

New Kyd, "Chanson Noire: The Tale of Pomegranates"
Performance: 26.02.2026
Traces in the exhibition: until 25.03.2026

INTRODUCTION CABARET VOLTAIRE

In the third act of contemporary contributions within the exhibition "Suzanne Perrottet. After Dada, After Dance", New Kyd presented their performance "Chanson Noire", developed in collaboration with Marquis McGee and produced by RESTLESS collective. Various traces and symbols that emerged during the creation and staging of the performance unfold from the corridor into the exhibition space, bearing witness to an activation that extended from the Historical Hall to Suzanne Perrottet's archives.

The objects, traces, and works—both sonic and material—form a constellation of orienting points within the artist's cosmology, showing key references that shaped the development of the performance. The piece takes the Dadaist Chant N_* as its point of departure—specific program elements of the Dada soirées in Zurich, during which Oceanic and African poetry and songs were appropriated in an effort to unsettle Western thought and language. From this starting point, the work opens a field of references through which it seeks new narratives grounded in Dada's anti-war ethos.

In keeping with Dada's interdisciplinary and culturally multi-perspectival spirit, the project also resonates with Suzanne Perrottet's commitment to humanity and liberation. More broadly, New Kyd's artistic approach—marked by collaged narratives and a playful embrace of rebellion and absurdity—can be understood as deeply embedded within the historical and conceptual framework of Dada.

TEXT BY NEW KYD

"Chanson Noire: The Tale of Pomegranates" is inspired by *The Poet's Inner World – Music Inspired by the Colour of Pomegranates* by Aram Bajakian

A ritual. A story and also a lament.

"Chanson Noire: The Tale of Pomegranates" unfolds as a contemporary response to Chant N_*—happenings entangled with the dadaist movement in 1916 in Zurich. At Cabaret Voltaire, where Dada erupted in absurdity against the logic of war, New Kyd revisits the echoes to rupture sense and rationality again, in order to find ways to survive a violent future and history. The Dadaists were emigrants. Exiles. Anti-war bodies seeking authenticity in a collapsing Europe. Their nonsense was not frivolous—it was refusal. Marcel Janco's poster designs for Chant N_* drew from African and Oceanic forms, staging ritual as rebellion. Kyd uses the tool of imagination to propose their own interpretation of the original task/idea of the Dadaists. Kyd is inspired by the archives of Suzanne Perrottet's work

exhibited at Cabaret Voltaire and the desire that can be clearly seen in it: notes, photos, love, messiness—all colliding in expressive defiance.

This contribution draws deeply from that lineage of non-rationality and shadow work.

Kyd's myth theory — Otherwise known as Kydology (watch this space).

One guiding principle of the performance is Oya, who is a Yoruba deity. A goddess of war and storms. She is an ambivalent force of the world, usually explained as having both the force of masculine and feminine energy. Her ritual dance is fierce and based upon the untameable power of nature; representing change and destruction of the old. As such she is a cleansing spirit, clearing the path for the New.

Another source of inspiration is Kyd's reading of the myth of Persephone, in which she has to dance through the underworld in order to save herself (she had been abducted by her uncle Hades, who would later wed her). After Demeter fails to get her daughter back, Hades grudgingly gives permission for Persephone to be free during Spring. However, he tricks the young goddess to eat pomegranate seeds—as the laws of the Olymp prescribe for 'those who have tasted the food of the underworld to stay there for a part of the year'. Kyd proposes that seeing the following struggles of her daughter, God-mother Demeter is made to realise she never had been able to save herself.

The siren, a hybrid being, who sings to lure in and consume spirits who have estranged themselves from nature. Their mesmerizing songs recall the forgotten pasts rekindled by the ritualistic dances that inspire Kyd—like a spell. Their song is also an extension of the movement, for vocal chords are also part of the dance.

The fairytale: Sleeping Beauty, understood as to never be able to rest in peace. A victim of circumstance, cursed to a century of sleep by the black fairy who had been excluded for no good reason by the ruling class. The turning wheel of violence.

The last mythology is of the Jynx / wryneck bird. A bird known for being able to twist their necks by 180°. It protects itself by twitching and making snakelike movements, never confined by linear vision. It serves as a symbol of hope for hauntologists (in Kyd's opinion at least), for it can see (like Janus) past, present and future—including the lost ones.

This continues Kyd's ongoing research into imaginative archiving, hauntology and automatism (after Huat Lim's understanding of the term) through the lens of Yoruba mythology. A thread which links Kyd's work is

their position as a Nigerian of the Yoruba tribe; born and raised in the United Kingdom, and living in Zurich since 2019.

“Chanson Noire: The tale of Pomegranates” continues durationally following the performance which activated the space. You will find yarn strung out from the staircase and on to the handrails. You can find objects like the spinning wheel and the little black bird whistle. The objects create a ballet framed by the archives in the exhibition. The pomegranate stained tutu hanging from yarn delicately strung up and tied together by the tutu strap. A hair bonnet with a red cloud from the Akatsuki (meaning “Dawn” or “Daybreak”) from the anime Naruto. The red cloud is a symbol of a secret criminal organization of rogue ninjas that intend to force world peace through destruction. A Pomegranate stained t-shirt with the character Juuzou Suzuya who is also a top-ranked, eccentric Special Class investigator from the anime Tokyo Ghoul. The second Pomegranate stained t-shirt has an image of a Greek statue.

The white bed sheet is where you have the most explicit remnants of the performance. In the center is a tray with a bird on it. Yarn is a symbol of time and the fragility of life, but also a symbol of a bridge towards hope. Lastly is a custom made black crochet garment from Agnes Stecher who goes by the moniker A6NES. Through the duration of the exhibition *Bird of lost futures* by New Kyd and Kiji Suedo is playing in the space, this contribution provides a sonic canvas for the installation.

LYRICS

Birds of lost futures - Kiji Suedo & New Kyd

See the birds outside my window
The suns coming up again
Death is coming before me
I miss you my friend
Dreams of lovers
Can we be friends too
I'm planning an instigation
Be a star for you

In my solitude
You haunt me
In my solitude
You taunt me

Keep your love
Keep your fake love

* The censored form is used to highlight the racist meaning of this term without reproducing it. In their efforts to transcend boundaries in Western thought, lifestyle, or the arts, Dadaists uncritically drew on non-European languages and objects—yet attributed to them the same value as Western practices and exhibits. The implicit or explicit racist elements contained therein must nevertheless be critically reflected upon.