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16th edition of Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World

An exceptional opening evening starring Charles Aznavour

For its first official evening, the 16th edition of Mawazine offered a high-level program that celebrated the French crooner and national and international artists. The day before, the great Youssou N'Dour, a most loyal Mawazine regular, sang at the festival.

Rabat, May 13, 2017: The opening of a festival is always a special moment, full of emotions and reunion. Mawazine Festival can certainly confirm that, as the event offered two evenings back-to-back that its festivalgoers will certainly never forget!

The first on Thursday, May 11, allowed the public to (re) discover one of the most renowned singer songwriter, composer and musician of Africa: Youssou N'Dour, a most loyal Festival regular, who in a few years managed to rise to the rank of world music star and reference.

The following day, Friday May 12, the public has a *rendez vous* with a living music legend on the stage of Mohammed V National Theater. For an hour, Charles Aznavour lulled, rocked and cradled a full house of his fans, which hummed the hottest hits of the master crooner. Coined "Entertainer of the Century" by CNN in 1988, Grand Charles leads a unique career spanning 70 years. Boasting over 100 million records sold, 1,200 songs, 80 feature films, 294 albums, hundreds of gold, platinum and diamond records, and thousands of concerts in 94 countries around the world,

Two miles away, another star was illuminating the sky of Rabat, more

precisely on the OLM Souissi stage. Coming straight from Britain, Ellie Goulding with her With 30 million sold albums, left a deep impression on her audience with her exhilarating electro-pop melodies that made her successful debut in 2010. Very active on the social networks, she has no less than 30 million followers. Yesterday, the vibrant singer confirmed before thousands of festivalgoers that she fully deserves both critical and public recognition.

A privileged venue of Oriental music, Nahda stage offered, in its turn, a great moment of music with the famous Sami Yusuf, author, composer, performer and poet deservedly heralded "the most popular Muslim British in the world". Through his music, which evokes his relationship with Islam, the singer celebrated love, tolerance and mercy, claiming a rare authenticity and an intact passion for traditional heritage. This commitment allowed him to sell no less than 34 million records and to revolutionize the "anasheeds" by giving birth to a new musical genre.

Strongly committed to the promotion of Moroccan music and Moroccan artists, Mawazine has as always granted a centre place to the singers and musicians of the kingdom. The Salé stage was the scene of the performances of several major figures in the national repertoire, including Fatima Zahra Laâroussi, Tahour, Latifa Raafat, Regragui Orchestra and Abderrahim Souiri.

Committed to the development of all the music of the African continent, Mawazine was also for this first evening a showcase of multiculturalism. On the Bouregreg stage, Panache Culture has delivered a blend of several musical styles: pure reggae open on oriental influences and North African sounds. Highly appreciated, the band tackled brilliantly the themes of everyday life. All with a positive energy that took the audience on a journey to a surprising and innovative musical world!

Useful information:

16th edition of Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World: May 12th to 20th 2017.

About Festival Mawazine Rythmes du Monde:

Established in 2001, the Mawazine Festival Rhythms of the World is the essential rendezvous for music amateurs in Morocco with, for the last 15 years, over 2 million festivalgoers at each edition. Held every month of May over nine days, Mawazine offers a rich and diversified program

where world stars from the four corners of the world make of the cities of Rabat and Salé a world stage for music. Committed to promote Moroccan Music, the Festival devotes more than half of its shows to national artists. As a firm believer in the values of peace, tolerance, openness and respect, 90% of the concerts are free of charge so that everybody can enjoy it. Mawazine also participates in the region's economy, attracting tourists from all over the world; thus making of Morocco once every year a world music stage.

About Maroc Cultures Association:

Created in compliance with the provisions of November 15, 1958 Dahir, and further to a General Assembly held in Rabat on October 23, 2001, Maroc Cultures is a non-profit association whose main mission is to offer to the public of Rabat-Salé-Zemmour-Zaër region a highly professional cultural and artistic entertainment worthy of the capital of the kingdom. Echoing the fundamental values of His Majesty King Mohammed VI development policy, Maroc Cultures materializes this mission through Mawazine Rhythms of the World Festival as well as various events, multi-disciplinary symposia, plastic art exhibitions and concerts.