



# THE LINGERING NOW

O AGORA QUE DEMORA -  
OUR ODYSSEY II

Based on HOMER'S ODYSSEY  
CHRISTIANE JATAHY

Création Studio Théâtre National 19/20

THÉÂTRE NATIONAL WALLONIE-BRUXELLES



**What can a 3000 year old fiction tell us about the world we inhabit in the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century ? The stories of Odysseus the warfarer, and his ten years of mythical travels to return home, after the Trojan war ; those of Penelope, the wife, defending homeland Ithaca against the invaders ; those of the son Telemachos, setting out to find his lost father : how do they connect to the contemporary movements of people crossing borders in search of a safe land, a home ? Or those, marginalised by the powers that be, to defend their home against invaders ?**

*The Lingerin Now* is the second panel of a dyptic called *Our Odyssey* by brazilian theater and film maker Christiane Jatahy dealing with these questions, starting from Homer's epic. It deepens the development of a language that has earned Jatahy a place on the forefront of contemporary theater worldwide: exposing the tension lines between film and theater and their respective connections to past and present; undermining the border walls between fiction and real; challenging the position of the spectators within these new connections.

*The Lingerin Now* takes Jatahy's research to a new level, beyond exploring how cinema can add to our theatrical experience, dramaturgically and formally. It reverses the roles between both media. *The Lingerin Now* is a film that only reaches its full dimension in a dialogue with theater. A film, shot in Jenin, Palestine; in refugee camps in Lebanon and Greece; in the African cosmopolis of the inner city of Johannesburg; in an indigenous community struggling to defend its homeland and its integrity in the Amazon rainforest; and

in Rio De Janeiro. The context of these film shootings may be documentary, but the scope is definitely fictional: actors from these communities arm themselves with the verses of Homer to speak about their realities. They become a succession, a multiplication, a manifestation of Odysseuses, Penelopes and Telemachuses, drawing straight lines from the ancient greek characters to us present in the theater. Each of us, spectators and performers, sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, with a present, a recent history or a near future, of journeys and transformations in order to secure home, branded into our genetics.

In *The Lingerin Now* we embark on a journey, guided by a 3000 years old fiction, but always with the mud of the now and the real sticking to our shoes. A film, a play, that positions the audience inside the fiction. An encounter trying to discover the cracks in the wall, the backdoors left open, raising the question: how can we break the cycle ?





## Our odyssey

**Christiane Jatahy draws her inspiration from the issues of migrations and exile, from the confrontation of feminine and masculine points of view, and from the otherness that expresses itself through a many-voiced narration. Mixing theatre, cinema, and performance, her new quest uses one of the foundational texts of Western literature, *Homer's Odyssey*, as a starting point.**

Always looking for new areas, Christiane Jatahy likes to work on borders, between the actor and the character, between the actor and the spectator, between the movies and live theatre, and between reality and fiction. Imaginary odysseys, odysseys that could be real, *Homer's Odyssey* – poetic materials where borders are omnipresent.

It's about trying to get home, to one's home. It's about he who stays and she who leaves. It's about searching for the other, about being a stranger, about being a refugee, about war and the wounded. About fiction and reality and how one can imagine that reality. It's about other fictions. It's about the past after Homer, about our past, of today, of here and of now.

## The Lingering Now

*The Lingering Now is the second panel of the diptych Our Odyssey. (...) It is not a play. To paraphrase the opening of What if they went to Moscow?, it's maybe a movie and maybe it isn't. It's maybe a play but it starts like a movie. The heart of the piece is cinematic. But it's through the film that we get on stage, so it is also an odyssey that leads us to theatre. There are innumerable odysseys themselves made up of other odysseys.*

*We went to certain places in the world to film people living their own odysseys, not to produce a documentary, but rather to offer them a fiction through which they could recount what they are experiencing. A play built from *The Odyssey* with passages from the original but which respects my language and where reality and fiction are*

*constantly combining with each other. We filmed in Palestine, Libya, Greece, South Africa and Amazonia. A sort of relay race between many Odysseuses – men and women. The story goes from one place to another, a single journey with multiple actors in a virtual space. Even if they don't meet each other, the story continues and numerous facets of the work are multiplied in the film and on the stage to eventually touch us in our hearts.*

*We immediately separate the refugees from our world by labeling them, which keeps them far from our reality. It's hard to believe that one day we and our loved ones could be in the same position. We are reminded of this possibility at all times by the actors who are refugees. We worked with cultural institutions, Palestinian actors and Syrian actors currently in exile in Lebanon. (...) These journeys which make up Our Odyssey have deeply affected us, having shared with such strong people who opened themselves to us to bring a bit of light to our fiction, and who through this same fiction have illuminated both their reality and ours.*

(...)

