

Drawing Collection and Album
Cover for “In the Heart of the
Moon,” by Ali Farka Touré and
Toumani Diabaté

Colin Tsay

Ali Farka Touré

Ali Farka Touré was a Malian singer and guitarist who was known for his blending of traditional West African music with American Blues. Touré played a pivotal role in popularizing this genre of music, and his voice and hypnotic guitar style made him an influential figure in world music. Amongst his many accolades and influences, Touré's legacy includes 3 Grammy awards. Out of respect for Touré's influence in globalizing the music of Mali, the Republic of Mali named him Mayor of Niafunke, a position he held until his death.



Toumani Diabaté

Toumani Diabaté was a renowned Malian kora player, recognized for his blend of traditional West African music with genres such as flamenco, blues, and jazz. Diabaté comes from a distinguished line of griots, including his father Sidiki Diabaté, who released the first-ever kora album in 1970.

Toumani's brilliant work on the kora earned him multiple Grammy awards, and he was an instrumental figure in promoting the kora globally.



Grammy for Mali

For their album “In the Heart of the Moon,” Ali Farka Touré and Toumani Diabaté won the Grammy for Best Traditional World Music Album in 2006. Part of the beauty of the album was that Touré was a non-griot from northern Mali and Diabaté was a griot from southern Mali, so their different cultural influences came together to make a unique album. However, both artists shared a deep love and respect for one another since they first met and performed in 1988 in London. For the recording of “In the Heart of the Moon,” the artists met in Bamako, Mali where it took them only two hours to record the album. The album has an upbeat feel to it, and consists of songs from the 50s, 60s, and 70s, as well as more traditional griot songs, like “Debe” which has been played for over 700 years.



Album Cover

This album cover features Touré playing his guitar and Diabaté playing his kora on the Niger River, overlooked by the moon. The two artists recorded “In the Heart of the Moon” at the Hotel Mandú which overlooks the Niger River. Also represented on the album cover are the colors of the Mali flag (green, yellow, red). On the left and right sides of the cover are various drums, which represents the arrangement of percussion throughout the album. Finally, the overall colorful theme of the album represents the vibrance of the music in the album.



References

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