

## **Working Together: Music Research in Collaboration**

*Tom van Buren*

The field of applied ethnomusicology in the United States divides into three general areas of endeavor and experience: (1) the public sector of national, state, and county level arts agencies, museums, and archives; (2) commercial applications, publishing, or music production and promotion; and (3) the research and public programs of regional independent not-for-profit intercultural arts organizations, often known as folklife centers. At a local level these organizations can be fertile grounds for research into actual music practice in America's ethnic cultural communities, research that looks at the background, practice, and significance of music-making for the musicians as well as their audiences and that takes into account musicians' roles in the surrounding cultural context. Independent organizations offer several advantages for applied music research: they are geographically close to the cultural communities they draw upon for content or are directed to for audiences; they can sustain programs and collaborative relations over an extended period of time; and they can readily engage artists and consultants whose knowledge and skills are essential to the processes of research and organizing cultural displays. Field research is explicitly—or implicitly—a part of most projects undertaken at such organizations, and the ensuing programs are often driven by the strength of the collaboration between the field researcher/coordinator responsible for the projects and his or her "informants," be they artists, community scholars, or production partners. In this essay, following a short account of the path that led me into this field and a description of the program model through which I have been exploring collaborative field research, programs, and documentary production, I will offer a description of several

projects I have directed that exemplify the potential and the pitfalls characteristic of collaboration in applied ethnomusicology.

In January of 2001, as I was completing an audio documentary compilation of Mande music as performed in a West African community of New York, I recorded Keba Bobo Cissoko, a Mandinka-speaking musician from a hereditary caste of praise singers (*jali*; pl. *jalilu*; practice and repertoire, *jaliya*) from Guinea-Bissau.<sup>1</sup> He performed the western Mandinka blessing song *Allah l'a Ke*. This invocation to Allah incorporated a prayer for peace and a call for reconciliation within the extended community. The piece began with an instrumental introduction on the *kora* (a gourd harp) comprising a clarion call melody followed by cascading lines and fast finger work that led into an ostinato pattern accompanying the singing. His song began with an opening praise to Allah: "*Ye Allah l'a Ke Silan go don m'a ke . . .*" [All praise to God, who created all things . . .]. He then asserted the authority of the *jali*, singing "*Jaliya le n'yo mada, Jaliya mo kan kèlèntidi*," [Jaliya is one voice, Jaliya is different (from regular speech)]. Then came the main text of the song, a moral parable:

Woyie terela komindo tono te wola,  
Tefili fana ta manyama.  
Fanaba cursi dom,  
Adi brin kanta.  
Adi tama mese mese  
Adi wi lo bundala.  
"Kombara kuman kura kura me:  
Yenin foli ke leleyen kata moyen,  
Yenin foli yen badenya le ma."  
Ada g'na wulu ku walaka,  
Ado fo felen silama.  
Adi badenya wo jana.  
Adi manamana-kan tola,  
Na bana naola adi si fonya di janfa.  
Wo kaffiri da sibo kuju to le  
korondoba,  
I bolo dun i yèrèro.

If there is someone you don't know,  
You can't sympathize with him.  
You can tell a liar,  
He hides in his costume.  
He hides and listens  
He hides at the door.  
"Come listen, I have something to  
tell you:  
I heard something new.  
I'll tell you a secret, because we  
are family."  
But he does not know what he hears,  
That's loose talk.  
When he's finished his lying,  
He'll need to go out for some air.  
Before you talk about others,  
Take care of yourself.<sup>2</sup>

As I listened to the recording on headphones, I wondered whether his words were meant for me, an ethnomusicologist attempting to learn

about a seven-hundred-year-old tradition in just a few years while developing public programs to celebrate and promote the work of musicians such as Cissoko. Through their words and music, artists often present the most succinct and poetic of lessons to ethnomusicologists and folklorists. I took his words as a message of caution, a warning to act responsibly toward the immigrant artists whose largely unappreciated knowledge and experience quietly enrich American society. Such is the challenge of applied ethnomusicology: public sector ethnomusicologists, like folklorists before them, work in or near the communities they study, and the impact of their efforts—for better or worse—may be felt long after cultural projects are finished.