*We have filmed with the idea of bringing into the present, into "the here," and symbolizing something quite different, those who come from elsewhere and who are not part of the present moment. The Lingering Now (...) also broaches these questions, such as the means to end borders, between us and the others. On this utopia which is maybe the "Ithaca" of the project, to unite places, territories separated by forces much stronger than those of nature. The public is the point towards which everything converges, the central point, the point where I observe and create. (...) The public is a fundamental element, the public in the public arena in the Greek sense, in the political sense, like a choir that changes history.*

— Christine Jatahy. Excerpts from an interview with Thomas Walgrave, Sesc Pinheiros, 27 March 2019



## Interview with Christiane Jatahy

The Linger now is the second part of the diptych *Our Odyssey...*

*The Linger Now* is actually the second act. In the first act, *Ithaca*, the stage was divided in two and the audience would move seeing either Odysseus' or Penelope's point of view. I added reality to the fictional story by supplementing Homer's texts with statements that I had heard from refugees telling me of their experiences of crossing the sea to get to Europe. In that first part, the story was more about the arrival in *Ithaca* than about Odysseus' voyage. The piece ended with an image of the sea and the introduction of film into the show.

With the *Overflowing Present*, the structure is different; the film has taken over, it is the main part of the show. It's no longer about injecting the

real into the imagined tale but on the contrary it is about immersing the fictional stories into what has been experienced, into reality. We went to five locations in the world to meet people who live an odyssey every day: exiled actors, refugees in countries such as Palestine, Lebanon, Greece, and South Africa... And for the last piece we returned to Brazil where I wrote a scenario based on Homer's chants.

This is a script that is like a relay race at the Olympic Games where "the passing of the baton" would be the actual meat of the film, which goes from country to country. I wanted to meet as many Odysseus and Penelopes as possible, those people who have been forced to leave their countries, to try to reconstruct a feeling of belonging somewhere else. Even if the feeling of being between places lingers, experienced as a place surrounded by borders, where the past is inaccessible and the future unattainable. The people are blocked in a present that is so overwhelming that it overflows. But it is not a static wait because everything moves in a circular motion, like in *Limbo*.

**You chose to go on an Odyssey yourself while making this film?**

I wanted to meet those who actually endure it in a number of different places. At each stop, I asked myself what can we do to change the situation, to change ourselves and to change the world. Because if change is possible for us, could we not also change the world? There are often barriers that are difficult to remove, barriers that make it difficult to feel like one is home, to build a new house, a family or a future. For some people in exile or in a country at war, only the present exists, the past is already too far behind them or almost destroyed, and the future is unimaginable. The only thing left is the wait. That's the case in Palestine or in any occupied country, and for the Syrian war refugees, stuck in a no man's land on a border. There is the desire, the will to go but going is impossible. It's somewhat like the situation Odysseus finds himself in for a decade, his arrival home continually delayed, made impossible by mostly exterior forces. In my work there is always research into meta-language, that's why in this film that goes from continent to continent, I went looking for real Odysseus who could tell of their experiences of exile which resonated with the adventures and emotions that Homer's Odysseus experienced. The construction of the film is ever obvious, it connects via circularity the fictional theme and the real stories. The fiction that I created is constantly interweaving with the reality of the actors I found in Palestine, Lebanon, Greece and South Africa. In each country three actors were filmed, two Odysseus and one Penelope. Odysseus and Penelope are both characters in exile, searching; I didn't want to show differences between genders. Penelope is not just she who waits, she is also she who experiences the crossing of seas and borders.

