



You may remember last December

Panorama brought you a track called "Staying Home for the Holidays." It was the result of a collaboration with **Matt Hampsey** and all the gang at the **New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park**. They produced a Hanukkah live-stream featuring Panorama with New Orleans vocalist **Meryl Zimmerman** (you'll remember her doing "Ocho Kandelikas" with us in December, 2017), they paid everybody for the session, paid for the production and even allowed us to share the track with you.

A few weeks ago I had another invitation from them. This one turned out to be an especially cool gig that not

only allowed us to make new friends and deepen our understanding of biguine music but also resulted in your song-of-the-month for December 2021.

There is a performance group, founded by **Hubert Petit-Phar** and **Delphine Cammal** and based out of Guadeloupe, called [Compagnie la Mangrove](#). A troupe of dancers and musicians, they, like many performers in Louisiana, draw inspiration from the swamp. This fall they made a trip here in search of collaborations around Creole culture and identity. While none of us in the band can (to my knowledge) claim Creole heritage, we have worked long and hard to develop our biguine repertoire in as authentic a style as we can. We are grateful to enjoy a pretty solid reputation for that music in New Orleans which led to us getting the call.

We were told to appear at **Esplanade Studios** at noon on Friday October 29 but, beyond that, we didn't know what to expect. When we arrived, Compagnie La Mangrove was finishing up some recordings. Then, after some awkward introductions in foreign languages, Panorama got set up and started to play, busting out a few of our biguines, "Serpent Maigre," "Asi Pare," "Les Deux Jumeaux" and "Ba Moin En Ti Bo Doudou." But while we were warming up, some of the dancers from La Mangrove, Mr. Petit-Phar plus brothers **Mickaël** and **Valentin Top**, surprised us and took to the floor.

Y'all... In all the years we've been playing the music of Martinique and Guadeloupe, we have never had the opportunity to play for people who grew up there and know the vibe from the inside. So, for us, having that opportunity was a real deep education on just how that party gets down. In fact, it didn't take long before I abandoned the band and joined the dancers. I know there were cameras present so I assume there'll be footage!

Today's offering is a Creole Christmas song, a "kantik Nwèl," that was on a CD somebody gave me back in the 90s. The song implores God to come live among us on Earth and set things right. In French, "Naissez" is the present imperative form of the verb "Naître," "to be born," so the title essentially means "Be Born!" I really dug the groove, the percussion, the call and response refrain and just a very different

way of celebrating Christmas from what I grew up around. So I studied on the tune, found lyrics online and made a simple arrangement. When I heard we would be accompanying Compagnie La Mangrove, I brought my charts in hopes they'd be willing to give it a go. Mangrove vocalist **Yann Arnauld** agreed to sing the lead while their other singer, **Stacy Marie-Luce** with all the others made up the chorus. Twenty minutes later, after only 3 takes, we had it in the can.

Special thanks to Matt Hampsey, **Sunpie Barnes** and all the gang at the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park for including Panorama in this wonderful experience, for again financing the whole thing and graciously granting us permission to share this recording with you. Extra special thanks to Sunpie for joining us on accordion.

Jwaye Nwè! And thanks for listening.

Ben Schenck
Panorama Jazz Band
New Orleans

Credits

Compagnie La Mangrove of Guadeloupe

Lead Vocal: Yann Arnauld

Chorus: Delphine Cammal, Stacy Marie-Luce, Hubert Petit-Phar, Suzanna Petit-Phar, Mickaël Top, Dr. Valentin Top

Panorama Jazz Band

Ben Schenck - Clarinet
Aurora Nealand - Alto Saxophone
Charlie Halloran - Trombone
Bruce "Sunpie" Barnes and Michael Ward-Bergeman - Accordions
Mark Rubin - Tenor Banjo
Matt Perrine - Tuba
Doug Garrison - Drum Set

Words and Music - Trad (PD)

Arranger - Ben Schenck

Publisher - Snack Daddy Music

Recorded by Misha Kachkachishvili October 29, 2021, at Esplanade Studios, New Orleans, LA

Mixed and mastered by Lu Rojas

Graphic design by Ben Schenck

Photo of instruments by Greg Miles

Photo of Mr. Arnauld – unknown

Naissez

Grand Emmanuel, divin fils de Marie
(Great Emmanuel, divine son of Mary)
Venez réparer les pertes des humains
(Come repair the failings of humanity)

NAISSEZ, l'amour vous y convie
(BE BORN, love invites you here)
NAISSEZ, pour changer nos destins
(BE BORN, to change our destinies)
LE CIEL est sensibl' a nos larmes
(HEAVEN is sensitive to our tears)
LE CIEL nous accorde un sauveur
(HEAVEN grants us a savior)

La charmente paix succède à nos
alarmes
(The enchanting peace follows our alarms)
Le jour fortuné combler notre
bonheur
(The lucky day fills our happiness)

LE CIEL est sensibl' a nos larmes
(HEAVEN is sensitive to our tears)
LE CIEL nous accorde un sauveur
(HEAVEN grants us a savior)
IL NAIT, ce messie adorable
(HE'S BORN, this adorable messiah)
IL NAÎT, ce grand dieu fait enfant
(HE'S BORN, this great god made child)
NAISSEZ, l'amour vous y convie
(BE BORN, love invites you here)
NAISSEZ, pour changer nos destins
(BE BORN, to change our destinies)

Jen gen, pa fé bagai kon sa
(Young people, don't do stuff like that)
Pa laissé l'anmou conduizot
(Don't let love lead you)

CÉ PA l'anmou ka conduit moin
(IT'S NOT love that leads me)
CÉ MOIN ka conduit l'anmou moin!
(IT'S ME who leads love!)