TUESDAY 12 MARCH

La Ferme du Buisson, *Marne la Vallée*

## THURSDAY 14 MARCH

Espace le Pin Galant, *Mérignac*

## FRIDAY 15 MARCH

Espace le Pin Galant, *Mérignac*

## TUESDAY 19 MARCH

Théâtre la Colonne, *Miramas*

## THURSDAY 21 MARCH

L'Autre Scène, *Vedène*

## TUESDAY 26 MARCH

L'Autre Scène, *Vedène*

## SATURDAY 29 MARCH

Espace Lino Ventura,  
*Garges les Goneses*

## TUESDAY 2 APRIL

Scène Nationale Annecy, *Bonlieu*

## WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL

Scène Nationale Annecy, *Bonlieu*

## FRIDAY 12 APRIL

Scène Nationale St Quentin en Yvelines

## SATURDAY 13 APRIL

Scène Nationale St Quentin en Yvelines

## TUESDAY 16 APRIL

Théâtre, *Corbeil Essonnes*

## THURSDAY 2 MAY

Maison de la Culture, *Amiens*

## SATURDAY 4 MAY

La Faïencerie, *Creil*

## TUESDAY 7 MAY

L'Arsenal, *Metz*

## WEDNESDAY 15 MAY

Centre Simone Signoret,  
*Villefontaine*

## THURSDAY 16 MAY

Centre Simone Signoret,  
*Villefontaine*

## WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE

Grande Halle de la Villette,  
*Paris*

## THURSDAY 20 JUNE

Grande Halle de la Villette,  
*Paris*

## FRIDAY 21 JUNE

Grande Halle de la Villette,  
*Paris*

## SATURDAY 22 JUNE

Grande Halle de la Villette,  
*Paris*

## MORE IMAGES OF REHEARSALS...

