

Zaho de Sagazan
La Symphonie des éclairs (Le dernier des voyages)

Despite the whirlwind that has been sweeping her away since the spring of 2023, Zaho de Sagazan has kept writing and is now set to release an enhanced version of her first album, *La Symphonie des éclairs*.

This extended version includes seven intimate and previously unreleased songs charged with an undeniable electro energy. While attentive listeners had already caught the very tragic “*Dernier des voyages*” during her shows, nothing was yet known of “*L’Envol*” and its existential impulse, the post-breakup tenderness of “*Est-ce que tu vas bien?*”, the artistic profession of faith on “*Ô travers*”, the explicit sensuality of “*Hab Sex*”, or even “*Parler l’amour*” and lastly “*Old Friend*” written and recorded with the very one who had given rise to her desire and urgency to make music...Tom Odell.

Following another busy year in 2024, the French artist seemed to have little time to get down to writing. With 116 sold-out shows in 2023, her first Zénith arenas in Paris and Nantes and a flurry of summer festivals, on top of two other historic moments forever in our memories: her covers of “*Sous le ciel de Paris*”, a great classic of Edith Piaf, Yves Montand and Juliette Gréco, during the closing ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, and of Bowie’s “*Modern Love*” which brought Cannes Film Festival jury president Greta Gerwig to tears. As her unique voice crossed borders, it never ceased to stir crowds and trigger passions. She naturally breezed through sold-out shows in Canada, London, Berlin, Cologne, Amsterdam, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Yet, the Saint-Nazaire native had even more remarkable achievements to add to her name. She became the first artist to win four French Music Awards in a single night – Album of the Year, Best Original Song, Best Female Newcomer, Best Live Newcomer Act. Few emerging artists have been honoured with the prestigious *Ordre des arts et des lettres* in recognition of their contribution to the arts or received both the jury and audience prizes at the Music Moves Europe Awards created by the European Union.

Upon its release on March 31, 2023, *La Symphonie des éclairs* only confirmed the fast-growing buzz following her first shows and prizes - emerging talent at the Printemps de Bourges festival, an artist residence at the Francofolies de la Rochelle, the Chorus des Hauts-de-Seine prize, the TransMusicales de Rennes... an excitement shared by professionals and audience alike and quickly supported by numbers. Certified gold album on Christmas Day followed by a platinum certification on the anniversary of the album's release.

Today, the first cohorts of fans tell their younger siblings in *Zaholatry* how they felt when they encountered her remarkable voice for the first time. If it were a type of material, it would be a metallic velvet; the texture both bouncy and rough; the movement somewhere between a silk-lifting breeze and the ripple caused by skimming stones...While Zaho de Sagazan’s voice has a peculiar character to it, it’s one that soon feels familiar before becoming powerfully intimate: That of a sister, a best friend, a shaman, a therapist?

The young artist spread her wings with a repertoire at the unlikely crossroads of Barbara, alternative electro artist Koudlam, Christophe and Cold Cave music, where French introspective chanson meets the rightful heirs of Kraftwerk. Her voice cuts through the emotions, tearing apart the peacefully seductive girl-song blueprint. This very voice had made her feel uncomfortable during her childhood: “*It made me self-conscious because many things about me were the opposite of the feminine and I couldn’t hide my voice.*”

But Zaho harnessed it as she did her music, by working relentlessly and finding great pleasure in doing so. At first, her piano lessons were associated with the chocolate doughnuts she got as rewards during the classical training she started in 6th grade. While she eventually got sick of playing, she rekindled her love for it a few years later. Her obsessive and self-taught passion is reflected in her current writing as she weaves steady melodies, repeating the same two chords to the point of hypnosis.

She developed a passion for classical *French Chanson* during her teens, admiring Maurice Fanon’s and Barbara’s wordplays respectively on “*L’Écharpe*” and “*Du bout des lèvres*”, songs that touch on the most intimate truth of emotions. She also passionately explored the type of dark electronica that seeps deep into the soul and thumps through the body with great fury. At the age of thirteen, she discovered through Tom Odell how a song could drown

you in sadness only to console you in a heartbeat – “*Pleurer dans ta voix*”(editor’s note: *Cry in your voice*) she now sings alongside Tom in “Old Friend”.

It took her some time to admit to herself that her calling was to be an artist. At one time, she was tempted by working in healthcare, eventually channelling that kind spirit to bring her closer to her current work as a singer – “*I’m the friend you call when you want to talk for three hours*”. But an almost natural law took precedence: her family is anything but ordinary since her father used to travel a lot with his spectacular artistic performances. Of his five daughters, three are in the artistic world.

Everything came together at once: Zaho, always the great dreamer, grew up guided by the maternal insight of ‘*putting herself in others’ shoes*’, which was both a charitable virtue and a wonderful way to hone her observation skills. Whether her songs are written from the “I”, “you” or “he” perspective, the subject never changes: a person who loves, suffers, is hesitant, looks at themselves in the mirror, and seeks to explore themselves further...

Throughout the album, Zaho de Sagazan alternates between spleen and ecstasy, elated highs and sobering lows, desire and sublimation as she dives into couple relationships, romantic fantasies, daring self-portraits, troubling dreams and meditation or simply invites you to follow her into her liberated and ardent world. Zaho is truly a unique and distinctive artist, one of today’s timeless voices.

Zaho is now recognised as a timeless voice of today. In the space of a year and a half, her uniqueness has cemented her status as a phenomenon in the storied *French Chanson* scene, as evidenced by her many professional accolades as well as the tremendous fan fervour. Shortly before Christmas fans were treated to a radiant EP of covers—including M’s *La Bonne Étoile*, Brigitte Fontaine’s *La vie est belle* and 99 *Luftballons* by Nena. Today Zaho de Sagazan returns with a generously expanded version of *La Symphonie des éclairs*, with a splendid array of exclusive songs to remember for a long time to come.