

**PRESENTATION 2025**

# **GRAND ENSEMBLE KOA**



# RÉSISTANCES!



# PRESENTATION



## GRAND ENSEMBLE KOA

ALFRED VILAYLECK - artistic direction, composition & bass  
CAROLINE SENTIS - voice, sing  
RÉMI FOX - saxophone soprano  
ARMEL COURRÉE - saxophones alto & baryton  
JÉRÔME DUFOUR - saxophone tenor  
PASCAL BOUVIER - trombone  
DANIEL MOREAU - piano, keyboards  
JULIEN GRÉGOIRE - drums

### History of the Group :

The Grand Ensemble Koa is an 8-member group playing innovative electric jazz, blending jazz improvisation, contemporary composition techniques, sophisticated grooves, and electro-rock sounds. It was founded in 2008 by bassist and composer Alfred Vilayleck. At the same time, the musicians created the Collectif Koa in Montpellier, which allowed them to share numerous performance experiences and pivotal artistic encounters.

In 2010, the Grand Ensemble Koa worked on a creation inspired by Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*, combining contemporary musical writing, satirical theatre, and soundpainting. The resulting album, *Koa-Roi*, was released at the end of 2012 and was named "Jazz Revelation Album" by *Jazzmag* in February 2013. Pascal Rozat wrote: "A fully accomplished first opus, striking in its coherence."

In 2013, the group performed *Ahimsa*—a repertoire based on Indian nonviolent culture—whose album was released in 2015, including a performance at the Carreau du Temple in Paris. In 2014, they collaborated with the Belgian collective *Maak Spirit* on a project titled *Koa Meet Määk*.

The ensemble later drew inspiration from the Beat Generation, the group of nonconformists embodied by Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and William Burroughs, where poems and words seeking freedom inspired the album *BEAT* in 2019.

Also in 2019, inspired by the dances and music of the Balkans with their broken yet melodic rhythms, the project *La Danse des Insoumis* emerged—an imaginary dance in which a community rises against the constraints of society, fully embracing the present moment.

*Résistances* is the Grand Ensemble's latest creative project. With this work, the Grand Ensemble Koa presents a jazz free from aesthetic constraints, advocating freedom of thought. It is a call for reflection and a celebration of human creativity.

# RÉSISTANCES !

## CREATION 2025-2027 :

Résistances... resistance to oppression, resistance to hatred, resistance to ideological drift that pushes our societies toward the denial of empathy, the absence of solidarity, and even the refusal of the other.

This aspect of human behavior—our capacity to create Résistances—is nourished both by our life experiences and by our need for art, music, concerts, poetry, words, and sounds that touch us deeply and bring us closer together.

### • Socially engaged texts

After BEAT, a creation dedicated to the writers of the Beat Generation and the rebellious spirit of William Burroughs, the Grand Ensemble Koa continues its exploration of the power of words and dissenting voices. With Résistances, the collective turns to three major 20th-century figures from very different contexts, all united by the same desire for freedom: **Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwich, American writer Allen Ginsberg, and Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi.**

These choices reflect a desire to explore the diversity of forms of resistance: Darwich's intimate and universal poetry, blending memory, exile, and identity; Ginsberg's fiery verve, inherited from counterculture and civil rights struggles; and Suu Kyi's complex trajectory, a symbol of democratic struggle yet now a controversial figure.

Through this confrontation of voices and visions, Résistances interrogates our relationship to today's world: how can we continue to stand up against injustice? What place should ideals have when they clash with the contradictions of reality? What remains of utopia when it becomes power?

### • A dialogue between music and committed texts

This creation takes the form of several tableaux that set to music and prose the texts of these authors:

- Song by Allen Ginsberg,
- État de Siège and Identité by Mahmoud Darwich,
- Freedom from Fear by Aung San Suu Kyi ...

The musical language of the Grand Ensemble Koa exists within this fertile tension: contemporary, energetic, and open writing, nourished by jazz, rock, and collective improvisation. The musicians aim to convey the urgency of the texts, giving a sonic resonance to the echoes of revolt, but also to silences, vulnerabilities, and doubts.