**Can you describe your stops in each country and the links you tried to hear and grasp between fiction and reality?**

We worked with cultural organizations to meet actors, technicians and the general population. In Palestine, for instance, we went to the refugee camp in Jenin to work with people. At each stop we advanced through Homer's story. The part we filmed in Palestine combines the story of the Cyclops and the violence of war. In Lebanon we met Syrian actors: one of them had been arrested while trying to go back to Syria, arrested because he had posted photos of his tattoo on Facebook. I wanted to work with refugees who are like you and me, to put a lie to the stereotypes we have about refugees. Myself, I could possibly need to leave Brazil and find sanctuary elsewhere... In Lebanon we shot the Circe episode on Ayaye Island after the Cyclops is blinded; the descent into Hades, on the other hand, was shot in South Africa where we worked with refugee artists from Malawi and Zimbabwe. There we met families who literally crossed Hell and confronted death very close at hand and survived... the work is constantly going back and forth between documentary research and fiction work. Not all the episodes are so tragic; there is a lot of hope, with difficult testimony but there are also many moments of relief: the presence of the children in Palestine and in Lebanon (they are invisible to many but they also have a future). We organized and filmed a party at each stop... the final arrival of Odysseus in *Ithaca* corresponds to our return to Brazil, to confront my familial and political history. When he gets back to Ithaca, Odysseus explains to the seer Tiresias that to understand his past he needs to meet people who have never seen the sea. The end was shot in the Amazon Forest, a symbolic place for many reasons, it contains a family mystery which is close to my heart, and is currently in the middle of disastrous decisions being made by Jair Bolsonaro. He wants to destroy Brazil's past and hope in the world. My personal history serves in reality as a bridge to speak of the Brazil of today.

— Christine Jatahy interviewed by Moira Dalant for the 73<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Festival d'Avignon



# Christiane Jatahy

Author, theater director  
and filmmaker

© Patricia Civdanes



Born in Rio de Janeiro, Christiane Jatahy is an author, theater director, and filmmaker. She graduated in theater and journalism and holds a post-graduate in Art and Philosophy.

Since 2003, she has been developing a body of work that explores border zones: between artistic disciplines, between reality and fiction, actor and character, theater and cinema. Some of the first performances are *Conjugado* and *The lack that moves us and Corte Seco (Straight Cut)*.

In 2010 she launched her first feature film, *The lack that moves us*, starting from the play with the same name. Despite its radically experimental setup (the film was shot in one continuous session of 13 hours, on Christmas Eve, in one single location), it gained wide acclaim, remaining on the billboard of Brazilian movie theaters for over 12 weeks and participating in various international film festivals.

In 2011 she premiered *Julia*, based on Strindberg's *Miss Julie* (rewarded the Shell Award 2012 for Best theatrical direction in Brazil). Deepening Christiane's research into the tension fields between theater and cinema, *Julia* has been presented by major theaters and festivals in Europe and the US. After over 300 presentations worldwide, *Julia* continues touring and will be presented in various theaters in Europe in 2021 and 2022.

In 2012, as part of the cultural program of the 2012 Olympics, she created, directed, and coordinated *In the comfort of your home*, a series of interventions, documentary work, performances, and

video installations by 30 Brazilian artists in the privacy of households in London.

In 2013, she developed the audiovisual and documentary installation project *Utopia.doc*, her first research into questions of home, exile, and refugees. It was presented in Paris, Frankfurt, and São Paulo.

In 2014, she premiered *What if they went to Moscow ?* based on Anton Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*. Splitting the audience between a cinema and a theater (they switch places at the break), *What if...* was recognized with the Shell Award, the Questão de Crítica Award, and the APTR Award. More than seven years after its creation, *What if...* continues touring.

In 2015, concluding the memory trilogy (including *Julia* and *What if they went to Moscow ?*), she created *The Walking Forest*, loosely based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, combining live performance with a video installation and live cinema.

In 2016 Christiane Jatahy directed for the first time an opera, staging Beethoven's *Fidelio* at the Teatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro, mixing the live performance with cinematographic elements and positioning the choir

In 2017, invited by the Comédie Française, she created *La règle du Jeu (The Rule of the Game)*, based on Jean Renoir's masterpiece.

In the same year, at the invitation of the Theater der Welt Festival and the Thalia Theater in Hamburg, she premiered the installation/performance *Moving People*, again focusing on the question of refugees, and an adaptation of Bernard-Marie Koltès' *In the Solitude of the Cotton Fields*.

In 2018 she was invited as Artista na Cidade (artist of the city) by the city of Lisbon, presenting throughout the year her oeuvre in the main theaters, cinemas, and festivals of the city.

In the same year, deepening her research into the question of refugees, she started to develop the diptych *Our Odyssey*, inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*. The first part, *Ithaca*, premiered at the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe in Paris, confronting Homer's epic and the reality of today's refugees crossing the Mediterranean.

The second part, *The Lingering Now (O agora que demora)*, based on Homer's epic as well as on documentary material filmed in Palestine, Lebanon,

South Africa, Greece, and the Amazon, is a dialogue between theater and film, mixing classical Greek fiction with real stories from refugee artists. *The Lingering now* premiered in 2019 in SESC São Paulo and at the Festival d'Avignon.

