

**ECOLE  
DES  
SABLES**  
GERMAINE ACOGNY

# ATCHA-ATCHA!

**ACOGNY TECHNIQUE**

OPEN LEVEL IMMERSIVE WORKSHOP

3-15 FEBRUARY 2025

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# ATCHA-ATCHA !

## ACOGNY TECHNIQUE IMMERSIVE WORKSHOP

From 3 to 15 February 2025

Under the artistic direction of Alesandra Seutin and Wesley Ruzibiza, **Atcha-Atcha!** is a **two-week immersive workshop dedicated to the Acogny Technique (AT)**.

The Acogny Technique is one of the few codified modern African dance techniques. It is based on a sensitive and unique approach to the body, in harmony with nature, emphasizing humanity and individual sensations to better express them.

This dance experience offers daily practice focused on the modern African dance technique of Germaine Acogny, the creative exploration of this method to create hybrid worlds, as well as the practice of traditional dances that form its foundations.

**Open to all levels, it is aimed at people aged 18 and over** from around the world, eager to embark on an enriching dance adventure.



# WHERE ?

Ecole des Sables

Toubab Dialaw, Senegal

The Ecole des Sables, **International Center of Traditional and Contemporary African Dances**, is at the same time a school for theoretical and practical teaching, a research laboratory and a place for meetings and exchanges, conferences and artistic residencies.

The School was **founded in 1998 by Germaine Acogny** and her husband **Helmut Vogt**. Since then, the School has regularly organised professional training courses bringing together dancers and choreographers from Africa, its diaspora and the whole world. More than 700 dancers from 26 African countries have benefited from a high level of technical training, given by internationally renowned African and Western teachers.

The work space consists of two large dance rooms: one of 400m<sup>2</sup> with a sand floor, called "Aloopho"; the other of 280m<sup>2</sup> with a professional dance floor, called "Henriette Room". In addition, the Centre also has a conference room to ensure optimal reception. The School has 24 bungalows with a total capacity of 72 people, divided into three "villages". Meals are taken in the Centre's restaurant, which can accommodate 70 people and is run by the women of the village.

In 2020, the artistic direction of École des Sables was entrusted to **Alesandra Seutin** and **Wesley Ruzibiza**, both former students and holders of the Acogny technique diploma. They work in collaboration with **Paul Sagne**, who, after 17 years of development within the school, now holds the position of administrative and General director.



# ACCOMMODATION, CATERING, CARE, EQUIPMENT

Ecole des Sables  
Toubab Dialaw, Senegal



Participants are accommodated in the Centre's **24 bungalows** (equipped with mosquito nets and fans), with 2 to 3 people per bungalow. Some of the bungalows have en-suite bathrooms and toilets (reserved primarily for older people). The other bathrooms, which are well-equipped and built in an original architectural style, are located right next to the bungalows.

Meals are taken in the Centre's restaurant overlooking the lagoon and the ocean. They are prepared by a team of cooks made up of village women, under rigorous hygiene conditions. The cuisine is varied and healthy: rice, fish, meat, lots of local vegetables and fruit, adapted to Western tastes and stomachs.

The Centre is equipped with a nurse's house where a doctor is on hand throughout the course. Minor cases or those that do not necessarily require the intervention of a specialist can be treated on site. Some cases requiring specialist advice and consultation can be referred to Rufisque (the nearest town, 25 kilometres away) or Dakar. The village of Toubab Dialaw has a pharmacy, a clinic and a professional masseuse. A WIFI connection is available.



# THE TEACHERS

## ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop

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**OMILADE D. SMITH**

Acogny Technique

A multifaceted artist-scholar and curriculum developer, Dr. Omilade Davis-Smith has worked the majority of her life as a dancer, educator and performer. Omi earned a PhD in Dance from Temple University with a specialization in the development of contemporary dance in Senegal, and an MFA in Dance from Arizona State University with a focus on contemporary African dance techniques and somatic approaches to choreography. She is one of 17 people certified in the practice and pedagogy of Germaine Acogny's Modern African Dance Technique, and she apprenticed with Guinea's Ballets Africains from 2021-2022. Omi is currently Assistant Professor of Dance at American University's Department of Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. She also serves as the Professeur chargé de l'élaboration du programme d'études for the École des Sables.

Omi's scholarly research focuses on continuities across African American, Caribbean and Francophone African cultural histories. Her movement research employs choreographic tools to explore connections between language, rhythm, symbolism and aesthetics in African social and contemporary dances.

In her current book project, *Putting Africa in Her Place: Germaine Acogny's Modern African Dance Technique*, Omi engages a new pan-African theoretical framework to examine cultural and ideological values embedded within the Acogny Technique. She has taught widely in West African and US institutions, including the University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Minnesota, L'Institut Supérieur des Arts Mory Kante in Dubréka, Guinea and L'École des Sables Centre International de Danses Traditionnelles et Contemporaines in Toubab Dialaw, Senegal.



# THE TEACHERS

## ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop

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### **RAOUF TCHAKONDO**

Creativity around the Acogny technique  
with dances from Togo

Raouf Tchakondo is a Franco-Togolese dancer, choreographer and teacher with over 20 years' professional teaching experience. He gives regular classes to amateurs, young dancers and professionals in Togo and abroad, notably at the École des Sables since 2011.