Résistances is driven by the subtle compositions of Alfred Vilayleck and the luminous vocals of Caroline Sentis, a collective energy with relentless groove that creates a truly exhilarating sonic universe.

## • Scénography

For Résistances, we envision a stage setup where image, lighting, and music closely interact. The idea is to explore an immersive universe in which projected texts could merge with images or illustrations.

Lighting, conceived as a form of dramaturgical writing, could vary according to the figures being evoked. Around Mahmoud Darwich, we imagine warm, sandy tones, crossed by shifting shadows. For Allen Ginsberg, it would be more like neon flashes, electric pulses, creating an "underground" atmosphere. For Aung San Suu Kyi, we would lean toward soft, clear lighting, abruptly interrupted at times to suggest shadowed areas.

Finally, we aim to explore a closer interaction between music and visuals, where certain instrumental gestures could resonate with the appearance of a word, the flicker of a light, or the emergence of an image. Each sound would thus carry a visual resonance, transforming the concert into a shared, sensorial experience.

## LISTEN HERE

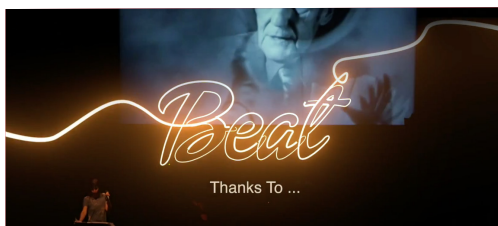
### «SONG»

New piece in the repertoire **RÉSISTANCES**

First recording made during the creative residency at Théâtre La Vignette, Montpellier [34] in January 2025.



## LAST PROJECTS :



«Thanks To»  
**BEAT**



«Castelvania»  
**LA DANSE DES INSOUMIS**

## CREATION PHASES

- September to December 2024: Artistic conception and instrumental writing phase (Alfred Vilayleck)
- January 6–10, 2025 @ Théâtre de la Vignette (Montpellier, 34): Creation residency (5 days) + teaser video production
- October 2025: Work on the texts, musical composition, and spoken-word structure (Alfred Vilayleck / Caroline Sentis)
- January 2026 @ Victoire 2 (Montpellier, 34): Creation residency (4 days)
- March 16–19, 2026 @ Patio des Arts / Conservatory of Narbonne (11): Creation residency (4 days) + masterclass / outreach activity
- July 2026 @ Festival Musiques au Présent (Narbonne, 11): Creation residency (2 days)
- October 2026 @ L'Astrada (Marcillac, 42): Creation residency (3 days)

## PROVISIONAL DATES

- July 2026 @ Musiques au Présent Festival (Narbonne, France – Dept. 11)
- September 2026 @ Constellation Festival (Paris, France – Dept. 75)
- October 2026 @ Jazzèbre Festival (Perpignan, France – Dept. 66): Premiere of the creation
- November 2026 @ Koa Jazz Festival / Victoire 2 (Montpellier, France – Dept. 34)
- November 2026 @ Studio Konzert at Bauer Studio (Ludwigsburg, Germany)

...and many more dates to come!

- Recording of the album "Résistances" scheduled for November 2026 at Bauer Studio for the Neuklang label (Pias).

Album release planned for Spring 2027.

## KEY DATES

- October 29 – November 1, 2018 – Creation residency @ Théâtre de la Maison du Peuple – Millau [12]
- March 23, 2019 – Masterclass @ Conservatoire d'Aveyron – Rodez [12]
- April 18-24, 2019 – Creation residency @ Le Club – Rodez [12]
- July 19, 2019 – End-of-residency performance @ Millau Jazz Festival – Millau [12]
- February 7, 2020 – Concert @ JAM [Montpellier, 34]
- September 10, 2020 – Concert @ Studio de l'Ermitage [Paris, 75]
- August 4, 2021 – Concert @ Jazz in Marciac [Marciac, 32]
- October 23, 2021 – Concert @ Le Taquin [Toulouse, 31]
- January 6-10, 2025 – Creation residency @ Théâtre La Vignette [Montpellier, 34]