*Entre chien et loup* (produced by Comédie de Genève and premiered at the Avignon festival 2021), laying bare the mechanisms of fascism in a community starting from Lars Von Trier's *Dogville*, is the first part of a *Trilogy of Horror*, dissecting the horrors Brazil is living under its actual regime. The second part *Before the sky falls* (created at the Schauspielhaus Zürich in October 2021) connects Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to *The Falling Sky* by Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert to approach the violence of toxic masculinity, the political power of patriarchy, and its inherent aggression against the feminine in all its emanations - women, children, and ultimately nature and the earth itself. The third and final part *Depois do silêncio (After the Silence)*, based on Itamar Vieira Junior's novel *Torto Arado* focuses on structural racism and the question of land and territory, and will open at the Wiener Festwochen in June 2022.

During the 2021-2022 season, Christiane Jatahy is artiste invitée of the Mucem in Marseille, showing various of her creations and some site-specific interventions in the context of the museum.

Currently, Christiane Jatahy is an associate artist of the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe, Centquatre-Paris, Schauspielhaus Zürich, Arts Emerson Boston and Piccolo Teatro de Milano. The company Vertice is sponsored by Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France, Ministère de la Culture France.

In January 2022, she won from Venice Biennale the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement.

## Thomas Walgrave

Lighting and set designer

Born in 1965 in Antwerp, Belgium. Studied History of Art at the Ghent University, and Cognitive Anthropology at the Centre for Comparative

Knowledge Systems (a collaboration between the universities of Ghent, Cambridge, Utrecht and Paris). Specialised in nomadic societies, focused on the Tuareg nomads of the Central Sahara and Sahel.

Was from 1987 until 1992 collaborator of the Antwerp arts Centre Monty. Collaborated with a large number of Flemish, Dutch and international companies, among others Forced Entertainment (UK), Peter Halash & Love Theatre (US/Hungary) and Wooster Group (US).

Was since 1991 a core member of theatre company TG STAN (BE), responsible for the scenography and/or light design of over 50 productions of the company. Traveled extensively with these productions throughout Europe, the US, the Middle East and North Africa.

Collaborated as scenographer and/or light designer with artists like Tiago Rodrigues, João Galante & Ana Borralho, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Vera Mantero, Lia Rodrigues, Miguel Pereira, Karima Mansour, Dani Lima, Aydin Teker, Stéphane Olry & Corine Miret, Ricardo Araújo Pereira, Gonçalo Waddington, Michael Marmarinos, João Fiadeiro and Faustin Linyekula.

Was from 2008 till 2018 the artistic director of the Alkantara Festival, an international festival for contemporary performing arts in Lisbon, as well as Alkantara, a center for artistic research and residencies.

Published articles about the relation between politics and performing arts in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (portuguese edition) and in various books and magazines.

Lectured at the Forum Dança school for performing arts in Lisbon.

Works with the Brazilian director Christiane Jatahy on various projects as an artistic collaborator, set and light designer, since 2017: *Moving People* (Hamburg, Theater der Welt 2017) *In Der Einsamkeit der Baumwollfelder* (Hamburg, Thalia Theater 2017), *Notre Odysée: Ithaque* (Paris, Théâtre de l'Odéon, 2018) and *O agora que demora* (São Paulo and Brussels 2019, SESC São Paulo and Théâtre National Wallonie Bruxelles).



# THE LINGERING NOW

## O AGORA QUE DEMORA - OUR ODYSSEY II

Based on HOMER'S ODYSSEY  
CHRISTIANE JATAHY

Multilingual subtitled – 120'

With

**Abbas Abdulelah Al'Shukra, Abdul Lanjesi, Abed Aidy, Adnan Ibrahim Nghnghia, Ahmed Tobasi, Bepkapoy, Blessing Opoko, Corina Sabbas, Emilie Franco, Faisal Abu Alhayjaa, Fepa Teixeira, Frank Sithole, Iketi Kayapó, Irengri Kayapó, Isabel Novella, Ivan Tirtiaux, Jehad Obeid, Joseph Gaylard, Jovial Mbenga, Kroti, Laerte Késsimos, Leon David Salazar, Linda Michael Mkhwanasi, Manuela Afonso, Maria Laura Nogueira, Maroine Amimi, Mbali Ncube, Melina Martin, Mustafa Sheta, Nambulelo Meolongwara, Noji Gaylard, Ojo Kayapó, Omar Al Jbaai, Phana, Pitchou Lambo, Pravinah Nehwati, Pykatire, Ramyar Hussaini, Ranin Odeh, Renata Hardy, Vitor Araújo, Yara Ktaish, Marie-Aurore d'Awans and Banafshe Hourmazdi**

