

Meet Yacouba!



Awou ni Tieh,

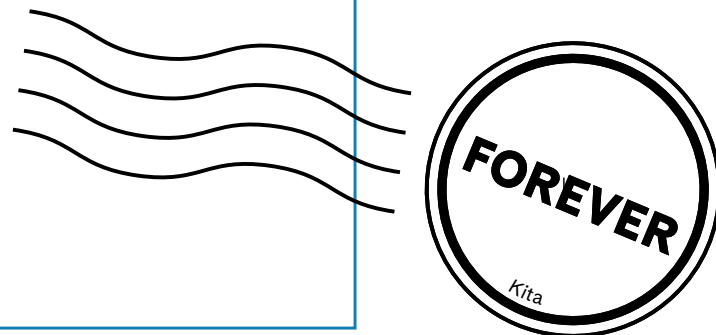
My name is Yacouba Sissoko. You can call me Yacou (pronounced: YAH koo). I'm from Mali, in West Africa, but have lived in Manhattan for more than 20 years now. I was born into a family of musicians and storytellers called jelis. My grandpa, grandma, and mom were famous singers in Mali, and all my siblings and cousins make music. I grew up with my grandparents, and was lucky to learn a special instrument called the kora from my grandfather starting when I was nine years old. I can't wait to share the songs of my family with you.

Ka An Ben,

Yacouba



Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019



Niu-goona

We asked Yacouba ...

What is your favorite Malian food?

People in Mali mainly eat dishes made from rice, or a special grain we have called fonio. My favorite food is niu-goona, a sauce for rice made of peanut butter and spinach.

What was it like growing up in Mali?

I was a little bit spoiled. I grew up with my grandparents, and I was their favorite. They used to take me everywhere, and trusted me with the stories (and some secrets!) of our ancestors. My grandparents were my best friends.

Were there special traditions in Mali?

When we were kids we had a three-month summer vacation. Two weeks before school would begin again, we would gather outside the city and have a big party and feast.