

Constance Mbassi Manga
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Singer, Songwriter, Worship Leader, Backing Vocalist, Vocal Coach, Music Practitioner, VO Actress, Playwright, Script writer, Creative Writer.

CAREER HISTORY

October 2020 – March 2021:

Artist in residence at Benfield School in Newcastle (working remotely/part time):

- exploring and training young people in performance and vocal skills
- engaging diverse young people attending Benfield School
- encouraging and support the sharing of cultures to develop stronger community cohesion
- developing a strong relationship with the young people and staff to confidently explore music/performance development engagement in and out of school environment
- working closely with partner organisation to discuss equipment, training and recruitment to ensure the project develops accordingly throughout the 6-month period
- exploring other funding streams with partner organisation to support development if this is required
- reflecting and sharing learning and creativity via monthly evaluation sheets and attendance at artist gatherings
- proportionately managing time allocated and budget throughout the residency
- supporting all participants to create quality music/performance skills and product throughout.

March 2018 – October 2020:

Creation of the musical Haendel on the Estate (music and book)

- **full performance of the musical at Arts Depot in October 2020**
- excerpts performed at Ovalhouse in London from 14-16 February 19.
- live performance of one of the songs from the musical at BEAM Brunch (The Other Palace, London) on 22 February 2019
- leading the CONNECT workshop at Ovalhouse about adding music to plays on 23 February 2019

(2015 – February 2020)

Worship leading at St Barnabas Church, North Finchley at least 8 times a month, during the main church services (300-650 people attending), mid-week praise and worship event (Banners Worship, Leaders' conference, Corporate Prayer meetings etc.) – more recently, Zoom worship leading for a range of churches.

(October 2019 – February 2020)

- **Leader of the new gospel choir** at St Barnabas Church; 1st performance on December 15th at The Bohemia Pub, North Finchley and December 21st at Caffe Vero, North Finchley
- Private singing lessons to teenagers and adults (including professional singers)

October – December 2018

Singer and actress in the play Yerma (García Lorca) – playing the Old Woman

April – June 2018:

Lead and ensemble singing in Verity Standen's creation Undersong performed at MayFest in Bristol and at Ovalhouse in London.

21-24 September 2017:

Lead vocals on my composition called 'If the sea could speak' – performed at the Tower of London as part of Totally Thames 2017

July 2010 – May 2011:

Lead singer in Cirque du Soleil show Totem (Venues: Royal Albert Hall, North American tour – Charlotte, Baltimore)

October 2007 - June 2008

Touring with CARGO (Paul Field's presentation/show), bicentennial of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade – lead and backing vocals

COCO MBASSI BAND

Lead vocals - live performances with my band (many venues, festivals etc – since 1993 – more information on www.cocombassi.co.uk)

3 albums released (Sepia, 2001, Sisea, 2003, and Jóa, 2014) and 1 live DVD of tour performances (Coco Mbassi Tour, 2005)

Africa Calling Eden 'Live 8' Concert, Rigas Ritmi Festival, Kaunasjazz, Jazzkaar, Louisiana International Festival, Jazz Sous Les Pommiers, Normandy, France, Festival d'Été in Montréal and Nuits d'Afrique in Québec, Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Afroprojekt in Würzburg..., Pollen radio show with Jean-Louis Foulquier, Festival des REMY in Yaoundé (Cameroon)...Womad festivals in Reading and Cornwall, UK; Caceres, Spain; Las Palmas, Canary Islands, Adelaide, Australia...

VOCAL COACHING/ SINGING LESSONS/ WORKSHOPS

Adults

Since February 2017: Regular African Polyphony and Polyrhythm workshops, London

May 2013: South Thames College, London – singing technique

2001 - 2012: African polyphony workshops: Hlasohled, Prague, Czech Republic, Womad festivals, Adelaide, Australia, Reading; Womad Summer School (Bath Spa Uni), Conspiracy to sing workshops, Buncrana, Co Donegal, Ireland, Momboye Centre, Paris, France...

June 2007: African singing, rhythm and dancing workshop, Riga (Latvia)

August 2006: Music workshop leader, Orpheus Centre for young disabled adults and teenagers; creation and performance of a musical during the African Week (2 weeks –live-in)

Children and teenagers

November 2017: Vocal polyphony workshops at Soundskool

September – December 2010: Creation of the Sing up pack for the Singing the Rhythms of Life WOMAD project to be delivered in 10 schools in Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire, including workshop materials and CPD content for teachers. Workshops delivered by Serge Ngando using the workbook I created, video available here: https://vimeo.com/20011872?fbclid=IwAR2uh2Rde-oqxvg0hUDCNOnM4mZuDjXlc2NFaCMXTgMf1HSufRqAuPZcZ_Q

(2009-2010)

African singing, Bodens Theatre School (groups of 10-15 young people aged 5 to 18)

(October 2006 -December 2009)

MAPS & Maximum Dance Design, UK - Black History Month workshop leader (singing, storytelling, poetry)

(September 08 - April 09)

Sacred Heart RC Secondary School (incl. GCSE/BTech preparation)

(May – June 2008)

Mbawula (South African gospel/choral singing) - primary & secondary schools in Yorkshire

October 2006-December 2006: Jigsaw Arts Schools

December 2005 – October 2010: Point Blank London

October 2005-March 2006: NPV (New Peckham Varieties), London

March to June 2003: Centre Municipal Guy Toffoletti, Bagnolet, France.