## PARTNERS

Partners in development:

- Victoire 2, Montpellier [34]
- Festival Musiques au présent, Narbonne [11]
- L'Astrada, Marciac [32]



# LINE UP



- Alfred Vilayleck

A graduate of the conservatories of Perpignan and Strasbourg, Alfred played in several jazz ensembles before founding the Collectif Koa in Montpellier in 2008, which led to collaborations with Steve Coleman, Aka Moon, Magic Malik, Jim Black, and others.

A versatile accompanist and globe-trotting musician, he has had the pleasure of performing with Serge Lazarevitch, Joël Allouche, Jeroen Van Herzele, Julien Lourau, John Tchicai, Pierre Van Dormael, and Cherif Soumano.

He currently leads the Grand Ensemble Koa and is a member of various groups including Gratitude Trio and Peemaï. Alfred also teaches jazz at the Montpellier Conservatory and leads numerous Soundpainting projects.



- Caroline Sentis

From Connie & Blyde to Banan'N'Jug and the Grand Ensemble Koa, Caroline Sentis explores vocal techniques and instrumentation across unique musical landscapes. Concert after concert, she reveals the full extent of her vocal and instrumental mastery.

She plays with the textures of her voice, shaping and adapting it to fit the compositions – from jazz to chanson. Constantly learning, from her self-taught beginnings to formal studies at the Montpellier Conservatory, she creates bridges between her influences through duos, groups, and orchestral projects. Her collaborations are imbued with kindness, humility, and contagious good humor, often featuring theatrical, dreamlike, and lyrical dimensions.



- Rémi Fox

Rémi Fox is a saxophonist, improviser, composer, and artistic director of numerous projects where experimentation and the pursuit of new forms are central.

He holds a Master's degree from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris in jazz and improvised music, along with an award from the generative improvisation department and a Performer's Diploma.

He performs worldwide – solo and with various ensembles – and regularly brings his music into dialogue with other art forms. This desire has led to collaborations with theater, dance, cinema, and visual and digital arts.



- Armel Courrée

Armel Courrée earned a degree in musicology from Paul Valéry University in Montpellier in 2006. Alongside his studies, he performed in various street music groups such as the Vauvert Jazz Big Band and the gypsy-fusion group Tzigzag, with whom he recorded an eponymous album and toured between 2003 and 2006.

In 2009, he completed his Jazz DEM at the CRR of Perpignan. He currently performs with the metal brass band Born to Brass, the ethio-jazz group Ethioda, and several other street music ensembles. He teaches saxophone in Nîmes.



## LINE UP

- Jérôme Dufour

Trained at the conservatories of Béziers and Marseille, Jérôme Dufour also holds a degree in musicology from the University of Montpellier and both a DEM and DE in jazz from the CRR of Perpignan, under the direction of Serge Lazarevitch. He currently teaches at the CRRs of Montpellier and Béziers.

He has performed in France and internationally with artists such as Fethi Tabet, Didier Levallet, Pierre Diaz, and Frédéric Monino. He is the co-founder of the ensemble Abrazz'band and currently performs with Jazzimut Quartet, Têtaclak, and various other musical projects alongside Serge Lazarevitch, Joël Allouche, and the collectives WART, Continuum, and Koa. He also engages in music education through pedagogical concerts focused on improvised music.



- Pascal Bouvier

Pascal Bouvier earned a DEM in trombone from the Conservatory of Nîmes and in jazz from the Conservatory of Perpignan, studying under Serge Lazarevitch.

He takes part in a wide variety of projects, ranging from symphony orchestras to big bands, brass bands, rock, Latin combos, and jazz groups. He has toured nationally and across Europe, recorded several albums, and performed at major international festivals. He continues his career as a trombonist, notably with the Collectif Koa, which he joined in 2009, the music-hall orchestra Octane, and the marching band Lorkès 974 – for both of which he is also an arranger – as well as with the group Ethioda.



