



**27<sup>th</sup> TO 29<sup>th</sup>  
JUNE 2024**

**ESSAOUIRA-MOROCCO  
FESTIVAL-GNAOUA.NET**

**PRESS RELEASE**



**CASABLANCA, MONDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2024**

**OPENING OF THE GNAOUA FESTIVAL:  
UNPRECEDENTED FUSION CONCERT FEATURING  
3 CULTURES ENSHRINED ON UNESCO INTANGIBLE  
HERITAGE LIST**

A program that will bring together over 400 artists from 14 different countries; 53 concerts; a human rights forum; a training program with prestigious music institution Berklee College of Music; round table sessions on Gnaoua culture; a major exhibition of Moroccan visual artists and multiple activities throughout the city.

This exceptional edition will open with two highlights that will leave a lasting impression. First, the traditional and thundering opening parade of all brotherhoods marching together; led by the Gnaoua Maâlems, this wildly colourful show winds its ways through the streets, joining Souiris and festivalgoers to celebrate the launch of the 25<sup>th</sup> edition of the Gnaoua and World Music Festival.

The Parade will be followed by an unprecedented concert, a musical creation unique to the Festival that will celebrate the trans-Atlantic brotherhood with musicians and dancers from Morocco, Brazil, and the Ivory Coast.

This promises to be a truly musical and visual experience, an explosion of rhythms combining Gnaoua, Brazilian Batucada, Flamenco and Zaouli genres, evoking their similarities. This show also represents - for the very first time - the extraordinary meeting of 3 musical genres enshrined on UNESCO's list of intangible culture : *Gnaoua, Flamenco, and Zaouli*. The great Maâlem **Hassan Boussou** and fiery Maâlem **Moulay Tayeb Dehbi** will exchange their own spiritual notes with those of their Brazilian alter-egos: the very activist **Ilê Aiyê**, a brilliant percussionist ensemble that promotes the African component of Bahian music. Then **La Compagnie Dumanlé**, who practice Zaouli - a popular Ivorian art form that features masks, costumes, music and dance in every show - will face off with the percussive zapateado of Flamenco dancer **Nino de Los Reyes**, alongside percussionist **Sergio Martinez**. A highly anticipated fusion concert that will surely live on in Festival history.

Once again, the programme for the 25<sup>th</sup> edition of the Gnaoua and World Music Festival has been carefully designed to offer a wide spectrum of musical genres and artists, by making demanding yet popular choices. This year's Festival program is audacious, bold, and inclusive, qualities that have become the hallmark of this event : a one-of-a-kind life experience. We expect to welcome more than 400,000 festivalgoers this year, from forty + countries around the world and all across Morocco.

## ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES



**HASSAN BOUSSOU**

Hassan Boussou is the worthy heir to his late father, Maâlem Hmida Boussou. For years he has taken his musical heritage to all corners of the world, either in his traditional group, Boussou Ganga, or with his France-based fusion group, Séwaryé. Maâlem Hassan Boussou is a veteran of the sharpest and most diverse collaborations, with the traditional repertoire that remains his principal source of inspiration, combined with Western sounds and rhythms. Hassan is the most faithful among the faithful, bringing the full generosity of his art to each edition of the Essaouira and World Music Festival. In 2016, he created a fusion with one of the American masters of free Jazz - Jamaaladeen Tacuma - during the 19th edition of the Festival. In March 2017, he received a standing ovation at the Gnaoua Festival Tour concert at the Bataclan in Paris: a 100% Festival fusion with Maâlem Mustapha Baqbou, Hindi Zahra, Mehdi Nassouli, Tony Allen, Karim Ziad, and Titi Robin. For this edition, audiences will meet him once again at the exceptional opening show alongside La Compagnie Dumanlé, Nino de Los Reyes, Sergio Martinez, and Ilê Aiyê.



**MOULAY  
EL TAYEB DEHBI**

Moulay El Tayeb Dehbi was born in Marrakech in 1979. He was raised in a Gnaoua family, in which has initiated by his father, the maâlem Moulay Abdellatif, and several other Gnaoua masters, including Mohamed Kouyou and Abdelkadir Ben Salloum, Mahjoub Al-Khlamoussi, Zoukari Hassan and Haj Boujamaa. Maâlem Moulay El Tayeb stands out with his perfect mastery of Gnaoua heritage rhythms. This has earned him a spot with many festivals and well-known artists. For the 2018 edition, he performed on the main stage at the Gnaoua and World Music Festival, on Moulay Hassan Square, alongside two other young maâlems from Marrakech.