December 2000 – June 2002: ATEN Theatre Company, Gennevilliers, France (pop and gospel)

April-May 2002: Vocal coaching for the musical Erea's Side Story (with pupils of the professional High School Erea, Asnières, France).

May-June 2002: Vocal coaching for a children's play for primary school pupils (Lesseps primary school)

October 2001 – July 2002: Daniel Féry Centre, Nanterre, France - Vocal technique (r'n'b-soul)

BACKING VOCALS (RECORDING SESSIONS & LIVE CONCERTS) & COLLABORATIONS

- With: Paul Field, Sixun, Richard Bona, Nicoletta, Toure Kunda, Jocelyne Beroard, Salif Keita, Manu Dibango, Ray Lema, Demis Roussos, Nino Ferrer, Pierre Vassiliu, Ismaël Lo, Sol en Si (with Maurane, Michel Jonasz, Alain Souchon, Maxime le Forestier etc...), Gospel Symphonique with Clyde Wright of the Golden Gate Quartet and the classical orchestra Colonne (spring 2000), Les Enfoirés...

- Lead singer and backing vocalist for the creation 'Le Manacuba', by Luc le Masne (La Havana, Cuba in June 2000, la Cigale in March 2001, Orléans Jazz Festival, summer 2002); lead singer and backing vocalist for Anima (CD 'EDEN'), music composed and arranged by Luc le Masne (1995-1996).

- Member of the Gospel choir 'Les Chérubins' from 1991 to 1996, solo and choir. Narrator and singer for the classical contemporary creation 'Mémoires d'Eau', by Luc le Masne, performed at the very well-known Abbaye de Royaumont and the Auvers/Oise festival between the autumn of 1999 and June 2000 (directed by Michel Piquemal).

ACTING AND DANCE

August 2018:

- Speaking role of a mother in Shelley House, film by Lyle Bush
- Non-speaking role of a mysterious woman in Clipped by Claudia Kaleta

August 2017 - June 2018: Social Mover for Sadler's Wells Theatre via The Movement UK –Live and post-show video and written reviews of dance performances at Sadler's Wells and other venues on various Social Media platforms.

October 2006 – December 2008: Black History Month workshop leader – MAPS & MAXIMUM DANCE DESIGN – London, UK, (primary and secondary schools)

1989-1993:

Dancer with modern African bands from Cameroon, Mali and Congo (Salif Keita, Toto Guillaume, Geo Bilongo etc...); Dancing lessons given in dance centres in Paris, France.

Since 1993:

Dancer and choreographer in my band (Coco Mbassi band) during tours and live concerts.

VO, DUBBING, ADS etc...

(November 2019 - July 2020)

- UN Covid-19 awareness script (French with an African accent – via Elkanodata)
- MTV Shuga – reading scripts for the MTV Shuga TV show about raising HIV and safe sex awareness amongst young people in French speaking African countries
- Mercy Ships charity promotional videos (via Westfall Gold)

(2012 – 2014)

Voice Over for Matinee Multilingual, UK

(September 2006)

Wild at Heart ITV1 series - lead and backing vocals

(July 2003)

Lead and backing vocals on a compilation for film and ad music (Africa Pop-Koka Media)

2002

French dubbing and Duala version singing for Nestle and Maggi cube spots intended for the Ivory Coast and Cameroonian national TV and radio.

(2001 – 2005)

Various radio spots for Africa Number 1 (major black radio based in Paris, France)

(1994 – 2003)

Extra in films (e.g., L 627 by Bertrand Tavernier, Les amants du Pont Neuf by Leos Carax)

BOOKING AGENT

For Coco Mbassi Band between 1996 and 2018- booked Womad festivals, Jazzkaar festival in Estonia, Rigas Ritmi, Kaunasjazz etc...

AWARDS

Nominated for the BBC World Music Awards 2002

Winner of the German World Music Record Critics' Award 2001

Winner of the Radio France Internationale Découvertes contest in 1996 with the song 'Mwengue Mwa Ndolo', released on the compilations 'Women of Spirit' (Putumayo World Music) and New African Worldbeat vol.3

TRAINING

September 2011-June 2013: DTLLS/PGCE, French and Singing

October 2003: Music Industry training course at MCPS-PRS Alliance offices

Understanding the different roles present in the industry (publisher, manager, record label, writer, lawyer ...) and the importance of the Alliance for all these roles, in order to gain a broad understanding of the Alliance.

June 2006: City and Guilds teacher training preparatory course (at Point Blank London)

March 2006: Grade 2 Certificate for Singing (Trinity and Guildhall)

1997-2003: Vocal technique, body and voice training and interpretation at the Studio des Variétés (Paris).

1984-1986: Modern Jazz dancing lessons (2 years).

1987-1991: African dance lessons with the late Abeti Masikini (dancer and singer from Congo), and training with various traditional African dance ballets (Cameroonian, Congo and Guinea dances mostly) with Sammy Ateba (Cameroonian dancer and percussionist, Mohamed Bangoura, Georges Momboye...)

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Masters in Research, Social Sciences, Kings College

Holder of the IOL Diploma in Translation DIPTRANS

BICFET (British Institute Certificate in French and English Translation)

Holder of the French Baccalaureate.

Website creation + basic HTML

Microsoft Office Packages

Mac OS (up to OS 10.12 Sierra)

LANGUAGES

African languages: Duala native, basic Lingala (spoken)/intermediate Lingala (written)

European languages: French native; English, native level, German read and spoken (basic). Basic understanding of LATAM Spanish, Italian and Portuguese.