



Aziz  
عزیز سحماوی  
SAHMAOUI  
& UNIVERSITY OF GNAWA

OLYMPIA  
PRODUCTION

TV5MONDE

Le Monde

Télérama

fip



## WHO ARE THEY?



"After finishing his studies, **Aziz Sahmaoui** moved to Paris and co-founded one of the seminal bands of the 1990s, **L'Orchestre National de Barbès (ONB)** - a machine designed to scare the living daylights out of identity obsessives and frontier-guardsmen.

After releasing two albums with **ONB**, he joined one of the pioneers of cosmopolitan cultural cross-breeding, the pianist **Joe Zawinul**, old sparring partner of **Miles Davis** and founder of **Weather Report**, who liked nothing better than signing up African virtuosos to his blue-sky ensemble. It was in **Zawinul's Syndicate** that **Aziz Sahmaoui** met various musicians with whom went on to form the band **University of Gnawa**, a band that, since 2010, has never stopped deconstructing that chimera created by the label 'world music': a hand-book of 'folkified' identities put together for the benefit of the northern hemisphere.

With its Senegalese, its Frenchmen, its North Africans and its musicians of no fixed origin, **University of Gnawa** dishes up a style of music whose catalyst is trance. At the heart of their adventure there's a reconciliation, between the rhythmic genius of **Africa** above and **Africa** below the **Sahara**, whose ineluctable bond **University of Gnawa** embodies with instinctive mastery and skill."

*Arnaud Robert*

[DOWNLOAD BIOGRAPHY](#)

## LINE-UP



**Aziz Sahmaoui** : Lead, mandole, n'goni

**Alune Wade** : Bass, vocals

**Adhil Mirghani** : Percussions, vocals

**Hervé Samb** : Guitar, vocals

**Cheikh Diallo** : Keybord, kora, vocals

**Jon Grandcamp** : Drums





## NEW ALBUM

"We're all aboard for a road trip through the sounds of the blues, of ballads, of North African songs, all delivered with tenderness or buoyed along by hypnotic rhythms. [...] It's all very very very beautiful, a fine work."

Jerome V. / SONGAZINE

**LISTEN**



TRANSGLOBAL  
WORLD MUSIC  
CHART

#11

100 BEST ALBUMS OF 2019

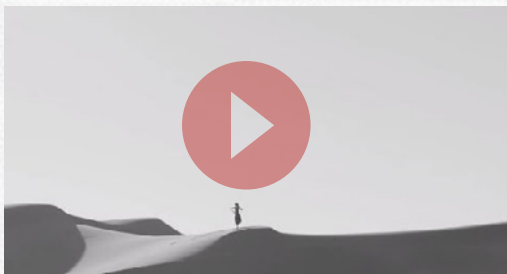


PLAYLIST ON BBC WORLD



PRIX COUP DE CŒUR ACADEMIE  
CHARLES CROS 2019  
LIVING MEMORY

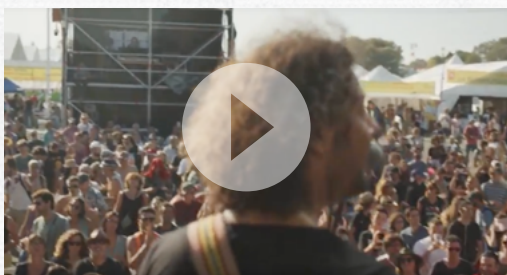
## VIDEO CLIP - *NOURIA*



## BEHIND THE SCENE



## FÊTE DE L'HUMANITÉ



## JAZZABLANCA FESTIVAL



عزيز سحماوي  
**Aziz SAHMAOUI**  
& UNIVERSITY OF GNAWA





## PRESS QUOTES

• • • • •

*"We're all aboard for a road trip through the sounds of the blues, of ballads, of North African songs, all delivered with tenderness or buoyed along by hypnotic rhythms. Guitars, n'goni, kora, percussions mix to weave our poetic trance. [...] It's all very very very beautiful, a fine work. Recommended for those who want to take off without leaving their sitting rooms."*

**Jérôme V., Songazine**

*« So here we are being invited to cross a bridge that's been thrown up between Africa and Europe, to enter into the interplay of karkabou (metal castanets) and voices, to forget the binary rhythms that have ended up formatting our ears. So here we are being invited to enter into the trance, to free ourselves from the material world, from all habits and torments. It's one hell of a challenge, and it's fulfilled because Aziz Sahmaoui and his cohorts weave together a truly unstoppable groove. »*

**Frédéric Briard, Marianne**

*"Aziz Sahmaoui traces a line between scared and profane, between moments of contemplation, with their elevated spiritual tone, and moments when the body is called upon to freed itself. All these ingredients are united to turn this cauldron of fusing sound into alchemical magic, to which he has given the apt name of Poetic Trance."*

**Jacques Denis, La Terrasse**

*"Aziz has come up with nine captivating songs. His lyrics, inspired at times by legends immemorial, evoke love and the absence, or even the fear, of the other, the enemy of reason. His voice evokes the heat of a beautiful simmer. Riffs seems to undulate on the soft curves of the dunes. Then, all of a sudden, we're possessed by a vertiginous rhythmic whirl."*

