



PRESERVING HEALTH & HUMANITY NOW:

A FESTSCRIPT IN HONOR OF LAWRENCE O. GOSTIN

Kamel Zennia

Singer-Songwriter

DISCOGRAPHY

- Debut album Am Assa (The day will come)-2013
- Single release, Taddart lw (My village)- 2023

For over 25 years, singer-songwriter Kamel Zennia has performed his heart's purpose, setting fire to music on several lands and in several languages.

Born in Tizirt-sur-Mer, Algeria, into the sumptuous riches of Berber culture, Kamel was raised at a crossroads of customs and influences. With the Mediterranean at his doorstep, he was quick to find poetry and melody in his surroundings, which from a young age shaped his musical palate with both ancestral and modern Berber traditions, African, European, and Middle Eastern rhythms.

In 1986, Kamel's older brother bought him an Italian steel-string acoustic guitar, initiating a lifelong affaire de coeur with music that would set him on the path of a modern-day troubadour. Four years later, after many a moonlit night spent picking up riffs with hometown friends on Tizirt's seductive shorelines, memorizing chords and tinkering with lyrics, he packed up his guitar and left for Europe.

Following a brief touchdown in Germany, Kamel settled in Odense, Denmark's third largest city, acclaimed for its international and underground music scene. There he tried his hand at culinary school but was too distracted by the siren's call of the city's busker-friendly boulevards and open-mic nights to trade in his guitar for gastronomy. Instead, he joined the band El Trio Tropical along with musicians from Russia and Bolivia, and began playing Latin music and gypsy rumbas. Kamel became renowned for his rousing strumming and excruciatingly sentimental vocals - talents that kept the gigs coming and consequently landed him a spot with Latin rock band Los Bandidos in the Midtfnys Festival, one of Northern Europe's then-largest outdoor music events, where they played on a few small



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world music stages and experienced world's unique cultures and music genres. Bob Dylan and other top global acts were in attendance during that festival.

Kamel left Denmark for the U.S. in 1996. Lured by America's potent bounty of musical genres and cultural diversity, he resettled in Washington, DC, and soon co-founded the band Gibraltar. Much like the land of Gibraltar itself - a territory legendary for its multiethnic mix - the band Gibraltar intersected several styles to create a fresh fusion of Algerian folk-rock and Western beats. The group established itself as a staple of the DC world music scene and had a successful 10-year run, performing in bars, embassies, and festivals along the East Coast.

Now a solo artist, Kamel Zennia is drawing on the lessons of his international journeys and his hearty roots to break new ground. His most recent single "My village" which he dedicated to his home village and the people that live there, secures a preview for a new EP album scheduled for release in 2025. Kamel continues to perform live with many local artists at various Washington DC venues, and in March 2024 he joined award-winning chef Jose Andres Live at the Lincoln Theater stage for his Zaytinya Cookbook Launch and entertained with his band one thousand people in attendance.