

NDIMA

pygmy group from Congo Brazzaville

PRESENTATION

Traditionally nomadic, Pygmies are nowadays in the process of settlement. They live in the forests of Africa between the Atlantic Ocean and the big Lakes, and left according to the geographical areas in various groups in particular Baka, Bambuti, Batwa, Babongo, Efé and others.

In Republic of the Congo, we count several groups of pygmies among which aka where from are native the musicians of the Group Ndima.

Who are Pygmies aka and how do they live?

Hunters-gatherers, they are easily recognizable by their short size and their traditional housing environment established by huts in log. The esthetic expressions such the physical scarifications also allow to identify them. They live in the forest of the North of the Republic of the Congo and the South of the Centrafrique. They speak the aka language and live a life altered culturally, further to the increasing influence of the modernism in rural areas, and further to the rarity of certain foodstuffs in the forest today, which is more and more destroyed by the farmers and the foresters.

Members of a minority and marginalized, aka pygmies maintain bad relationships with their neighbors majority and slave master Bantus. They maintain with the latter relationships of clientele and exercise for their account various economic tasks: hunt, fishing, collect some honey, work in plantations and transport diverse loads.

Children of the forest, the Aka know how to take care of their environment because their life in all its aspects depends on it. To feed, they hunt animals and to edible vegetables which grow to their reach. They look after themselves with plants and with diverse essences, the virtues of which they know well. They also make use of it in their love life to conquer love of a woman, a man or to strengthen the marital union. Diverse objects are made with vegetables to be of use to the hunting, to the cooking, to the harvest of the honey...

Pygmies aka are people who practices the music on a daily basis. It is bound to diverse circumstances appropriate to their community. We find in their directory of the musics reserved for the spirits of the forest, among which each bears a name and materializes through a plant mask to appear in public, to participate in the event for which it is invited: rite of hunting or cure, raised by mourning, musics of entertainment, those linked to the divination, to the sexuality.

Aka practises the complex and rich contrapuntal, technical polyphony which they learn since their early childhood and which distinguishes their music of that of their neighbors called Bantu or big black. They also make use of the jodel - the alternation of the voice(vote) of head and the voice(vote) of breast, which also establishes(constitutes) an identity element.

The varied rhythmic formulae which support the dances show too the wealth of the culture pygmy aka, which nowadays is endangered.

This is the way the Group Ndima, consisted of musicians pygmies aka of the village Kombola, Republic of the Congo, attempts to promote and to protect through shows(entertainments), recordings and diverse meetings, their musical heritage(holdings).

Through this show(entertainment) of singings(songs) and dances, " Moaka na ndima " - Literally The pygmy aka in the forest, the musicians of Ndima invite the public of the Festival of the imagination in a journey in the depths of the equatorial forest, in a meeting of pygmies

PRESENTATION DES ARTISTES DU GROUPE NDIMA

PRESENTATION(DISPLAY) OF THE ARTISTS OF the GROUP NDIMA

-EMILIE KOULE

She is the singer and dancer of the group Ndima and also the co-founder of the group since 2003. Emilie Koule is and will stay together with Angelica Manongo the feminine voices which made known on the national level first the polophonic music of the pygmy, music of a long time underestimated by the Congolese. She participated in the realization of both CDs of the group Ndima; the first one was published in 2003 with the support of Unesco and Japanese Government.

Head voice singer, « kingo ya bolé » in aka language and talented dancer, she has the perfect control of the singing in counterpoint and of the various dances of the heritage of the aka pygmy. Together with Nadège Motambo she will, they will again be the feminine voices duo which made the success of their first European tour (summer 2015 will be their 4th European tour ... and even Asian – Rain Forest Festival)

-NADEGE MOTANBO

Head voice singer "kingo ésoni" language aka, Nadège MOTAMBO seduced by its artistic qualities and dance during a party in the village of Kombola his mentor Sorel ETA who will integrate her in the group Ndima. She has distinguished herself in 2012 during the first European tour of Ndima fulfilling the role of lead vocal in the absence of Angelique Manongo. Tireless dancer, she knows how to keep captive an audience by her ability to yodel and sing gracefully counterpoint techniques she has learned since childhood imitating her elder.

-OLIVIER MANIALE

Singer, dancer, percussionist, harpist, flutist ... Olivier MANIALE is a one-man band. Endowed with a remarkable courage and with good qualities of communication which distinguish him from his peers, he proved several times that the group can count on him during the shows and the workshops. His artistic qualities confer him the leader's status. His presence is an asset for the success of Ndima on tour.

-DOPO KOUDZEDZE

He is the youngest of the Group. Skillful percussionist, the keys of the various rhythmic formulae of the directory of Ndima are in his hands. Tireless and requiring, he looks after the good execution by his peers of the polyrhythms who accompany the singings and the dances. Its presence and its dexterity to put in vibration its drum of preference " Ngué ", aka word that indicates the mother of drums, reassure his partners .

-MICHEL KOSSI

Hunter-gatherer just like his parents as well as his peers, Michel Kossi practices the music for cultural and economic needs of his community. Percussionist, player of the musical bow, the hooked harp, the harp-zither, he is also a singer and a dancer. Its artistic qualities and his passion for its culture make that he is omnipresent in the activities of the group Ndima.

-RICHARD EKOUME

Drummer and singer (head voice), Richard Ekoume comes for the first time on tour, far from his native forest and village of Kombola. He will be part, in some songs of a quartet of voices and in some other in a duo of skillful drummers. Confident of his artistic qualities

-SOREL ETA

Self-taught ethnologist and manager of the group Ndima, Sorel ETA studies with passion the culture of aka pygmies, community that he met in 1996 in the forest of the North of the Republic of the Congo. He is used to saying that is trained at " the University of the forest " by his professors: the aka pygmies. He creates in 2003 the group Ndima (the forest), with which he intends to emphasize the aka musicians, their musical heritage, to favor the cultural exchanges with other artists, and to promote the dialogue of culture between pygmies and other peoples. His knowledge of the environment of aka life allows him to present communications on this endangered culture, and to coordinate the shows of the group Ndima.

SUMMARY OF the SHOW

Moaka na ndima or the "aka pygmy in the forest " is a journey in the depths of the equatorial forest. This show, of a duration of sixty minutes, invites the public to make a dive in the history in the discovery of the aka man and of its musical heritage that is nowadays endangered.

" Moaka na ndima ", it is also the discovery of the voices of aka pygmies and mainly the complex vocal techniques such as the counterpoint and the yodel, the specificities of their musical genre compared with the music of their neighbors, the Bantu.

Moaka na ndima, it is still the expression of the mesmerizing melodies of chordophones as harp-zither " mondoumein ", and the musical bow " mbela ", instruments having the peculiarity to be of use to aka in the hunting.

Moaka na ndima, is finally the wealth and the complexity of the rhythmic formulae of drums evoking diverse circumstances of the everyday life of pygmies aka.

Through a diversified directory, the musicians of the group Ndima intend to give a representative outline of their music and their tradition