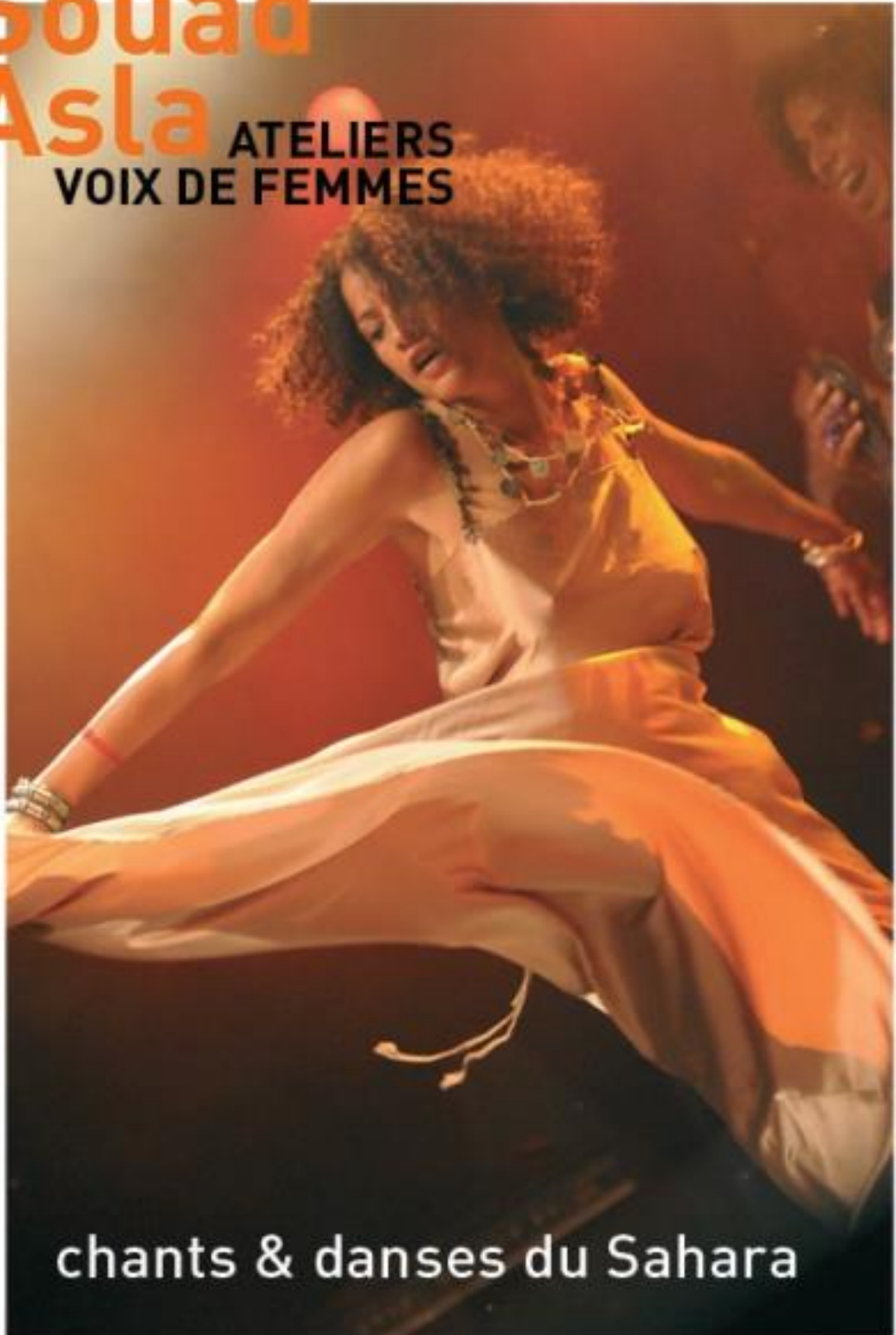


SouadAsla: Women's voice workshop

# Souad Asla

ATELIERS  
VOIX DE FEMMES



chants & danses du Sahara

"With modest means and a totally rhythm dedicated body, the Saoura's people have populated the void's immensity with melodies of singular charm. Serious or trivial, the text can be only a pretext, with the melody made of shouts and whispers, interspersed with silence. The text often ends up being eclipsed to make place to rhythm and emotional power."

