

AHILAN RATNAMOHAN

&

STAR BOY COLLECTIVE

MICHAEL

ESSIEN

I WANT TO

PLAY

AS YOU

Personages

Lateef

Nosa

Sunny

Jimmy

Junior

Aloys

Note:

by choreography

by stage directions

In a non-traditional theatre space, a warehouse for example, a pounding beat cranks in resonating throughout the space. A man, or a boy, bursts into the space. It's dark, a sunrise-like light slowly emerges, we see flashes of him sprinting, turning, shimmying. And then another enters, both are wearing football jerseys, pants and socks; intricate, colourful combinations of mismatching, disparate clubs. Footballers continue to arrive, the space eventually filled with their movements. They introduce patterns, intricate footwork, accelerations, skips and bounds. The movement is hypnotic, undertaken in a very spiritual manner. Two players break from their run to exchange shirts with a slap of the hands and fists. Occasionally players' movements synchronise for a moment before falling out of sync as they continue on their own paths. Players begin to trail one another, but constantly changing. And then two groups form. The training patterns and movements are performed in unison, the two groups eventually

merging to form one, circling the space they finally come to a stop skipping on the spot, gathering themselves and then suddenly they burst into a series of explosive movements, fake left, fake right, sprint, sprint, sprint. Turn and shimmy, shimmy. Jump, jump back, hop, hop, hop. Step, pivot, step, jockey back, jockey back. The choreography is relentless, the group traverses the space in a compact huddle. Eventually players begin to fall out, some move off to do their own sequences, one player moves right in front of the audience performing a series of improbable kicks, both spectacular and unspectacular at the same time, he yells with each kick, others move back into their original movements and then they are back in a cluster circling the space.

NOTE: the cast of this performance rotates in accordance with the precarious and transient nature of the footballers, whose lives it focuses on. The performance is strongly improvised and relies on the footballer-performers' comfort and freedom in their roles and interactions with the audience. The choreography remains similar, but the stories change according to the experiences of the player performing. This version features Sunday Ibrahim, Sunny, Lateef Babatunde Mudashiru, Lateef, Etuwe Bright Junior, Junior, Aloys Kwaakum, Aloys, Wemimo Osasuyi Nosaand Jimmy Nwaoze,

Jimmy. Other players who made and performed this piece include: Idowu Okunola, Essien Christopher, Ibukin Akinfenwa, Praise Onubiyi, John Obi Agbo, Junior Ndagano.

One player darts to the front taking the lead, taking them left and then right and finally leading them to a corner where, with arms in the air, he begins to pray. The other players have now surrounded him, they perform a small series of steps in unison. He repeats an Islamic prayer, but English words and phrases begin to come out of it and eventually a story.

NOTE: the performers will speak in a dialect in-between English and Pidgin English, in some moments veering more to the one or the other. The sentence constructions are intended as they are.

lateef My club in Nigeria play against Union Bank FC.

There was one manager, he was very interested in me. He promised me he was going to take me to Hungary. I was very happy. Hungary!!

At the end of the day, they deny us visa. I was crying.

Different phrases and words get repeated in a prayer-like manner.

lateef I keep on training. In the next two weeks the manager came back to me. He told me, “I’ve helped you to secure another offer. In Portugal.” Portugal! Portugal!! Portugal!!!

Lateef snaps out of his prayer and joins the group in their movements. They slowly introduce a chant which accompanies the beat created by their feet.

all

Shoe get size

Okrika get quality

Shoe get size

Okrika get quality

NOTE: Okrika means second-hand goods, but sounds almost like Africa as they chant it. The group continues to move and chant as they head off-stage.

Another footballer darts into the space, he has the ball at his feet, he dribbles around mazily, pirouetting occasionally.

Controlling the ball his movements are elegant and light. He stops to talk directly to the audience.

nosa I was 15 when I came to Europe and Finland was the first country I arrived in, the city of Kokkola. I think I was the first black guy they saw, because people would stare at me as if I was not a real human being. To the extent that kids would come up to me to touch my skin to see if I was real or not.

