

Le Semeur – 16 October 2009

National Stage

The East will be at Jaude

La Comédie revives its traditional ball. And this year will have to be marked with a white stone as not only Oriental dance will be much in evidence, but national stage will also invest Place de Jaude on Friday 16 October at 8.00 p.m. The event will be free and open to everyone as it comes within the scope of *Clermont Fête ses Etudiants*, in co-direction with *La Coopérative de Mai*.

As usual, a choreographer is at work, offering dance courses for beginners during the week preceding the ball. Here too, the ball 2009 is to be remembered as La Comédie has invited a great star of Oriental dance, the choreographer Leila Haddad. For almost 20 years, she has been incarnating Oriental femininity on all stages of the world. Of Tunisian origin, she militates to make known the richness of her thousand-year old Arab-Berber culture, releasing this dance from the simplistic cliché of "*belly dance*".

Fantasies and folklore are to be forgotten. Leila Haddad gives back credibility to a major art. This immemorial dance with extremely attractive body movements, where the shimmering colours of veils mix with serpentine postures, brings to this state of bewitchment close to trance.

The choreographer also makes her art known through classes and conferences with the objective of changing other people's opinion on this art. Shortly before the ball of La Comédie, she presented her latest show, *Zikrayat*, memory in Arabic, a tribute to Om Kalsoum, great Egyptian diva and tutelary figure of all the Arab peoples. Then Leila Haddad led introductory courses in Clermont during the whole week.

Today, 16 October, at 8 p.m. the East will thus find a place at Jaude for an immense, joyful and spontaneous party where each one, no matter his age or skill, will take possession of the dance floor to the rhythms of El-Awfar group, seven highly skilled musicians playing all the traditional instruments of North Africa and the Middle East.

Jean-Philippe Monjot