As an ethnomusicology graduate student contemplating ethnographic fieldwork, I chose a different path to research the musical life of diverse urban communities in the United States for the dual purpose of organizing public presentations and actively engaging in the cultural life of those communities. While this decision removed an element of exoticism from the process of fieldwork as framed by the anthropological model of the field, it enabled me to combine longstanding musical and cultural interests into a professional role that draws equally upon musical knowledge, foreign language, historical studies, sensitivity to issues of diversity and racism, and a commitment to a pluralistic vision of American society. In the course of nearly a decade in this work, I have learned the essential value of collaborative research with community scholars and realized the importance of engaging in dialogue with recent immigrant artists and cultural specialists who are redefining their own cultures in new contexts. By the term “dialogue,” I refer to the range of communication that pervades the collaborative process: establishing contact and beginning negotiations, attending and reviewing performances, conducting formal and informal interviews, and, eventually, joining efforts, talents, and energies in staging performances, developing educational programs, and documenting projects. Effective collaborations involve frequent meetings in which all matters are discussed, from mundane planning logistics to the aesthetics and intercultural perceptions of performance symbolism. The fruits of this type of dialogue have convinced me that the work of applied ethnomusicology may greatly benefit the ethnomusicologist in the academy, just as academic studies in ethnomusicology help lay the foundation of cultural knowledge and research methods that inform the applied domain.

### **The Community Cultural Initiative: From Projects to a Program Model**

Following formal academic training in which I explored transnational cultural development through music and dance in the African diaspora communities of the Americas, I became interested in the possibilities and challenges of studying cultural transmission and development through immigration. Inspired by engaged scholars in the field of ethnomusicology who had crossed from strictly academic studies to a level of interaction and advocacy within the local sites of their fieldwork, or who had followed a wider path of public service (e.g., Davis 1992; Hawes 1992; Seeger 1992; Sheehy 1992; Titon 1992), I joined the staff of the Center for Traditional Music and Dance (CTMD, formerly the Ethnic Folk Arts Center) in 1994. I served first as its program director and subsequently as a director of field research activities—a post involving fieldwork, the management of archival material, and the development of new projects.

I was drawn to the work of the Center because of a program model taking shape at the time known as “Community Cultural Initiative,” in which artists and community scholars would develop field research, documentation, and performance programs in collaboration with the CTMD. I worked on three such projects in the Arab, Albanian, and Dominican communities of New York City. In 1995–96, through CTMD, I developed a proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts to support a collaborative research and performance event production of performing arts of a West African immigrant community in New York. The Dominican and West African projects offered numerous opportunities to engage in cultural development projects and to explore research interests such as syncretism and cultural change through migration. In that these projects were about the process of negotiation and the exchange of ideas with artists and community scholars, they also highlighted collaboration as a mode of knowledge in the field of applied ethnomusicology.

Collaboration in ethnic arts programming began at CTMD in the early 1990s, after almost two decades of the Center’s involvement with presenting community-based traditional performing arts to general audiences. Founder Martin Koenig and artistic co-director

Ethel Raim launched a project in 1990 in which research, planning, and implementation of multiyear performance programs unfolded in explicit collaboration with community participation at all phases. This yet-to-be named program began in the Albanian community of New York and New Jersey. Research and networking in this area resulted in an annual festival of Albanian performance traditions, the *Festivali Shqiptar* (lit. “Albanian Festival”). This event aimed to reflect the diversity of the community through numerous performances of folk traditions representing Northern and Southern Albania and Kosovo, as well as urbanized music performed with modern band instruments. This effort also attempted to bridge religious divisions between the Muslim, Eastern Orthodox, and Catholic sectors of the community. A key element of this effort was the involvement of youth and families from a sponsoring Albanian Catholic church in the Central Bronx—members of the Rozafati Association, who joined the organizing committee for the project. They wanted to create a context in which their children could learn about their cultural background. A number of dance and music groups developed in conjunction with this effort, involving youth as performers.<sup>3</sup>

After several years as the primary partner, CTMD reduced its role in the fourth year to serve only as a fiscal sponsor and advisor. I coordinated contracts and documentation for the fourth annual *Festivali Shqiptar*, as the program was poised to assume its structure as a completely autonomous community event. Under the care of the organizing committee and its community supporters, the annual festival has been held for over ten years, skipping only 1998, when the war in Kosovo diverted the community’s attention.

