



UMS PRESENTS

# ONE NIGHT IN BAMAKO

**Fatoumata Diawara** *Lead Vocals and Guitar*

Ekoue Jean-Baptiste Gbadoe, *Drums*

Jean Alain Hohy, *Bass*

Gregory Emonet, *Guitar*

**Bassekou Kouyaté and Ngoni Ba**

Bassekou Kouyaté, *Lead Ngoni*

Aminata Sacko, *Lead Vocals*

Moctar Kouyaté, *Calebash*

Mahamadou Tounkara, *Percussion*

Abou Sissoko, *Medium Ngoni*

Moustafa Kouyaté, *Ngoni Ba*

Friday Evening, February 7, 2014 at 8:00

Michigan Theater • Ann Arbor

**48th Performance of the 135th Annual Season  
Global Music Series**

Photo: The artisanal market of Bamako; © Ocean/Corbis.

## PROGRAM

*This evening's program will be announced by the artists from the stage. There will be one intermission following Fatoumata Diawara's set.*

This evening's performance is sponsored by Comerica.

Additional support provided by Gary Boren.

Media partnership provided by WDET 101.9 FM, WEMU 89.1 FM, and Ann Arbor's 107one FM.

Bassekou Kouyaté & Ngoni Ba and Fatoumata Diawara appear by arrangement with FLI Artists.

## ARTISTS

Building on Mali's rich musical tradition, **FATOUTATA DIAWARA** presents a joyous mix of the vibrant and understated, combining songs about love, politics, and empowerment with arresting melodies soaring over intricate guitar and drum arrangements. Inspired by Wassoulou tradition, jazz, and blues, Ms. Diawara has created her own unique contemporary folk sound, with a distinctly African spin to the concept of the female singer-songwriter.

At the center of the music is Ms. Diawara's warm, affecting voice; spare, rhythmical guitar playing; and gorgeously melodic songs that draw powerfully on her own often troubled experience. Born in Côte d'Ivoire, raised in Mali, and now based in Paris, Ms. Diawara has had a life covering a whole gamut of contemporary African experience: fighting parental opposition to her artistic ambitions and the cultural prejudice faced by women throughout Africa, winning success as an actress in film and theater, before finding her feet in the medium she was always destined to make her own: music.

Damon Albarn, Toumani Diabaté, Herbie Hancock, and Led Zeppelin's John

Photo: Fatoumata Diawara, photographer: Youni Lenquette.



Paul Jones are just a few of the major players who have fallen for Ms. Diawara's effortless musical charm, as her presence has lit up shows in Europe by Africa Express, AfroCubism, and Hancock's "Imagine" project. Yet her recording debut, released in North America on Nonesuch Records in 2012, is almost entirely her own work: self-composed and arranged, with her own backing vocals and percussion. It breathes with the natural warmth, confidence, and spontaneity that are the essence of Ms. Diawara herself.



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Music is a potent organizational tool that can be used as a rallying cry to action or as a soothing message bringing hope. Scan to learn about the role of music during the crisis in Mali.

Download a free QR code reader app on your smart phone, point your camera at the code, and scan to see multimedia content.

Photo: Bassekou Kouyaté and Ngoni Ba.



**BASSEKOU KOUYATÉ** is the greatest master of the *ngoni*, an ancient traditional lute found throughout West Africa. He has collaborated with many musicians in and outside of Mali: his US debut tour included 33 shows with Béla Fleck, and most recently, he has appeared on stage together with Sir Paul McCartney, John Paul Jones, Damon Albarn, and many others at the latest Africa Express events in Europe. He played in the Symmetric Trio alongside Toumani Diabaté (*kora*) and Kélétigui Diabaté (*balafon*). He was part of Taj Mahal's and Toumani Diabaté's Kulanjan project, as well as being one of the key musicians on Ali Farka Touré's posthumous album *Savane*.

The *jeli ngoni* is the traditional stringed instrument of Mande griot singers. No one on earth plays it like Bassekou Kouyaté, who runs his through a wah pedal and cranked amp, firing off

overdriven pentatonic runs which recall the electric desert blues of Tinariwen or Ali Farka Touré. Deftly balanced against the beautiful acoustic tones of his band Ngoni Ba, Mr. Kouyaté creates a striking future-ancient sound. *Jama Ko* was recorded in the midst of a military coup that has brought terrible unrest to Mali. Mr. Kouyaté's anger is palpable in the torrential *ngoni* leads and urgent rhythms of "Ne Me Fatigue Pas," and his sadness in the sparse acoustic lament "Wagadou." "Kele Magni," a duet between Ngoni Ba's lead singer Amy Sacko and the great Khaira Arby, is a stirring call for peace, while "Poye 2," a gruff, loping jam with Taj Mahal, unites African and American blues to fine effect. The *ngoni* is the key instrument for the griot culture. Unlike the *kora*, whose history goes back only a few hundred years, the *ngoni* has been the main instrument in griot storytelling, dating back to the 13th century during



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EVENING'S PERFORMANCE BY THE ST. LAWRENCE  
STRING QUARTET.

*Continued...*

the days of Soundiata Keita, the founder of the Mali Empire. The repertoire Mr. Kouyaté plays is Bambara music from the region of Segou. Bambara music is pentatonic in nature and as close to the blues as you can get in Africa.

Mr. Kouyaté's most recent and third album *Jama Ko* was released to huge acclaim, topping year-end lists in

*Uncut*, *Mojo*, *Songlines*, and *Froots*, and was recorded, mixed, and co-produced by Howard Bilterman (Arcade Fire) in Mali and Montreal. Andrew and Brad Barr (Barr Brothers) added drums and guitar; Mocky Salole (Feist, Jamie Lidell) plays organ and drums. *Jama Ko* guests include Tah Mahal, Khaira Arby, and Kasse Mady.



## UMS ARCHIVES

This evening's performance marks **Bassekou Kouyaté and Ngoni Ba**'s second UMS appearance, following their UMS debuts in February 2010 at Hill Auditorium as part of Béla Fleck's Africa Project. UMS welcomes **Fatoumata Diawara**, who makes her UMS debut tonight.