

PRESS RELEASE  
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AODAN  
(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)



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A NEW MUSIC IS BORN: AODAN KINDLES THE IMAGINATION OF FRENCH AUDIENCES WITH FIREY COMPOSITIONS FROM ITS RECENTLY RELEASED ALBUM 'ORIGIN'.

## AODAN

They are seven musicians, crossing the frontiers between three styles of music: rock, classical and trad. During the Summer of 2009, they came together to create a new style of music inspired by the hypnotic steps of traditional Breton dancing and by the melodies of central Brittany. A team of artists helped them create, around their music, a world of interwoven stories, texts, costumes and stage props. Thus was born an epic world of science fiction and magic, a melting pot of original sound and colour which has come to be known as AODAN.



## QUOTES

*"...Aodan, a new and, as yet, unnamed genre of music which one could call the Breton music of today." "Seven musicians, each born of diverse cultural backgrounds, have made a big impression."*

Ronan Gorgiard, Ouest-France (newspaper), 7 February 2010

*« The group is amazing, with their colourful and imaginative costumes... »*

*"The music is beyond surprising."*

*"The group will be playing at the Cornouaille Festival in July, and it will be well worth the effort to go and check them out"*

Le Télégramme (newspaper), 7 February 2010

*"Relegating to the dusty shelves of an antique shop all previous experiments in music fusion in Brittany, Aodan, a group of young and highly talented musicians and two fantastic voices, have without a doubt opened a new path for traditional music." "the tribal qualities of the sung dance-music of Lower-Brittany has reached a summit of sophistication without ever losing touch with its roots..." "Classical, rock, strong traditional roots and an overall opening to the galaxie..." "Certainly one of the most amazing and creative moments of the festival (Cornouaille Festival)."*

Brigitte Becaert, Ouest-France (newspaper), 24 July 2010

In the autumn of 2009, Jean-Philippe Mauras, director of the 'Festival de Cornouaille' and 'Kerné Production', heard the first recordings of Aodan and invited the group to perform for the 'Talent on Stage' concert in February 2010. This début concert was captured by both 'France 3' television and the radio station 'France Bleu Breizh Izel'.

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Spring 2010, nine months after the formation of the group, Aodan recorded its début album 'ORIGIN'. The self-produced album (distributed by Coop-Breizh) was launched with a snowy winter tour around Brittany and received a warm welcome by critics both in France and elsewhere in Europe.

#### ALBUM REVIEWS

*"Aodan is the 'chefs special', an innovative project driven by young musicians for whom one imagines a very promising future. For a first try, it's a masterful one!"*  
Michel Toutous, Armen (magazine), January 2011

*Awarded the 'Bravo !!!' title by the Trad Magazine*  
*"...a sacred fire burns inside them...a UFO in the breton music of today"*  
Philippe Cousin, Trad Magazine, January 2011

*Selected for the « Télégramme 2010 Grand Prix Album Awards »*  
*"Incredible creativity and maturity"... "it touches on different musical styles without ever losing its own flavour: gypsy, oriental, baroque, groove. Each of the nine tracks paints a fantastic and luxuriant picture".*  
Frédérique Jambon, Le Télégramme (newspaper), Nov. 2010

*"Through its compositions and interpretations, Aodan has renewed the possibilities of expression in Breton music. The musicians create a musical fusion, playing on subtle complexities which make their music remarkable for its originality and its quality."*  
Armor Magazine, January 2011

*"Aodan has perfected a new style within the breton music genre. Surprising, fascinating...probably the most artistically innovative project to have come from the traditional Breton music scene in recent years."*  
Folker Magazine, **Germany**, January 2011

During the winter of 2011, guided by the director of the Tro-Héol theatre company, Aodan began the stage-work necessary to transform their concert into a veritable show complete with storyline, choreography, props and sound and lighting effects. The next chapter of Aodan's story awaits to be unveiled...

#### TOURS AND FESTIVALS

Festival Interceltique de Lorient, Lorient, FR (summer 2011) Festival Yaouank, Rennes, FR (2010) Fête de la Samhain, Roc St André, FR (2010) Fest Noz Tour in Brittany, FR (2010) Festival de Cornouaille, Quimper, FR (2010) Talents en Scène, Quimper, FR (2009)

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## VOICE:



**Stefanie Devaux (Althéa):** A singer, born in Germany of Slavic origins, she inherited as a young girl her great-grandfather's gypsy violin. The gift inspired a love of her family's culture which constantly brought her back to her roots even when experimenting with careers in Rock, Jazz and Classical. She settled in Brittany where she met Jonathan Dour, a meeting which sparked the first step towards Aodan's creation.

