

# MAMADOU KELLY



## 2018 CONCERT REVIEWS

*<<One of the best and most intimate shows I've ever experienced>>*

Benjamin Greene about the concert at Ashkenaz Music and Dance, Berkeley CA, 26 October 18

*<< they were off the hooooook!!!>>* Tom Nguyen, EnClave.LA after the Halloween show at DubClub – Echoplex, Los Angeles CA, 31 October 18

*<<Thanks for the great show! Hope we can have you back in Boston soon!>>*

WorldMusic/CRASHarts about the City Winery Boston concert, 4 November 18

*<<The band went straight into a guitar melody, the percussionist joined in and the infectious rhythms of West Africa filled the room. It was hard for audience members to not tap their feet or bob their heads as the show continued – several even got up to dance near the stage as Mamadou Kelly's bright vibrant energy extended to the crowd>>* Jenny Porter Tilly, Herald Times, Bloomington IN, about the 25<sup>th</sup> Lotus Festival opening concert at Buskirk-Chumley Theater, 26 September 18

Booking North America: Chris Nolan, Clermont Music, 67 Commons Rd, Germantown, NY 12526  
+1 518 755 5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

Booking Europe: Francis De Souza  
Earth Beat BV, Falckstraat 37-hs, 1017 WV Amsterdam NL  
+ 31(0)20-6279518 [francis@earthbeat.nl](mailto:francis@earthbeat.nl)



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA  
[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

Mamadou Kelly, born in 1969 near Timbuktu Northern Mali, began working on local farms as a young teenager but became drawn to music. By age 15 Kelly had ventured to Niafunké to learn from the famed Ali Farka Touré. By 1986 he had begun to perform with Touré and at the age of 18 had made his first trip outside of Mali to perform.

In 2003 Kelly accompanied Ali Farka Toure to the Folk Live Festival in Washington DC. He performed in 2005 and 2006 at the Festival au Desert in Timbuktu and in 2008 at the Festival sur le Niger in Segou Mali. In 2010 Kelly performed with Afel Bocoum at the Afrika Festival in Hertme, Netherlands and in 2011 they crisscrossed the USA and Canada as part of the Acoustic Africa concert tour. He performed in France as part of Africa Express 2012. In 2013 following the political crisis in Mali, Kelly participated in the USA and Europe Caravan for Peace Tours.

Kelly recorded his first album, "Adibar" in Bamako in 2013. He followed with a second, "Djamila" recorded in New York in 2015. That album was named a Top of the World selection by the British magazine, Songlines. During Kelly's 2016 North American tour he recorded his third album "Politiki". He was joined on that project by American musicians including five-time Grammy Award winner Cindy Cashdollar, avant-garde percussionist Susie Ibarra, bass player Jacob Silver and electric guitarist Dan Littleton. Kelly is presently finishing work on his fourth album, "Les Bateaux" recorded in Bamako and Saugerties with the collaboration of Cindy Cashdollar, David Rothenberg and Jacob Silver and scheduled for release in Fall 2019.

Kelly continues to live with his family in Mali and is a mentor to young Malian musicians.

#### CONTACT

Christopher Nolan, Nolan + Associates, 67 Commons Rd, Germantown, NY 12526  
+1 518 755 5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA  
[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

PRESS:

"Malian musical royalty" - Songlines #127 May 2017

"At one level this is simple, quite lovely, rural-sounding music, but it is also layered and its complexity is only thinly disguised." - fRoots Magazine #407, May 2017

"Politiki is a remarkable combination of West African and American blues genres featuring outstanding guitar work." World Music Central, 10 April 2017

"Kelly transforms desert blues with modern sophistication" - Earth Beat Amsterdam, 11 April 2017

"a storied cast of supporting musicians like Susie Ibarra, steel guitarist Cindy Cashdollar, bassist Jake Silver, and guitarist Dan Littleton. Listen to the acoustic-leaning title track from Mamadou Kelly." - New Sounds #3967, WNYC 31 March 2017

"Incredibly accomplished guitarist ... a fine singer... profoundly moving music" Mark Sinnock, Songlines Magazine #112

"There is a warm, unaffected spontaneity to the proceedings, with Kelly's voice... sounding out over a propulsive and nicely earthy mess of guitar, njarka and djourkel underpinned by bass and calabash."  
[Mark Hudson, Songlines Magazine](#)

"Mamadou Kelly presents superb acoustic interplay, infectious Malian rhythms and alluring songs."  
[World Music Central](#)

"the real roots of American blues and jazz"  
[George W. Harris, Jazz Weekly](#)

"Soulful grooves, brilliant playing and arranging, and a vibe that just won't let go"  
[Banning Eyre, Afropop Worldwide](#)

[Dr. Debra Jan Bibel in Amazon.com](#)

[5.0 out of 5 stars Deep Malian Blues from Bamako and New York](#)  
Reviewed in the United States on December 18, 2019

Building on his previous album that introduced steel lap guitar to Malian blues, Mamadou Kelly now adds clarinets [David Rothenberg] on two tracks. Cindy Cashdollar's lap guitar is again present, on two tracks. Les Bateaux, moreover, includes two traditional Malian instruments, the n'goni lute [Kande Sissoko] and the balafon, bamboo xylophone [Adama Sidible]. Even a violin is heard [Madou Diabate]. Calabash and drums [Afo Guindo], bass [Jacob Silver], and guitars [Aly Magassa and Kelly



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA

[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

himself] round out the band. The sound of his album, while fusion in instrumentation, has a strong traditional feeling. The album title track recalls the drought of the early 1970s when all looked toward the boats arriving up the Niger with food. Three concluding tracks are bonus remixes [Dave Cook; David Harrow] of tracks from Kelly's EP, Ni Allah. Lyrics in Songhoy, Bambara, Peuhl, or Bobo; French; and English are found online on the label's website. Kelly has been expanding his approach to contemporary Malian desert blues. The bass clarinet and steel lap guitar are nice accents but are very limited here, as I desired more expressive phrasing. Nonetheless, this is Kelly's strongest blues album to date.

