

FRIENDS OF AFROPOP NEWSLETTER



Number 10

END OF YEAR SPECIAL -- HAPPY HOLIDAYS 2000!

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING and THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF MALI HONORED AT AFROPOP EVENT AT WOLF TRAP IN VIRGINIA



Photo Credit: Barry A. Wilson

Habib Koite, Keletigui Diabate, Georges Collinet, Sean Barlow, Rick Madden, Jeff Ramirez at the Afropop reception inducting the Corporation for Public Broadcasting into the Friends of Afropop Hall of Fame

The "Voices of Mali" tour this fall, starring Oumou Sangare and Habib Koite & Bamada, inspired us to create two back-to-back "Afropop Music and Conversation" events, gathering friends and supporters for high-spirited, memorable experiences... The first at The Barns of Wolf Trap Performing Arts Center in Vienna, Virginia honored the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) for their bold and visionary support of Afropop, both at our birthing in 1987 when no one had ever tried a national, continuing series based on world music, and just this year with CPB's major grant to World Music Productions to revitalize our radio series and extend our service in the new media domain. The focus of this second

grant is a complete overhaul and redesign of our web site -- www.afropop.org -- so that we can make our 15 years of research and programming available on demand to music lovers, journalists, educators, scholars, concert presenters and others. Stay tuned for the unveiling of the new www.afropop.org in January 2001. We invite content contributors, cross-promotional partners and financial supporters to join our team!

(full story on p. 4)

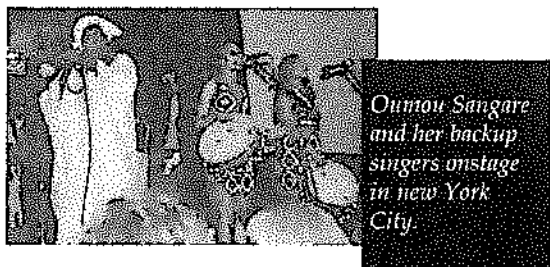
Oumou Sangare
at B.B. King Club
in New York



Photo Credit: Barry A. Wilson

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Afropop Events in Virginia and New York City feature Oumou Sangare and Habib Koite & Bamada



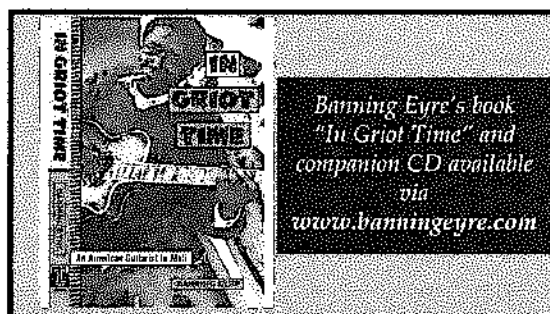
Habib Koite spoke emotionally at our Afropop reception in Virginia about how Afropop has made and continues to make invaluable connections between Africans and Americans.

Accepting the induction into the Friends of Afropop Hall of Fame for CPB, Rick Madden who is CPB's VP for Radio and was the program officer for our first grant from CPB in 1987, picked up on Habib's words and talked about how Afropop introduced so many public radio listeners to great music from around the world. He also kidded me about showing up at the primarily suit-and-tie CPB wearing biking and cross-country ski gear.

His Excellency, Ambassador Cheick Oumar Diarrahh of Mali accepted Afropop's honor on behalf of the

Democratic Republic of Mali, which was also inducted into the Afropop Hall of Fame. Afropop host Georges Collinet introduced the Ambassador's home country as "the most beautiful country in Africa—beautiful people, beautiful music and culture, beautiful history and architecture." Ambassador Diarrahh graciously dubbed Habib Koite and other African musicians now touring internationally as the "the REAL ambassadors for Africa".