*"A magnificent voice, particularly agile in multiple registers"*

*Michel Toutous, Armen Magazine, January 2011*

*"The crystalline trills of Stefanie Devaux take flight, embers under the ice, commanding the attention of the audience"*

*Ouest France (Newspaper), July 2010*

*"Her bass timbres take flight, embracing the atmosphere"*

*Ouest France (Newspaper), October 2010*

**Fanch Oger (Ogam):** Fanch sings in a style firmly anchored in the 'sung dance-music' tradition of Lower Brittany. A self-taught singer with eclectic musical tastes, he grew up on a diet of French songs and rock, but fell in the magic cauldron of 'festoù-nnoz', (the nocturnal dance, music and song celebrations which take place in Brittany until this day) during his adolescence. Jonathan was moved by his voice and charismatic presence during a musical gathering in the centre of Brittany and proposed that he start singing with Aodan, so beginning Fanch's professional music career. He was quick to make an impression on the regional music scene, and was immediately invited to participate in the 3rd creation of the famous Kreiz Breiz Akademi with Erik Marchand.



*"A wonderful breton singer, following the in tradition of those such as (Erik) Marchand and (Yann-Fanch) Kemener"*

*Ronan Gorgiard, Ouest-France (newspaper), 7 February 2010*

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## STRINGS :



**Jonathan Dour (Djodan)** : Born into a musical family, Jonathan began his career as a fest-noz fiddler at the age of 14, playing with the group Karma and recording on four of their albums, one of which went on to win the 'Kan ar Bobl' awards of '98. At 18 he decided to dedicate himself entirely to music, continuing his classical studies at the St-Brieuc and Rennes Conservatoriums and continuing to develop his passion for traditional music with a project entitled 'Liamm' (1st place, Kan ar Bobl Awards '04). This project was a musical fusion of traditional song and lively, classical-inspired accompaniment (violin and cello), putting into practice his belief that for traditional music to flourish it must evolve. In 2008, after more than 400 fest-noz concerts, Jonathan took the time to sketch out an entirely new and imaginative project, pulling on all his previous sources of inspiration; breton sung dance-music, classical harmonies and string vamping, rock and dub, and a spark of gypsy fire! Aodan was born...

**Shane Lestideau (Shani)** : After Shane's early start to life tucked away in the heart of the Australian bush, her mother (a lover of irish and scottish music and dance) insisted on the family moving to the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, to give her daughter the chance to learn the violin which had been stored for so many years under her bed. For the following ten years Shane received classical training whilst also pursuing her passion for traditional music, playing for her mother's ceili dances and also during a year-long stay in Ireland and Scotland as a teenager. In 2000 she continued her classical studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and then specialised in baroque violin at the Boulogne-Billancourt Conservatorium in France. Her musical career in Brittany has enabled her to remain active in all the various musical styles in which she has trained, freely exploiting musical fusions and mixed art-forms. The potent creative energy which was present from the very beginning of Aodan's rehearsal sessions assured her that this project was a logical step in a long search for new sound-scapes.



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**Mathilde Chevrel (Matédha)** : Born in Upper-Brittany into a musical family, (her father was an organist), Mathilde chose the cello at the age of 10 and spent the ten subsequent years studying classical music at the Rennes Conservatorium. She then stumbled across the traditional music repertoire by chance, and discovered that it was, in fact, the melodies that she remembered from her grandfather's harmonica-playing as a kid. It wasn't long before she was one of the only cellists in Brittany to regularly play in fest-noz concerts and also win the prestigious 'Kan ar Bobl' in '05. She went on to further enrich her musical culture with studies in baroque music and jazz. It's no surprise that it was during a fest-noz that she met Jonathan for the first time (their shared interest in classical and trad music sparked the conversation!) and so Aodan's string trio was complete.



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## DRUMS AND BASS :

**Benoit Guillemot (Ioneh) :** As a kid, Ben learnt to love music thanks to the late-night music sessions enjoyed by his parents and friends at their family home. His first experience of the drums was playing on his dad's old kit, accompanying Platters vinyls, Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis. He tried out most styles of amplified music (punk, hard/hip hop fusion, prog rock), all his experiences taking him closer to the decision to be a professional musician. A love of jazz motivated him to do seven months of training under Césarius Alvim at Eric Le Lann's 'School of Musical Creation'. It was there that he befriended the bass player, Pierre-Yves Kermorvant, with whom he would participate in many future musical projects. Then, Ben spent three years touring France with the famous 'Freedom For King Kong' with whom he recorded the group's 4th and 5th albums. He also recorded on the 2nd album of 'Tcha K Fédérateur' before crossing paths with Jonathan and embarking upon a discovery of breton and world music with Aodan.



**Pierre-Yves Kermorvant (Martouk) :**

Though he was born in Brittany, Pierre-Yves spent the greater part of his childhood in Nigeria & home to the afro beat! He started the bass as a teenager playing in rock groups, then took up formal music studies in various jazz institutions including the CIM Jazz de Paris and Eric Le Lann's 'School of Musical Creation'. He went on to discover the double bass and, telling himself that no double bass player could get by without classical technique, he completed his studies in classical music at the St-Nazaire Conservatorium. Then arrived the memorable summers day when his friend Benoit introduced him to a still-forming tribe of musicians called Aodan... Even though his grandma was known for her singing of breton 'gwerz' (slow airs), Pierre-Yves hadn't worked on the breton repertoire prior to this project. He has found himself inspired by the freedom accessible within the style to express his musical creativity in a multitude of ways.

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