

Thais: Beco.

Matheus: A sound drama in four acts.

Tainá: Created by six young poets from Complexo da Maré.

Rodrigo: During the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Panta: In 2020.

Thais: My name is Thais. I'll be guiding you through the streets of Maré and I'll also play a mother called Dona Drika.

Rodrigo: And I'm her son, Emanuel.

Thais/Martina: A hollow poet makes no echo.

Rodrigo: But I'll be a rucksack as well. By the way, I'm Rodrigo Maré. Nice to meet you.

Matheus: I'm Matheus and you're invited to join us later, up on my roof top.

Panta: You came here to listen? Well then, listen up! Come with me.

Jonathan: I'm Jonathan but I'll also be playing the role of Carlos, and I'll play guitar for you.

Tainá: I'm Tainá and I'm going to witness an injustice.

Matheus: And there's also Sabrina. She'll be your MC. MC Martina.

Martina: "Show your faces in the alley, residents!"

PART 1: TOWARDS THE MANIFESTO

Thais: It's Saturday morning.
 Market day.
 Laughs,
 discounts.

Thais: Children's laughter passes me buy.
 You'll fall over, kid.

Thais: I laugh.
 I sea.
 A drum starts to pulsate in my chest,
 building up I make my entrance into the market
 A mix of maracatu and ijexá.
 Crowds of people.
 Hasty pace.
 Fast speech.
 Out of step.
 I stumble...

Thais: I stay alert.
 I lose myself,
 I find myself.
 There was so much to gaze at
 that my gaze got lost.
 It focussed on colours,
 flavours,
 flowers,
 strong scents...
 suffering.
 So many emotions laid out across the street.
 The gaze, too, is a place where paths meet.

Smiles, laughs, ecstasy.

And off we went, off we went like we were sure to win the lottery.

Meanwhile, she smiled.

From her roof top she sees the world and makes slam her fate.

Sabrina is her name, but to you, it's MC Martina.

Martina: I'm minding my own business, in line at the lottery store on Teixeira street. One of the few such stores in the Maré, which needless to say, are always crowded. Then out of nowhere, I spot Rodrigo buying up the entire grocer's. Seriously, just the excuse I wanted to step out of this line.

Rodrigo's dreadlocks are sparkling, his beard's ruler-trimmed, new shirt, new hairdo...

Got something lined up?

Thaís: Wow, look at you... You're all spiffed-up, dude!

Rodrigo You know today's the day, right? Check out my hair!

Martina: Live from Complexo da Maré City, or more precisely Favela Parque União.

Rodrigo, aka Maré.

King of live streams, the dude that never wears Nikes.

Percussionist, actor and art educator. He makes music out of anything to show to the world the favela is about way more than blood and pain.

Today, this is where I'm staying at.

Back in 2015, the minute I met 'im, I saw that.

Is it all about aesthetics? Well mate, hit play if only for kicks.

Those who know 'im won't deny. Born in Cancer with Arts rising.

Empirical.

The stuff Rodrigo does ain't taught in books.

Rodrigo: Here from Teixeira Ribeiro Street, I see everything.

This street is a barometer, it's a heart; I like to think of it as the river São Francisco, or the Capibaribe, or the river Moxotó, or the Aracati.

It does have its roots in the Nordeste judging from the overwhelming number of Nordestinos that keep its heart beating. All Maré people carry some Nordeste in them, with their arms open wide to welcome everything and everyone...

Workers, thieves, cops, pedlars... Several beats set the rhythm of my journey. Sounds from all over the place invade me. A polyphony of information. A treasure trove in every square metre.

I go on walking, avoiding the crowd to the right side of the street, when suddenly I stop, look and realize that inside that religious supply store over there is Thainá. *Performedia* artist, dancer, poet, friend, leafy tree, wind spreader! A daughter, a granddaughter, a woman. A body in the world that swings to memories of roots from days past. She, too, is a river and she's as big as Teixeira street!

Thainá: Coloured candles: red, green, yellow... The yellow ones are my favourite. Incense sticks, incense sticks, lots of incense sticks. I like cinnamon best. What a lovely smell! Herbs! I must get some... what is it again? Rosemary! It's always a good idea to hedge your bets? Who doesn't like it? Who wouldn't do that?

