



Les Boukakes

Music has many different faces, many characteristics which assign a style. When it comes to Les Boukakes it is one special characteristic that sticks out. It's a Phenomenon that everyone who has seen this band live can confirm. The art of boundless communication. Music that sways, independently of race, status or native language. Les Boukakes - neologism of the insult words Bougnoul (devaluing for Arabians) and Macaque (ugly ape), stand for music, developed in the exile, for a perfect symbiosis of Orient and Occident.

While the integration of North African immigrants in France is still a problematical topic, these 7 musicians from 5 different nations prove that the old Cliché is true: Music can overcome borders. In 1997 Keyboarder Stef – also named “the Okzitante”, Thierry Chadelle - guitarist from Korsika and Pascal - Drummer from the south of France met for the first time and “Les Boukakes” were born. They brought their music on the road, where they mainly played, until they finally published their first EP „Les Boukakes“ in 2000 and slowly managed to put up a fan base.

The album „Makach Mou' kil “(which means as much as „no problem“) published in 2001 backed by the Tunisian Derbouka Percussionist lmed Alibi inspired the French public and the press at the same time.

With this album Les Boukakes continued grandmaster Khaled's way of mixing eastern sounds Rai or Gnawa skilfully with Reggae and Funk but Les Boukakes stepped a bit further.

They use younger, faster ingredients like Rock and electronic sounds, in order to create a completely new, peppy style at a good pace: RAI' N' SKIRT.

„We wanted to make somewhat new for France and prove that integration works” explains Alibi the concept of the album. Nevertheless the band forbears from making political statements and concentrate on the music they want to make.

„It is elementary rock' n roll“ says Alibi about the album „our music has very traditional roots however integrated with modern influences of France. We eventually all live here.”

Boosted by the Algerian singer Bachir Mokhtar, the bassists Laurent „Bubulle “Durafourt from the north of France and the sound engineer Massimo Tomicello from Italy, this new music style, reminding of a fusion of the late Mano Negra and Rachid Taha, this particular music style makes its way into the French Charts and onto the stages of big Festivals.

It was again a turning point in the career of Les Boukakes that finally let their success begin and made all the work of the last 7 years worth it. Their participation in the renown band competition „Printemps de Bourges “, where they reached the finals and were celebrated as the new discovery of the festival, was accompanied by the European television stations ARTE who made a documentation of 5 chapters called „only the voice counts” about the band and their way up. They toured through complete Europe and shared stages with musicians such as Manu Chao, The Wailers, Taraf de Haidouks, Natacha Atlas, Rachid Taha, Ska P and Skatalites.

The year of success was completed by her second album „Bledi “ and their fantastic concert at the Womex 2005 in Newcastle which did not only inspire the present organizers of large European festivals, but also animated Rock legend Robert Plant to dance and do Head banging.

Beside their US tour in September, they played the large European festivals in summer of 2006, like for example: Roots festival (Amsterdam), Sziget festival (Budapest) Fêtes de Genève (Geneva) and as well for the first time, on important German stages like the Africa Festival (Würzburg), Festival Heimatklänge (Berlin), Bardentreffen (Nürnberg), Horizonte (Koblenz) und Odysseen – Kulturen der Welt (Bochum-Wattenscheid). Their extended European tour made them as well cross borders and they made their way to Morocco and Qatar. Also these performances proved by great audience ovations and good press feedback that Les Boukakes’s music is one of a kind.

“Make a note of the name. If there’s any justice you’re going to be hearing a lot of them in the near future.” *Roots*

“Les Boukakes, with a lead singer from Algeria and members from Tunisia and France, put rock dynamics behind impassioned lyrics about social conditions and the long, gutsy vocal lines of Algerian Rai music” *The New York Times*