Beginning in 1992, CTMD collaborated with Palestinian master musician Simon Shaheen to initiate a project in the Arabic-speaking communities of Brooklyn and New Jersey. Shaheen and CTMD staff convened a committee of Arab-American writers, musicians, choreographers, and educators to establish the *Mahrajan al Fan* festival. It was first held in September of 1994 at the Brooklyn Museum, and again in 1995, 1996, and 1998 at multiple venues in Manhattan.<sup>4</sup> The goal of the committee was to create a largescale exposition of Arab classical and folk culture that would help unite the community in an

expression of cultural pride and present a more dynamic public picture of Arab culture and its place in the larger cultural matrix of New York City.

The significance of this event was underscored by the development of support for it within the New York City Council. Its initial sponsor, council member Kenneth Fisher, altered his stance from one of apparent disregard for the 100,000 Arabs living in his Brooklyn district to one of active personal endorsement and financial support. He sponsored the event directly from 1994 onward and successfully brought resolutions honoring Arab New Yorkers through the New York City Council for 1996 and 1998.

During the course of these projects and the two described later in this essay, the staff of the Center for Traditional Music and Dance worked to codify the Community Cultural Initiative as a project easily replicated in different communities. A three-year grant from the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Folklife Centers Program had not only helped support three of these programs, but it also enabled CTMD to develop a general program model based on collaboration. In developing the model, CTMD staff sought to define the programs more precisely, including the goals they were to achieve and the timelines they were to follow. To that end I wrote a multiyear model plan in 1997, with input from the entire program staff. The plan included descriptive language, detailed procedures, and a timeline that would apply to funding proposals and publicity for future projects. It outlined these primary goals:

- To support the practice and perpetuation of traditional and evolved performing arts in specific ethnic communities of New York through collaborative performance projects, publicity, fundraising and technical assistance;
- To work in collaboration with community artists, institutions, educators, community organizers, local business and media to achieve the general mission;
- To encourage access to the program for a primarily same community-based audience; and
- To help the project to become a viable, ongoing presence in the cultural life of the community.

In contrast to a conventional performance program with a primary goal of staging performances (which may include the goals of economic incentive to artists and audience development), the Community Cultural Initiatives were meant to develop collaborative strategies for education and support for the arts both among general audiences and among audiences from the communities whose cultures were the focus of the programs. Examples from projects with Dominican and West African communities of New York City will serve to illustrate the dynamics of the Community Cultural Initiative in action.

### **A Dominican Collaboration**

During 1994 and 1995, while I worked on the Albanian and Arab performance programs, I oversaw the development of a project in the Dominican community. It had begun the previous year with preliminary fieldwork by ethnomusicologist and Dominican music specialist Martha Ellen Davis. Davis coached a group of four Dominican students to conduct interviews with artists she had met in the Dominican Republic or who had been introduced to the project by folk dancer and choreographer Ricardo Ureña. A number of people these students contacted became involved with the organizing committee of the project or performed at some events. I joined the project during this research phase when the key focus was to encourage activist artists and their community supporters to unite in a cohesive effort, expanding the definition of Dominican identity through performance to include a wider recognition of the extensive African contributions to its culture. In this way, the project was directed by the community partners to serve a primarily internal audience from the northern Manhattan Dominican community. This effort led to the creation of the *Quisqueya en el Hudson* festival (named for the native Caribbean Taíno word for the island shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti) and has resulted in seven outdoor annual festivals of music and dance in the Highbridge Park of Washington Heights. Support for this event has been strong in the immediate community, as well as among members of the wider network of alternative Dominican music. The evolving organizing committee for the event has been generally

under the leadership of Nina Paulino, an activist, singer, and supporter of cultural equity both within the Dominican community and beyond.<sup>5</sup>

An important contributor to the interpretation and artistic direction of *Quisqueya en el Hudson* has been Leonardo Ivan Dominguez, a compassionate and dedicated folklorist, teacher, and performer of Dominican music. Dominguez's research focuses on the complexity and regional contributions of diverse ethnicities, brought together through the history of the former Hispaniola (known now as Dominican Republic/Haiti), the base of Spanish colonial presence in the Caribbean. Dominguez is a driving force in the teaching and revival of Afro-Dominican folk culture in the community and currently directs a cultural education program at Alianza Dominicana, the largest Dominican social service agency in Washington Heights.

