

AKEÏKOI

The band AKEÏKOI was created in 2000 as a collective first called "Akeïkoi From Connexion", a connection of two bands: Caline Georgette and Yelemba from Abidjan. This group comes from the meeting between the Livenais brothers, who are from the "Froms", a small place between Nantes and Angers, and Lassina Coulibaly, whose headquarters are in "Akeïkoi", a working-class suburb of Abidjan.

As a lively and funk rock band, Caline Georgette have left its mark on the people who have seen them on stage because of its energy, rage and originality. Caline Georgette, it's more than 400 gigs between 1992 and 1995 in Europe or France, including a performance which attracted a lot of attention at the music festival "Printemps de Bourges" in 1993. Sounds takers to the core, talented and determined musicians, after their first album "Des clous", the three Livenais brothers work with a lot of musicians of various influences, are interested in world music and often go to Africa. In 1994, they meet the Togolese singer Jimi Hope and they'll have a few gigs with him in France, among others at the festival "Francofolies" of La Rochelle and a tour in Togo and Benin in 1995. With Jimi Hope, they record "Tôt ou Tard", an essential collector record which already heralds the birth of an African rock, in which you can already feel another idea of the fusion of cultures.

It's in the district "Akeïkoi" of Abidjan that Lassina Coulibaly, a versatile artist of Senoufo extraction who's been initiated by his masters, settles in order to form the Yelemba company in 1995, with the help of the association of Nantes "Planète Tam Tam". Between tradition and modernity, Yelemba works and revisits the large multi-ethnic repertoire from the Ivory Coast. Musicians, dancers, singers and exceptional actors, these all-round artists present their shows in Europe and on the international scene. Five of these musicians (of the Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Burkina Faso) led by Harounda Dembélé, the lead drummer of the company, explore new ways within AKEÏKOI, bringing along their rhythms and traditional singing (in Senoufo language, Dioula), the stretched hide drums and other balafons, as well as sacred instruments hardly heard around the world, like the boloyes. This sound laboratory gives a large part to performance, to dance and to the show.

After several years of mutual discovery and of music adaptation between the members of the collective, the first album by AKEÏKOI "Binkafô" is released in 2002 under the label Hors-Normes Productions, followed by a national tour in 2003 and 2004. "Binkafô" is the album of the meeting between two worlds which have to coexist, the world of pure rock and the one of ethnic African music. The recording can be done only in live conditions and the band comes out of it even more experienced.

The conflict in the Ivory Coast disturbs and weakens the work of the band during two years; but the depth of the project, the creative intensity and the musicians' determination enable AKEÏKOI to resurface with an unquestionable artistic maturity and a strong motivation to bring their project at the front of world wide stages. This turning point in 2006 is characterized by a change of the group (lighter with an eight musicians basis) and of the music identity marked by a subtle and powerful balance between rock and afro, as shown in their last EP, which was released in June 2007 and which heralds the next album scheduled for 2008.