With each new country he arrives at, he returns to the ball dribbling and caressing it into a new position.

nosa I've been to Albania, it's worse than Africa. The very night I arrived it was raining all over the place and I had to jump over puddles in order to get to my hotel room.

At the hotel I met one of the players he asked me, "Boy, where you from?"

He said, "If you're from Belgium, what are you doing in Albania?" Because there, managers and presidents they put guns at the table in order to force you to sign their contract.

...

I've been to Russia, likewise Estonia. Can you imagine a boy from Lagos, where it's like 35, 40 degrees hot, going to Russia where it's minus 30? It's like taking something from the pan, into the freezer. Sometimes I would cry before training, because it's so cold I couldn't feel my feet. On the streets, I didn't see anybody because they're all wearing big puffy jackets and head-warmers, you only see the smoke coming out of someone's mouth.

...

I've been to Greece, the city of Thessaloniki. In Greece, there are cats and dogs all over the streets without no owners. I asked a man, "Hey, how come there are so many cats and dogs living on the street?" Because in Belgium, cats and dogs are like diamonds, you see them in their owners' handbags. He said, "The people here are so poor they can't even feed themselves, let alone their dogs." To the extent that people have to steal from supermarkets just to survive.

...

I've been to Portugal, that was my best chance. FC Porto. I was there for a week and the trainer said to me, "Boy, you're good, but with the current league, cup and Champions League commitments, we don't have time to look at test players."

He said that instead they would send me to FC Ribeirão in the second division, about thirty minutes from Porto, where they send their youth players on loan. I was ready to sign with them but then my agent realised that at the end of year when it's time to go back to Porto he would be cut out of the deal. He told me to come back with him to Belgium.

Another player walks purposefully into the space, he carries a ball in his hand and bounces it sharply to take the attention. Nosa settles with the ball at his feet.

junior In 2009 I was set to go play for FC Inter in Finland where they agreed a fee with my club in Nigeria. They arranged a two-year work permit for me. When I arrived in Finland I got a call from my manager, he was a German man, he asked me not to sign the contract, instead to fly to

Central Europe where he had a better club that was ready to sign me.

At first I refused. Because Finland is better than where I am coming from. But he said, “No, you are as good as Yaya Toure, from here you can find the club of your dreams. Like Manchester United, Real Madrid, Anderlecht.”

I was supposed to meet him at the airport in Brussels.

When I arrived in Brussels airport... since then I've never heard from him.

Another player arrives on the stage, he is carrying bibs, cones and a ball.

junior That was how it all started.

jimmy As little kids we all watched the success of Cameroon in the Italian World Cup and Nigeria in USA 94. Top European clubs became interested in African footballers. As youngsters, millions of us started believing in the European dream.

As he talks to the audience he sets up a field, two cones for goals. He throws the fluoro yellow and orange bibs just in front

of the audience. As he talks, more players arrive, taking up positions in formation with the ball in their hands.

jimmy Thousands of us come to Europe
to play football.

Some of us make it.

Some of us fail in our trials.

Some of us don't even get the chance to prove ourselves at
a club.

Some of us end up without visas, staying in Europe.

To survive the cruel reality of Europe,
new groups and even new families form.

Even if it isn't with a Jupiler League team,
we all believe we have to keep training.

Every morning we meet at the Park to train. Sometimes
there are more than fifty of us.

You might not see us...

You might not know us.

But we are training.

Every morning.

All over Europe.

All over the world.

An electronic beat drops. The players slam their balls to the floor at once and begin pounding the balls with their feet militantly, left, right, left, right. The balls remain static, their feet start to diverge into more unorthodox patterns. They are in unison but at a certain point, one by one, each player starts to break out into his own routine of flashy dribbles and turns, they still remain in their positions. Two start to move at the same time and then three, until eventually they are all repeating their individual phrases at the same time. And then all stopping, they fall back into unison, the balls still as they dance around them with toe-taps and twists. The music fades out and the players dart forward with their balls to form a line.

