

BIOGRAPHIE ROKIA BAMBA

Born in Brussels in 1976, Rokia Bamba is one of the first Belgian voices to speak, broadcast and comment on Hip-Hop music on the airwaves of free radio stations in Brussels. As a child, alongside a music-loving father, she became passionate about music. She quickly immersed herself in the musical diversity of the African continent and beyond, sharpening her ear and shaping her taste for the eclecticism of black music: from the Maloya of Reunion Island to the techno of Detroit and Chicago, via the post-disco of ESG, the kuduro of Kapiro, the rumba of Soumaro and the South African Gospel. If the spectrum of Rokia Bamba's musical influences is wide, the red line that runs through each of her sets and her sound creations is loud and clear.

"By launching myself in DJ-ing, I immediately made the choice to put my talent at the service of Afro-feminist, anti-racist, LGBTQI groups and collectives. I am a black woman, a mother, an artist, an activist and I define myself as an ARTIVIST. It is impossible for me to separate my political commitments from my artistic practice."

In 1992, Rokia Bamba co-founded "Full Mix", the first hip-hop, funk and R&B radio show on Radio Campus. In Belgium, few female voices have established themselves as critics of so-called "urban" and black (African and Afro) music. Over the course of her radio shows, while the musical trends and their star DJs pass like shooting stars, Rokia Bamba imposes herself and shines powerfully in the sky of Brussels' nightlife. She shines and thrives, and the Belgian scene would fade without her. Meanwhile she also multiplies prestigious scenes like Massimadi Festival, Botanique, Ancienne Belgique, BOZAR, Afropunk Paris... and many more to come.

Rokia Bamba is also a composer and sound director. She works in the visual arts, as for the *Troubled Archives* project for which she composes in response to the installations of visual artist Antje Van Wichelen made from colonial photographs. Or in the exhibition *RESISTE!* shown in Cologne in spring 2021, at the Fondation Hermès (Brussels) and the Fondation Ricard (Paris) with the artist Minia Biabiany. As well as in the theater with the play *Buddy Body* where she accompanies the play of actresses exorcising the memories of March 22, 2016 in Brussels. Other projects, at the crossroads of her artistic and activist commitment continue to see the light of day in these parallel artistic fields and add to her teeming palette of creativity; one thinks in particular of the rap project Murmuziek within the prison of Forest (Brussels) and whose Mc are (ex)-inmates.

Today, from her turntables, Rokia offers us music as a vector of a collective movement, as a rallying call, against the current of an industry that multiplies ephemeral musical segments. And for good reason, Rokia Bamba excels where opinions differ. At the very place where many dig, with a great deal of decibels, elitist cleavages, she gathers. Her technical expertise, her musical culture and her caring gaze on the crowds she makes move build DJ sets like so many paths, stories that everyone takes pleasure in browsing, listening and sharing.

Rokia Bamba provokes shivers, awakens senses and pushes to action.

It is vibrant, it is alive, long live her dance floors !