



TINARIWEN

Tinariwen is a group of Tuareg musicians from the Sahara Desert of northern Mali. They have been singing for nearly last three decades.

Is this your first visit to Bangladesh? How is your experience so far?

Yes, this is our first visit to Bangladesh. It is a beautiful country and people are very welcoming. The crowd we witnessed on the night of our performance was absolutely stimulating.

Could you please briefly tell us about your band?

We are Tinariwen and we have been performing together since the early 90's. We are a Grammy award winning group of Tuareg musicians from the Sahara Desert region of northern Mali. We have six members in our group, having specialization over blues, rock and folk songs. In 2010 we

represented Algeria in the opening ceremony of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. Our sound is primarily guitar-driven.

Your band is not only about music, it is about the struggle of survival. How has the journey been from the early 80s to till now?

In the early 80s, the band members of Tinariwen used to sing about wars and weapons. But from early 90s we started spreading messages about peace and harmony. We have also been able to encourage our youths to give up the path of bloodshed and embrace humanity. Our songs are full of life which aim to uphold humanity over discrimination. We hope to diminish the barrier of language and culture through our music. Today, we are in Bangladesh, in front of the people who

do not understand our language, not only to perform songs but also to spread the message of humanity and peace through our melody.

Do you prefer performing only folk songs or do you try other genres of music as well?

Most of the songs that we perform come from traditional folk music. We arrange them with guitars to modernize them. Sometimes our audience calls them fusion. Since we have band members of different taste and capabilities, we try making our songs versatile and dynamic. Sometimes we try pure traditional lyrics with traditional instruments; sometimes we incorporate modern melody to play them with modern instruments.

What themes do you choose for your songs? Do they talk about your land and culture?

The subjects of our songs vary from land, nature to culture and human beings. We talk about human life and their struggles to achieve their desires. Since the beginning of this band, we are performing songs that promote the culture of the land and nature. We believe music can be a powerful weapon to bring people together and united.

Do you have any special message for our Bangladeshi listeners?

The only message we want to convey is that we have come from very far away. But we are always ready to discover any part of the world that has a big heart for music. Our journey in Bangladesh has been tremendous so far. We hope to come again and perform for this spirited audience.

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By Sanjida Chowdhury

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