Sunny leaves the line, the players turn swiftly, their backs now facing the audience. Sunny paces around the other footballers sizing them up before approaching...

sunny You have your documents?

nosa ...

sunny Hey, I'm talking to you, do you have your papers?

nosa Why?

sunny Why? I'm trying to help you, can I see your documents? What's your name?

nosa Wemimo Nosa.

sunny You know you're rude, boy...

He moves to another player, he looks him up and down, even starts to feel the size of his calves. Then, standing right in front of him, he begins to do some speed exercises, willing the player to copy and keep up with him. Satisfied, he moves on. He moves to Aloys. His actions are policeman-like, his movements that of a footballer, but his familiarity with the players is clear. He turns Aloys around, he addresses the audience directly...

alloys The choice to apply for asylum was my last resort. I knew it was probably not going to work because I had come here for football trials.

But going back to Africa at this point is not an option, not without success at least...

Sunny turns him back around and moves on...

sunny What are you smiling for? Am I your girlfriend?

lateef I'm smiling coz I just came back from the hospital, my girlfriend just gave birth.

sunny Congratulations. So have you been to the gemeente yet?

lateef No, senior man, I'm going next week for sure.

sunny Time no dey. If you sort it out, then come back to me, I know one club for you.

lateef Yes, sir. For sure.

sunny Hey, you have your documents?

junior I'm new here.

sunny I know you're new here, do you have your documents?

junior My African passport...

sunny Your African passport? Here in Europe? You don't have an ID card?

junior I just came, sir. *almost walking away*

sunny You just came? So what are you doing to get your ID card?

junior I'm trying to look for a European girl that will love me.

sunny So how come you have two phones with you then?

junior My brother bought it for me.

sunny Your brother? What?

junior He's playing football in Sweden.

sunny Okay... look, next time I see you, if you haven't made some progress you and me, we are going to have a chat.

junior Yes... sorry sir.

sunny Sorry for yourself.

Sunny walks back to a position where he still can keep an eye on the other players, Lateef turns around immediately.

lateef I was sleeping one day... my friend called me.

He asked me, "Lateef, is it possible for you to come and work with me?"

I was very happy because most of the time I just stay at home all day.

When I got there and we started to work, I was thinking... it's very easy.

The name of the work is stellingbouw.

When we start the work, we had to climb an almost seven-story building.

I was very tired.

My colleague told me that he wants to go and pee-pee.

I said 'okay' and continued working.

I wait for almost fifteen minutes.

I don't see my colleague.

When I go and check for him in the toilet, can you believe it? This guy is in a very comfortable position sitting and drinking and smoking.

Shit. And me? I'm working!

But there's nothing I can do because he is my boss.

I called my brother direct.

I don't do this shit work anymore.

I came to Europe to play football.

sunny Old boy! Come on now!

Everyone scoots back to where Sunny is standing, they huddle close to each other, organising to form a 'wall' as set up in a football match to defend against a free kick. Throughout the scene they maintain the tension and choreography of the 'wall', shuffling right or left, players turning around to check their positioning in relation to goals, Junior breaks out of the wall...

junior One of us lied to his girlfriend about owning a car and a house here in Europe.

The players break out of the wall in different manners, slides to protect a potential shot, attempts to talk with referees, attempts to stand at the ball and protect a potential quick free kick...

alloys One of us was told by his club that if he gets injured again, his contract would be terminated.

sunny One of us arrived in Europe without shoes and had to wear a pair of oversized Timberlands.

nosa One of us had bananas thrown at him by fans from his own club in Eastern Europe.

lateef One of us came to Europe to make money for his family to survive.

jimmy One of us got into a relationship with an older woman because he needed food and a place to sleep.

