



TOUMANI DIABATÉ

with the
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

Tuesday 21 October 2008 7.30pm
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall

Toumani Diabaté kora
Clark Rundell conductor

Fode Lassana balafons
Fanta Mady Kouyaté acoustic & electric guitar
Fodé Kouyaté pumpkin & tama (traditional
African percussion)
Mohamed Koita bass
Kasse Mady Diabaté vocals
Ganda Toukara ngoni

Johannes Bellinck sound engineer

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
leader James Clark

Orchestral arrangements by
Nico Muhly and Ian Gardiner

This concert has been rescheduled from 25 October

Commissioned by the Barbican (London) and Liverpool
Philharmonic Hall & Events, produced by the Barbican,
and supported by the Arts Council of England and
Liverpool Culture Company Ltd as part of the 2008
European Capital of Culture Programme

Songs with Orchestra

Manchester Tune
kora & orchestra
arranged by Ian Gardiner

Djourou Kara Nany
kora, balafon, acoustic guitar & orchestra
arranged by Nico Muhly

Cantelowes
kora, balafon, acoustic guitar & orchestra
arranged by Nico Muhly

Mamadou Boutiquier
kora, vocalist, ngoni & orchestra
arranged by Ian Gardiner

Elyne Road
kora, acoustic guitar, balafon, ngoni,
pumpkin & orchestra
arranged by Nico Muhly

Kaira
kora, balafon & orchestra
arranged by Ian Gardiner

*Toumani will also perform
unaccompanied and with his band,
including some of the songs from
his collaborations with Ali Farka
Touré and Taj Mahal.*



commission for their 2007-08 season. This month the Paris Opéra ballet premieres *Triade*, a newly commissioned collaboration between Muhly and Millepied.

He has also lent his skills as performer, arranger and conductor to other musicians, including Björk (*Medúlla*, *Drawing Restraint 9*, *Volta*), Bonnie 'Prince' Billy (*The Letting Go*), and Antony of Antony and the Johnsons. His work with Antony has included performances in Arnhem, Leeds and New York City; in 2007 they worked together on a new Shakespeare setting for *The Sonnet Project*, a project linking Opera North with the Royal Shakespeare Company. 2008 saw the release of such collaborations as *Ekvilíbrium*, the solo debut of Icelandic musician Valgeir Sigurðsson, and *All Is Well* by American folk singer Sam Amidon. Sigurðsson released both discs on his own Bedroom Community records, a label he inaugurated by producing Muhly's first album, *Speaks Volumes* (2007). In the months leading up to *Speaks Volumes'* American release, Muhly was invited to present concerts of his chamber music at both Carnegie Hall and the Whitney Museum. Future recording projects include a second solo record, titled *Mothertongue*.

Creating the orchestral arrangements

by Ian Gardiner

Two facets of Toumani's music are heard in the pieces with orchestra in this concert: the intimate and magical quality of his solo work, as heard on the album 'The Mandé Variations', from which three tunes have been transcribed and arranged by Nico Muhly; and the virtuosic and exuberant flourish in his collaborations with other musicians, as heard in the recordings of his own group the Symmetric Orchestra, and the album *In the Heart of the Moon*, a spellbinding dialogue (with a little help from Ry Cooder) between Toumani and the late Malian singer/guitarist Ali Farka Touré. Two tunes from this recording, adaptations of traditional songs *Mamadou Boutiquier* and *Kaira*, form the basis of two of my arrangements for this concert. The third tune that I've adapted is based on a recording of an improvisation that Toumani played to tonight's conductor Clark Rundell backstage after a concert in Manchester. A lilting lullaby of a tune goes through a number of variations – an opportunity for some of the woodwind and the strings to sing.

Arranging such beautiful music for a small orchestra would seem to be quite a straightforward task, but two elements should ring a note of caution to the arranger. Firstly, by some extraordinary legerdemain, great kora players like Toumani manage to play bass, rhythmic accompaniment, and rippling melodies simultaneously with just two hands, as well as using all kinds of playing techniques to get different sounds and colours – the kora is an orchestra itself. At times the orchestral arrangement just needs to highlight some of these parts – to play alongside and support. And second, this is often quite fragile music based around subtle embellishments of and improvisations on its main ideas – the arrangements need to leave plenty of space for this, and provide a variety of backings and colours behind Toumani's solo work ... but the orchestra also needs to have its voice, so I've tried to create moments where backings become 'frontings', with richer treatments of the melodies touching on early 20th-century classical sonorities. Here the orchestral players also have to lock in to a particular type of Malian swing in the rhythm – light, tripping, a bit hip-wiggling.

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

The RLPO gives over sixty concerts from September to June in Philharmonic Hall, as well as presenting concerts locally and throughout the United Kingdom. The Orchestra has toured to the Far East, the USA and throughout Europe, and has enjoyed a special relationship with Prague in recent years. The Orchestra performed at the Prague Autumn last month, and tours North Germany and the Netherlands later this month. The RLPO is Classic FM's Orchestra in North West England; this relationship has been extended until 2012.

In 1998 the Orchestra launched its own recording label, RLPO Live, a venture which has met with a great deal of success. Many RLPO Live recordings are currently being reissued by Avie Records; see www.avierecords.com. Other recordings by the Orchestra appear on the EMI, Naxos, Nimbus, Universal and Virgin Classics labels. See www.liverpoolphil.com for the latest releases.

Members of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic are involved in a number of innovative community education and outreach projects, including the RLPO's series of Family Concerts. The Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, whose most famous 'old boy' is Sir Simon Rattle, also enjoys close links with the RLPO. Ensemble 10/10 is the RLPO's exciting new music group; Kenneth Hesketh is the orchestra's Composer in the House (2007-09). The dynamic young Russian Vasily Petrenko became Principal Conductor in September 2006; his contract has been extended until 2012.

Principal Conductor Vasily Petrenko	Cellos Jonathan Aasgaard Hilary Browning	Executive Director (Orchestra & Ensembles) Andrew Cornall
Conductor Laureate Libor Pešek KBE	Stephen Mann Simon Denton	Head of Programming Sandra Parr
Artists Laureate 2008 Vladimir Ashkenazy Sir Simon Rattle	Double Basses Marcel Becker Nigel Dufty	Concerts Administrator Amy Brookes
Composer in the House Kenneth Hesketh	Flute, Piccolo & Alto Flute Fiona Paterson	Artists and Recordings Administrator Verity Weatherburn
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Chorusmaster Ian Tracey	Oboe & Cor Anglais Rachael Pankhurst	Orchestra Manager Julian Munro
First Violins James Clark Jane Nossek Lesley Gwyther Martin Richardson Ruth Longmaid Oliver Morris	Clarinet & Bass Clarinet Katherine Lacy	Deputy Orchestra Manager Jo Athroll
Second Violins Jennifer Stokes Kate Marsden Martin Anthony Burrage Susanna Jordan Anne Lawes Steven Wilkie	Bassoon Alan Pendlebury	Librarian Anthony McCormick
	Horn David Pigott	Platform Manager Ian Doran
	Percussion Josephine Large	Assistant Platform Manager Alan Scollins
	Violas Fiona Winning Robert Shepley Richard Wallace Jayne Coyle	