



Mali's legendary blues guitarist Boubacar Traoré to replace staff Benda Bilili in Millennium Park concert

EXTRA Newswire

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Coming to the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park on Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. is Mali's legendary blues guitarist Boubacar Traoré. He and his trio will replace the previously announced group, Staff Benda Bilili, whose U.S. tour has been cancelled due to visa issues. Opening for the night is Nawal of France and the Comoros Islands and her rich blend of traditional and contemporary sounds of the islands. Admission is free.

The bands will appear in Millennium Park as part of the 13th annual World Music Festival: Chicago, presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture. The Boubacar Traoré Trio, originally scheduled to perform on September 21 at Chicago's Mayne Stage, return to the World Music Festival: Chicago for the first time since 2005.

Boubacar Traoré was born in 1942 in the Kayes region of Mali. A self taught musician, he began to compose music at an early age, influenced by American blues and kassonké, a traditional music style from the Kayes region. In the early 1960s, Mali won its independence and the people of Mali awoke each morning to the sound of Kar Kar's (his nickname) melancholic voice on the radio, which sang of independence. He is widely known amidst his generation in Mali for his hits "Kar Kar Madison", "Mali Twist" and "Kayes Ba," in which he encouraged his fellow citizens to return and build the country.

Audiences can learn more about the Boubacar Traoré Trio at a live performance and interview on Wednesday, September 21 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center's Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington Street, or by tuning into WNUR 89.3, or visiting www.wnur.org.

The concert in Millennium Park begins with Nawal, a native of the Co-

moros Islands, in the Indian Ocean off the eastern Coast of Africa, currently living in France. She returns to Chicago this year with her quartet, singing in Comoran, Arabic, French and English, and showcasing the musical traditions of the Indo-Arabian-Persian Bantu polyphonies, and the syncopated rhythms and Sufi trance of the Indian Ocean.

Over the past 20 years, Nawal has gained international praise as a self-produced artist with a powerful voice and a socially progressive commentary. In Millennium Park she performs with her band, which includes Melissa Cara Rigoli (mbira, percussion), Idriss Mlanao (percussion) and Matthieu "Emana" Eskenazi (contrabass), in addition to Nawal on guitar and the gambusi, a Comoran banjo-like instrument. Nawal performed as a solo attraction at World Music Festival: Chicago in 2005.

For more information about World Music Festival: Chicago, visit www.WorldMusicFestivalChicago.org. Information can also be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WorldMusicFestivalChicago and on Twitter @WMFChicago.

World Music Festival: Chicago 2011

From September 15 to 22, the City of Chicago transforms into a global center for the best of today's international music when the 13th annual World Music Festival: Chicago 2011 returns. Presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture (COTC), the city-wide, multi-venue, eight-day festival features acclaimed musicians from more than 40 countries. Featuring traditional and contemporary music from diverse cultures, the performances and events include a combination of free and low-cost ticketed concerts, many of which are family friendly.

World Music Festival: Chicago 2011 is made possible with generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts; the John D. and Catherine T. Ma-

cArthur Foundation; and United Airlines, the Official Airline of the World Music Festival. Additional support has also been provided by the following individuals and organizations: Andrew I. Dane and Mary Elizabeth Ferraro; Chicago Public Radio 91.5 FM WBEZ; WNUR 89.3 FM; the Chicago Park District; and all venue partners.

Millennium Park

Millennium Park is located in the heart of downtown Chicago. It is bordered by Michigan Ave. to the west, Columbus Dr. to the east, Randolph St. to the north and Monroe St. to the south. Convenient parking is located in the Millennium Park Garage (entrance on Columbus at Monroe or Randolph) and at the Grant Park North and East Monroe Garages, all located within a short walking distance of Millennium Park.

Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture, presents thousands of high-quality free festivals, exhibitions, performances and holiday celebrations in venues throughout the city each year. DCASE is dedicated to promoting an ongoing celebration of the arts in Chicago, supporting the people who create and sustain them, and marketing the city's abundant cultural resources to a worldwide audience.

Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture

The Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture (COTC) is dedicated to promoting Chicago as a premier cultural destination to domestic and international leisure travelers, providing innovative visitor programs and services, and presenting free world-class public programs. COTC supports local artists through grants and other resources and creates vital opportunities for artists of all levels. For more information please visit www.ExploreChicago.org. ■



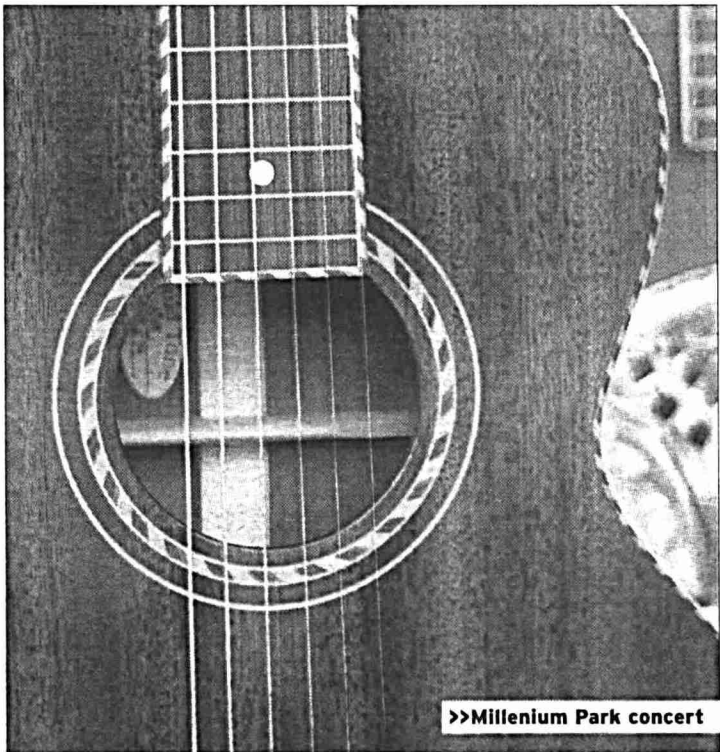


Photo: Ma O' Reilly-Amendes

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