

BIOGRAPHY



BEIDJA RAHAL

[Arabo-Andalouse Music]

CHILDREN & TEENAGER'S COURSE

Rarely has a performer of the Andalusian repertoire, who also masters aroubi and hawzi, put so much passion into her art. Yet Beihdja Rahal, born in Algiers, had not initially envisaged a career in the arts. In 1974, her mother enrolled her and her brothers and sisters at the conservatoire. Some chose the piano as their instrument, as there was one at home, but Beihdja preferred the mandolin for practical reasons. At the conservatoire, she chose Andalusian as her subject and worked with the masters Abderrezak Fakhardji, Mohamed Khaznadji and Zoubir Kakachi. In 1982, she joined the famous El Fakhardjia association and, in April of that year, she made her stage debut at the Algiers Opera, where she distinguished herself with a long solo performance of the nouba hsine.

In 1983, the late Maître Abderrezak Fakhardji chose her to perform a nouba in the rasd eddil style, conducted by Sheikh Hamidou Djaidir, at a concert in Algiers which was also broadcast on Algerian television. Co-founder of the Essoundoussia music association in 1986, a year later Beihdja took part in the production of four of the five recordings in a collection published by the association. In 1992, she decided to move to Paris to study a speciality. In the end, it was in France that she brought her musical projects to fruition, with a first recording of Zidane in 1995, a second of Mezmoum in 1997, and a third devoted to Rasd in 1999. From 2000 onwards, she worked more in Algeria and performed under her own name for the first time. It is true that she found a more favourable context there: a wider choice of musicians and traditional instruments. Encouraged by the exceptional reception she received from the public, Beihdja threw herself wholeheartedly into her work, achieving in ten years, during which she deprived herself of holidays and rest, the tour de force of "boxing" the twelve noubas of the Algerian çanaâ school.

With her extensive theoretical training and exceptional talent, Beihdja Rahal shines in the interpretation of the Andalusian mode, that classical musical style that is only worth its weight in gold for the authenticity and purity of its playing. Andalusian music is played on traditional instruments such as the târ, the derbouka, the 'ud, the violin and the kouitra, and its performance requires total respect for its rules, harmony, rhythms and melodic lines. Its interpretation demands warmth, soul and feeling. Beihdja Rahal's interpretation exudes an emotional atmosphere that has delighted audiences at every one of her performances in Europe and around the world.

She has been giving music and singing lessons in Paris for over twenty years, with the aim of preserving this classical heritage. Children are her priority, as they are the next generation of musicians. She has also set up her own association, Rythmeharmonie, where she gives singing and instrumental lessons to adults, both amateurs and professionals.

In 2015, at the request of her director, she conducted the Andalusian musical orchestra at the Algerian cultural

centre in Paris. Since September 2023, she has been giving masterclasses at the ACIMA music academy in Algiers.

With Saadane Benbabaali, professor of Arabic literature and a specialist in Andalusian muwashah, she co-wrote two books, *La plume, la voix et le plectre*, in 2008, and *La joie des âmes dans la splendeur des paradis andalus*, in 2010.

Kamel Bouchama has just devoted an entire book to her, *Beihdja Rahal, la félicité du répertoire andalou*, which they presented at SILA 2018 in Algiers.

Andalusian music is brought to its peak here by the crystalline voice and enchanting orchestra of the first woman to record the twelve modes of classical Arab-Andalusian music, a first in the history of this art form, hitherto the preserve of men. Beihdja has no intention of stopping there, as her discography shows: with a 2nd tour of the twelve noubas, she is now on her 29th album. All of them are now available for streaming. In concert, Beihdja Rahal plays the koutira, accompanied by 4 exceptional musicians playing the oud, viola, mandolin and derbouka.