

COMOROS ISLANDS / FRANCE

*"To listen to Nawal is an invitation to dream, dance,
meditate and soar over the Indian Ocean..."*



NAWAL

"World Diva"

www.myspace.com/nawalcomoros
www.nawali.com

Nawal “World Diva”

Nawal bathed in both popular and spiritual music from a young age. Now living in France, today she is recognised as being a key figure from her native islands: the ever rising star of Comoros. A singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Nawal plays guitar, *gambusi* (traditional lute, inherited from Yemen), and diverse percussion. Nawal states “My main instrument, before anything, is the voice.” Aptly called a “mystic pop diva”, Nawal communicates something bigger than music – she has the capacity to touch people’s hearts with her powerful voice and message.

Between traditional and contemporary, Nawal’s compositions are an acoustic roots-based fusion, a reflection of the diverse character of the Comoros and beyond. Indo-Arabian-Persian music meets Bantu polyphonies and rhythms mixed with Sufi trance. Nawal sings mostly in Comorian (*Shikomor*) a language in the Swahili family, also with French, English and Arabic. Nawal sings in favor of all humans, for education and for union. She also conserves the philosophy of her great grandfather Al Maarouf, a grand Sufi master, who was Inspired by the light of Islam founded on love, respect and peace.

A self-produced artist, Nawal has performed professionally for over 20 years, with concerts in Europe, North America, Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. In 2011, Nawal will release “Embrace the Spirit” her first solo album, as well as a CD/DVD recorded live with the “*Femmes de la Lune*” (Women from the Islands of the Moon), six women from Mayotte (French Comoros). This is a musical creation between the traditional feminine Sufi repertoire and Nawal’s worldly muse, and is also a humanitarian project to assist the emancipation of women through Art. In 2007 Nawal released her second album “Aman” (Peace of the Soul) which was awarded stunning reviews from the international press. Her first album “Kweli” (Truth) was released in 2001 (Mélodie).



Nawal plays the Daf - Festival Villes de Musiques du Monde – France 2009

NAWAL IN CONCERT

Today, Nawal performs in 4 different formations:

1) Solo, 2) Quartet, 3) with the “Femmes de la Lune” of Mayotte, and 4) Carte Blanche

1) A Solo performance includes Nawal singing and playing diverse instruments, including the guitar and *gambusi* (traditional lute, inherited from Yemen), mbira and percussion (daf, udu, etc...). Soul vibration, love and sharing – this concert is best for intimate settings to allow for an intense communion with the public. Nawal sings her compositions as well as some traditional songs. Depending on size and acoustic quality of the stage, microphones may not be necessary.

2) The Quartet is Nawal’s main ensemble which she has toured internationally with. Nawal plays guitar and *gambusi*, and today she is joined by Claudine François on piano, also with JB Gbadoe and Aurore Voahangy Coriton on diverse percussions. All sing backing vocals. Nawal’s Comoran roots are complemented by those of Aurore originally from Madagascar, JB originally from Togo-Benin and Claudine from France who has performed in ethno-jazz collaborations internationally. The Quartet plays from Nawal’s compositions from the albums “Aman” (Peace of the Soul) & “Kweli” (Truth), as well as some excerpts from her new album, soon to be released.

3) A presentation of Nawal & the “Femmes de La Lune” is a choreographed performance of the Nawal Quartet with with six women from Mayotte (French Comoros), ten musicians total. An enchanting fusion highlighting women's Sufi songs from Mayotte. A CD/DVD of this project has been completed and will be released to international audiences in 2011.

4) The Carte Blanche is a performance with guest artists, Nawal can choose the artists or the organizer may propose a collaboration. Nawal is open to every style of music from opera to hip hop, and also interested to mix all the arts with her music including dance, poetry, painters, etc... For the Carte Blanche, there is no rehearsal, however the artists may meet before the concert. Since each performance is totally unique, it often allows for a certain magic to happen which thrills and entrances the audiences. For more info on past Carte Blanches, please contact us.



Nawal & the “Femmes de La Lune” from Mayotte – France 2009

PRESS REVIEWS

NEW YORK TIMES

"[One] of the most notable world music CDs released over the last year... "

The New York Times

Jon Pareles, June 2007

RFI

"Nawal... more engaging than ever."