Dominguez lived and worked in the Dominican Republic until the mid 1990s, when he emigrated to New York. Although he was always interested in Dominican folk culture, in the mid 1970s he became an agronomist to earn a living. While he attended the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo, the national university, he was a drummer for the Ballet Folklorico, a premier performing troupe based there. During that time he met performers with whom he would later work in New York. In the late 1970s, along with composer and guitarist Luis Dias, he was also a founding member of the music ensemble Convite. This ensemble conducted musical research and performed a progressive mix of folk and popular forms in a variant of the Nueva Canción movement taking place throughout Latin America at the time.

During the late 1970s and 1980s, Dominguez worked for the Dominican ministry of agriculture on various research and outreach projects throughout the countryside. In 1980, during a brief period of thaw in the often-repressive politics of the Dominican Republic, he was asked by his ministry to organize a cultural festival as a vehicle for bringing farmers and other rural participants into a forum in which they could share culture and learn new methods of agriculture. This confluence of his experience and interest is of particular significance in his effort to research and document rural community-based traditions and their impact on popular music.

In addition to organizing youth participation in the performances at *Quisqueya en el Hudson*, Dominguez served as a presenter for many



of the performers over the years. He has also organized events honoring veteran performers and highlighting the history of distinct genres within Dominican music, tributes to Dominican *son* music in 2002 and to merenegue in 2003. From 1996 to the present, Dominguez and I have consulted on a variety of projects, including the festival program, a written history of Dominican music in New York (van Buren and Dominguez 2003), and the forthcoming production of a CD compilation documenting participants in the *Quisqueya en el Hudson* festival.<sup>6</sup> Collaboration with a community scholar like Dominguez and the other participants and organizers of the project brought together our very different but compatible skills, which included cultural knowledge, field research, fund raising, publicity, event production, and audio documentation. Working in applied ethnomusicology requires touching upon all of these areas, but the collaborative approach brings them all into play in ways that no single ethnomusicologist or community scholar can hope to match.

### A West African Collaboration

The second example of collaboration toward research, presentation, and cultural organizing is the West African Community Cultural Initiative, which I began planning in late 1995 as the first *Quisqueya en el Hudson* festival was taking shape. My work began with initial contacts and fieldwork among New York-based African musicians and dancers. The two areas of my initial cultural focus were Mandinka musicians from the Gambia and southern Ashanti and Ewe performers in the Ghanaian communities of Brooklyn and the Bronx. I conducted site visits and interviews with numerous groups and arranged for public performances at various events.

In April of 1996, the National Endowment for the Arts approved funding for a two-year project focusing on the Ghanaian and Mandinka communities of New York. I began work on the project by following up with several of the groups with whom I had begun research and documentation the year before. This effort resulted in two presentations: the first, a performance by the Guinean dance company Les Merveilles d'Afrique—founded by the renowned choreographer Kemoko Sano—at a multicultural festival produced by the CTMD in Van Cortlandt Park

in the Bronx (May 1996); the second, a concert of Ghanaian highlife music and Ewe dance at the Brooklyn Museum during June 1996.

While these were successful events, it became apparent that if the project was to encourage interest and support from the communities whose cultures were represented—if the project was to be collaborative—our work would need to focus in such a way that the participants would draw upon a shared regional culture rather than a constructed pan-African heritage. A pan-African focus resonates with the monolithic view of Africa favored by U.S. educational and cultural institutions for programming events during African American History Month (February). However, it has little to do with the reality of cultural diversity in Africa, nor does it account for the dynamics of African immigrant communities' interaction with each other or with African American communities in environments such as Harlem or the Bronx (where we conducted our research).

Consequently, I sought out community-based media and cultural contacts, including Mr. Dame Babou, a Senegalese radio producer and journalist. Mr. Babou cordially entertained the notion of this regionally based project and expressed interest in collaborating on a cultural production for his community in New York that would also serve as outreach to other related Western African communities in the city. He said at the time that the Sene-Gambian communities of New York and their African cultural relatives from Guinea, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire needed wider support for positive cultural programs, both for their own community empowerment and in order to seek a better level of recognition and relations with their neighbors in their adopted city.