The wall has crept further and further forward.

junior Why? Why? Why you gotta sign a contract in a language you don't understand? They say, 'Yeah we do it on trust', but then when you're injured and you don't get your pay...

Jimmy comes out to pull him back and re-organise the wall.

nosa Ik heb al drie verschillende diploma's
en toch geen werk. Ik heb me al
ingeschreven in elke interimkantoor en
toch geen werk. Je kan toch niet zeggen
dat ik een stempelaar ben.

lateef Belgian people, why are you always eating! Bread in
the morning, in the day, at night, three meals? This is not
normal! Why?

sunny Ref, I'm trying, I'm trying to learn Nederlands. I
went to the OCMW and I told them I'm doing 1.1 then the
lady sends me something in N e d e r l a n d s 10.1!!!

junior You want us to learn Nederlands, but at the end of
the day my landlord doesn't want to speak no Nederlands
with me. The only thing he wants to hear is b e t a l i n g .

lateef Referee, referee, don't mind them, you know one day

I was training in Brussels and someone stole my wallet.

This Belgian man said don't worry, he gave me €150.

Belgians are the nicest people. Belgians are the...

*Jimmy, still trying to organise the wall, pulls Lateef back, all
the other players are trying to push forward, they are*

gesturing to the audience. Common football gestures, prayers, waving of imaginary cards, pointing at eyes, pulling shirts. Jimmy, leaning back into the crowd, still attempting to maintain order, explodes forward.

jimmy You know, I arrived in Denmark as an underage professional player. I played there for six months before I came to Belgium to seek a better chance.

In Belgium it's not easy to survive if you're not playing as a professional. Things didn't work out for me. Last year I decided to take up a non-football job for the first time in my life.

Through the OCMW I've been working as a klusjesman for the last twelve months. In those twelve months I haven't trained...

During Jimmy's repliche the players have cleared out. He is alone on stage. A ball is fired into his feet. One by one the balls are sent back into the space and met by players arriving back in the middle. A chaotic, percussive beat fades in. It transports us with references to North Africa and the Middle East with cymbals and tablas. The players start performing a sequence of dribbles, attacking as if it's a last chance to make it; pirouette,

chop, fake shot, pirouette, chop, chop, turn... They are in unison but shoot off in completely different directions always stopping at exactly the same moment only to start again abruptly. It is chaotic and frantic but precise; exhausting but controlled. To cope with the sweat, their jerseys are discarded. The sequence grows until all players are pirouetting with the ball, circling the space and again they all stop with a foot on the ball. After a long pause, Lateef walks forward to the audience. Bare chested and dripping with sweat, he starts addressing them passionately in Yoruba.

lateef Back in the Eighties, African football was thriving. Stadiums were packed with eighty thousand spectators or more. The problem started when the allure of European football came in. The best players left. The standard of African football declined because all of the best players wanted to play in Europe.

Sunny, leaving his ball, arrives next to Lateef.

sunny My name is Sunday Ibrahim. Right wing. Stamina.

Speed: 95%.

lateef Most of us came via agents and managers...

nosa Wemimo Nosa. 1 metre 75. Left foot, right foot.

Highly technical.

lateef We have had different paths, some of us have played in other African countries like Togo, Senegal and Morocco.

junior Etuwe Bright Junior. Defensive midfielder. 1 metre 93. – 9% body fat.

lateef Some of us have travelled through other European countries like Italy, Portugal and Denmark. Different people have picked us up along the way, clubs, coaches, managers, agents, friends and family.

jimmy My name is Nwaoze Jimmy. Central midfield.

Strong vision. Very skilful.

lateef To make it we often rely on the solidarity of the African community in Europe.

alloys My name is Aloys Kwaakum. Right Midfield, Right Full-back. Free agent.

They have all arrived next to him, standing in a tight line, bare chested.

lateef Not knowing that football is a business, thousands of us head to Europe.

