

# Mp3 Diaj (drummers In A Jam) - Pangaea: Old World, New Visions



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"African-Inspired, California-Grown," world beat, fusion, new age, lyrical and upbeat music (with hand drums, percussion, Xylimba, keesansi, alto recorder) 15 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, WORLD: World Beat Details: "Pangaea: Old World, New Vision" - This album results from a collaboration between musicians playing traditional and improvisational music with artistry and original lyrics by Ma Boukaka and Robert Bornn. The album weaves Bantu lyrics together with "in-the-moment" contemporary instrumental and vocal arrangements. Pangaea is a tribute to our shared experience of poignant nostalgia for the past, grief over modern political and ethnic strife, and our eventual triumph over obstacles to humankind. The Pangaea album introduces new lyrical arrangements of traditional ballads and original songs to delight our modern ears and touch our hearts. The DIAJ Ensemble DIAJ (Drummers in a Jam) is an acoustic ensemble from the San Francisco Bay Area. We create what we call "African-inspired, California-grown," world beat/new age music. Our music blends Congolese and West African musical traditions with modern, improvisational, vocal and instrumental artistry on a variety of drum, percussion, and wind instruments. We weave rhythm, melody, and lyrics together in contemporary arrangements by Robert Bornn, bandleader. DIAJ features Ma Boukaka, Robert Bornn and Laura Worth with other Bay Area musicians. Ma Boukaka brings us modern lyrical arrangements of traditional, original modern, and improvisational Congolese ballads. He also graces our stage with drum and percussion rhythms based in Congolese tradition and modern inspiration. Laura Worth on alto recorder and Robert Bornn on Xylimba, drum, and percussion add contemporary improvisational harmonics and rhythm. DIAJ creates compelling musical expressions to delight modern ears and touch hearts. Audience participation is actively encouraged at DIAJ performances. Most of our music is "in-the-moment" creations recorded in a variety

of informal settings. With our albums and performances, we hope to contribute to building community and celebrating our human rights as we create meaningful and fun artistic experiences. Our art honors our diversity and rejects the gratuitous violence that appears in much entertainment today. In the wake of hate crimes at home, brutal civilian war casualties and "ethnic cleansing" in many parts of the world, it has been said that the most important lesson of our era is that each one of us is important and worthy of basic respect. We promote these ideas in our music.

The Musicians Ma Boukaka is from Republic of Congo in Central Africa and grew up between the village Ngolibu and the capital city, Brazzaville. He learned to drum by tapping out rhythms in the jungle with his friends. At 14 he went to work as a cook in Brazzaville. Later he became a "pisteur" -- guide, hunter, and cook for a French safari company in Northern Congo and Gabon. On safari, he met Alan Baer, a young American who offered to bring him to the United States. Ma Boukaka accepted and came to the Bay Area in 1959. After the arrival of fellow Congolese in California, Ma Boukaka worked with them for years to produce many shows of Congolese culture through dance, drum, and song. Now, on his own and with others, he continues to create songs and musical arrangements evolving from his traditional Bantu roots. He has taught drumming for decades and continues to initiate beginners into African rhythms and inspire drummers at all levels. He performs with his band, Bole Bantu ("It Takes Two") and has released an album by the same name. He also performs and records with DIAJ (Drummers in a Jam). (lead vocals, tumba, ngoma, harmonica, keesansi (kalimba), bell, clave, slit drum).

