

Native of Yaoundé, Cameroon in Central Africa, composer, arranger and bassist, **Andre MANGA** built his first musical instrument at seven years old, a pseudo marimba made with bamboo and a part of a tree trunk. Later, he designed a guitar with strings made from bicycle brakes cables as well.

A chance encounter with worldbeat superstar Manu Dibango convinced Manga to pursue a career as a performer but his parents disapproved of this musical leaning and sent him off to boarding school. Ironically, soon after his arrival, the school formed its own orchestra and he soon emerged among its leading players.

By age 17, Manga was the bassist of the Cameroon National Orchestra. Soon after he relocated to Gabon to become a top session musician. Gabon is where Andre's career took flight. He recorded a dozen albums with African artists such as Hilarion Nguema, Tou Kone Daouda, Angele Assele, and Jean-Claude Naimro from the internationally renowned group Kassav.

In 1988 André moved to Paris and toured internationally with Pierre Akendengue before inevitably taking a job as keyboard for his hero Manu Dibango, whose fame had now spread to Europe. He later became his bass player and musical director, as they toured the world. André joint also a group of Cameroonian musicians to perform on Paul Simon's "Rhythm of the Saints" album.

Having reached an artistic plateau in Paris, he scanned horizon for new adventures. He found them in a jazz epiphany while on tour in Germany. He recalls "I was sleeping lightly while the bus rolled along my spirit, and my subconscious level and I woke up, startled. I looked around and nothing was out of place but I felt something has happened to me". A revoir car pas comprehensible

By 1995, he had settled in Los Angeles with the goal of combining jazz with traditional African rhythms. Towards that end, he formed **the group Dumazz** (vocalist Chana Smith and Zia Dejan, guitarist Sanjay Divecha, Keyboard John Opferkuch, saxophonist Bobby English, drums Jan Fabricky and percussions Cassio Duarte).

Their Narada label debut LP Mother Rhythm appeared in 1998 "**A festive package of energetic jazz- driven instrumental and vocal compositions**" Jason Ankeny, **All Music Guide**.

With a growing affinity for jazz, Andre moved to Los Angeles in 1995 to fulfill his vision. The music he had in mind would enjoy the melodic and harmonic freedoms of jazz yet preserve the complex African rhythms he had mastered. That goal is manifest in the band Dumazz. The name combines the Cameroonian word for the baobab tree, a symbol of wisdom and traditionally a meeting place for village elders and the word jazz. Dumazz saxophonist Bibby English explain "**When you put the two together you have a very wise, very spiritual group rooted in jazz music.**"

In 2011, André released another album, called "**Voyages**". The 12 tracts on the album take the listener to a journey that shows Andre's passion for his culture and the desire to scan the world looking for other forms of music to fuse with his own. He took the opportunity to pay a tribute to his musical hero Manu Dibango with the song "Soul Makossa" and a salute to musical genius of the millennium Michael Jackson with "Human Nature". Worth noting also is the tribute to Archangelo de Monaco, Dina Bell, and Charles Lembe Cameroonian musical figures who were the essential to André's musical upbringing.

The album "Voyages" got 5 stars from Lee Armstrong of Jazz Party who described it as" So hot. It burns me through the speakers. This mix of Afro-Jazz is infectious on both its rhythms and vibrancy"

Andre has produced albums for Prince Diabaté, Manu Dibango, Ashley Maher, Isabelle Longnus, and many others.

He has toured or performed with various artists including Georges Seba, David Zasloff, Boyz II Men, All4one, The temptations, Karen Briggs, Teshina Arnold, Bebe Winans, Jacky Jackson, Andrae Crouch, Donny McKurklin, Jeffrey Osbourne, Dr Dre, Kevin Tone, Patrice Rushen, Frieda Payne, Kirk Whalum, Marc Antoine, Lokua Kanza, Rick Braun, Peter White, Lao Tizer, Norman Brown, Eddy Murphy and many others.

He currently holds the bass position with singer songwriter global sensation Josh Groban.