Is it all in here, Daisy? Awesome! Hey, the money's on the counter, OK? Thanks!

Daisy: Right on. Cheers!

Rodrigo: C'mon, Thainá. Thais, Martina and I are out here waiting for you. You got your stuff? You paid already? Let's go then.

Thais: You guys manage to get everything?

Martina: Everyone ready?

Rodrigo: Hey, where's Jonathan?

Martina: Yo, Panta!

Thainá: Over there. Isn't that Jonathan coming out of the grocers, the dude in the song!

A man, a boy, a kid, an old man... Jonathan embodies this gradient and has his own many shades of the same colour.

Discreet.

Alert.

Baroque.

He lives and breathes sound.

Laughs and sneers.
Supports Flamengo.
A child of the Maré's back-and-forth hustle.
He's singing, fingering his guitar.
Jonathan is someone I believe in.
I'll beckon him, hang on:
"Jonathan! Come over here, man!"

Panta: I sure am popular today! Check out this committee waiting for me outside the grocers: Iná with the herbs for the bath and the censer; Rodrigo carrying bags full of fruits; Martina empty-handed, but following the band; and of course, Thais standing tall next to Martina.

How's the troop? Not even sure I deserve such an honour. Especially after this shopping spree. People coming and going frantically, the butcher guy sweet-talking a demanding lady; that old hag jamming the corridor; that beggar's soda they only sell here... Just your ordinary weekend rabble in the Maré. I got through checkout with two heavy bags, to find myself embraced by the market hubbub and by my mates...

Thais: OK, guys, we're off!

Panta: Wait, wait, wait. The Bard of this party isn't here!

Martina: C'mon, troop, look at the time!

Thais: Let's go, guys. He's waiting for us at the roof top. C'mon, c'mon...
Hey, how about you? Are you joining the band? It's quite a trudge to get there.

Thais: Hang on. He said the key was round here somewhere. Here... I've found the key.

Panta: He makes his way through the chaos, devouring silences, aiming only for three-pointers. Like a good player, he doesn't lose the ball, faces fear, dribbles past all barriers, and doesn't miss his shot. Because he knows it ain't no time for that. He writes with power, setting the cadence. His pencil is his drumstick. And with noise, he guides us through our own darkness. His is a sagacious name, pregnant with meaning. A name from history, from tradition. Here's another child of the Maré, and his name is Matheus Araújo.

Matheus: Seriously... this is what I call a "good day". Saturday, sunshine, I only need to have some coffee and to put on a sound to sweep the rooftop. 'Cause today's the day, dude. And man! The view from the rooftop is

fuckin' awesome. You can almost see the whole favela. Then I wonder, what would it be like to see the favela from that kite. Can you imagine? I'm serious, close your eyes, and imagine. Imagine away. That's how we try and reach farther, by imagining. Always remembering to look down at the ground. Never! Never forget to look down at the ground.

Thais: Hey, my man! We're here.

Matheus: Martina, Jon, Iná, Rodrigo, and of course, Thais leading the band.

Her surname is Ayomide, "she who brings joy to the party." You gotta meet her. She's a beast that can tame ideas, scars, the lanes in the atmosphere of the body itself, through dance, theatre, movement... movement... movement... She's all about movement, dude. She's all about words, spoken and written. Because she knows in our life there's no rehearsing. That's why she's always recording more lines, to keep moving forward. And straight up, she knows things ain't always straight. For real! That's because she's mates with fear. They walk hand in hand. And to walk hand in hand with fear, you must be Courage. That's what this chick is, she's Courage. And to be Courage, my friend, it ain't enough to be a sea breeze, you gotta be a *maré*, a tide. A high tide. High on Thais performing Ayomide.

Panta: Now what?

Matheus: Didn't Rodrigo say he'd bring a stereo and set it up here? Where is it?

Rodrigo: Right on! I'm gonna set it up here. You guys ready?

Martina: What you waiting for?

Thais: Hey, *amigo*, it's time we dance to our own tune.