**Mamadou Kelly**  
**Les Bateaux**  
 Clermont Music (71 mins)  
 ★★★★★  
*Malian veteran's fourth album*



Malian guitarist and singer Mamadou Kelly is a graduate of the bands of both Ali Farka Touré and Afel Bocoum, and this is his fourth full album. There is a clear consistency displayed in this artist's recordings. He is a good singer, albeit not with a particularly distinctive voice. He does, however, demonstrate that he can produce highly enjoyable music that is thought-provoking and memorable.

This release continues to maintain a fairly traditional instrumental line-up of acoustic and electric guitar, *ngoni*, calabash and electric bass. However, as on his previous releases, there is some occasional additional instrumentation. In this case it is lap steel guitar on two tracks, clarinet on another two, *balafon* on one track and violin on two others. These add some very sympathetic adornment and variation from the standard line-up. In particular, the lap steel brings an ethereal atmosphere to the poignant title-track, which describes villagers anxiously waiting on the river bank for the arrival of boats carrying food during periods of famine. One 'bonus' track in the form of a techno remix is slightly misplaced and adds little to what is otherwise a highly tasteful and engaging release.

MARTIN SINNOCK  
**TRACK TO TRY** *Les Bateaux*

ISSUE 155 › SONGLINES 51



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA

[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

**LIVE PERFORMANCE VIDEO LINKS:**

Live at Lotus Festival 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6Bkdili91o>

Live at Lotus Festival 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXWvtc719b0>

Live at Joe's Pub 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5EYN6FzG14>

Voice of America Music Time in Africa 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFKVeusMIQk>

Full concert Kennedy Center Washington DC

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUagk\\_AGsAE&t=6s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUagk_AGsAE&t=6s)

Live at Freedom Square Troy NY 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnypV1mf-xY>

Live at Freedom Square Troy NY.2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjuXixswkyY> City

Winery NYC 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al7k16lJ8jg>

**OFFICIAL MUSIC VIDEOS:**

Woma Gara 2019 (Les Bateaux)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NA8ymolLU3Y>

Nayes 2019 (Les Bateaux)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=valGN-QkWxg>

Nakam 2017 (Politiki)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLs1vco0NrE>

**AUDIO LINKS**

<https://soundcloud.com/clermontmusic/sets/mamadou-kelly>

**DISCOGRAPHY**

Les Bateaux (CLE027-2019)

Politiki (CLE016-2017)

Djamila (CLE012-2015)

Adibar (CLE007-2013)

**INTERNATIONAL CONCERT TOURS**

[Only concerts in his own name are listed below. Kelly also performed around the world with the Ali Farka Toure Band and with Afel Bocoum.]

**2018**

Montana Folk Festival	Butte MT
Zebulon Café/Concert	Los Angeles CA
Half Moon	Hudson NY
Union Pool	Brooklyn NY
Korzo Theatre	Den Haag NL



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA

[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

Bitterzoet	Amsterdam NL
Lotus Festival	Bloomington IN
Tropicalia	Washington DC
O+ Festival	Kingston NY
The Linda	Albany NY
Nightlight	Chapel Hill NC
Mothlight	Asheville NC
The Falcon	Marlboro NY
Zen Barn	Waterbury VT
Brooklyn Bowl	Brooklyn NY
Ashkenaz	Berkeley CA
Dub Club at Echoplex	Los Angeles CA
City Winery	Boston MA

2016

The Cooperage	Albuquerque NM
Sante Fe Bandstand	Sante Fe NM
International Folk Art	Sante Fe NM
Dub Club at Echoplex	Los Angeles CA
The Basement East	Nashville TN
The Mothlight	Asheville NC
Black Swan	Staunton VA
The Falcon	Marlboro, NY
The Music Hall Loft	Portsmouth NH
Freedom Sq	Troy NY
Joe's Pub	New York NY
BSP Kingston	Kingston NY
Kennedy Center	Washington DC
Balliceaux	Richmond VA
Bossa Bistro	Washington DC
Union Pool	Brooklyn NY
Half Moon	Hudson NY

2013

Lensic Performing Arts	Sante Fe NM
Festival Nuits d'Afrique	Montreal PQ
Iron Horse	Northampton MA
Grassroots Festival	Trumansburg NY
Tropicalia	Washington DC
Bloomberg Lunch Series	New York NY



**CLERMONT MUSIC** 67 Commons Road, Germantown, New York 12526 USA

[www.clermontmusic.com](http://www.clermontmusic.com) 518.755.5089 [admin@clermontmusic.com](mailto:admin@clermontmusic.com)

Lincoln Center Out of Doors	New York NY
Bard College	Annandale on Hudson NY
Littlefield	Brooklyn NY
World Music Festival	Chicago IL
Thunderbird	Pittsburgh PA
Littlefield	Brooklyn NY
City Winery, Afropop 25 Gala	New York NY
Silvana	Harlem, NY
Tropicalia	Washington DC

---