**Abderrahmane MOUSSAOUI Anthropologist**

### **Presentation and objectives of the workshop:**

The project " Voix de Femmes ", are two vocal and corporal expression workshops led by two artists: Souad Asla, author-composer-performer and Mounira Yagoubi, dancer-choreographer, both steeped in the cultural traditions of the Algerian Sahara and strongly attached to their transmission.

These workshops aim to initiate women from everywhere to the traditional South Saharan songs, which is the best social link in this area. "The tradition is what makes the link. The song unites these women for a few hours. They sing and talk about politics, about their lives. It is a moment of sharing and communion where women no longer feel alone. It's simple, generous."

Above all, they aim to bring women together around a deep human experience, through traditional songs that are disappearing, which deserve to be safeguarded because of their uniqueness and their generous capacity to unite.

- Propose an artistic practice accessible to all
- Initiate women from everywhere to traditional South Saharan singing, which is the best social link.
- Transmit the musical bases necessary to the singing, which implies learning vocal techniques and rhythms recognition by ear training as well as the installation of the voice and the body in the space.
- Encourage diversity and cultures meetings, mix generations, social classes and origins around a unique human and artistic experience.
- Propose a unique and privileged meeting with an artist, her language and her artistic universe.

### **Course of the workshop**

The two-hour sessions are composed of different exercises and learning, which are always accompanied by a cultural context in order to share and grasp the meaning.

- Body and then voice warming up
- Vocal improvisations/techniques from different Algerian songs
- Group singing and circle technique
- Learning of traditional songs from the Saharawi repertoire
- Learning of dance steps for a setting in movement of the songs
- Learning of the Arabic language and its pronunciation

Traditional songs have this incredible capacity to bring people together, and those people secure the cohesion of the group. The songs are exclusively practiced in a circle, "around the well". Every participant has to individually feel part of the group and each voice joins the others to form a melodious whole. One by one, the women are invited to the center of the circle and improvise a solo that can be a singing, or a dance or even some spoken words, while the rest of the group continues the basic melody and supports the solo with their voice and eyes.

This workshop around transmission and sharing these songs and Algerian traditions quickly become more than just an artistic experience. The women fully participate and let themselves be guided by the artists to definitively integrate the Saharawi universe, a universe made accessible to all during the two hours of the workshop.

During the workshops, the participants get closer to each other; they hold each other by the waist to form the circle, looking for this collective, human and vocal strength. Some of them will discover their voice; others will develop it and sometimes even assume it. Everyone has the possibility to make her voice vibrate without the artists looking for unity. On the contrary, Souad and Mounira put forward everybody's differences as so many treasures. It participates without any doubt to make of these workshops times of free expression where each one of them will find her right place.

### **A rewarding option: the restitution: Souad Asla invites the "Voix de Femmes" choir on stage**

How to show a project of artistic practice in its double cultural and human dimensions? How to give an account of what concerns what's intimate, the links that were created during the workshops? If the choice is made for a restitution, the participants are integrated in the artistic universe artistic universe carried by Souad Asla, which is undeniably valorizing and meaningful. Souad Asla wants to integrate the participants in her concerts, an approach already tested in Nanterre and Grenoble, which seems indeed the most rightful way to give to see and to hear:

- the link between the women and the artists
- the group's cohesion
- the women's immersion in the cultural and musical universe of the artists
- the achievements in terms of songs, dance...

The restitution option requires women to have participated in quite a few numbers of workshops. The project can be articulated in two different ways:

- in the form of an artist residency during an event which takes place over several days > intensive practice

- over several weeks prior to an event, with the restitution taking place during the event >  
progressive practice

Social networks:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxtzTqPbxEljfZiNlneNXUg/featured>

[https://www.instagram.com/souad\\_asla/?hl=fr](https://www.instagram.com/souad_asla/?hl=fr)

<https://www.facebook.com/Souad-ASLA-LEMMA--115813658457045>