



Baaba Maal

Friday, April 2, 2004, 8 pm
Zellerbach Hall

Baaba Maal (El Hadji Mall), *vocals and guitar*

Mansour Seck, *vocals and guitar*

Barou Sall, *hoddu*

Mama Gaye, *guitar*

Djiby Sall, *guitar, vocals, and dancer*

Assane Kaba, *percussion*

Ousseynou Kaba, *percussion*

Abdoul Khadre Diack, *dancer*

Crew

Julian Hickman, *tour manager*

Elsbeth Hughes, *sound engineer*

Mike Healey, *technician*

Hugh Crowther, *lighting director*

This performance by Baaba Maal is sponsored, in part, by Hear Music.

Additional support has been provided by the Friends of Cal Performances.

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The Wallace Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation for their generous support.*

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Baaba Maal is known worldwide as one of Africa's finest artists, and his music is filled with the purity and timelessness of Fulani musical traditions and the more contemporary influences of funk, reggae, R&B, and jazz. His high-energy concerts, performed in traditional Senegalese costume, include dancing interspersed with driving rhythms and music, and are a magnificent balance of Senegalese roots and Western pop.

One of the true stars to rise from the African continent, the Senegalese master musician has been making music for the world to enjoy for nearly two decades. With releases ranging from contemporary Afropop to expressions of traditional West African music, his projects have received resounding critical acclaim worldwide.

Aside from being a remarkable musician, Baaba is socially active and represents the United Nations Development Program as a spokesman on the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa. He has been featured on both *Red Hot and Rhapsody*, a tribute to Gershwin, and *Red Hot and Riot*, a tribute to Fela Kuti, both projects arranged by The Red Hot Organization, a HIV/AIDS awareness campaign group.

Music was an integral part of Baaba's childhood as he grew up on the banks of the river Senegal. He was born among the Hal Pulaar people (known to the English speaking world as Fulani), and his mother used songs she composed herself to educate and instill in him the power of intelligent and thoughtful lyrics. Technically speaking, he was not destined to become a master musician by virtue of the fact that he was not born into the caste of artists and communicators known as *griots*. Through time, travel, and education, however,

his experiences have resulted in profound self-awareness, allowing Baaba to deliver a message of empowerment, enlightenment, and peace.

His early education in St. Louis (the original French colonial capital) led him to win an art scholarship in Senegal's modern capital, Dakar. There he joined Asly Fouta, a group of 70 musicians. Thus began Baaba's study of local instruments, which was later expanded through an extensive tour of West Africa with longtime friend Mansour Seck. Going from village to village, they tapped the oldest person in each location to learn about the history of the village, the country, and the music. Baaba's studies were then completed at the Conservatoire des Beaux Arts in Paris. And following his return to Senegal, Baaba formed his own band.

Complementing his understanding of traditional music, Baaba was also influenced by black American singers of the 1960s, such as James Brown, Otis Redding, and Wilson Pickett. He later discovered Jamaican musicians such as Toots Hibbert, Bob Marley, and Jimmy Cliff.

Baaba Maal has continually reinforced his position as a seminal artist in the world music arena. Through constant touring, he has honed and enriched an already phenomenal stage presentation. Using his music as a vehicle to express his concerns and empower his people, Baaba sings and speaks for Africa with unprecedented authority.

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