



Press Release

## **Appointment with the Greatest Moroccan Artists for Mawazine's 15th edition**

*The stage of Salé: an eclectic and festive lineup!*

**Rabat, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - Chaâbi, hip-hop, aïta, gnaoua... all tastes of nature will be represented on the stage of Salé for a particularly rich and diverse edition. Ahouzar, Hoba Hoba Spirit, Douzi, Stati and Najat. Aâtabou, to name a few, will be the worthy ambassadors of the Moroccan musical scene.**

Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World, fervent advocate of musical diversity, promises once again more exceptional moments for all music lovers of the Kingdom. The most popular artists, of all styles, responded to the call with enthusiasm.

Hence, Sunday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Ahouzar** will cause uproar amongst festivalgoers by interpreting his songs; true hymns to love, peace, fraternity, and hope. Since the 80s, when his career debuted, many generations have been touched by the sensitivity and generosity of this big-hearted artist, native of the Atlas, especially the nostalgic of Moroccan folkloric heritage and traditional rhythms. Determined to live up to expectations of traditional musical from the Atlas, he will perform on the stage of Salé.

Two days later, on Tuesday may 24<sup>th</sup>, and in a totally different repertoire, it is the emblematic group of Hayha Music, **Hoba Hoba Spirit**, who will trample the stage of Salé for its fifth appearance at the festival! Subtly mixing different genres- fusion, Afro, rap, gnaoua, rock, or reggae- aiming to bring Moroccan youth a message of hope and peace, its music evokes problems encountered by the Kingdom's new generation. This is the case for *Kalakhnikov* (2003) and *Blad Schizophrene* (2005), two albums with songs that still resonate in our memories...

Another star, and not the least, will perform on the stage of Salé that same evening: the great **Abdelaziz Stati**. True symbol of celebration and joy, he is the uncontested master of Moroccan chaâbi. His debuts, which for the most part he owes to his uncle, Bouchaib Benrahhal, popular singer who initiated him to violin and who transmitted his passion to his nephew since his early youth. Since the creation of his group in 1985, Stati continuously perfected his technique to become one of the greatest players of contemporary kamanja. Success inevitably followed, hence strengthening the fidelity of an increasing number of fans.

Fans of Moroccan hip-hop are reassured. They have not been overlooked! In another register, it is the band **H-Kayne** who will perform at the same place on Thursday May 26<sup>th</sup>. The distinguishing mark of this flagship group of Moroccan urban music? Hip-hop full of messages of hope and enthusiasm, far from the usual speeches of this genre's standards. Created in 1996, its first prize at the Boulevard of Young Musicians, won in 2003, truly marked the quartet's debut, which counts today 3 albums including *H-Kaynology* (2006), an album marking a real turning point in the domain of Moroccan rap. To this day, H-Kayne is the only band of this genre to have performed on the prestigious Bataclan



stage in Paris. He was also named, in January 2011, Goodwill Ambassador in Morocco for the United Nations Programme.

**Muslim** will also be performing that evening. The year of 2016 is a turning point in his career to say the least! His latest track, “Dmou3 L7ouma” (the neighborhood’s tears), a hit continuously broadcasted on Moroccan radio, is a tribute to the youth seeking their way. Young people he grew up with, himself coming from a relatively modest family from Jmaâ, in Tangier. This neighborhood’s streets are inexhaustible sources of inspiration for the rapper, who mainly writes his lyrics in darija (Moroccan dialect), to “use the language of the youth and speak truthfully. Hence I express my deepest thoughts and theirs. I scream up high on stage what Moroccans down low think,” he says. Lyrics always reaching their destination, as Muslim excels in art and prose. His career counts no less than 6 albums, including the excellent *Al ttamarod*, released in 2010.

Another dear compatriot sees his career take a lovely turn with his latest single, “Dounia Labladi.” It is of course **Douzi**. Belgium resident born to a Moroccan father and Algerian mother, the “Raï child prodigy” expertly turned this interbreeding into a major asset. Spotted during a television show when he was only 5-years-old, he very quickly became Morocco’s darling. A status confirmed upon the release of his first album, *Goulou Imumti tjini*, in 1994. A first album that was followed by a dozen more, in French, Arabic, Turkish, and even Hindi, opening up the world to him. A Best-Of with his finest songs was also just released. He will perform on the stage of Salé next Friday May 27<sup>th</sup>.

To wrap up the week, the immense, charismatic, essential **Najat Aâtabou** will set the stage of Salé on fire, Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup>. Free and modern woman, her songs are her best way of fighting against women inequality. This is the case for “Hedi Kedba Bayna” and “J’en ai marre,” fraudulently recorded by a guest during a marriage where she performed without the consent of her family, who does not support her venture. However luck was on her side when Mustapha El Mils, famous producer, fell on a recording and offered his help. This was the beginning of the extraordinary adventure of this singer with incisive liveliness, which was named, after a dozen albums, the “Lioness of the Atlas.”

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### ***Useful Information:***

Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World 15<sup>th</sup> Edition: May 20<sup>th</sup> to May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

### ***Stage of Salé***

Concert of Ahouzar on Sunday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Concert of Hoba Hoba Spirit on Tuesday May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Concert of Abdelaziz Stati on Wednesday May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Concert of H-Kayne & Muslim on Thursday May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Concert of Douzi on Thursday May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Concert of Najat Aâtabou on Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016



### **About Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World:**

Born in 2001, the Mawazine Festival – Rhythms of the World is the essential rendezvous for music lovers in Morocco. With over 2 million festivalgoers for each past edition, it is ranked the second greatest cultural event in the world. Organized during nine days, every year in May, Mawazine offers a rich and robust lineup, which intermingles the ultimate stars of the global repertoire, making the cities of Rabat and Sale a forum of exceptional encounters between the public and a multitude of renowned artists. Extremely committed to the promotion of Moroccan music, Mawazine dedicates over half of its lineup to national talents. Embodying the values of peace, openness, tolerance, and respect, the Festival's main mission is to ensure access to the public, hence offering free admission to 90% of its concerts. It is also a major contributor to the regional tourism economy and leader of the creation of a genuine entertainment industry in Morocco.

### **About the Maroc Cultures Association:**

Maroc Cultures is a non-profit association, which commits to create a cultural and artistic motion for the people of the region of Rabat-Sale-Zemmour-Zaër. Created in 2001, the association pursues its mission of the development and democratization of culture, initiated by His Majesty The King Mohammed VI, throughout several events, most notably the Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World and the musical contest Generation Mawazine. Every year, Maroc Cultures also organizes numerous interdisciplinary symposia, art exhibitions and concerts.