

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan

Presents

DANCERS OF MALI

National Ensemble of the Republic of Mali

with

Dancers Acrobats Warriors

Singers Drummers Musicians

BOUBA DIALLO, *Director General*

MAMADOU BADIAN KOUYATE, *Artistic Director*

FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 20, 1972, AT 8:00

POWER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

L'Oiseau Sacre (Sacred Bird)

The Sacred Bird is a mystical symbol of great significance to the Malian people. The Sacred Bird of the Bambara, for instance, reportedly appears only at night. It is ridden by an elf called Farima-Ni who is excessively talkative, sometimes funny and enchanting, other times mysterious and sad. Here is the L'Oiseau Sacre of the Bambaras, bringing you greetings from the people of Mali.

Zantegueba

This is an ancient mask from the Bambaras. Representing a lion, it always signifies the end of a ritual or ceremony. The acquisition of this mask and the holy rituals accompanying it are identical to the ceremonies observed at marriage proposals.

The Call of the Tam-Tam

The Tam-Tam is an extraordinary instrument made of hard wood and the skin of sacrificed animals. Sending vibrations all over Africa to the rhythm of the heartbeat, absorbing the pulse of the suffering, the happy and the loving, the Tam-Tam calls all together, invites them to unite and to let their hearts beat at the speed of the Tam-Tam. The Tam-Tam is calling!

Mandan

To express the joy about the arrival of winter, the young men and women of a village organize popular festivities to honor Mandan, the god who changes the seasons.

Le Masque de Force (Dogons)

The masks worn in Dogon dances are several hundred years old and are national treasures. They are rarely permitted to travel abroad because of their antiquity, their delicacy and historical significance, their rarity, and their inestimable value. These masks are used to this day by the Dogons in observance of their exotic rites, which are among the most unusual and most fascinating practiced by any people on earth. The Dogons, isolated from civilization by the sheer, towering cliffs in the region of Sangha, in which they make their homes, take us back in time many centuries with these primitive tribal masks, made of hard wood, reeds, feathers, animal hides and cowrie shells.

Sounou

This dance from Kharta is performed by the young men and women to celebrate the abundance and prosperity of a good harvest.

INTERMISSION

The Dance of the "Possédés" (The "Possessed")

The observance of this rite is widespread throughout the Republic of Mali, and amongst most of the tribes especially the Bambaras and the Songhais. Many centuries old, the ceremony involves the wild, hypnotic rhythms of the Tam-Tam, the Tambourines, and the Balafons. A sick young girl, whom the tribe's doctor cannot seem to cure, is mystically united with the spirit (devil). She becomes "possessed." She rolls, wailing, on the ground, generating a similar state of being "Possessed" in the members of the tribe who surround her. Invisible horsemen mount the dancers who become the horses of the gods. They become caught up in the frenzy of the rite, and, in a fever pitch of emotional excitement, they become "possessed," throwing themselves on the ground and rolling about in horrible convulsions.

Enter the "fetish man," a personality well-known throughout Africa. He is always on the lookout for manifestations of the devil's presence and handiwork, and the bodies of the "Possessed"

afford the devil a natural hiding place. By touching the victims and pronouncing in a high-pitched voice the proper sacramental words, he seeks to exorcise the devil; and almost immediately the convulsive writhing ceases. The fetish-man is the victor; the devil has been put to flight.

But the Tam-Tam, the Kora, and the Balafons play on, weaving their strange, hypnotic spells over one and all. Before long, the "Possessed" are again dancing frantically, caught in the spell of the devil and his music.

The Dance of the Hunters

Since earliest times the hunters of a tribe enjoyed a position of special prominence and importance, since they not only provided food for their people but also assured the protection, peace, safety, and security of their villages from marauding beasts or tribal enemies. As combination constabulary—militia—armed forces, these fearless tribesmen remain even today a vitally important part of tribal society.

To be a good hunter it is not enough for a man to be an expert marksman, and to possess intrepidity and courage in abundance; one must also be knowledgeable about all manner of flora and fauna. The hunt is always preceded by certain tribal rites. During these, the Griot (troubadour) praises the actions and skills of the best among the hunters assembled. This often causes intense rivalry among hunters, who throw themselves into proving their exceptional prowess by performing wildly exciting dances.

Masques

Sandia

Here are some popular dances from the African griots (troubadors) as they are commonly presented for happy and joyous occasions.

Mandiani

A Malinke betrothal and wedding dance is performed by the young women of Mandingue in Southwest Mali.

N' Tessanoufe Songs

These old songs are interpreted by the charming Oumou Kouyate.

Bondialan

This ancient dance from the Segou region is performed in celebration of any occasion in tribal social or religious life. It combines the fervor of the Tam-Tams with the grace and skills of the dancers.

Finale

A salute of the entire Ensemble.

<i>Staging</i>	CHEICK OUMAR MAIGA
<i>Costume Supervision</i>	CHEICK N'DIAYE
<i>Personnel</i>	MAMA TANOGO
<i>General Manager</i>	WOLFGANG SCHIMANSKY
<i>Tour Manager</i>	HENRI LEHOUSSE

An Evening with The Duke

Saturday, November 11, in Hill Auditorium at 8:30

Duke Ellington and his world-famous orchestra will be presented by the University Musical Society for the first time as a special Benefit Concert, with the contributions to help insure the long-standing tradition of excellent concerts in Ann Arbor. Tickets, including contribution, are priced at \$50, \$25, \$15, \$10, \$7, \$6, and \$4, and are now on sale at our Burton Tower offices. Included in the \$50 ticket is a special after-concert supper party and "more jazz." Brochures with complete details available upon request.

COMING EVENTS

AH AHK, MUSIC AND DANCE from Korea	Sunday, October 22 (2:30, Rackham Auditorium)
GUARNERI STRING QUARTET	Sunday, October 29* (2:30, Rackham Auditorium)
BATSHEVA DANCE COMPANY from Israel	Friday, November 3* (8:00, Power Center)
ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA	Saturday, November 4 (8:30, Hill Auditorium)
CHINESE SKIN SHADOW PUPPETS	Monday, November 6 (8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
YUVAL TRIO from Israel	Wednesday, November 8 (8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
CHRISTOPHER PARKENING, <i>Guitarist</i>	Tuesday, November 14 (8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
PANIAGUA QUARTET	Saturday, November 18 (8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
ITZHAK PERLMAN, <i>Violinist</i>	Tuesday, November 21 (8:30, Hill Auditorium)

HANDEL'S *Messiah*

For over ninety years, the University Choral Union has presented the *Messiah* in celebration of the Christmas Season. Donald Bryant conducts the chorus, members of the Interlochen Academy Arts Orchestra, and soloists Louise Russell, soprano, Sofia Steffan, contralto, Waldie Anderson, tenor, and Benjamin Matthews, bass, in three performances in Hill Auditorium. Tickets now on sale.

(8:30) Friday, December 1
(8:30) Saturday, December 2
(2:30) Sunday, December 3

AUSTRAL STRING QUARTET from Sydney	Tuesday, December 5 (8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
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* sold out

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Burton Memorial Tower, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Phone 665-3717