Our New York City Afropop event was the next night at the new BB King Club and Grill near Time's Square. Author, guitarist and long-time Afropop contributor Banning Eyre set the scene with an informal presentation based on his book "In Griot Time: An American Guitarist in Mali" (Temple University Press, 2000). Banning talked about the cultural context Oumou Sangare and



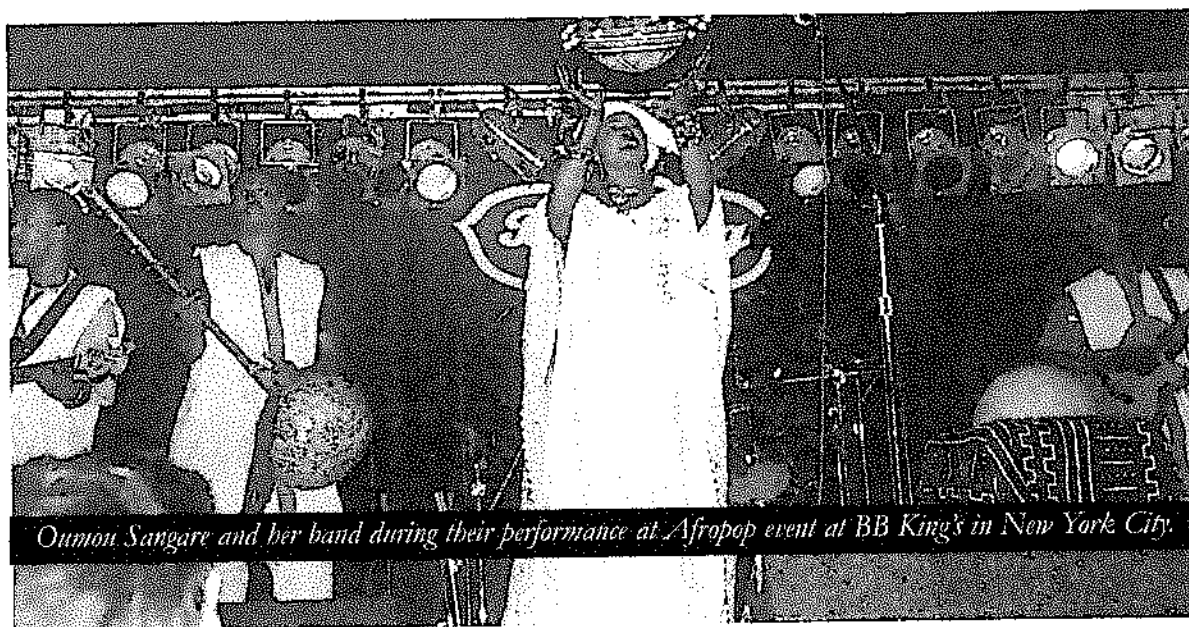
Habib Koite come out of and helped our audience demystify and more deeply appreciate Mali. Our sixty guests, including about a dozen Afropoppers who have traveled with us in West Africa, had a chance to socialize with one another and Habib Koite during a pre-show reception and then it was time for Habib Koite and Bamada to do their thing.

Habib & Bamada played a smoking set that night. The club was sold out and the energy in the room was elec-

Looking around the room, I would have sworn that over half the fans were singing along.

Habib's English continues to improve and even though it's not perfect, when he speaks, everyone in the room leans forward to get what he's saying- and, in some more fundamental way I think, to encourage him to communicate.

Habib told a funny story about the first time he and his band encoun-



tric. Maestro Keletigui Diabate wowed the crowd with his balafon solos. A new addition to Bamada is Madou Kone on tama who did blistering talking drum solos and animated the stage with spirited dancing. By now, many in the crowd have their favorites in Habib's repertoire including "Cigarette Abana", "Wasiye."

tered American culture in 1995 when they came to New York City to help celebrate an anniversary of the United Nations. Habib says he asked the taxi driver to take them to the "Ramadan Inn" but when they drew near the driver took a detour. When Habib protested and pointed to the "Ramadan Inn," the driver replied,

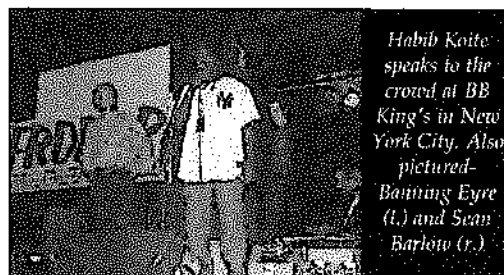
"No, that's a non-smoking street". Habib's bandsmen had been smoking in the driver's non-smoking cab, and they all learned quickly about new rules in this new land.

Oumou Sangare and her band did two magnificent sets at the BB King Club. The band features some exceptional players, including Abdoulaye Fofana on flute and Baba Sallah from Gao whose acoustic guitar solos added a powerful, northern Mali feel to Oumou's wassoulou sound. Oumou's two singer/dancers danced up a storm. And at the center of it all is the regal Oumou Sangare, whose vocal solos tear at your heart. In every set she performs, she always announces to the crowd that she is singing especially on behalf of women in Mali and women everywhere.