**Fara C., L'Humanité**

*"For his new and magnetically beautiful album Poetic Trance, Aziz Sahmaoui nourishes the gnawa sap of his native Morocco with West-African sounds and soaring rock...Together with his band, University of Gnawa, the singer, player of mandole and n'goni, resident in France, creates the perfect union between Europe and Africa..."*

**Asrtrid Krivian, Afrique Magazine**

*« Poetic Trance, the third album by Aziz Sahmaoui and his University of Gnawa, plunges us into an Africa re-configured around the two shores of the Sahara; an Africa over which a growing current of deep mysticism is blowing...Poetic Trance - an album that is quite simply magical, mystical and spell-binding. Already a contender for Album of the Year. »*

**Baba Squaaly, RFI Musique**

*"On this dazzling, solar album with its irresistible groove, Aziz Sahmaoui and the University of Gnawa demonstrate that world music isn't something to be filed away on a shelf reserved for folkloric curiosities; rather that it's alive, modern, brilliant. And it speaks today to our bodies, our hearts, our souls."*

**Christine Monin, Le Parisien Magazine**

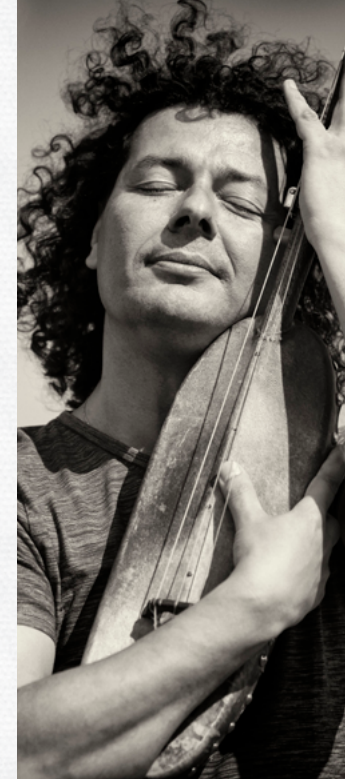
**FRENCH  
PRESS REVIEW**

**DOWNLOAD**

**INTERNATIONAL  
PRESS REVIEW**

**DOWNLOAD**





## ON THE ROAD

• • • • •

- 14.12.2019** **LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE** - Centre Culturel  
**31.01.2020** **EPERNAY** - Th Salmanazar  
**07.02.2020** **COURNON** - La Coloc' de la Culture  
**28.02.2020** **GENNEVILLIERS** - Le Tamanoir  
**25.03.2020** **PARIS** - La Cigale  
**08.04.2020** **LE HAVRE** - Le Volcan Scène Nationale  
**14.05.2020** **COGNAC** - Les Abattoirs  
**15.05.2020** **GUYANCOURT** - La Batterie  
**20.06.2020** **MORSANG-SUR-ORGE** - Fête de la Musique  
**27.06.2020** **ESSAOUIRA** - Festival Gnaoua  
**16.07.2020** **MARSEILLE** - Festival Jazz des Cinq Continents  
**30.07.2020** **ANNEMASSE** - Fête Musical'Eté  
**20.08.2020** **ARIANO** - Ariano Folk Festival  
**+ MORE TO COME**

## CONTACTS

• • • • •

### MAIN AGENT

**Zohra Haddouch**  
 +33 6 09 04 33 05  
[zhaddouch@zahora.fr](mailto:zhaddouch@zahora.fr)

### PRESS OFFICER

**Sophie Louvet**  
 +33 6 84 40 61 51  
[louvetso@wanadoo.fr](mailto:louvetso@wanadoo.fr)



## REFERENCES

• • • • •

Festival de la Cité Lausanne • **Festival B-United Bruxelles** • Festival Diwan Tlemcen • **Festival Musicas do Mundo Sines** • Womad UK **Festival de La Mercè Barcelone** • WDR Synphonie Orchestra Köln **Cully Jazz Festival** • Mawazine Festival • **Festival Music Meeting Nijmegen** • Festival Timitar Agadir • **Juicy Beats Festival Dortmund** • Afrika Festival Vienne • **Kilkenny Arts Festival Dublin** • Europa Jazz Festival Cagliari • **Global Copenhagen** • Stanser Musiktage Festival • **Dimajazz Fest Constantine** • OFFest Festival Skopje **Mistura Festival Lisbonne** • Festival Nomade Belo Horizonte Brazil **Festival Mundial Tilburg** • Giardino Centro Santa Chiara **Tilburg Festival Colors of Ostrava** • Les Nuits d'Afrique Montreal **Cleveland Museum of art Cleveland** • Grand Performances Festival Los Angeles • **Calgary Folk Music Festival** • Lincoln Center New-York **L'Boulevard Festival Casablanca** • Festival de la Ciudad Madrid **Afrikafest Festival Hertme** • Havana World Music Festival Cuba **Festival Gnaoua Essaouira** • Festival Transmondial Moods Zurich • **Krio Jazz festival Praia** • Fest Taragalte Mhamid • **NYAD Institute Abu Dahbi** • Musiques Sacrées Fez • **Opera Frankfurt Philharmonie Paris** • **Jazzablanca Casablanca** • Mama Festival Paris