By the winter of 1997 Babou and I had invited a diverse organizing committee of some eight persons to plan a major performance program. In committee dialogue about the title and focus of the program, it became apparent that there was a basis for cultural exchange in the various communities from Francophone West Africa, in addition to a widespread familiarity with the Malinke language of the region. Likewise, the fact that many musicians from these communities knew much of each other's repertoire and performance practice made the prospect of a unified performance program more tenable. Through the suggestion of then-committee member and independent Guinean

cultural promoter Mamadou Condé, we settled on the title *Niani Badenya*, which refers to a concept of community heritage in the Mandinka language (*badenya*) and to the founding of Niani, the capital city of the Empire of Mali, in 1225 AD by the Emperor Sundiata Keita, the hero of oral epic literature.

During this phase in the organizing process, another cultural organizer, Kewulay Kamara of Sierra Leone, joined the committee. He had been involved in related efforts, such as the former Fareta School of African Drum and Dance, a collectively run rehearsal and performance space on Broadway and Houston Street in Lower Manhattan. He also had been organizing benefit events for victims of the civil war in Sierra Leone, which was beginning at that time. Kamara has maintained a dedication to the study and teaching of the Manden heritage for his cultural work, and as a community services organizer he has championed intercultural understanding among New York's communities, particularly around issues of race and ethnicity. To this latter end, he teaches courses on community relations and issues of race at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice (City University of New York); the school's student body includes a sizable component of law enforcement personnel. During a five-month period, the organizing committee met on a weekly basis to plan a program for the project. Kamara gradually assumed more responsibility and contributed greatly to the cultural definition of the project and to outreach efforts with African community audiences.

In June of 1997, we produced the first *Badenya* festival of Manden culture in East Harlem, a celebration of the cultural continuity of the Empire of Mali and its successor states.<sup>7</sup> Kamara wrote an historical essay for the printed program notes, which we developed into a longer piece for the newsletter of the CTMD (Kamara 1997), and he served as an inspired master of ceremonies throughout the event. The festival featured two concerts, one of *jaliya* music and the other of dance from Senegal, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire. The presentations involved most of the prominent performers of these genres active in New York City at that time. The events were free to the public and attracted a considerable audience from the Senegalese, Gambian, Guinean, and Ivoirien communities of Harlem. African-Americans and Puerto Ricans from the surrounding neighborhoods attended as well, and a sizable group

of African dance enthusiasts associated with two prominent studios in Lower Manhattan was in attendance.<sup>8</sup>

Under Kamara's leadership, the festival took on a ceremonial tone, from the opening libation to an invitation for audience members to join the performers onstage in dance during the finale. He emphasized the positive association of Sundiata's rule with the bringing together of diverse elements of West African culture, thereby creating a tolerant mix of Islam and indigenous belief that allowed a flourishing culture lasting several centuries. Keba Cissoko sang the blessing song *Allah l'a Ke* (described at the beginning of this essay) during the opening performance, and he offered a rousing song of salutation to the Western Mandinka people in the audience during the closing dance performance of Les Merveilles de Guinée. His presence also lent a weight of gravity and honor to the event. Senegalese media producer Mamadou Niang, who had collaborated with Kamara on projects before, produced a three-camera video documentary of the event for the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, adding a community-based sensibility to the framing and editing of the event.<sup>9</sup>

Over the following three years, Kamara led an evolving committee that eventually incorporated as the Organization of Badenya in the Americas (OBA). Collaborative efforts between OBA and CTMD led to the production of three other major African events. In 1998, the project staged a tribute to the nineteenth-century anti-colonial leader Samori Touré that was held at John Jay College in Manhattan. In 1999, the event featured a program consisting entirely of percussion in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, with over fifty drummers of Senegalese *sabar*, Guinean *domba*, and Yoruba talking drum traditions. Doudou N'Diaye Rose, guest *sabar* master drummer from Senegal, served as musical director for the concert.