I had the honor of emceeing the New York show. And as I mentioned when introducing Habib, Afropop has enjoyed a long and special relationship with Mali. I first went to do research and gather sound in Mali in May of 1987 at the end of Ramadan. Zani Diabate's band played in an open air cultural center the night the new moon was sighted, signaling the end of Ramadan. And the next day, everyone dressed in new grand boubous and matching shirts and pants

walked around the neighborhoods to visit friends and share food.

I knew immediately that Mali was a culturally dense place that Afropop would be reporting from often. And it's very satisfying when you think of the international success Mali's artists have had. Mali is a big country physically with several distinct cultures but only has about 12 million people. And when you realize that about a dozen Malian artists now have international recording and touring careers-Habib Koite, Oumou Sangare, Salif Keita, The Rail Band, Ali Farka Toure, Toumani Diabate, Amadou & Mariam, Ami Koita, Mamadou Diabate, Afel Bocoum, Lobi Traore--that is exceptional in Africa.



Habib Koite speaks to the crowd at BB King's in New York City. Also pictured- Banning Eyre (l.) and Sean Barlow (r.)

So here's to the CPB and the Democratic Republic of Mali and our artist friends Habib Koite and Oumou Sangare. May you live long and prosper!

If you were unable to attend our benefits and would like to support the redevelopment of our website, please make a tax-deductible contribution by sending a check to:

**World Music Productions
688 Union St., Brooklyn NY 11215**

AFROPOP WORLDWIDE

Program Listings

DECEMBER 2000

PRETTY BOYS AND WORKING STIFFS

Latin music hits the mainstream media with Ricky Martin and crew. We'll listen to what is crossing over and to the Latin dance music still largely ignored by non-Latino media. First person stories from the artists and leading media figures.

AFROPOPPERS IN THE WINGS

This program samples work from new artists throughout the African diaspora. One hit wonders or future stars? Time will tell, but these artists represent the cutting edge of Afropop in the year 2000. Rising Afropop Stars

GILBERTO GIL, LIVE

features one of the finest live recording moments from the Afropop archives. Gilberto Gil acoustic. Live in New York City.

JANUARY 2001

SAMBA!

The first of the year means that the millions of people around the world who live for carnival swing into high gear to get their songs, grand themes, costumes cranking. In this program we visit with one of the greatest living sambistas, Martinho da Vila, who tells us what samba means to the people of Rio's favelas (hillside slums). Plus a grand panorama of historic and contemporary samba.

From MESOPOTAMIA TO ANDALUCIA

Back in the day, the great oud players of Baghdad were renowned in Moorish Andalusia, and cultural and economic communications flourished across North Africa between the Middle East and the Iberian Peninsula. We'll hear the modern day inheritors of this legacy and visit with Lebanese oud maestro Simon Shaheen.

ZARAGOZA NIGHTS, IBERIAN DREAMS

Afropop travels to the Strictly Mundial Festival in Zaragoza, Spain (between Madrid and Barcelona) where over the course of four nights, 60 ensembles perform til dawn. We'll hear veteran and emerging artists from Catalonia, Galicia, Aragon, and Portugal and visit with the artists.

Uplinked January 25, 2001

THE CUBAN CONNECTION, PART 14: HEART-BEAT OF HAVANA-RUMBA, RAP, TIMBA Y MAS....

In this, our latest installment of groundbreaking coverage from Cuba, Afropop travels to Havana for the Havana Jazz Festival where the most interesting music is always what happens AFTER the concerts...in the clubs where Cuba's leading bands battle for the hearts and feet of demanding Habaneros.

FEBRUARY 2001

ETHIOPIA RECONSIDERED

Ethiopia inspires grand claims about black history. For some, it is the cradle of civilization. For others, the country's ex-president Haile Selassie was a god. We'll look at Ethiopia's past through the lense of its modern and traditional music. The show includes selections from the remarkable 8-volume retrospective series, Ethiopiques.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FUNK

Funk is a perennial favorite. In this panoramic history of the funkier of funk we hear classics and some rarities. And George Clinton clues us into the deeper meaning of funk.

Uplinked February 22, 2001

WORLD FUNK

Many streams fed funk in America, and the favor is returned around the world. Appearing in Afropop's Funk Dome, are funky sounds from Brazil, Nigeria, Algeria, and elsewhere.

