



CULTURAL SERVICES
FRENCH EMBASSY
IN THE UNITED STATES



FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON – FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES SEASON #1 – CLASSES D'ART - ONLINE

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Olivier Py

Author, director and actor, Olivier Py, born in 1965, has been one of the most important authors and directors of European theater and opera for the past thirty years. After studying at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre (Ensatt) in Lyon, he attended the Conservatoire National des Arts Dramatiques, in Paris in 1987, while also studying theology. In 1998, Olivier Py was appointed director of the Centre Dramatique National (CDN) d'Orléans. He then took over the leadership of the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe in Paris from 2007 to 2011. During these years, his work has been featured many times at the Festival d'Avignon and it also toured internationally included in the United States. Olivier Py became director of the Festival d'Avignon starting with the 2014 edition.

Caroline Guiela Nguyen

After studying at Conservatoire d'Avignon in 2004, Caroline Guiela Nguyen enrolled in the School of Théâtre de Strasbourg to study directing. In 2009, she founded the company Les Hommes Approximatifs, and since then, has developed several productions. Her work reveals a passion for both the fictional and the real, which she explores conjointly by bringing together amateur and professional actors coming from different social, geographic, cultural and spiritual backgrounds. Starting in 2015, Caroline has been collaborating with the playwright-director Joël Pommerat and Compagnie Louis Brouillard. She is currently working on a new cycle that includes three new works: A film shot with inmates from Maison Centrale d'Arles Prison, and two theatre projects in close collaboration with Odéon - Théâtre de l'Europe and The Schaubühne Theatre in Berlin, where she is currently an associate artist.

Angelique Kidjo

Beninese popular singer Angelique Kidjo navigates between three continents, several languages, and musical adventures that enlarge the scope of African music to pop, jazz, and modern opera. Her fiery temperament and her engagement have made her one of the symbols of a complex mutant culture, at once shifting and deeply rooted. The BBC has included her in its list of fifty icons of the African continent. Time Magazine called her the "first African diva" and she is part of The Guardian's list of the 100 most influential women in

the world. The Daily Telegraph described her in 2012, at the London Olympics, as the “undisputed queen of African music”. She occasionally writes for the New York Times. On July 25, 2017, she created the show *Femme noire/Black Woman* after a poem by Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Celebration of African women*, presented in the Cour d’Honneur of the Palais des Papes as the closing show of the 71st Festival d’Avignon. Angelique Kidjo is the recipient of many awards, among which are three world music Grammy Awards and one contemporary music Grammy Award.

François Chaignaud

François Chaignaud began studying dance at the age of six. After graduating from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Danse de Paris in 2003, he worked with several choreographers such as Boris Charmatz, Emmanuelle Huynh, and Alain Buffard, as well as developing his own works. From *He’s One that Goes to Sea for Nothing but to Make him sick* (2004) to *Думи мої* (2013), he has created performances in which dance and singing intersect in a variety of environments. In the tension that he creates, the possibilities of a body take shape, inhabiting the space between the sensual rigor of movement, the evocative power of singing, and the convergence of heterogeneous historical references — from erotic literature (*Aussi Bien Que Ton Cœur Ouvre Moi Les Genoux*, 2008) to sacred art. Also a historian, François Chaignaud published *L’Affaire Berger-Levrault: le féminisme à l’épreuve* (1898-1905) with PUR.

About The Festival d’Avignon

Founded by Jean Vilar in 1947, the Festival d’Avignon is one of the most important performing arts events in the world. Every year in July, the festival brings together around fifty contemporary creations and the world’s greatest artists in theatre, dance, music, and visual arts in the heart of the Provençal summer. The Festival d’Avignon also marks an important and unique moment of debate and meetings on culture in France, Europe, and the world. Several shows are performed in historic locations and UNESCO heritage sites, the most prestigious of which is the Cour d’Honneur of the Palais des Papes. The Festival d’Avignon is emblematic of the policy of cultural decentralization in France and dedication to French culture. The Festival d’Avignon welcomes more than 600 French, European and international journalists and more than 130,000 spectators each summer. Since September 2013, the Festival d’Avignon has been directed by author and director Olivier Py. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 edition has been canceled.

<https://festival-avignon.com/en>

About The Cultural Services of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in The United States

The Cultural Services of the French Embassy promotes the best of French arts, literature, cinema, digital innovation, language, and higher education across the U.S. Based in New York City, Washington D.C., and eight other cities across the country, the Cultural Services brings artists, authors, intellectuals, and innovators to cities nationwide. It also builds partnerships between French and American artists, institutions, and universities on both sides of the Atlantic, and fosters French-American exchange around literature and the arts.

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