In 2000, the collaboration between CTMD and OBA produced a final major concert featuring a performance by the renowned South African singer Miriam Makeba. I had stepped down as coordinator for the project and OBA assumed full responsibility for the artistic direction of the event. The decision to feature Makeba reflected OBA's agenda to increase the visibility of an African community-directed public program. Unlike the previous concert, in which the guest performer, Doudou N'Diaye Rose, performed with all the other

participants, Makeba's participation was staged apart from the New York based performers in the second half of the event, with little reference made to the local cultural organizing effort. In this manner, the local participation suffered to some degree. The focus on the traditional culture of Mali presented a different set of associations than the popular South African-based pan-African appeal and progressive legacy of Makeba.

Despite unease with this change in focus, I came away from this project with a deep sense of appreciation for the members of the organizing committee, including Babou, Kamara, and Niang, who inspired and supported the events through their skills, efforts, and wisdom. They were crucial partners not only in the productions, but also in an intercultural dialogue that offered tremendous lessons about the cultures being presented and about the perception of traditional arts and culture both outside and inside the various West African communities of New York. For instance, the project highlighted the varying degrees of identification felt and expressed by people of diverse backgrounds even in the culturally distinct Manden area of West Africa. It also suggested the divisive effects of colonial identification that are still felt among African immigrant communities and that fuel civil wars across Africa today.

### **Lessons of Collaboration**

The projects described above illustrate key aspects of community-based applied ethnomusicology programming and underscore the great potential for collaborative research and programming and intercultural dialogue as a means to cultural education, support, and community empowerment. The Community Cultural Initiative program was promoted in grant language, event publicity, and internal and external discussions as something that might serve as an example to other folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and their respective institutions in helping artists to reach diverse audiences. The program was intended to help these practitioners create more informed performance programs through collaboration. The process of collaboration also served to encourage a greater sense of interest and ownership on the part of participants and their supporters in the community through the inclusion of diverse partners

and artistic participants, through publicity, through day-to-day communications, and generally by example.

However, the model is not without its faults. In the course of the Dominican and West African programs described above, collaborative efforts generated episodes of tension and misunderstanding alongside programming successes. The areas of tension often involved unequal power relations that come into play when arts managers and consultants in relatively well funded organizations become involved in trying to influence the course of cultural events in newly settled and often marginal communities.

There have also been problematic conceptual issues concerning the nature of community and perceptions about the role of culture therein that may undermine a project or lead its participants to make unfounded claims of authenticity or authority. In the Dominican community, one finds considerable competition among the numerous artists who are attempting to learn and recreate Afro-Dominican rural-based music, and these far outnumber the few people with direct experience as performers of this music. Among Mandinka *jalilu*, few can effectively articulate to wider audiences the full potential of their performance practice and repertoire as a symbol of the deep culture, the dignity and the wisdom of their tradition, for purposes of community organizing and empowerment. Many of their supporters have attempted to do this, but all too often for self-promotional purposes. The crucial balance for applied ethnomusicologists is to give respect to the authority of the artist or tradition bearer's efforts to define him- or herself in a performance setting or in documentation, while at the same time mitigating the agendas of collaborative partners in the process.

Nevertheless, collaborative research and programming within diverse communities is an essential aspect of the future of applied ethnomusicological work in the United States, as it must be elsewhere. Extended conversation and the exploration of ideas is a great benefit of the process of project development and performance event planning. Partners from educational, media, and local institutions offer invaluable perspectives on the interpretation and presentation of culture, but the artists themselves offer some of the more succinct and poignant lessons of all. Keba Cissoko's warning about the

disguised liar who speaks freely of community knowledge is a lesson to all who would make overly ambitious claims as they use the arts to manipulate others.

The lesson of true collaboration in applied ethnomusicology is that we must maintain integrity in our dealings with others. The expropriation of resources, knowledge, and trust is so completely ingrained in the colonial and postcolonial experience of the Euro-American “West” that we must work tirelessly to overcome these tendencies. In the applied section of the field, the ethnomusicologist’s job security is often limited to the duration of a given project, and we face daily the need to be accountable to the people with whom we collaborate. If we lose that trust, there is no future in our work. The current hardening of American society against the wider world requires applied cultural workers to exercise sensibility and imagination in order to understand where people of diverse communities are coming from and what their experiences in America mean to their families, communities, and cultures. This is an important goal of the programs described above, but one that varies depending on the intended audience of the programs, be it the larger society or local immigrant communities. By working together across our diverse communities in effective collaborations, we can create an alternate sense of what may be possible across and within those communities.