He offers intense physical work by building bridges between different traditional West African dances, modern dances, classical dance and the Germaine Acogny technique, of which he is one of the heirs. His approach is to take dancers to a simple world where the body is in joy by teaching the basic elements: the contact of the feet, the positioning of the pelvis, the positioning of the spine and above all the mobilisation of the sternum. Through his teaching, he invites dancers to develop the confidence to go beyond their limits while retaining the joy of dancing. Artistic director of the Aske Dance company, the Fédération Togolaise de Danse and the Fesnad (Festival National des danses traditionnelles du Togo) ... Miscellaneous: Combat sports: Taekwondo, Aikido and jujitsu Plastic arts Actor and comedian.

# THE TEACHERS

## ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop

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**MAMADOU BALDÉ**

Sabar

Mamadou Baldé was born on 6 October 1979 in Saint-Louis, Senegal.

As a child, he attended primary schools (Oumar Sy Diagne) until the fifth grade where he was admitted to the 6th grade in the 1992/1993 school year at the Augustin Henry Louis Guillabert College in St Louis.

In 1994, he left the college and joined the troupe of his neighbourhood as a young actor/dancer who performed in competitions during the rainy season (called Navetanes), which put different troupes from the neighbourhoods of the city of Saint-Louis in competition on different themes proposed by the national office of ONCAV (Organisation Nationale et Coordination des Activités de Vacances).

1995/1996: Zonal Champion with the ASC Tonnerre de Saint-Louis in Theatre, Awarded revelation of the year in dance

1996/1997: Zonal Champion with ASC Diaminar as choreographer, Departmental vice-champion with ASC Diaminar

1998/1999: Creation of the Dance Group called ALCAM Boys from which he gathers dancers recruited in the ASC troops (who provided the dance with the Guneyi orchestra of Saint-Louis)

2000/2006: He provided choreography in various establishments in the city of Saint-Louis in their school activities on the occasion of their cultural day.

And also provided choreography in sports and cultural associations.

2007: Dance course at the Ecole des Sables

2008: Integration into the JANT BI Company as a tradimodern contemporary dancer

2009/2016: International tour with the company JANT BI in various countries of the diaspora such as France, Spain, Germany, USA, Croatia, Poland, Austria, Portugal, Holland

2016/2021: Organization of dance courses in France, Belgium in collaboration with associations.

# THE PROGRAMME

ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop  
From 3 to 15 February 2025

## WEEK 1 & 2

Monday to Friday

**07:30-08:30** Breakfast

**09:15-11:15** Acogny Technique

**11:30-13:00** Sabar dance class

**13:30-14:30** Lunch

**15:30-17:30** Creativity around Acogny Technique

**18:00-19:00** Screenings/Conversations/Knowledge sharing (2/3 times a week)

**19:30-20:30** Dinner

**Saturday and Sunday off (except optional excursion week 1)**

***THIS PROGRAMME MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE***



# MORE INFORMATION

ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogy Technique Immersive Workshop  
From 3 to 15 February 2025

## WHERE?

ÉCOLE DES SABLES, SENEGAL

## WHEN ?

**FROM 3 TO 15 FEBRUARY 2025**

## DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS ?

**Friday, 3 January 2025** (please note applications are selected as they come, places are limited to 30 participants)

## HOW TO APPLY ?

Please send us a photo and a letter of intent letting us know who you are and why you would like to take part in this internship by completing the following application **FORM**.

# PARTICIPATION FEES

ATCHA-ATCHA ! Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop  
From 3 to 15 February 2025

**FEE : 1,225€**

**INCLUDED :** (classes, accommodation, breakfast/lunch/dinner, local airport transfer and 1 excursion included)

*Not including: Airfare, visa (if needed), covid test and travel/health insurance.*

## **PAYMENT PLAN :**

200€ to reserve your place, no later than **10 days** after acceptance.

*525€ before 15 December 2024*

*500€ before 13 January 2025*

*Or*

*Full payment (€1,225) before **13 January 2025***

### ***In the event of cancellation :***

*Non-refundable deposit of €200.*

*After 15 December 2024 and until 13 January 2025, €525 of the total amount will be retained.*

*After 13 January 2025, the full amount will be retained.*

*The transaction charges are the responsibility of the participant.*

# CONTACT INFORMATION

ATCHA-ATCHA ! Germaine Acogny Technique Immersive Workshop | From 3 to 15 February 2025



## ECOLE DES SABLES

More information: [candidature@ecoledessables.org](mailto:candidature@ecoledessables.org)

Artistic Directors

**Alesandra Seutin:** [alesandra.seutin@ecoledessables.org](mailto:alesandra.seutin@ecoledessables.org)

**Wesley Ruzibiza:** [wesley.ruzibiza@ecoledessables.org](mailto:wesley.ruzibiza@ecoledessables.org)

General and Administrative Director

**Paul Sagne:** [paul.sagne@ecoledessables.org](mailto:paul.sagne@ecoledessables.org)

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