



**Abraxas**



**[www.abraxas.be](http://www.abraxas.be)**

## Abraxas / Introduction

Between folk-rock and tribal musics Abraxas has created “*a unique style that wins over everybody everywhere they go. Their music reaches a deep truth and returns the soul of our cultures to us, with good time and humanity. And on stage it’s mind-blowing!*”

(R. Hammel)

Abraxas is a musical trip around planet Earth.

The 6 musicians go for a walk from Ireland to Africa, from Spain to the Balkans, from Greece to Orient. Of several origins (Poland, Czech Republic, France, Spain, Switzerland and Morocco), the 6 companions based in Neuchâtel (CH) mix traditional world instruments (Irish bouzouki, Indian shruti-box, Brazilian berimbau, Moroccan guembri,...) with more “conventional” instruments like mandolin, violin, flute, bass, drums-percussions.

Traditional gnaoua singing mix with English lyrics with a rock verve.

All these ingredients give a tribal dance flavour to Abraxas magic potion.

During their 7 years musical trip Abraxas has played many concerts in Europe and Africa and recorded 2 albums.

**Stéphane BELKA** mandolin, flute, guitar

**Gabriel SKLENAR** violin

**Hicham LAIMINA** vocals, djembé, qraqech (Moroccan castanets), guembri, dance

**Sébastien GUEANT** bouzouki, vocals

**Serge RUBI** percussions

**Corinne BARBIER** dance, vocals, ravantha, shruti-box, berimbau



## Abraxas / Discography

### Toro Borracho (2007)

10 tracks



The musicians of Abraxas decided to compose their new album after a Burkina tour (winter 04/05). Mixed, festive, open to many influences, **Toro Borracho** takes its inspiration from the musics of the world: Bulgaria (*Mominsko Horo*), Ireland (*Faggae*, amazing blend of an irish reel with a reggae beat), Africa (*Anitié*), Spain (*Toro Borracho*)... mix together in harmony.

You will appreciate too the cover versions: *Music for a found harmonium*, a classic revised in Abraxas way, and the beautiful *Sidi Brahim* by John Renbourn group.

**Toro Borracho** leaves a big place for the band's compositions. Abraxas asserts clearly its own identity far from fashions: a unique style, unclassifiable, irresistible.

"Toro Borracho makes you want to travel. It's a musical postcard from somewhere else you will get with pleasure." (C'est-à-dire, 27/8/07)

### Arabolero (2003)

12 tracks



Fall 2003, Abraxas release its first album after 3 years on stage in France and Switzerland.

Their innovative style « folk-celtic-oriental-rock'n'roll » had already won over a large public. With **Arabolero**, they take you in an exciting dance crossing lands and cultures : Ireland, Orient, eastern Europe, India,...

Arabolero also contains some great cover versions. *4 Sticks* by legendary Led Zeppelin and beautiful *The Great Valerio* by Richard Thompson.

Brilliance, melodies, trance and dance, 12 tracks are recorded. One of which in complete symbiosis with Ahmad Mohammad, a Pakistani singer.

## Abraxas / YELEEN Festival (Burkina Faso)

In December 2004, Abraxas flew away to Burkina. The musicians were invited to perform in the 8<sup>th</sup> tale and music Yeleen Festival in Bobo-Dioulasso. The festival brings together storytellers from the whole world and African musicians. For the 8<sup>th</sup> edition which took place between 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2004 and 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2005, organizers wanted to open their musical programme beyond African borders. Taking its inspiration from musics of the world, the music of Abraxas fitted in naturally with a festival open to artistic expressions from the four corners of the world.

Besides Abraxas is an association which aims to stimulate dialogue between musics of the world and that way between people. And Abraxas band is also a melting pot of several cultures: the five musicians have their origins in Poland, Czech Republic, France, Switzerland and Spain. It was their first travel in Africa. The best way of discovering musical traditions from this continent, sharing everyday life of African women and men. And the best way of coming back with heart full of sensations and head full of pictures, ready to improve the music of Abraxas.

From their Burkina tour the musicians made many plans. Upon Linz Pflasterspektakel, international festival in Austria, they especially created a repertoire with Lymania Star, a traditional African band they met in Burkina. Abraxas created a new show straight inspired from their travel and from which the 2<sup>nd</sup> album was born. Finally they created a teaching plan for the schools mixing a film they shot in Burkina and live music.