Robert Bornn grew up in Brooklyn, New York. He first learned hand drumming in the 50s on the streets of New York City and has more recently studied with Bay Area teachers including a number of Congolese and West-African masters. Robert has been inspired and taught by Ma Boukaka, Arthur Hull, Babatunde Olatunji, Sanga-of-the-Valley, Fred Simpson, Mabiba Baegne, Abdoulaye Diakite, Malonga Casquelourde, Babou Sagna, Sikiru Adepoju, Mamady Keita. He has been drumming for more than four decades and founded DIAJ (Drummers in a Jam) for Bay Area drummers and dancers ten years ago. In 1997 he wrote, directed, and produced "Sweet California," an African-inspired performance of original and traditional music and dance including his original ballet, "California Suite." He writes original lyrics and melodies as well as arrangements for DIAJ. He is the founding director of DIAJ performing group and producer of their albums, including Pangaea: Old World, New Visions and Abby Womba. He writes, directs, performs, and records with DIAJ. He recently founded Big Deal Productions to record and produce the music of DIAJ. (Xylimba (marimba), djembe, dunun,

ngoma, keesansi (kalimba), percussion) Laura Worth was born and grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She moved to California in 1970 as a young adult and played the soprano recorder for personal enjoyment. In 1998 she began improvising original harmonic lines on the alto recorder for DIAJ. She has also been drumming for eight years and enjoys crafting opportunities to make music with others who share her delight in the artistic process. She co-produced "Sweet California" and co-founded DIAJ. She performs and records with DIAJ. (alto recorder, ngoma, and percussion.) Thierry Sornasse was born and raised in Belgium where, as a teenager, he discovered drumming with a local group called "Gomma". He experienced different musical influences from Africa, Brazil, India, and Europe and has always been interested in discovering new instruments to add to his repertoire. He performs and records with DIAJ. (djembe, dunun, ashiko, didgeridoo, percussion) Robert Sellers was born in Pennsylvania and moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1970. He has studied drumming technique and rhythmic sensibility for 10 years with Arthur Hull, Baba Olatunji, Fred Simpson, Simbo, and most recently with Abdoulaye Diakite. He performs and records with DIAJ. (dunun, djembe, ashiko, shekere) With other artists including Wade Peterson, Sean Araneda, Linda Scarborough, Jonathan Fisher, Devorah Ginden, and Nina Serpiello.

Partial Listing of Events and Appearances Noteworthy DIAJ Ensemble Performances: - Burgess Theater, Menlo Park (see ballet below) - Bill Graham Presents, "New Orleans by the Bay" at Shoreline Amphitheater - Afribean (main stage, Mountain View) East-West Bookshop, Mountain View - Tapestry of Talent festival, San Jose - Making Waves (San Francisco Festival) - Peninsula School Benefit Performance, Menlo Park - Skylonda Fitness Center - ensemble performance for guests (Skyline Blvd. Retreat) - Portola Valley's "Windy Hill Faire" - San Francisco fundraiser by EMILY's List called "Beat for Boxer" - East Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce celebration cruise - Somar Gallery - "Burning Man" Performance Art Event, San Francisco - Interactive entertainment for corporate parties (including Incyte and Teknowledge) Community Drum Circles and Interactive Classes (averaging every other week between 1992-present): - Burgess Theater (drum and dance classes) - Private homes around the San Francisco Bay Area - Hidden Villa Visitor's Center - Afribean (invited facilitator for about 100 participants) - Various Festivals (Drums of the World, Juneteenth, Int'l Day at Cesar Chavez School) - Baylands, Palo Alto (boathouse and outdoors) - New Guinea Sculpture Garden, Stanford University - Menlo Park Recreation Center (dance classes) - Cubberly Community Center (at Dance Visions, Zohar, and in the Auditorium), Palo Alto - Skylonda Fitness Center - drum circle for guests (Skyline Blvd. Retreat) - Street

fairs: Los Altos, Menlo Park, Palo Alto Original Ballets - Produced Sweet California, including "California Suite," an "African-inspired, California-grown" ballet with audience participation in 1997. Burgess Theater, Menlo Park. - Produced The World Is You, a fusion music and dance event at Hidden Villa, Los Altos Hills, July 2001 Albums - 1994 - DIAJ (cassette) - 1996 - Kilimanjaro (cassette) - 1997 - "Abby Womba" (cassette) - 1999 - "Pangaea: Old World, New Visions" (CD) - tba: - "The World is You" and "Little by Little" (CDs)

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