Sylvie Clerfeuille, April 2008



L'EXPRESS

"Nawal 'La Voix des Comores' : incredible depths.... her version of Amour Sorcier from Claude Nougaro, combines strength and spirituality. Luminous."

G. Medioni, May 2008



MONDOMIX

Nawal, "the voice of Comoros" : a grande dame with refined elegance, who makes the mixing of her roots her principal theme, a secret from which she entrances her public. From Sufi music to Bantu polyphonies, in passing by the rhythms of the Indian Ocean, her trio contrabass, vocals percussion – navigate with sense, and a real sense of musicality."

Reportage Sakifo Musik Festival by Anne-Laure Lemancel, August 2007



LA PRESSE (Montréal)

Nawal has a serene look of the wise. Her smile is contagious and that of an artist from the muslim culture petrified in an open and contemplative mysticism. Her imposing presence is that of an autonomous woman, more over a free spirit. All this is reflected in her composite music, as well as her image of her life as a Comorian immigrant in France."

"Les Comores de Nawal" by Alain Brunet, July 2007



FROOTS (UK)

"...downright gorgeous music...a record that's going to become a long-term favourite"

Ian Anderson, Oct 2007



LA WEEKLY

"On 'Aman', her new tour de force, the nearby African rhythms - that kalimba, and the drumming and call-and-response - mix with Malagasy melodicism and tunings and the complexities of Arabic and Indian musical traditions.... The variety of songwriting and styles, that mix of sweet melody and energetic rhythms, reminds one a bit of much of Brazil's best - the variety of Caetano Veloso, of Gilberto Gil at his rootsy finest... The long tendrils of Islam are never far off, and Sufism suffuses the entire project ... and in long Sufi trance passages that must be remarkable in person. (Her live shows reportedly are even better than the album.) And dig Idriss Mlanao's jazzy bass lines - it's what jazz fans can grab onto as we listen, soaking in all the exoticism of the rest."

"Whirled Music" Brick Wahl, May 2007



DAILY NEWS (Los Angeles)

"Aman translates to "peace of the soul," so the title is an apt description of this album of Sufi chants and spiritual roots music... resulting in trancelike compositions that take you away from the worries of the world."

CD Review par Glenn Whipp, June 2007



GLOBAL RHYTHM

Aman selectionned "Top 10 World Music CDs"

August 2007

BOSTON HERALD

"From adversity, the saying goes, comes strength - and also, in the case of singer and guitarist Nawal, inspiration for a life of music... Her new CD, Aman, has a delicate, often spiritual beauty to it."

"For Nawal, past is ever-present" Bob Young, June 2007





PRESS REVIEWS cont'd

BOSTON GLOBE

"Her music takes as its point of departure traditional Comorian sounds, which resonate with Arabic and African influences accumulated over centuries through the Indian Ocean trade... But if its predominant component is Comorian roots, "Aman" deviates in many ways, each one offering a glimpse of this woman's unusual journey from a highly conservative family in a highly conservative nation to the liberated spirit that she has become."



"Nawal's musical journey to liberation" Siddhartha Mitter, June 2007

AFROPOP WORLDWIDE

"A self-styled vocalist, composer and string player (guitar and the long-necked lute called gambusi), Nawal hails from Comoros, an Island nation in the Indian Ocean. She has a silver-in-the-rough voice that conveys wisdom and experience, and her music is an unorthodox blend of Comoros tradition, Sufi spirituality, and more.... Nawal is a modern original with deep respect for the past, and passionate, though never naïve, hope for the future."



CD Review by Banning Eyre, June 2007

FINANCIAL TIMES



"Aman has a mesmeric slow burn, combining the African and Islamic influences of the archipelago... "Meditation", almost too pretty for its own good..."

David Honigmann, June 2007

FNAC

"Here is a generous authentic music, which draws its strength from the Comoran tradition. In effet, "Aman" is one of the most notable African albums this year. "Aman" is the revelation of a talent that merits to be supported."



FNAC Châtelet-les-Halles "L'Afrique en Acoustique", May 2009

AL-WATWAN (premier journal des Comores)

"Nawal's prestation at the festival "Arabesque : Arts of the Arab World" was a success. More than a thousand people attended the Kennedy Center at Nawal's majestic concert. Her repertoire satisfies all tastes and cultures. Comoran music which draws from the deep roots of the tradition, passing by the echoes of the Orient. »



Moindje, March 2009

ALTER MUSICA - ALiA

"Nawal is an artist of rare caliber, the music which flows in her veins is equal to her blood, and her voice strikes us with an infinite sweetness."



