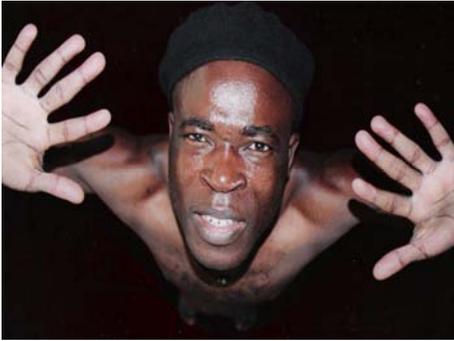


## Meet Assayigah



Assayigah is a highly qualified and experienced dancer, choreographer and teacher from Togo. He is also one of the few choreographers on the African continent to distance himself from the mimetic traditions he has himself researched and learned, and to approach African dance in a contemporary, personal way. His dazzling career has led him to teach alongside internationally-acclaimed instructors such as Germaine Acogny, Alphonse Tierou and Rose-Marie Guiraud, win a number of international awards, and to perform in over twenty countries. Assayigah currently works and lives in Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

Assayigah was born in Lomé, Togo, and started his training as a performer aged thirteen at the Ecole Expérimentale de Musique (*School of Experimental Music*) in Lomé. He then went on to study at the famous Ecole des Arts du Spectacle in Paris. After finishing his baccalaureate studies in 1980, Ass went on to study Contemporary African Dance and Choreography to degree level with Rose-Marie Guiraud, at her Ecole de Danse et d'Echanges Culturels (*School of Dance and Cultural Exchanges*) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, between 1981 and 1985.



Between 1989 and 1992, he directed two more critically-acclaimed shows and toured extensively throughout Europe and Africa, before being contracted to run his own show (Tropic Gym) teaching aerobics on the Togolese channel TVT, which he carried on doing until 1999. In 1994, Assayigah received an Honorary Diploma from the Panafrican Congress in Dakar, Senegal for his creation called "Les Réfugiés" (*The Refugees*), and won the Premier Prix de Création Chorégraphique (*First Prize for Choreographic Creation*) for his show called Martin Luther King. In 1995, Assayigah was formally invited to the second MASA (Marché des Arts et du Spectacle Africains –*Market of African Performing Arts*) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, and to a meeting organised by the Conseil International de la Danse (CID – *International Dance Council*, part of UNESCO), in

Libreville, Gabon. In 1998, Assayigah was invited to be part of the jury at the Rencontres de la Création Chorégraphique Africaine (*African Choreographic Creation Meeting*) organised by Afrique en Création in Luanda, Angola

Since relocating to the UK in 2000, Assayigah has taught and participated in numerous workshops and community events, involving both children and adults, as well as performed in many venues and festivals. In 2004, he represented the United Kingdom in the International Dance Festival Competition in Seoul, Korea.

Assayigah is a member of the CID (Conseil International de la Danse – International Dance Council), run by the UNESCO, as well as of the Hub Network for African Culture, run by the Arts Council of England.