- Daniel Moreau

A graduate of the conservatories of Tarn, Montpellier, and Perpignan, Daniel was involved in the founding of the Grand Ensemble Koa, through which he met Aka Moon, Magic Malik, Mâäk Spirit, and Marc Ducret.

In 2012, he toured Europe with the Gospel Soul group and later traveled with Deedee Daniel to the United States, Morocco, and Senegal. He then spent time in Havana, Cuba, where he met pianists Ernan Lopez Nussa and Rolando Luna.

Daniel later founded the group Ethioda, with which he recorded two albums. Since 2017, he has also collaborated with Magic Malik Fanfare XP and the Gazy Jazz Project. In parallel with these artistic projects, Daniel Moreau teaches in the jazz and improvised music department at the CRR of Montpellier.



- Julien Grégoire

Julien Grégoire studied percussion at the Conservatory of Montpellier, then continued at the Conservatory of Perpignan, where he earned a DEM in drums and jazz.

He has performed with artists such as Julien Lourau, Bojan Z, Enildo Rasua, Salvador Niebla, Xavi Reija, Joël Allouche, Magic Malik, and Steve Coleman.

Julien is a regular performer with Joanda, La Varda, and the brass band Born to Brass. He also plays with Yoda Quartet, Melquiadès Quartet, the Grand Ensemble Koa, Darjiling Quintet, and the big band Red Star Orchestra.

He leads his own contemporary jazz quartet project, Watcher Hill, and co-leads the trio Zylia with pianist Rémi Ploton and vibraphonist Samuel Mastorakis.





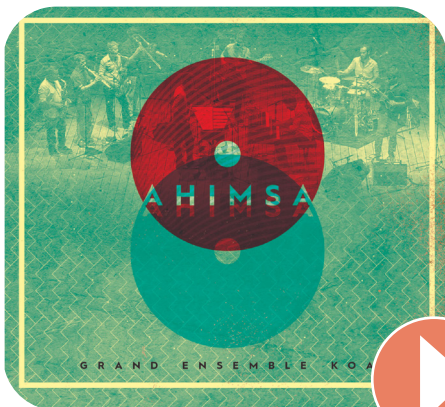
# DISCOGRAPHY



## BEAT

Release in France: January 11, 2019  
Release in Germany: January 25, 2019

RECORDING PHILIPPE GAILLOT  
STUDIO RECALL  
EDITING FLORIAN VINCENT  
MIX & MASTERING PHILIPP HECK  
STUDIO BAUER [LUDWIGSBURG]  
PRODUCTION COLLECTIF KOA  
COMPOSITION ALFRED VILAYLECK  
MUSICIENS ALFRED VILAYLECK [DIRECTION, COMPOSITION & BASS]  
CAROLINE SENTIS [VOICE]  
MATTHIEU CHÉDEVILLE [SAXOPHONE SOPRANO]  
ARMEL COURRÉE [SAXOPHONE ALTO]  
JÉRÔME DUFOUR [SAXOPHONE TENOR]  
PASCAL BOUVIER [TROMBONE]  
DANIEL MOREAU [PIANO, KEYBOARDS]  
SAMUEL MASTORAKIS [VIBRAPHONE]  
JULIEN GRÉGOIRE [DRUMS]  
SERGE LAZAREVITCH invité [GUITAR]