### Notes

1. Cissoko died on 8 February 2003 in New York City as a result of a long illness. After initial training in jaliya with his uncle, he moved to Conakry, Guinea, to study with renowned choreographer Kemoko Sano before joining Les Ballets Africaines, Les Ballets Djoliba, and the Ensemble Instrumental de Guinea. He performed both on kora and percussion, playing *dundun* (large barrel drums). He lived in New York after 1996, giving stunning performances both as a soloist and in a variety of ensembles. Known for exceptional kora playing, a powerful voice, and command of the western Mandinka repertoire, Cissoko influenced many musicians of African interest as both a teacher and collaborator.

2. Lyrics from “Allah l’a Kc” on the CD *Badenya: Manden Jaliya in New York City* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings SFW 40494, 2002). Translated by jali Keba Bobo Cissoko.

3. Ethnomusicologist Jane Sugarman served as an advisor and presenter at the first of these festivals.

4. Arabic for "festival of art," the event was a conscious recreation of regional Arab community festivals that were held in venues from New Jersey to Rhode Island from the 1930s to the 1950s. Drawing participants from as far afield as Detroit, these gatherings were sponsored by Arabic-language newspapers and Lebanese community churches. The history of the cultural life of this community has been documented by Anne Rasmussen, who has researched Arab American community culture and whose article appeared in the 1994 Mahrajan program book.

5. Following the death of prominent Afro-Dominican dancer Santiago Villanueva in March of 2002 at the hands of police during a medical emergency at his workplace in Bloomfield, N.J., Paulino has been instrumental in organizing a campaign to seek a grand jury investigation.

6. The CD project is currently under submission to Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, as the third of the *Global Beat of the Boroughs* series documenting immigrant community-based music in New York City.

7. The first *Badenya* festival was held at the Hecksher Theater in the former Boys Harbor building at 104<sup>th</sup> Street on Fifth Avenue. The building houses the Harbor Performing Arts Center, a top community school of Caribbean music, and the Museo del Barrio, a museum devoted to arts of the East Harlem community and Puerto Rico.

8. The Fareta School and the Djoniba Dance and Drum Centre.

9. This video production (1 June 1997) and the video of the following year's event of 30 May 1998 were underwritten by the Jerome Robbins Archive of the Moving Image of Dance at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, which houses the master tapes in its collection.

### Works Cited

- Davis, Marth Ellen. 1992. "Careers, Alternative Careers, and the Unity Between Theory and Practice in Ethnomusicology." *Ethnomusicology* 36(3):361-88.
- Hawes, Beth Lomax. 1992. "Practice Makes Perfect: Lessons in Active Ethnomusicology." *Ethnomusicology* 36(3):337-44.
- Kamara, Kewulay. 1997. "Jaliya: The Living Tradition of the Word." In *New Routes* 5(2):3-12. New York: Center for Traditionl Music and Dance.
- Rasumussen, Anne K. 1991. "Individuality and Social Change in the Music of the Arab Americans." Ph.D. dissertation, Univerity of California, Los Angeles.



- Seeger, Anthony. 1992. "Ethnomusicology and Music Law." *Ethnomusicology* 36(3):345–60.
- Sheehy, Daniel. 1992. "A Few Notions about the Philosophy and Strategy in Applied Ethnomusicology." *Ethnomusicology* 36(3):323–36
- Titon, Jeff Todd. 1992. "Music, the Public Interest, and the Proctice of Ethnomusicology." *Ethnomusicology* 36(3):315–22.
- Van Buren, Tom. 2002. *Badenya: Manden Jaliya in New York City*. Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings SFW 40494.
- Van Buren, Tom, and Ivan Dominguez. Forthcoming. "Transnational Music and Dance in Domincian New York." In *Transnational Perspectives on Dominican Migration*, ed. Ernesto Sagas and Sintia Molina. Gainesville, Fl.: University of Florida Press.