

from ♦ coffee ♦ beans ♦ to ♦ disinfectant ♦



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BATIMAMZEL DANCE THEATRE COMPANY

FROM COFFEE BEANS TO DISINFECTANT

A new, exciting and exhilarating dance 'From Coffee Beans to Disinfectant' embraces the cultures of the Caribbean, which is a fusion of African, Asian, and European styles, presenting images and forms in a unique blend of dance/theatre.

This innovative masterpiece opens at The Roundhouse in March 1986 and is choreographed and directed by Greta Mendez who devised the idea of the show. She stated; 'Since my arrival in Britain in 1970, I have been confronted with negative images of black people. It is reinforced daily via the media, and by the lack of black people in position of effective power/control. Not puppet power, the people constantly in need of charity/aid, so that everyone can give money and feel good about themselves. There is an obvious psychological and demoralising effect on a generation who have not been exposed to anything but the negative'.

A dancer of remarkable versatility, Ms Mendez has joined Geraldine Connor, Clarinda Salandy, Bebe Barrett and other skilled musicians and singers to bring an entertaining and thoughtful new social piece to the stage.

Greta Mendez: *Choreographer / Director*

'A Trinidadian dynamo who made a potent impact on both audiences and critics', said Time Out. Greta has a history of dance/theatre teaching and choreographing experience, and has performed in a variety of shows. These includes 'Mas in May', MAAS Movers, BBC2 Riverside', and 'Samson et Delilah'. She was featured on the cover of Time Out March 1981, and in Cosmopolitan magazine in March '83. Greta is a forerunner in the art of dance/theatre of her generation, The Times said 'Greta Mendez in her solo showed the precision and imagination the rest of the programme lacked'. 'When she let rip with her dancing as in her sportive, friendly-competitive duet with tall, fair Steven Giles, she and he both look splendid'. 'Greta Mendez has choreographed things to perfection'.

Geraldine Connor: *Musical Director/Arranger.*

The daughter of Pearl and Edric Conner, Geraldine was trained at the Royal College of Music as a Mezzo Soprano, and is a member of the Music Teacher Association of Trinidad & Tobago. A winner of numerous music awards, she has travelled extensively and has wide ranging experiences in the field of music and theatre. She is Education Supervisor at the Brent Black Music Co-op., and is also a member of the Brent Black Music Caribbean Focus Choir. Geraldine with her beautiful, powerful and very expressive voice fronted the group BLAZE which supported the singer Billy Paul on his last British Tour. As well as being an accomplished singer/musician, Geraldine's potential as an actress has been recognised, and was acclaimed in the 13 part T.V. series shown in the Caribbean 'Old Story Time'. She spends a major part of her time teaching the piano, recorder, steelband, as well as the theory and history of music.

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Beyhan Fowkes: *Dancer*

Trained in ballet and Graham Technique (at LSCD), Beyhan has been involved in various dance/theatre productions with a wide range of dancers, musicians and actors, as a choreographer and artiste, both on stage and on screen. Among these are; 'King and I', 'Ludus', Jumpers Dance Company, Wayne Sleep's 'Dash' and 'Hot Shoe Show', BBC1's 'Pebble Mill', several pop videos, 'Riverside' on BBC2, Dance Umbrella, Fusion Dance Company, Charity Galas, and most recently with Marguerite Porter and Stephen Jeffries from the Royal Ballet.

Bunty Mattias: *Dancer*

Trained at the London School of Contemporary Dance and the Alvin Ailey American Dance School, Bunty has a background of contemporary/jazz training. She played the part of Josephine Baker in the recently televised series 'Bluebell' and has also appeared in 'The Little Shop of Horrors', 'Something's Wrong in Paradise' and Tom Jobes 'City'.

Lati Saka: *Dancer*

This Nigerian dancer has already acquired valuable performing and choreographic experience with the Young Vic, The Curtain Theatre, The Cockpit Youth Company and Fusion. She also teaches dance/movement at Youth Clubs.

Sheilah Cuffy: *Dancer*

Sheliah has performed as a member of the Omnibus dance/song/drama group, and has worked as backing vocalist for 'Mistaken Identity' the support band for Millie Jackson on her 1985 tour. Currently a member of BLAZE, who performed at the I.C.A. Rock Week, and were support for Billy Paul at the Hammersmith Odeon in Jan. '86.

Michael Joseph: *Dancer*

Michael studied at the Leicestershire County school of Dance and Drama and is an experienced actor/dancer/acrobat. He took part in the film 'Knights and Emeralds'; and has also played at the London Coliseum in 'Orpheus in the Underworld' 'Faust' and 'Don Carlos' and at the Royal Opera House in 'Turandot'.

Ann Fridal: *Singer*

Born in Trinidad & Tobago, Ann studied at the Royal College of Music, and in America as a Dramatic Soprano. She now lives in Milan, Italy.

Harry Morgan: *Musician*

A percussionist who began his career with a band called The Black Disciples, Harry is interested in Jazz. He worked with Howard Jones on his tour of the US September - November 1985. With 'Mistaken Identity' and Millie Jackson in April 1985 on their British tour, and in the past has recorded with Princess, Blaze, Daryl Hall, Hazel Dean and Dead or Alive.

Clarinda Salandy: *Designer*

One of the designers for the Notting Hill Carnival 1985, Clarinda created the set for the 'Sacred Music of Tibet' which was performed at the Almeida Theatre, in January 1986. She has been with Temba since August 1985 designing the sets for 'ALL YOU DESERVE' and 'MAMA DECEMBA' at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre and 'Pirate Princess' which will be shown at The Arts Theatre as part of the Black Theatre Season. Clarinda designed the set for this production of 'From Coffee Beans to Disinfectant' together with Bebe Barrett.

Bebe Barrett: *Designer*

Bebe has worked on various sets, including 'Pippin' 'Un Ballo in Maschera' a Beaufort opera, and in the 1984 Edinburgh Fringe with the National Students Theatre Company. She was assistant designer for the Chichester Festival 1985, and is Artistic Director for 'Gathering Stones' one of the films to be shown at BAFTA Awards in March 1986

FROM COFFEE BEANS TO DISINFECTANT

This work deals with transition from a time when people controlled their lives, to slavery, through to the sophisticated forms of slavery control. Images are vibrant, and vital, and a reminder to the majority of African, Asian and Caribbean people of a culture, rich in music, dance and rhythm

Company

Battimamzel Dance Theatre Company is a multi-racial ensemble which was set up by Greta Mendez in 1985. Its aim is to highlight, and to bring to the public's attention those deep-rooted aspects of caribbean culture which had previously been stifled, and to utilise the natural arts and experiences which are unique to black people, merging it with classic and contemporary styles of today to bring together and direct the whole into an educational, cultural and dynamic force.

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The Black Experience Arts Programme is a London-wide programme reflecting historical and contemporary black experiences through a variety of art forms. It runs from February to the end of March 1986 in



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