Magalie Bergès, May 2008

MFI HEBDO

"Nawal is one of the rare artistes which has pierced beyond the Indian Ocean. Her singing are both powerful and enchanting."



Daniel Lieuze, April 2008

QUOTIDIEN de La Réunion et de l'Océan Indien

"[Nawal] steeped in spirituality takes the audience very far and very high."

"Trans'océan Indien" by K.B., August 2007



LE JOURNAL (La Réunion)

"A lunar voice... a mystic pop diva..."

M.D., August 2007

MUZIKIFAN

"The long trance number "Ode à Maarouf," in honour of her great-grandfather, a famous Sufi marabout of Comoros, is outstanding."



CD review, June 2007

ITHACA TIMES New York

"Nawal is a world musician in the truest sense of the art form"

"World Music Wonders" by Elaina Parisi, July 2007



SONGWRITER / COMPOSER

- 2010 : Nawal's song "Hima" used for documentary "Africa Shafted: under one roof" by Ingrid Martens (South Africa)
CD/DVD Release in Mayotte : « Nawal & Les Femmes de La Lune »
- 2009 : Musical Creation : "Nawal & Les Femmes de La Lune" – Festival Villes des Musiques du Monde
- 2008 : Composition of the music for "Résidence Ylang Ylang" a film of Hachimiya Ahamada
Nawal's album "Aman" selected for the FNAC Indétendances World Compilation
fROOTS : "Aman" selected for best of 2007
- 2007 : CD Release : Nawal "Aman" (Peace of the Soul)
Global Rhythm (USA) "Aman" Top 10 World Cds in August
- 2006 : Composition of the music of "Matopos" a film by Stéphanie Machuret
seen on ARTE
- 2005 : Nawal selectionned to compose "Sahel Opera" commissioned by the Prince Claus Fund in Holland.
- 2004 : Nawal featured on "Women of Africa" CD compilation (Putumayo World Music)
Nawal in "Trajectoires santé ici et là bas" - film prevention against AIDS (GRDR prod)
- 2002 : Nawal featured on "Island Blues" CD compilation (Network)
- 2001 : CD Release : Nawal "Kweli" (Truth)

NAWAL CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS

- J.F.Kennedy Center - Washington DC (USA)
Festival Arabesque
- Festival Nuits d'Afrique - Montréal
(Canada)
- Grassroots Festival – NY & NC (USA)
- Lotus Festival - IN (USA)
- Chicago World Music Festival, IL (USA)
- San Francisco Int'l Arts Festival, CA (USA)
- Festival of Colors - Detroit, MI (USA)
- Beverly Hills Hotel - CA (USA)
- Sauti Za Busara - Zanzibar (Tanzania)
- Worlds Of The Indian Ocean - (Kenya)
Nairobi
- Lepont & Danish Institute - (Syria)
Aleppo & Damascus
- Théâtre Magtymguly - (Turkmenistan)
Achgabat
- Commeration of the African Union (Lybia)
- Palace of Arts - Budapest (Hungary)
- Ethno Port Poznań Festival (Poland)
- Espace Senghor - Bruxelles (Belgium)
- Sfinks Festival - Boechout (Belgium)
- Institut du Monde Arabe - Paris (France)
- Fjørde Festival - Fjørde (Norway)
- The Drum - Birmingham (UK)
- Musée du Quai Branly - Paris (France)
- Festival Mundial - Tilburg (Holland)
- Dunya Festival - Rotterdam (Holland)
- Druga Godba - Ljubjana (Slovenia)
- Sakifo Musik Festival - (La Réunion)
- Café de la Danse - Paris (France)
- Festival Milatsika (Mayotte)
- Les Nuits du Ramadan - (Morocco)
CCFC : El Jadida & Agadir
- Festival Les Suds à Arles (France)
- Festival au Féminin – Paris (France)
- Festival d'Ile de France - (France)



NAWAL ON THE RADIO

FRANCE & DOM-TOM (French overseas departments) :

BBC "Francophone"

RFI "Musiques du Monde", "Reine d'Afrique"

FRANCE CULTURE "L'Oreille d'un Sourd", "Equinoxe", "Double Culture"

FRANCE INTER "L'Afrique Enchanté"

AFRICA NO.1 : "Africa Mix"

FIP, Chérie FM, NOVA, Aligre, FPP, France Inter, FIP, RFI, France Musique, Radio France Orient, Radio Nova, Aligre FM, FPP, Africa No. 1, TSF, Media Tropical, Radio Libertaire, Radio Galère, Radio Gazelle, RFO Réunion, RFO Mayotte, etc...