We learn on the job.

My name is Lateef Mudashiru Olombebe. Utility player.
Very strong and aggressive.

The footballers stare out into the audience. It's as if they are waiting to be bought ...

And then, after an uncomfortably long amount of time, one of them, looking deep into an audience member's eyes walks forwards slowly and picks up one of the bibs placed in front of the audience by Jimmy in the beginning. After a while another player moves forwards and takes a bib; and then another and another and the atmosphere shifts dramatically from uncomfortable and awkward to upbeat and energetic. The players shout encouragement to each other, put on their bibs and move to their sides for a game of three-on-three.

After performing the normal, pre-game rituals the teams face off and get ready to play. But as they start, it becomes clear this is not an ordinary game, they are playing without a ball. The game still retains all the qualities of a normal game, it is intense and tactical, we see the players' spatial positioning shift in relation to each other.

As the first goal is scored, the players run to the audience to celebrate, revelling in their presence and spectatorship. The game remains serious but also becomes quite joyful.

As the game starts to find its flow, one player leaves unannounced, he runs into the audience approaching somebody...

player Excuse me, do you have a smartphone? Could I please ask you to film me while I'm playing? I need to make a video to send to clubs for trials. Thank you. Please just focus on me, okay?

Players continue to leave randomly to request being filmed by the audience, the game continuing uninterrupted. Occasionally an audience member is consulted with in regards to a foul or the ball running out of play. The goal celebrations ramp up in style and size, and then, in the middle of normal play, a fat beat drops and one player runs to the person he had asked to film him and begins to dance in front of the camera. Another player runs out to pull him back into the match, which continues, but gets distracted and begins his own dance. Another player arrives and pushes him out of the way to take

the attention. And like this, one by one, all of the players are dancing in front of their camera, the Game Without A Ball continuing in the background all the while. And then two players begin to dance with each other and another two, their dances become funnier and more absurd. They reference famous celebrities from football such as Roger Milla. The group walk back together in a line, each of them in front of their camera in the audience, they turn walking forward in a catwalk-like fashion, pulling out a sequence of football movements in unison as they arrive at the end and then a pose before turning to walk back.

Just as their football catwalk is becoming more and more absurd, 'Shakara' by the famous Nigerian musician Fela Kuti takes over. The players take up positions similar to their first choreography with the ball, spread out across the width and depth of the stage, only now they are simply dancing to and enjoying the music. And then, screaming above the music, Sunny addresses the audience...

sunny Hello my friend! Today's Monday!!!

I want you to finish this building in six hours!!! I give you six hours, my friend. You have to do a good job, okay?

Sunny is central and maintains contact with the audience, the other players offer comments, almosts asides; if Sunny is the star musician, they are his support.

jimmy Hey! In Belgium, if you don't have this...

As he says 'this' all the players except Sunny begin to make an ID Card gesture with their hands.

jimmy It's not going to work out for you. It's all this...

They don't want you. And without this, you're never going to earn this!

With the last 'this', they make the gesture for money with their hands. These two gestures will be repeated throughout this section, almost becoming part of their dance.

sunny My friend, I give you six hours and you haven't even finished yet!?. Olenyayi Nashisheh (Yoruba). How am I supposed to pay you for this? Here in Belgium, if you don't have this... you don't get this.

lateef *coming forward like a muscle man* Here in Belgium,
you don't have this... *shows his muscles* you don't have
this *shows his ID card gesture* you don't get this... money
nosa Zonder papieren en zonder werk? Jij
gaat een Junky worden zeker... Ga naar
Coninckplein!

sunny My friend, you're back again? You know you have to
work hard right? Last time was not good enough, I know you
understand why

I can't pay you. If you don't get it done today there's no
second chance for you. I have ten other guys I can call for
this job. Get to work now!

lateef My friend, here in Belgium there's no work for lazy
man.