## Abraxas / Press cuttings

### **- C'est-à-dire - 27/8/07**

« ...La musique d'Abraxas est un savoureux mélange de sonorités puisées dans le vaste chaudron des chants du monde... Toro Borracho est un surprenant mélange de sonorités orientales, irlandaises ou africaines... Les compositions enivrent. C'est une invitation au voyage, une carte postale musicale venue d'ailleurs qui se reçoit avec plaisir. »

### **- Arc Hebdo - 29/6/06, par Roland Hammel**

« ...un style unique et inclassable qui entraîne l'adhésion partout sur son passage... Leur musique touche une vérité profonde, nous restitue l'âme de nos cultures, avec la fête toujours présente et une grande humanité. Sur scène, ça déménage... Un groupe habitué aux grandes scènes et aux tournées, qui joue parfois dans un home d'handicapés ou un mariage, un coin de forêt... Sympa, sans prétention, relax... »

### **- La presse Riviera Chablais - 21/6/04**

« ...Cette 5<sup>ème</sup> édition (Festival Danse avec le loup, Corbeyrier) aura été le théâtre de quelques belles surprises dont la prestation d'Abraxas... »

### **- L'Est Républicain – 4/8/02**

« ...Les cosmopolites d'Abraxas ont su faire danser les spectateurs de la MPT des Longs Traits (Pontarlier)... Un public nombreux, entassé dans la salle de la maison pour tous... Abraxas a su jouer de son folk aux sonorités orientales pour faire danser une assistance visiblement ravie... »

### **- L'Express – 20/3/01**

Case-à-Chocs (Neuchâtel) – « ...Devant une jolie assemblée, Abraxas lance les festivités avec un folk qui vous ferait siffler sous la pluie. Les ritournelles sonnent haut dans la tête et ne laisse aucune brèche à l'hésitation. Tête-bêche, tout s'y complète. Ying-yang, bim-bam, big-bang. Qu'éclate la joie ! »



## Abraxas / References

ABRAXAS has played some 250 concerts :

### Festivals :

**Switzerland** Paléo Festival 05 (Nyon), Jazz Festival de Montreux Off, Expo 02 (exposition nationale suisse), Promos (Le Locle), Jazz Parade (Fribourg), World Music Festiv'Alpes (Château d'Oex), Festi'Neuch, Hors-Tribu (Val de Travers), Fête de la Bière (Lausanne), Busker's de Neuchâtel, Irish celtic folk festival (Undervelier), Danse avec le loup (Corbeyrier), 24h Free Wheels (Genève), Kelten Fest, Baleinev (Yverdon), Festival la Bonneville (Val-de-Ruz), Festival des arts de rue de Sion, Ouniours (Veysonnaz), Fête des Couleurs (Aigle), ...

**France** Festival Jazz en Franche-Comté (Pontarlier), Celtivales (Pierrefontaine-les-Varans), Festival Ca s'joue au château (Pontarlier), Semaine de la Liberté (St-Dié), ...

**Austria** Pflasterspektakel (Linz)

**Burkina-Faso** Yeleen Festival 04 (Bobo-Dioulasso and Ouagadougou)

### Clubs

**Switzerland** Chat Noir (Genève), Spirale (Fribourg), Royal (Tavannes), Nordportal (Baden), Odéon (Brugg), Undertown (Genève), Bikini Test (La Chaux-de-Fonds), Case-à-Chocs (Neuchâtel), Ned (Montreux), Cintra (Fribourg), Bar King (Neuchâtel), Pommier (Neuchâtel), Dublin's (La Chaux-de-Fonds), Pischna Scena (Pontresina), Temps Modernes (Vevey), Bistr'ok (Genève),...

**France** A l'Ouest de la Grosne (Bresse-sur-Grosne), l'Arrosoir (Châlon-sur-Saône), Atelier des Môles (Montbéliard), Surabaya (Villers-le-lac)...

### Shows

Abraxas composed and performed the music of these shows by **Benjamin CUCHE** :

- « Elle était une fois », medieval and burlesque show with C. Mordasini and Christine Brammeier. 13 performances during La Bonneville festival (CH),
- « Impro 02 », theater-music improvisation show with B. Cuche and K. Slama. 7 performances during Expo 02 (CH),
- « Improcadabra », theater-magic-music improvisation show with B. Cuche and Magico. Being prepared for 2008, 30 performances in Switzerland.

### Openings

Abraxas opened for:

Sinsemilia, Elbicho, Renaud Garcia-Fons, Princess Erika, Sally Nyolo, Flor del Fango, Mad Sheer Kan, Glen of Guinness,...