INTERNATIONAL :

BBC - Radio 3 & World Service

PRI (Public Radio International) "The World" (*Marco Werman*) "Global Hit" USA 2007

WBAI "Wake Up Call" NYC, USA 2007

KCRW "Café L.A." with *Tom Schnabel*, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2007

NHPR "Front Porch" with *Liz Bulkley*, USA 2007

CUIT Toronto, Canada 2007

RFI "World Tracks" (anglophone) with *Daniel Brown* FRANCE / INTL 2007

BBC World Service "Music Review" with *Radek Boschetty* UK / INTL 2005

WBAI "The Arts Magazine" with *Prairie Miller*, NYC, USA 2005

KPFA "Music of the World" with *Stephen Kent*, Berkeley, CA, USA 2005

KALX "Tangents Radio" with *Dore Stein*, San Francisco, CA, USA 2005

KALW "Africa Mix" with *Emmanuel Nado* CA, USA 2005

KUSP "Rhythm Afrique" with *Gypsy Flores* Santa Cruz, CA, USA 2005

WHPK "Music Around the World" Chicago IL, USA 2005

KLCC "Tropical Beats" OR, USA 2005

Radio Comores Moroni, COMORES 2006

Radio 4, HOLLANDE 2005

Radio Popolare, Milan, ITALIE 2002

Heard on the radios in Poland, Hungary, Turkmenistan, Tanzania, Marocco, Norway, England, Canada, etc...

NAWAL ON TV

2010 : RFO Mayotte

2009 : NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TV
FR3, RFO, TV5, etc... "Mezzo Voce"
East African TV

2008 : FranceÔ : "Ô Quotidien" (Flyy Lerandy) &
"10 minutes pour le dire" (Gora Patel)
RFO Réunion – invited during the news

2006 & 2007 : RFO Mayotte

2006 : Télévision Algérienne "L'Aid dans la Cité"

2005 : TV5 "Mondomix Minutes"
TéléSud : animé par Pierre Bedou

2004 : RFO « 10 minutes pour le dire »
FR3 « Espace Francophone »

2003 : RFO Documentaire "Nawal à la Prison Loos"

1998 : Seen/heard on : TF1, A2, FR3 ARTE et autres, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Chaillot Palace, Paris

CONTACTS

BOOKING / PROMOTION :



ATEA Production

Tél/fax : +33 (0) 4 57 93 07 07

contact@ateaprod.com - www.ateaprod.com

26, avenue Maréchal Randon - 38000 Grenoble, FRANCE

MANAGEMENT :

France

ART' ET MOIN Association

Tel : +33 (0) 1 74 30 62 23

artetmoin@nawali.com

75019 Paris

USA

Dziva Productions

Melissa Cara Rigoli

+1 415 525 6161

melissacara@gmail.com

DISTRIBUTION "AMAN" :

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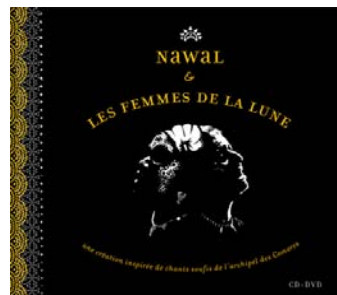
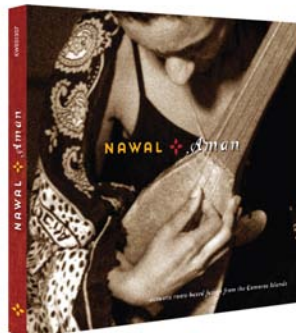
Tel: +33 (0) 1 49 60 06 38

contact@domdisques.com – www.disquesdom.com

Editions Le Souffle D'Or

Tel: +33 (0) 4 92 65 52 24

contact@souffledor.fr – www. souffledor.fr



www.nawali.com

www.myspace.com/nawalcomoros

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