

theArtists.

Interview with Taos  
Bertrand

Article written and  
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**SOUTHBANK  
CENTRE**

**Taos Bertrand**  
**brutal syntax**

WED 14 JUN

URCELL ROOM AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

OF CHRISTINE AND THE QUEENS' MELTDOWN

## Tell us about yourself Taos

I am a contemporary dancer and choreographer originally from Algeria, currently located in Paris. I started dancing when I was 18 and have also trained in literature and philosophy in khâgne at the Sorbonne, as well as in contemporary dance at the Conservatoire des abbesses de Paris. I worked with Olivier Dubois in Tragedy and Auguri, this was a strong moment in my career. I went on to work with artists such as: Adam Linder, Erwan Ha Kyoon Larcher, director Valentin Noujaïm in “Pacific club”, visual artist Jean-Luc Verna, pop artist Christine & the Queens, Marine Mane, the collective (LA) HORDE, the pianist Koki Nakano, Ingrid Florin, Karine Saporta, François Stemmer.

After 5 years in Japan I created a solo on my return, “Vestiges” (2021), “La Fin des Forêts” (2022), trio on another mythology of cruising, “promise” (2022), duo co-written with and at the invitation of Erwan Larcher at Vive le sujet at the Festival d'Avignon.

I have now created “brutal syntax”, a piece commissioned by the Meltdown festival, Southbank Centre, curated by Christine and the Queens.

### How did your new work and collaboration with Southbank begin?

Christine was in touch and invited me for this new collaboration in London, Southbank Centre. I am rehearsing the production in Paris where I am currently located working with producer Kelman Duranto who is based in LA, to create the soundtrack of the work. A global collaboration. We are in our final rehearsal stages ahead of coming to London.

## What is *brutal syntax* about?

*brutal syntax* is a trans-choreographic genre where contemporary dance, ribbon gymnastics, organic grace and pop culture come together.

It has a state of lust and sass even with the pure self of grace. The work has a sense of hypnotic ecstasy, taking the audience on a journey through a trance.

### Does collaboration and cross artform inspire you?

Yes, it's great to work with other artists as well as the challenges that it can bring. For example the speed of your process can differ when working with various artists on production. However the outcome can be stronger by the time you get to the final stages.

### What does it take to be a freelancer?

The funding support in Paris for the artist is strong, the challenges of being a freelancer is that each year I question if this is going to be the last year given the nature of a freelance output of work and energy to continue the constant chase of opportunities. I am conscious that the world is changing and the theatres are changing. The political pressure on the arts and on theatres is becoming stronger and stronger.

### Where would you like to go next with your work?

I would love to make a piece for a ballet company, I am attracted to the classical ballet form of dance as well as contemporary dance. I want to make my work more consistent over time, I don't know what it means but maybe I want to have more company life as a choreographer working more closely with dancers. One of my next projects is going to Australia to create a work.

## Any closing thoughts

To let the materials that you are giving to the dancers and to the work, the possibility to allow the dancers to breathe with improvisation. This gives me an organic outcome of composition and makes the work human.

Thank you for speaking with me, *Taos Bertrand*



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# Taos Bertrand

## brutal syntax

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