

Mounira Mitchala "Talou Lena"

Endowed with an exceptional voice and uncommon energy, the singer and songwriter Mounira Mitchala, aged 28, is one of Africa's rising stars.

Drawing her inspiration from the traditional rhythms of Chad (in the heart of the Sahel), to which she has added modern instruments and arrangements, she has forged a unique style. The themes that inspire her concern such social issues as forced marriages, the advance of the desert, peace, the reconciliation between Chadians, discriminations against AIDS sufferers, war, FGM etc.

After years of training and hardships in a country where it is not easy for a young woman to express herself, she has managed to assert herself on N'Djamena's music scene.

The recipient of the Decouvertes RFI prize in 2007 —unanimously awarded by a jury presided by Salif Keita— Mounira has shared the stage with Ismael Lo and Tiken Jah Fakoly, and her performance in Frederic Galliano's "African Divas" project has drawn a lot of attention.

First self-produced in N'Djamena, these recordings have been finalised in France with sessions gathering musicians from various horizons who have perfectly integrated the unique world of Mounira Mitchala.

1. **Annil** (4'05) : In Annil, Mounira denounces forced marriages. Indeed, as a consequence of the poverty and need which poison Chadian society, many young women are still forced by their parents to marry rich old men.
2. **Zarlie** (4'02) : In the heart of the Guera region, central Chad, Zarlie is the village where Mounira's mother was born. This song evoking her attachment to her roots and country is also a tribute to the woman who has given her all her love and has always encouraged her choices.
3. **Tourapna** (4'37) : Tourapna is a praise to the great men and women who have marked the history of the African continent.
4. **Talou Lena** (4'00) : With this song Talou Lena, Mounira exhorts Chadians to reconcile, work together and avoid civil war, which is the cause of Chad's economic backwardness. This is a call for unity.
5. **Assamony** (dedicated to Love Nixon) (3'38) : Mounira asks Chadians to fight against hunger, droughts and war, to become self-supporting, to accept their ethnic and religious differences and to ban treason and hypocrisy. This song appeals for tolerance and dialogue.
6. **Darfur** (4'15) : Mounira condemns the war in Darfur, whose victims are civilians, notably women and children. She dreams about peace and reconciliation, and calls on African heads of states.
7. **Koulnodji** (4'23) : In this song, Mounira denounces forced marriage and expresses her support to African women fighting against the weight of some customs.

8. **Annaloule** (3'59) : Inspired by a rhythm and melody sung by Guera women when they pound millet, this song is a celebration of African women, guardians of the tradition and in charge of the family unit.
9. **Al Sahara** (4'51) : The advance of the desert and the droughts are driving rural populations to exile in the large urban centres, where they are faced with poverty and exploitation. Mounira exhorts the country's authorities to give attention to and act against this environmental disaster and its tragic consequences.
"We must change our habits and prepare a better world for future generations."
10. **Adinna** (4'34) : Mounira encourages the youth to become aware of Chad's exceptional cultural richness, to save it and highlight it. This song's rhythm comes from the Bilala, one of Chad's many ethnic groups.
11. **Hadjilidjai** (4'43) : The hadjilidjai has always been the sacred tree of Chadian highlanders. Oil and soap are made from its fruit, its leaves feed goats and are used in sauces, its roots serve as the basis for traditional medicines, its wood is turned into mortars and pestles. Furthermore, hadjilidja provides gum Arabic and it slows down the advance of the desert.
12. **Darna** (4'31) : This is another song celebrating the beautiful mountains and landscape of Guera, one of Chad's most lovely regions.

All songs by : Mounira Khalil Alio (Mounira Mitchala)