

Aimland Records present: Jobarteh Kunda, Detailed press release:



Jobarteh Kunda (West African/ Caribbean)

Finalist for the World of Music Award 09!

Aimland Records is proud to announce that Jobarteh Kunda made it to the final of the World of Music Award with their song "Djihati Kelo" from the new CD "AHA!

African World Music of the very best! Nominated for the prestigious: German World Music prize **Ruth 2006** and the **BBC award 2005**. Bandleader Tormenta Jobarteh, the "White Griot", was awarded 1st prize of "**The best storyteller in Germany Award 2005**" competition.

USA: World Discoveries July 2004

"... the group takes a great leap forward with a couple of personnel changes very professional now. The group vocals are truly wonderful. This is a band to watch out for!..."

The band's name is its program: Jobarteh- Kunda (Clan) is a family of seven musicians, of which each member brings different musical roots to the band. Tormenta Jobarteh and his band presents unique and absolutely authentic world music utilizing traditional and modern instrumentation with beautiful multi-voice harmonies and exciting dance rhythms.

The history of this project, the outcome of a long maturation process, is as fascinating and exceptional as the band's sound. The band's leader, Tormenta Jobarteh, grew up in Munich and studied drums at the local Dante Augustini Institute. He made multiple tours in different ensembles through Europe, Asia and the U.S. until in 1987 he met a band from Gambia who invited him for a visit to this small West African country. This encounter had crucial consequences for him, for there, for the first time, he heard the beautiful sound of the Kora, the 21-string harp-lute of the Manding Griots. Tormenta spent eight years in Boraba under the tutelage of Basuro Jobarteh, his musical mentor and Griot of Boraba, in Fulladou. During that period, he focused his attention to learning the Kora, the Mandinka language and Mande culture. He became so immersed in his adoptive country's culture that he was eventually adopted by his teacher into the Jobarteh family. Griots (in the Mandinka language "Jaliya") are the highly respected musicians, historians, chroniclers, story tellers and wise counsellors of the people all rolled into one. The knowledge is traditionally passed from father to son. Jobarteh eventually was officially designated through ceremony as a Griot, with all rights and obligations that go along with it – certainly a unique distinction for a white non-African. Committed by this overwhelming honor, Tormenta Jobarteh began to bring the rich culture of the Mande-Griots over to Germany and Central Europe, developing a new musical concept based on his own Afro-European history.

In 1995 he met Mori Dioubatè during a concert. Mori and Tormenta began to collaborate in different projects. Mori Dioubatè is a member of the same old Griot family in Guinea that adopted Tormenta. Both Griots decided to start a common project and this was the birth of Jobarteh Kunda. Numerous appearances followed, consolidating the band's repertoire and reputation. To realize this ambitious project they gradually rearranged and modernized traditional songs and gave them new titles, thus creating an exciting, new, multi-cultural project. By the time they recorded their first CD "Abaraka" (Urkult, Indigo) in spring 1999 the band's line up comprised top-class musicians. "Abaraka" was an international success (the song "Afrika" became the title song of director Fritz Baumann's movie "Anansi").

Thanks to the band members' diverse musical backgrounds, influences of other cultures and musical traditions are woven into the pure West African style by including Caribbean elements as well as influences from Jazz and Pop music. This is precisely what makes the sound of Jobarteh-Kunda so appealing and rich in variations. It is World Music at its best. Garnering 1000's of new fans on their latest tour of Germany to support their sophomore release, Ali Heja (Bibi Africa, Indigo) they appeared at such well known venues including the Reggae Chiemsee, Sunsplash Festival, the legendary Finkenbach Festival and the Tollwood Festival München, sharing the stage with international world music stars such as Miriam Makeba, Gentleman, Manu Dibango and Tiken Jah Fakoly among many.

With the retirement of Mori Dioubate at the end of 2006, the band embarks on a new chapter with a new lineup of international musicians. Tormenta Jobarteh and the stalwart Saxophone/ flute player, Gerhard Wagner and Drummer Humphrey Cairo collaborated together on ushering in the band's sound toward its exciting, new evolution. With the addition of Dancer and Percussionist, Sabar and Djembe player, Cheick Bangoura of Senegal, Guitarist, Singer and Violinist, Miriama Broady of USA, and Italian Bassist and Producer Felix Occhionero, the band puts on a new youthful suit adding elements of hip hop, reggae and Highlife to its traditional African-Manding sound.

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