

Wasis Diop

Wasis Diop was born around 1950 in Dakar, Senegal. In 1974, he met the musician Umbaň Ukset, co founder of " West African Cosmos", a band combining Western and African sounds into Afro-Jazz, far earlier than what is now called World Music. Wasis Diop left the group in 1979 to work alone.

Along the way, Wasis met Yasuaki Shimizu, an avant-garde Japanese musician and future collaborator. He travelled throughout the world stopping a while in Jamaica to record and learn from Lee Scratch Perry, until his return to France in 1980. Between 1982 and 1984, he took frequent trips to London, where he worked with producer Robin Millar (Sade). They had met previously at the mythical Hérouville studio.

An encounter with producer Martin Meissonnier, through a collaboration with Amina Annabi which won them the Eurovision prize in 1991, triggered various compilations produced by Radio Nova in France and by Shimizu in Japan. His collaborations and shows in Japan

in 1989 confirmed his success in the Far East.

The long-awaited first solo album was released in 1993. In fact it was the soundtrack of the movie " Hyenas". Yet, it was so personal that the audience considered it a solo album. The song Dune was later sampled by Trackmaster and Dr Dre for the LP titled " The Firm" (Nas, Foxy Brown and AZ).

His worldwide success was confirmed with " No Sant", a second album released in 1995 which features African Dream, charted in the UK charts and championed by Andy Kershaw on Radio 1. Viewed as one of the major international artists from Africa, Wasis Diop brought out his third album " Toxu" in autumn 1998.

Over the years Wasis Diop has come to write an increasing amount of movie and TV scores for television, including many documentaries for Japanese, French, Brazilian and African productions. Some of which are " L' Amour interdit" of Jacques Malaterre for whom he also wrote the title track for " L' Odyssée de l' espèce" et " Homosapiens" and the music for " Survivre", a French TV series for TF1. In March 2004 the MK2 cinema at the "Grande Bibliothèque de Paris" honoured the African star, inviting him to play the soundtrack of " Hyenas" live at MK2.

As of today, Wasis has worked with Serah (Folk-Country singer), producing two of her albums in the US. Wasis has composed an opera titled " Opera du Sahel" produced by La Fondation Prince Clause, premiered in Amsterdam then hosted in Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, France.



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