

## **Dance #1 - Soko, Kandia Soli, and Gumbe/Dansa**

“Soko” comes from the Komanko people of the Faranah region of Guinea.

“Soli” is a rhythm of the Malinke-people from Guinea.

Soko, Kandia Soli is a dance normally performed by children as they enter the village to let their relatives know that there will be a circumcision. This rhythm accompanies the time leading up to the moment itself for the children that have not yet undergone the rite of passage into adulthood. In this context, it shows the role and responsibilities of youth in society. Kandia Soli accompanies the rite, which precedes initiation (circumcision) of boys and, unfortunately girls. Playing this rhythm occasionally starts about three months before the ritual and the frequency of playing increases until the last night before initiation. *Ask yourself:* How do you see and celebrate your body and how do you see and celebrate the body of a person of color? As you watch these movements, connect the image of the black body remaining a brutal subject in modern day America, and examine how the movement can cause an adaptive reaction to your kinesthetic senses.

Gumbe/Dansa - Gumbe is one of the most influential and important music genres in Sierra Leone intertwined with the history of the freed slaves who relocated during the 18th century. The arrival of the gumbe drum in Sierra Leone is directly related to the history of the Maroons in Jamaica. These Maroons were former African slaves that had escaped into the mountains. There they preserved their culture for more than 200 years. Gumbe gradually transformed into the Creole music genre identified with the broader Creole population of Sierra Leone. Dansa originates from the Kassouke-people from Southern Mali (Kayes-region), originally a competition dance for young men. Nowadays it's a popular rhythm played all over West Africa.

## **Dance #2 - Kassa/Sofa**

Kassa meaning, “to plant” in Malinke, is a family of rhythms associated with the harvest, created by the Malinke ethnic group from the Upper Region of Guinea. As farmers work in remote fields, drummers play for them throughout the working day, accompanied by women singing. People go to the fields from the village to cheer for the farmers and provide them with food, playing the rhythm and dancing in support of the farmers as they work. Because this labor is done without machinery, singers, drummers and dancers are there to encourage the farmers to persevere with joyful spirits.

“Sofa” means “warrior” in Malinke. This rhythm was played for warriors on horseback, to support their bravery and strength of going into combat, and as well as praise them for their success when they come back.

## **Dance 3 - Iyipada (Change)**

“Iyipada” means “change” in the Yoruba language. Yoruba (Èdè Yorùbá) is a member of the Volta-Niger branch of the Niger-Congo family of languages, and is spoken by

approximately 28 million people in Southwest Nigeria, Benin, Togo, the UK, Brazil and the USA.

In collaboration with Noble Savage, Arien Wilkerson has choreographed a performance that uses a consistent movement score, which then elevates, reconfigures and adapts itself throughout its duration. This adaptation is led by three distinct rhythms; free form jazz, femi kuti, and the sounds of the Noble Savage nomadic DJs. With their help, the rhythms and their distinct differences will challenge the viewer's outlook on the modernization of traditional dance in performance settings, especially its role in the gallery or museum.

This performance is not intended to entertain you, but rather, remind you to be present in receiving how movement is an effortless thread line to our own personal sense of adaptation. *As you watch, think about those who are unable to access all of their body, those who might be paralyzed or handicap. Hold space in their honor.*

We close the performance ending an all out dance party with tunes by Noble Savage Nomadic DJ