*The chorus of 'Shakara' – in Yoruba – comes in and all the
players sing along, dancing and enjoying the music,
uninhibited.*

jimmy Hey, if you don't have this... you cannot play for
any team. But with this... You can play for Anderlecht,
Liege, Westerlo. But without this... *he shakes a finger at
the audience*

A final breakdown cranks in and the players just dance, completely letting go, having fun and going crazy. The music slowly fades out. Junior is now central.

junior The first time that I went back to Africa after unsuccessful trials in Europe. I was still very happy because it was a great experience for me.

But it was a little...

lateef *has been eyeing Junior for some time now and approaches him* Tallest man!

junior Lateef Olongbebe...

lateef Tallest man!

junior Very strong and aggressive!

lateef Tallest man!

Lateef goes down on one knee. Junior obliges and puts his shoe on the raised knee for Lateef to polish it.

junior Lateef Olongbebe, my man!

lateef You go play for Europe na?

junior See this. *pointing to his clothes* Dis na European standard, no be African style.

lateef You dey look fresh. Seeya, me I go follow your account for Insta. Just do me one favour, senior man...

Your canvas, I dey get trials, please encourage me.

junior My canvas?

He begins to walk away...

lateef No be a...

junior Okay, okay, no problem, no problem. I will come to that cafe. That cafe where they... sit. If I come there it's nothing.

lateef Okay I will wait you there.

Lateef departs and Junior looks at the audience as if to say, 'you see?' Lateef, in the background, continues to watch Junior and in doing so begins, ever so subtly to pray, still keeping an eye on Junior but sometimes getting lost in his prayer.

junior What I was saying is that it was a bit complicated because I had to lie to some ppl because they don't understand that you go for a trial in Europe and you don't always make it.

They think automatically that because you've been to Europe you are rich.

*Jimmy walks forwards from the back,
he eyes Junior, looking him up and down.*

jimmy Senior man, senior man! Senior man, senior man!
junior Jimmy Bongo Friday! Very Skilful!

They slap hands and fists in a routine handshake.

jimmy When did you come?

junior Yeah...

jimmy Senior man, did you see my messages on Facebook?

junior Yeah I saw your messages but...

jimmy I sent you like seven messages.

junior On Facebook?

Junior has been inching away from Jimmy the whole conversation, Jimmy keeps inching closer.

jimmy Senior man, I said if you dey come, I beg you dey help me with jersey.

junior My jersey?

jimmy Yeah, yeah...

junior Okay, okay, no worry. I will go to FC Red Sand on Saturday for training. If I come dere... a jersey is nothing. Okay...

jimmy *walking back to where he came from* Senior man, senior man!

Junior again looks to the audience as if helpless.

junior They think automatically that because you've been to Europe you are rich. For three weeks I didn't train with my club because their thoughts were different to mine, they were expecting things of me because I was back from Europe. Like that I would provide them with balls and training jerseys.

Even my best friend didn't understand. My girlfriend even assumed that I was taking her back to Europe with me.

sunny Etwue! Etwue! Etwue!

Sunny approaches Junior, with him is Aloys who doesn't say anything but stalks Junior, checking his clothes even going as far to touch and feel them.

junior Sunday Ibrahim, my man!

sunny Etuwe! Etuwe!

junior *turning to the audience* This is my best friend. The only person in the whole world who will understand me.

sunny Etuwe! Etuwe!

junior I get in since na, like, two weeks. I been trying your number.

sunny I changed my number.

Aloys is by now even smelling Junior's cologne.

junior Old boy, how fa na?

sunny Etuwe, time no dey... Etuwe, this your watch...

junior This watch??

sunny Please encourage me with it.

junior Ahhh... Okay you know Elvin Elijiko? Him dey do a birthday. So I will enter there.

I will present you with it there, like public thing, say.

sunny Okay, okay...