**ILÊ AIYÊ**

The first 100% Afro percussion group from Salvador, at the origin of “samba-reggae”, Ilê Aiyê has revolutionised Bahian music and “re-Africanised” its carnival. This mythical collective has become a source of inspiration for many of Brazil’s Afro-descendants, like godfathers of Brazilian music Gilberto Gil, Margareth Menezes, and Carlinhos Brown. In the early 1970s, two young people from the Curuzu-Liberdade district named Vovô and Apolônio formed an initiative that spoke of an Afro-Brazilian renaissance, echoing Black Power in the US. Their idols were James Brown and Bob Marley, and they felt an urgency to reaffirm Black consciousness through cultural manifestations such as candomblé, afoxé (its musical version), and capoeira, silenced for too long by figures of white authority. From recording Gilberto Gil on one of their songs (on the album Refavela), to Caetano Veloso’s tribute-song to them, the prodigious reputation Ilê Aiyê has grown steadily over time. Five decades after their first days, the collective has grown to include 3000 members. Today, Ilê Aiyê is considered “cultural heritage of humanity”, and continues to be a source of inspiration for the diaspora and for generations to come.



**COMPAGNIE  
DUMANLÉ**

Created in 2012, La Compagnie Dumanlé is an artistic ensemble of actors, dancers and musicians, most of whom were trained at the Institut National Supérieur des Arts et de l’Action Culturelle (INSAAC) in Ivory Coast. The company aims to provide collectives and individuals with the means to communicate through the performing arts, and works on choreographic productions inspired by Ivorian heritage culture. Under the direction of Ivorian choreographer Hermann Nikoko, this organization has distinguished itself with a capacity to bring authentic patrimonial values to the international stage. Combining song, percussion, and movement, the Compagnie Dumanlé delivers a positive energy that soothes the soul of its audience. The company won the 19th edition of the national festival “Vacances Culture”, organized by the Ministry of Culture and Francophony, and later participated in the International Dance Festival in Ouagadougou with the “Blahon” (panther men) project. Other shows include “Mask Encounter” in Beijing and “Komian World” at Journées Théâtrales in Carthage, as well as an extended tout in Germany and Holland in 2022.



## **NINO DE LOS REYES & SERGIO MARTINEZ**

The Essaouira Gnaoua and World Music Festival proposes one of the most engaged duos of the Flamenco Jazz universe, bringing together Nino de Los Reyes and Sergio Martinez. This is not the first time these two have shared a stage. Nino is a rising star of contemporary flamenco, the first dancer to receive a Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Album with Antidote, in collaboration with legendary jazz artist Chick Corea. Corea also invited him to participate in his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday presentation at the Blue Note Club and Madison Square Garden in New York. Nino has shared the stage with Joaquin Grilo, Milagros Mengibar, Antonio Reyes and his brother Isaac De Los Reyes. He also collaborated with Paul Simon on his Stranger to Stranger album. As for Sergio, he is one of today's most internationally-recognised Spanish percussionists. This versatile artist has developed his career through collaboration with great figures from the global scene, artists such as Paul Simon, Al Di Meola, John Patitucci, Joe Lovano, and Terri Lyne Carrington. He has performed with his mentors - Danilo Pérez, Jamey Haddad and Jose Antonio Galicia - on the best jazz stages and has participated in the major festivals around the world.

### **Press Contact**

For more informations, please contact:

**Karima Hachimi** - karima@a3communication.net

**A3 COMMUNICATION** - 05 22 27 26 03/04

[www.festival-gnaoua.net](http://www.festival-gnaoua.net)

Facebook : [@GnaouaFestival](https://www.facebook.com/GnaouaFestival)

Instagram : [gnaouafestival](https://www.instagram.com/gnaouafestival)

Twitter : [@gnaouafestival](https://twitter.com/gnaouafestival)

YouTube : [GnaouaFestival](https://www.youtube.com/GnaouaFestival)

PRODUCED AND ORGANIZED BY



COMMUNICATION

IN PARTNERSHIP  
WITH



YERMA Gnaoua  
ASSOCIATION POUR LA PROMOTION  
& LA DÉFINITION DU PATRIMOINE GNAOUA