

The American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress presents

**HOMEGROWN**  
2014  
*The Music of America*

Traditional Ethnic and Regional Music and Dance that's "Homegrown" in Communities across the U.S.

**HOMEGROWN IN WHITTALL PAVILION**

# Amadou Kouyate

Traditional  
music and song  
from West Africa



**Wednesday**  
**March 26, 2014**  
**12 NOON – 1 PM**  
**Whittall Pavilion**

**Ground Floor, Thomas Jefferson Building**  
**Library of Congress**  
**10 First Street, SE,**  
**Washington, DC**

**FREE AND OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC**

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Capitol South, one  
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# Amadou Kouyate

Amadou Kouyate is the 150th generation *diali*, or *griot*, of the Kouyate lineage and has been studying and performing Manding music since he was a young child. Manding culture derives from West Africa and constitutes a prominent linguistic group found in Mali, Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea. Amadou is a *djembe* and *koutiro* drummer, but he most notably plays the kora. The Manding kora is a 21-stringed gourd/harp of West African diali culture. The diali is a musician, storyteller, community historian and mediator. Diali are very important in Manding culture for their critical role as stewards of community knowledge and relations.

Amadou learned to play traditional diali instruments from his late father, Djimo Kouyate. Djimo and his wife, Akua Femi Kouyate (also Amadou's mother) founded the *Memory of African Culture* in Washington D.C. Amadou has dedicated his life to sharing the spirit of African culture and preserving it through reconnection of the African Diaspora.

Amadou's performances on the kora range from traditional Manding songs to more contemporary pieces with blues, jazz, rock, and hip-hop influences. Having been born in D.C., Amadou has travelled throughout West Africa and defines his identities as both African and American. Amadou feels a responsibility for preserving the diali culture of his family while also incorporating his observations as a child of life in the United States. He has received an Apprenticeship Award from Maryland Traditions, the folklife program of the Maryland State Arts Council, to teach the playing and building of the kora to his apprentice, Jumoke Ajanku of Baltimore. Amadou has been an adjunct faculty member of the University of Maryland, and is currently an Artist in Residence at Strathmore.

Links:

Memory Of African Culture

<http://www.memoryofafricanculture.org/amk.htm>

West African Griots in America – Three Generations, Three Stories | WYPR

<http://programs.wypr.org/podcast/west-african-griots-america—three-generations-three-stories>

*The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 and placed at the Library of Congress to "preserve and present American Folklife" through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, public programs, and training. The Center includes the American Folklife Center Archive of folk culture, which was established in 1928 and is now one of the largest collections of ethnographic material from the United States and around the world. Please visit our web site: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>.*

