


OU

André Braga & Cláudia Figueiredo with Panaibra Canda

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A photograph of two men in a dance performance. The man on the left is white with a beard, wearing a light grey long-sleeved shirt and dark blue trousers, in a dynamic pose with one arm raised. The man on the right is Black with a beard, wearing a brown long-sleeved shirt and dark blue trousers, in a crouched pose with one arm extended towards the first man. They are on a light-colored floor against a dark background.

Resulting from a collaboration between André Braga & Cláudia Figueiredo and Mozambican choreographer Panaibra Canda, *OU* emerges from the desire to create from a specific landscape: Inhambane, a land of family and colonial memories, where the present mingles with the reverberations of the past.

With a strongly transdisciplinary language, *OU* weaves together dance, sound, video, and spoken word into a sensory fabric that invites listening and imagination. The performance is an invitation to think about History through fiction, fabulation, and the ghostly presence as a form of justice and remembrance. Here, the body does not merely dance: it speaks, remembers, resists, and dreams.



"The voice of the sea filled the sky and the earth. A voice that is full and breaks, and never ends."

In its continuous ebb and flow, the sea brings and carries with it memories from all times.

It was the sea that brought Vasco da Gama to Inhambane, a city in southern Mozambique which he named "Land of Good People."

And it was through the sea that thousands of enslaved people were taken from Inhambane, many of them lost forever to its waters.

"— The sea is a world. In the sea, there is life. There are mountains, plants, wind, and fish. There is human life in the depths."

Inspired by the mythology of Drexciya—which imagines an underwater people descended from African slaves thrown overboard during the Atlantic crossing — and by the testimony of a healer from Inhambane about her experiences with sea spirits, *OU* reflects on multiple encounters.

The encounter of two bodies—with their forces, abstractions, stories, and desires.

The encounter between sea and land, the visible and the invisible, the ancestral and the contemporary, the spiritual and the earthly.



*"Memory is rooted in the tangible—in spaces, gestures, images, and objects."
We are interested in thinking about History from other perspectives, other voices,
other languages, and from a cross-thinking that overlays past, present, and future.
We continue to explore what Paul Carter called the "politics of the ground":
"a new way of treading that does not flatten the land, but allows the ground
to climb the body, to determine gestures and movements in a new social
choreography."*

*"To share the Earth or to repair it is to make an effort to listen, to look, and
to see reality from different worlds; it is to make an effort to read and
interpret History based on a multiplicity of archives.
To share the Earth means to learn to be born together."
— Achille Mbembe*





"— The world is a source of potentialities, whose magnitude cannot be measured. We know very little about life."

— Paulina Chiziane

She says she went to the sea, after twelve years of preparation with an elder. She says that on the first day she went into the sea, she entered around 3 p.m. and came out the next day at 4 a.m.

She brought back medicines, shells, and plants for burning. Now, explaining what happens there in the sea is not easy, because it's not her. It's her transformed into a spirit. That spirit enters, does all the work, and only after it leaves does she return as a person. It's a mystery, an ancient secret that can never be revealed.

"Two bodies that History did not drown allow themselves to be carried by the sea."

In *OU*, a Portuguese and a Mozambican—André Braga and Panaibra Canda—meet and reflect one another in a place of the living, the dead, and the ghosts of both: the Indian Ocean.

OU is about telling another story. What the sea returns, what the shells whisper, what the healer who disappears for days into the Indian Ocean bears witness to—*"touch far more sensitive and far more interesting places, places that identify us as human."*

"We wanted to think the world beyond paradigms and common sense, and open ourselves entirely to other forms of imagination."

Inês Nadais, in *Ípsilon*, May 23, 2025



ARTISTIC INFO

COLLECTIVE CREATION

Artistic direction, concept development and dramaturgy: André Braga, Cláudia Figueiredo and Panaibra Canda in collaboration with Gonçalo Mota and João Sarnadas

Performance: André Braga and Panaibra Canda

Sound design: João Sarnadas

Video: Gonçalo Mota

Lighting: Santiago Rodríguez Tricot

Text: excerpts from a conversation with Constança José Beoula

Set design: André Braga in collaboration with the whole team

Costumes: Sandra Neves

Construction support: Joana Mesquita Alves, Sandra Neves, Pedro Coutinho, and Nuno Guedes

Production direction: Ana Carvalhosa

Production: Joana Mesquita Alves (project coordination) and Cláudia Santos

Administrative support: João Gravato

Technical coordination: Pedro Coutinho

Communication: Joana Borges

CO-PRODUCTION

DDD – Festival Dias da Dança; São Luiz Teatro Municipal;

Teatro das Figuras; Teatro Aveirense / CM Aveiro

SUPPORT

CulturArte Mozambique (support structure for artist Panaibra Canda)

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INFORMATION

Premiere date: April 2025

Age-rating: over 12 years old

Venue: suitable for theatres and non-conventional spaces;

Blackout required.

The team is available to carry out parallel activities related to the performance.



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