Sunny grabs hold of the bling bling watch still on Junior's wrist. Junior grabs hold of it too. They both hold it for an

uncomfortable BEAT before their hands lock undertaking a cultured handshake and then Sunny is off, calling as he leaves.

sunny Etuwe! Etuwe! Etuwe!

Junior looks at the audience. The other players have started to clear out. Lateef's prayer has now reached a peak and we hear it resonating as he departs from the space. Junior begins to move. Shadow football. Slowly at first. He traverses the space. A rhythmic, unplaceable beat joins him. It's similar to when he entered as the piece began, only the movements are now liberated, the music more flowing. The rigid, powerful training-like movements of the opening scene are replaced by a more melodic style, less rooted in the concreteness of training and the game. Kicks, shimmies and caresses of the non-existent ball are used to turn and pirouette. Jimmy bursts onto the stage joining for a fleeting moment before Sunny disappears leaving Jimmy to express himself, the movements stem from the same football language but are made different through their body types and technique. Lateef bursts on in a similar manner replacing Jimmy, and like this each player appears enjoying the freedom of the space, Aloys, Junior,

Nosa, there is a joie de vivre in their movements, which display glimpses of dance.

And then two arrive in unison, they kick, swirl, bicicleta and slide together, before being replaced by another pair, jumping, turning, zigzagging and spinning, as they disappear. As the lights fade, they return to individual runs through the space. Until one player is moving, in the dark, exhausting his enjoyment.

Michael Essien I want to play as you... ging in première op
2 februari 2013 in theater in Park Loods in Park Spoor
Noord, als deel van de openingsceremonie van Antwerpen
Sport Hoofdstad

Spel Etuwe Bright Junior

Lateef Babatunde

Aloys Kwaakum

Wemimo Nosia

Sunday Ibrahim

Jimmy Nwaoze

Regie Ahilan Ratnamohan

Ahilan Ratnamohan (Melbourne, 1984) is een Sri Lankaans-Australische performancekunstenaar woonachtig in Antwerpen. Hij studeerde film aan de University of Technology van Sydney en probeerde daarna een carrière op te bouwen als profvoetballer in Nederland, Zweden en Duitsland. Sinds 2007 is hij werkzaam in het theater. Hij werkte met diverse gezelschappen in Sydney voordat hij in 2014 in residentie kwam bij Monty Kultuurfactorij in Antwerpen. Met Star Boy Collectief, een groep van West-Afrikaanse voetbal-migranten, maakt hij sindsdien sociaal-politieke voorstellingen waar choreografisch en tekstueel verschillende cultureel geladen thema's onder de loep worden genomen.

Toneelwerk

*Look On The Bright Side** – 2019

Klapping – 2018

Mercenary – 2018

Valodas Trilogija / Language Trilogy – 2017

Reverse Colonialism – 2017

Drill – 2015

*Star Boy Productions** – 2014

SDS1 – 2013

*Michael Essien I want to play as you...** – 2013

* Teksten uitgegeven door De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek

Het Star Boy Collectief (Antwerpen, 2013) is ontstaan vanuit de samenwerking voor *Michael Essien I want to play as you...* Tijdens dit proces was het duidelijk dat er andere urgente ideeën waren buiten de omvang van dat project. Het collectief representeert een heel andere groep binnen ons kunstenveld; het zijn recent-aangekomen, economische migranten, sans papiers (vroeger) en mensen zonder een kunsteducatie of artistieke achtergrond, maar met een zeer sterke inhoudelijke bevoegdheid om hun ervaringen te delen. Met Monty Kulturfactorij en het Cultuurcentrum Luchtbal als thuisplekken begonnen Etuwe Bright Junior, Lateef Babatunde en Aloys Kwaakum verder met Ahilan Ratnamohan te werken. Door hun soms preciaire statuten in Europa bleven andere lieden van *Essien* betrokken voor tournees naar bijvoorbeeld Engeland en Zwitserland. De ongeplande ontmoeting is nu uitgegroeid tot een acht-jarige samenwerking.