PART 2: THE MANIFESTO OF NOW

Martina: No adapted screenplay, be it Netflix or a telenovela, could ever describe how it feels to be a black body in this decade.

Panta: Let me live without the burden of having to choose between the cross and the sword. I'm a child and I'm not here to be a christ. I want to grow up without having to take flight.

Martina: Here I am again. Another study of a body exposed, no likes, no fun, no taste. It hurts, sir. Not even my writing can plaster this up.

- Thais: What saves me is my art, and today I say, out loud, as a prophecy, as an *ebó* offering: Today none of my folks shall die!
- Martina: It's hurting, sir.
- Thais: Like a prophecy, like an *ebó* offering...
- Martina: Not even my writing can plaster this up.
- Thais: ... None of my folks shall die today!
- Martina: It's hurting, sir.
- Panta: The cold of those who invade us leaves us shaken.
The desire to live raises us.
- Martina: It's hurting, sir.
- Martina: A hollow poet makes no echo.
An opaque soul.
- Thais: Have you ever seen a slave ship reverse? Have you ever seen a slave ship reverse? Have you ever seen a slave ship reverse?
- I drive one!
- Today nobody's going back to the birch!
Today nobody's going back to the homesick blues!
Today nobody's going back to the slave quarters!
- Matheus: Today none of my folks shall die.
Today all our people shall live, to build support, so we remain together.
- Panta: I want life to be a gondola.
- Thainá: I have walked far and wide.
I have seen many get up and fall down.
Makes me stagger and in this struggle I don't try to catch all those who fall before my eyes, but to join forces with those who walk, to also build support.
- And here I am again...
- Thais: What saves me is my art, and today I say it out loud, like a prophecy, like an *ebó* offering:
Today none of my folks shall die!

PART 3: I WAS BORN RIDING THIS TIDE WE CALL MARÉ

- Matheus: Listen up. Do you guys remember that story?
- Thais: Shoot!
- Matheus: I was born riding this tide we call Maré.
You know how it goes, like comes from like.
Like a fish, you swim along the path of faith till you become a shark.
'Cause, brethren, when a nigga gets out of the alley and leaves his den, not even a Patriotas Avenue will stop him from crossing over to Vitória. If I tell you a story...
- Thais: Go for it.
- Matheus: You'll realize that the way to Glória wasn't exactly a street of Flowers.
- Panta: I found a Good View that seemed like Paradise. Out there on Horizonte Lane... Kids on the bus, messin' around on Quiet Street and you could feel the Tranquillity invading the alleys.
- Matheus: Dude...
- Martina: It's enough to spread Hope across the Hood, isn't it? You walk through Stones and see Youth spring up in the midst of this Rattoland.
- Rodrigo: Because this is the one and only Parque da União. And you can have a good time walking down Main Street looking out for Conquest. Then when you hit Downtown, you gotta pull a cobbler on Shoemaker street to keep your feet on the line.
- Thais: Because we are Navigators in the Rush, night and day.
- Thainá: Perhaps now you'll see that the Sun rises out of ourselves, because on the Seafront at the break of Dawn... *Ê laiá!* It will stop hiding from the Maré and will burn...
- Thais / Panta: Oh yes, it will.
- Thainá: ... anything that tries to dim out our glow until we get to the oh-so-dreamed Peace Street.
- Everyone: May the alleys open.
May they lead us to that street.
- Martina: No shortcuts, only sweaty bodies, but still standing.

Matheus: Still standing, still wounded, but with faith.

PART 4: SEQUENCE OF CHAOS

Thais: Did you come here to listen to me?
Then, listen up!
Come with us.

Matheus: Show up here.
A hollow poet makes no echo.

Panta: Did you come here to listen?
Then, listen up!
Come with me.

Rodrigo: Our sound amplifies and fills the world.

Martina: Get up! Like an *ebó* offering: Today none of my folks shall die!

Matheus: We can see new passages opening.

Panta: What saves me is my art.

Matheus: What saves me is my art.

Martina: Come with us. To explore new streets, to be these new alleys that are opening up and opening paths.

Rodrigo: Lose yourself. Find yourself.

Martina: Didn't you come here to listen?
Then, listen up!
Come with us.