

## NATHALIE NATIEMBE

### «Sankè»

Nathalie Natiembé's raw, unpolished songs are totally representative of Reunion island. Raised in Saint-Denis and now living in Possession, Natiembé says that she has always sung, «Dopui dann vant' mon monmon» (starting in my mother's womb).

Since 1998, she has also devoted herself, body and soul, to writing. Nathalie Natiembe kneads and pummels the Creole language until the strong emotions she draws from its words take her back to its sources. In March 2001, she came upon her own Mozambican sources during a tour which had marked her personal life. She met many namesakes in the southern town of Catembe, thus her Reunion family has extended to African lands.

In the new album, entitled «Sankè», Natiembé gives her rendition of what Maloya could become. With musicians from Reunion, Mauritius Islands and Madagascar, she confronts it and opens it to new horizons, until she reaches its very soul.

J. Cabaret

Nathalie Natiembé's international expansion has been strengthening since her first public appearance in 1997. The Reunion singer has gradually asserted herself thanks to her charisma and her strong, original songs. Natiembe sings the **Maloya**, the «music of the earth» like no other in Reunion. A cappella, accompanying herself on a small triangle, she electrified the festivals where she performed and she represented Reunion at the Printemps de Bourges «Discoveries» in 2001. But she cannot limit herself to the sole Maloya. «This is why my music is diverse» she says. She has been drawing from other musical sources in the Indian Ocean, in Africa and in the Maghreb, mixing all these influences. Her latest album, «Sankè», notably features the Malagasy accordionist Régis Gizavo and the Mauritian singer Lélou Menwar.

Deeply human and full of life, naturally cheerful, Nathalie Natiembé is atypical and unclassifiable. Stemming from a family of musicians, she is nevertheless fairly remote from the traditional musical streams. She thinks that Reunion music might just be too hybrid to be fully authentic. With a passion for life and for writing, Nathalie Natiembé expresses her attachment to her island and recounts her life in the manner of poets. An admirer of Baudelaire and Rimbaud, she has devoted one of her songs to the poet and composer Alain Péters.

Amongst the music forms of her land, the one that truly touches her is the Maloya, which has allowed her to develop this lyrical, almost intimist style marking all her albums. Her quest for authenticity led her to sojourn in Mozambique in 2001. There she discovered the deep roots of this music. Surprisingly, her research work with three Mozambique musicians has allowed her to be more at ease with her various musical influences. The range of these influences encompasses jazz and blues, soul and R'n'B, the Caribbean and Cape Verde, classical music and Charles Trenet.