



MILENA JELIAZKOVA

Bulgarian singer, songwriter, teacher, and artistic coach

Bulgarian and French citizen, Milena JELIAZKOVA began studying piano and singing at the age of six with Kristina Boeva, an esteemed professor at the Academy of Music Arts in Plovdiv. At the same time, she took lessons in traditional Bulgarian singing and dancing with her mother, a singer and dancer with the "Trakiya Ensemble." After eight years of both classical and traditional training in her home country, she continued her artistic journey in France with BALKANES, a Bulgarian a cappella polyphonic quartet, focusing on traditional Bulgarian songs as well as sacred Slavic and Byzantine chants

Holder of several degrees, including a Master's (MA) in Cultural Management from ARSEC/NACRe, Milena JELIAZKOVA conducted research in sociology and ethnomusicology on traditional Bulgarian singing as a vehicle for preserving Bulgarian collective identity. She went on to work with the director of the Amphitheatre at the Opéra de Lyon and with the Lyon-based baroque music ensemble Le Concert de l'Hostel Dieu, before dedicating herself fully to her artistic career and the management of the vocal quartet [BALKANES](#)

Milena has been singing since 1997 with this all-female a cappella ensemble, which has performed in France, Switzerland, Italy, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Germany, the USA, and beyond. Her eclectic musical tastes have led her to explore traditional music from around the world, along with the various vocal techniques associated with these traditions. In 2006, she co-created the project KĚF – Elektro Balkans with Jean-Pierre Caporossi and Tony Canton. Milena also performed for 15 years with the [Henri AGNEL](#) Company, which explores both medieval and contemporary Mediterranean repertoires, touring extensively in France and internationally.

In 2017, she co-founded the [SIBYLLES TRIO](#) with Françoise [ATLAN](#) and Milena ROUDEVA, and in 2019, she launched "[MUSTAAR](#)," a voice-and-percussion duo with Malik ADDA. That same year, she was selected by Simon-Pierre [BESTION](#), founder and artistic director of the ensemble [LA TEMPÊTE](#), as a traditional singing soloist for his production *Prophète(s)/Jérusalem*, commissioned by the Festival de Saint-Denis and the Basilica of Vézelay. .

In 2020, the quartet BALKANES — of which she is the driving force — was chosen by [André MANOUKIAN](#) to perform on the renowned jazzman's new album and to tour with him starting in 2021.

In February 2021, [the DUO SOURCIÈRES](#) was born — a project centered on women's songs from East and West — with Els JANSSENS, singer and artistic director of the ensemble MORA VOCIS.

In June 2024, the Ensemble [SAMANÛR](#) was founded — dedicated to songs from the Near East and the Balkans — with [Georges Camil ABDALLAH](#) (Lebanon), [Iyad HAIMOUR](#) (Syria/Palestine), [Amin AL AIEDY](#) (Iraq), and [Michel WOLKOWITSKY](#), founder and director of the International Festival of the Abbey of Sylvanès. In September 2024, the [ENSEMBLE ALGARA](#) was born — a choir dedicated to Bulgarian a cappella polyphony.

Milena composes and arranges music for all these ensembles, co-leads vocal workshops for all audiences in France, Italy, and Switzerland, teaches Bulgarian singing at the International Institute of World Music (iimm.fr), and offers vocal and stage coaching for both beginner and advanced singers (certified by Harmoniques, Paris). For the past nine years, she has also been invited to serve as a jury member for DEM (Diploma of Musical Studies in Contemporary Music) at the Regional Conservatories (CRR) of Annecy and Chambéry, the National School of Music in Villeurbanne, and at the IIMM. In 2023, she joined the teaching team of [LA PHILHARMONIE DE PARIS](#), leading workshops and masterclasses in Bulgarian singing for diverse audiences

Discography :

>BALKANES « Ochté », 2003

>BALKANES « Kœsmet », 2012

>Cie HENRI AGNEL « Los Kaminos », 2014, *Coup de cœur de l'Académie Charles Cros*

>BALKANES « Séfarades », 2016

>A. MANOUKIAN « ANOUCH », 2022

Publications :

« La Bulgare », roman, Hello Editions, 2022