

BIOGRAPHY, DIRECTORY & ORDERS **ABOU LAGRAA**

Born in Annonay, Abou Lagraa took her first dance class at the age of 16. A door opened by jazz... It is the immediate love at first sight, dance becomes its first form of expression, from jazz to classical then to contemporary dance, since it comes out of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Lyon. Like his dance, everything accelerates for Abou who from 1992 to 1996, dances alongside Rui Horta and the SOAP Dance Theater Frankfurt in Germany. He became his assistant choreographer for the Ballet of the Gulbenkian in Lisbon. **An early European career which also gives him a way of considering, in a very different way from the french model,** the economic mode of a company ; open to partnership and private sponsorship. The dancer is quickly noticed for his energy, his virtuosity and his musicality. **Supported by a unanimous critics and professionals, in 1997 he created his company, which he named La Baraka** (luck, in Arabic) because he believes he "had the chance to meet the right people at the right time". **In 1998, he created his first piece Violatus, a whirlwind of intimate duets and scenes of abducted groups, carried by a bouquet of dancers in deep purple and red, praised by critics and professionals. Following at an intense pace: Kraft (1999), Nuit Blanche (2000)... Pieces after pieces, choreographic writing becomes richer and confronts other universes. He succeeds in an innovative way a real encounter, between hip-hop dance and his contemporary dance.** A "schock" men trio in january 2000, then *Allegoria Stanza* in 2002, where these three hip-hop dancers and the seven contemporary dancers of his company are put in front of a basic material : the Abou Lagraa style to better recreate a clean and dazzling energy. The piece is bright.



The Baraka is now in orbit. Abou Lagraa locks up her dancers in a *Cutting Flat* apartment (2004), draws on the intimacy and exhaustion of *Où Transe* (2005) and links the residencies. In Bonlieu - Scène nationale d'Annecy as associate artist from 2004 to 2008, at the Théâtre des Gémeaux - Scène nationale de Sceaux from 2009 to 2014, then at the Maison de la Danse de Lyon in 2015. In 2009, Abou Lagraa was awarded the *Best International Dancer Award* by the Movimento Dance Prize in Wolfsburg.

Abou is also asked to create pieces for large prestigious neo-classical companies. *Fly Fly* in 2001 with the ballet Lorraine, in 2006 *Le Souffle du Temps* for the ballet of the Paris Opera with 21 dancers. The latest one is a little marvel, *Wahada* for the 22 dancers of the Grand Théâtre de Genève ballet (2019).

The Baraka with two, evolution, boiling ! In 2006, Nawal Lagraa Aït Benalla entered La Baraka through an audition. It is the meeting of two artists of double culture whose differences, will make them evolve. Under the influence of Nawal, La Baraka transforms itself because Abou reconnects with its origins and takes more and more pleasure in transmitting the choreographic material he has accumulated, to his dancers, but also to amateurs. From 2009, he made a double return to his roots. First on the other side of the Mediterranean, with the adventure of the Ballet Contemporain d'Alger and the play *Nya*, for which the choreographer receives *the award for the best choreography of the year* by the Syndicat de la Critique in 2011.

In February 2018, La Baraka settled in Annonay (in the Ardèche region) in the Chapelle Sainte-Marie, which, in the spirit of a «Villa Medici» for dance, became a place of welcome in residence for French and international choreographers. **Abou and Nawal Lagraa decide, together, to co-lead La Baraka and the Chapelle Sainte-Marie Choreographic Studio.** In 2019, Les Lagraa & The Edmond de Rothschild Foundations are developing the *Premier(s) Pas* programme, which offers a 360° accompaniment for professional dancers. As a result, in 2020, the creation *Premier(s) Pas* on the 8 winners of the program.

2020 - Premier(s) Pas, de Nawal Aït Benalla (volet 1) & d'Abou Lagraa (volet 2)

2018 - Wahada pour les 22 danseurs de Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève

2017 - Wonderful One, première au Festival Oriente/Occidente, Rovereto (Italie)

2017 - Dakhla, première à Suresnes Cité Danse 2017

2015 - Le Cantique des cantiques, première à la Maison de la Danse de Lyon

2013 - El Djoudour pour l'ouverture de Marseille - Provence 2013, capitale européenne de la Culture

2012 - Univers...l'Afrique pour les Gémeaux Scène Nationale de Sceaux

2010 - Nya pour le Ballet Contemporain d'Alger

2010 - Un Monde en Soi avec le Quatuor Debussy

2009 - Cérémonie de clôture du Festival Panafricain à Alger (Algérie)

2008 - Everyone's one pour le Memphis Ballet (USA)

2008 - D'Eux Sens

2007 - Nawal (ou l'offrande) pour le Centre Méditerranéen de Danse Contemporaine de Tunis

2007 - My Skin pour la Hochschule de Francfort

2007 - Matri(K)is

2006 - Le Souffle du Temps pour les étoiles (Marie-Agnès Gillot, Manuel Legris et Wilfried Romoli) et le Ballet de l'Opéra de Paris

2006 - Le Pas Suspendu avec l'Orchestre des Pays de Savoie « La Jeune Fille et La Mort » (Schubert) et les « Trois Tempéraments » (Hindemith)

2006 - R.B.V.B.

2005 - Où Transe

2004 - Cutting Flat

2003 - Leïla pour l'école supérieure du Centre de Danse Contemporaine d'Angers

2002 - Allegoria Stanza

2001 - Fly, Fly au CCN Ballet de Lorraine (au répertoire de l'ABC Dance Company - Saint Pölten, Autriche)

2000 - Nuit Blanche

2000 - Passage

1999 - Kraft

1998 - Violatus

1998 - Les 2



COMPAGNIE LA BARAKA