

Impasse is a powerful, driving, and charged duet that seeks to understand the politics of the Black body in a contemporary western society. Through striking imagery, raw physicality and emotional intensity the performance challenges the historical racial projections of blackness – its crudeness, threat, sexuality, rage and immorality – unveiling its power, grace, sensuality, tenderness, intelligence and love.

Credits

- ◇ Choreographer/performer/set designer: Mufutau (Junior) Yusuf
- ◇ Performer: Shafiki Sseggayi
- ◇ Music: Tom Lane & Mick Donohoe
- ◇ Sound Design: Tom Lane
- ◇ Lighting Design: Matt Burke
- ◇ Costume Design: Alison Brown
- ◇ Prop design: Maryam Yusuf
- ◇ Text: Ikenna Anyabuiké
- ◇ Production Manager: Lisa Mahoney
- ◇ Stage Manager: Alison O'Shea
- ◇ Set consultant: Lisa Krugel
- ◇ Rehearsal Assistant: Rima Baransi
- ◇ Producer: Gwen Van Spÿk

Impasse was originally created with funding from The Arts Council of Ireland; commissioned by Liz Roche Company and supported by Solstice Arts Centre, Dance Cork Firkin Crane, Irish Arts Centre New York, Ultima Vez, Dublin Dance Festival, Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, Maison de la Danse, Lyon, Le Pôle européen de création, Centre National de la Danse.

The 2025 tour is co-produced with Luail, Ireland's National Dance Company, and supported with funding from Culture Ireland.

A word from Mufutua

Stemming from an interest in racial and identity politics, particularly the politics and experiences of the black body and all its implications and realities, I wanted to further understand what my relationship is with my black body, and its

experience in a contemporary western society. I became particularly interested in the experiences of the black diaspora, leading to enquiries on notions of power, visibility, memory, migration, traditions and then ultimately questioning what it means to be a diasporic entity, how we inhabit spaces in which our existence is not clearly marked, how the question of memory becomes a critical one and by which our identity is secured. Moreover, I also wanted to explore the bias narratives that have been carved on black bodies over the last few centuries, narratives that continue to be perpetuated, and highlight the challenges that come with countering them

So, in this space, I wanted to develop a powerful dance duet, very physical and emotionally charged, that examines and celebrates blackness and encourages a sense of autonomy of black bodies. How does this black body navigate this western space while shifting through its historically racial projections and symbols, so to say, its blackness, its 'dirtiness', its crudeness, its sexuality, its bestiality, its threat, its violence, its rage, its immorality? But equally giving prominence to its civility, its power and grace, its sensuality, its tenderness, its intelligence, its love, its joy, its fluidity, etc.. How does it reclaim its humanity, which has been appropriated, inverted, and ultimately plasticised over the last few centuries? Through this dance duet, I would like to explore how this black body, with its complex realities, navigates its incongruous self in a space that is yet to truly understand it

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Impasse premiered in May 2024 for Dublin Dance Dance Festival to critical and audience acclaim and went on to be presented in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival August 2024, and in autumn 2024 to Maison de la Danse, Lyon; Solstice Arts Centre, Navan; Dance Cork Firkin Crane, Cork; Afropolis, Lagos, Nigeria; and The Mac for Belfast International Arts Festival and Sadler's Wells, London. The show has toured further in 2025 including to Impulstanz, Vienna and PRISMA Festival of Contemporary Dance in Panama. and continues touring through into 2026.

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For further information and to keep in touch with us you can find us [here](#) and on [instagram](#). Or you can email: gwen@cueperformance.com.