## Ahimsa

Release: March 10, 2016

RECORDING PHILIPPE GAILLOT  
STUDIO RECALL  
MIX & MASTERING MICHEL ANDINA [BRUXELLES]  
PRODUCTION COLLECTIF KOA  
COMPOSITION ALFRED VILAYLECK  
MUSICIENS ALFRED VILAYLECK [DIRECTION, COMPOSITION & BASS]  
CAROLINE SENTIS [VOICE, SING]  
MATTHIEU CHÉDEVILLE [SAXOPHONE SOPRANO]  
ARMEL COURRÉE [SAXOPHONE ALTO]  
JÉRÔME DUFOUR [SAXOPHONE TENOR]  
PASCAL BOUVIER [TROMBONE]  
MATIA LEVRERO [GUITAR]  
DANIEL MOREAU [KEYBOARDS]  
SAMUEL MASTORAKIS [VIBRAPHONE]  
JULIEN GRÉGOIRE [DRUMS]



## Koa Roi

Release: October 26, 2012

RECORDING STUDIO LA BUISSONNE  
PRODUCTION COLLECTIF KOA  
COMPOSITION ALFRED VILAYLECK  
MUSICIENS ALFRED VILAYLECK [DIRECTION, COMPOSITION & BASS]  
SYLVAIN ARTIGNAN [CLARINET]  
MATTHIEU CHÉDEVILLE [SAXOPHONES]  
ARMEL COURRÉE [SAXOPHONE ALTO]  
JÉRÔME DUFOUR [SAXOPHONE TENOR]  
PASCAL BOUVIER [TROMBONE]  
YOAN FERNANDEZ & MATIA LEVRERO [GUITAR]  
GUYLAIN DOMAS [BASS]  
DANIEL MOREAU [ELECTRIC PIANO]  
SAMUEL MASTORAKIS [VIBRAPHONE]  
JULIEN GRÉGOIRE [DRUMS]

The performance of a Grand Ensemble Koa concert and the hosting of creative residencies can be accompanied by cultural outreach activities in connection with the local territory of the venue. All the musicians in the group are experienced educators, thanks to their ongoing teaching work in conservatories and music schools across the Occitanie region.

The proposed cultural outreach activities are as follows:

- **Jazz Meets the Kids**

Educational concerts aimed at young audiences (ranging from primary school to high school students), including a presentation of the group's repertoire as well as a discussion and exchange session with the audience.

- **Open Rehearsals**

Soundchecks or rehearsal times open to all, offering opportunities to discuss the group's creative process and concert preparation with the audience.

- **Masterclass**

Work focused on the group's repertoire (target audience: music school students, conservatory and university students), with the possibility of a public performance featuring both the group's musicians and masterclass participants (in consultation with Alfred Vilayleck).

- **Soundpainting Workshop**

An introductory workshop to the sign-based conducting language created by Walter Thompson. This multidisciplinary approach allows musicians, actors, and dancers of all ages and levels to collaborate on stage. These workshops may include a public performance (in consultation with Alfred Vilayleck).

Alfred Vilayleck / Artistic Director  
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Collectif Koa  
[contact@collectifkoa.com]



## CULTUREJAZZ - SEPTEMBER 2020

«Asphodèle», the first piece, revolves around the velvety voice of the trombone, the electric bass lays down its rock beat, the vibraphone pushes the walls of sound and opens up the studio space and our minds, the spirit of Pink Floyd makes a guest appearance when the vocalist is doubled by the choir of all the others. Impressive.»

Alain Gauthier

## JAZZ MAGAZINE - OCTOBER 2019

«Caroline Sentis unleashed her voice in modulations akin to trapeze leaps, perfectly evoking the hissing of sulfurous tongues rising from the furnace-like bodies of the Beat poets [...].»





Guy Darol

## LES DERNIÈRES NOUVELLES DU JAZZ - JANUARY 2019

«A dazzling confirmation of Alfred Vilayleck's talent as a composer and of the musical and instrumental quality of the Grand Ensemble Koa from Montpellier. (...) The strength of the soloists radiates throughout the improvised sections, and a true collective spirit is present across the entire CD, track after track.»

Xavier Prévost

## SOCIAL MEDIAS

-  @gekkoa
-  @grandensemblekoa
-  @collectifkoa
-  [Inkfi.re/grand-ensemble-koa](http://Inkfi.re/grand-ensemble-koa)





## PARTNERS



## CONTACTS

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