Staging, direction and dramaturgy

**Christiane Jatahy**

Artistic, set design and lighting management

**Thomas Walgrave**

Director of photography

**Paulo Camacho**

Music

**Domenico Lancelotti, Vitor Araujo**

Sound design

**Alex Fostier**

Company collaboration and coordination

**Henrique Mariano**

Production and touring

**Matthieu Defour, Juliette Thieme**

Staging (movie)

**Christiane Jatahy, Paulo Camacho**

Cameraman (movie)

**Paulo Camacho**

Second cameraman (movie)

**Thomas Walgrave**

Mixing (movie)

**Breno Furtado, Pedro Vituri**

Stage & video manager

**Stefano Serra**

Light operator

**Isabel Scheck alternating with Juan Borrego**

Sound operator

**David Defour alternating with Jeison Pardo Rojas**

Stage manager

**Dimitri Wauters**

And all Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles' team

**Palestine**

Local production – Jenin

**The Freedom Theatre –**

**Ahmed Tobasi, Mustafa Sheta**

Sound operator

**Issa J Qumsyeh**

**Lebanon**

Sound operator

Beirut / Beqaa Valley

**Nour Salman**

Local translator

**Hiba Hussein**

**Greece**

Local production – Athens

**Daphné Tolis**

Sound operator

**Emmanuel Manousakis**

**South Africa**

Local production – Johannesburg

**Outreach Foundation – Linda Michael**

**Mkhwanasi, Malvin Phana Dube, Gérard Bester**

Sound operator

**Paul Van Zyl**

**Brazil**

Local production – Amazonia

**Rafael Cabral, Clara Aruac**

Sound operator

**Breno Furtado**

**Création Studio**

**Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles**

Production

**Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles (Belgium), SESC (Brazil)**

Co-production

**Ruhrtriennale (Germany), Comédie de Genève (Zwitserland), Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe (France), Teatro Municipal São Luiz (Portugal), Festival d'Avignon (France), Le Maillon-Théâtre de Strasbourg Scène européenne (France), Riksteatern (Sweden), Temporada Alta – Festival de Tardor de Catalunya (Spain)**

Sets construction and costumes

**Ateliers du Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles**

**Christiane Jatahy is an international associate artist of: Odéon – Théâtre de l'Europe, the Centquatre-Paris, Schauspielhaus Zürich, Arts Emerson Boston and Piccolo Teatro de Milano. The Compagnie Vértice is supported by Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France, Ministère de la Culture France.**

With the support of

**The Freedom Theatre (Palestine), Outreach Foundation (South Africa)**

With the international support of

**Ambassade du Brésil en France, Ambassade de France au Brésil, Bureau de représentation du Brésil à Ramallah, Ambassade du Brésil au Liban, Ambassade du Brésil en Grèce, Ambassade de Belgique au Liban**

## Contact

Production manager  
**Juliette Thieme**  
jthieme@theatrenational.be

Tour manager & international relations  
**Matthieu Defour**  
mdefour@theatrenational.be

## Professional workspace

**Professional workspace access**  
[www.theatrenational.be/en/espacepro](http://www.theatrenational.be/en/espacepro)

**Login:** diffusion  
**Mot de passe:** TNBstudio

## On tour

[www.theatrenational.be/en/productions/agenda](http://www.theatrenational.be/en/productions/agenda)

## Studio Théâtre National Creations

**Over the years, the Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles has supported artists and companies and enabled them to create by providing them with resources and infrastructure. In return, these creators breathe new energy into the Theatre and punctuate the seasons with laboratories, rehearsals, meetings and performances.**

**Artists of different ages, origins and languages, one after another they work on what will become the Studio Théâtre National creation. These artists have in common a sense of collectivity and teamwork which gives their approach a great energy on stage, making possible the invention of singular languages, where form and substance have nothing to separate them reasons to stand out. The Théâtre National welcomes these artists who take their stories and questions in hand, and helps them to carry these Studio Théâtre National creations.**

**→ Interviews and reports on  
[www.theatrenational.be/backstage](http://www.theatrenational.be/backstage)**

# THÉÂTRE NATIONAL WALLONIE-BRUXELLES CONSTRUCTEURS D'HISTOIRES/ VERHALENBOUWERS/ STORY MAKERS

THÉÂTRE NATIONAL WALLONIE-BRUXELLES

Bd. Emile Jacqmain 111-115

B-1000 Bruxelles

+32 2 203 41 55

info@theatrenational.be

[www.theatrenational.be](http://www.theatrenational.be)

