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for

VIEX SENG SENG FAYE



Dakar  
Suite

Leni  
Stern





**Leni Stern: electric/acoustic/baritone guitars**

**n'goni, lead, and backing vocals**

**Alioune Faye: djembe & n'der**

**Baye Demba Faye: mbangbang**

**Gibbi Faye: goron gu talmbat**

**Eladje Faye: dcho**

**Moussa Faye: toungoune**

**Baye Faye: dje, tom bass (Mercy reprise)**

**Makura Mbaye: percussion assistant**

**Aboubakar Sidiki Sacko: n'goni**

**Mamadou Ba: electric bass & n'goni bass**

**James Genus: acoustic bass**

**Leo Genovese: piano & Farfisa**

**Karen Waltuch: viola**

**George Brooks: saxophones**

**Gil Goldstein: accordion**

**Jonathan Goldberger: guitar & tape echo**

**Shane Theriot: electric & acoustic guitars, lap steel, Omnichord**

**Lara Bello, Emily Elbert, Nalani and Sarina Bolton,**

**Keith Anthony Fluitt, Alioune Faye: backing vocals**

**Produced by Leni Stern**

**Recorded by Lamp Fall, Dakar, Senegal**

**Additional recording in NYC:**

**Evening Light Studio/Jonathan Goldberger**

**Shelter Island Sound/Steve Addabbo**

**and Downtown Music/Glenn Ianaro**

**Mixed by Glenn Ianaro**

**Mastered by Fred Kevorkian**

**All songs by Leni Stern (Sesac) except**

**4, 10, and 12 by Mamadou Ba (BMI). 1 and 14 by Elhadji Alioune Faye**

**Cover Painting: Tiébou Souwère by Akeba**



# Opening

Leni Stern: vocals

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion

Jonathan Goldberger: guitar and tape echo





# Fisherman (*Mole*)

*rhythm: ndopp*

*My boat is dancing, gently through the waves.  
Fish are jumping all around us.*

*Let me catch them early in the day.  
Let me bring them home to my love.*

*She's still sleeping, she's still softly dreaming.  
Gotta catch a fish or two, bring it on home to you,  
Be there before you wake up!*

*Aye mol demna getch  
sumol demme getcho getgi sambara  
getgi sambara molyendo djo, molyendo djo*

Leni Stern: vocals, acoustic & electric guitar  
Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, voice  
Mamadou Ba: bass  
George Brooks: soprano sax  
Shane Theriot: rhythm guitar

“On the afternoon of our first show in St. Louis, Senegal I looked over the edge of the stage into the river during soundcheck, and I saw hundreds of dead fish floating in the water. Concerned, I inquired to the locals, and they did not seem at all moved. I was told the fishermen had picked a fight with the truck drivers when they couldn’t agree on the transport price, so furious, they tossed the entire catch of the day into the river!!

When Alioune and Mamadou taught me the fisherman song back in New York I had envisioned quite a different scenario. I pictured men in small boats out on the ocean under the blazing African sun, waiting patiently for their nets to fill so that they could go home and feed their families.

The fishermen of St. Louis rule their part of the city. When I wanted to drive through there on the way to my friend’s house I was told that not even the policemen go there... I went anyway to have a closer look at the colorful boats, hundreds all lined up at the shore, with flags from all over the world, even some from made up nations. I felt the song I wrote for them should give me permission to pass. Well, somehow it did.”



# Mercy

Leni Stern: vocals, guitar

Alioune Faye: calabash

James Genus: acoustic bass

Shane Theriot: omnichord

Keith Fluit: backing vocals

Mercy, Lord have mercy. Mercy, Lord have mercy on  
us all

Evening sun shines on the fields below  
Covers all in gentle light  
Can we forgive and start all over now  
Wrong is wrong and right is right  
Can we learn to love each other  
Let compassion find the way  
If god alone should stand in justice  
Cant he stop this madness, keep us safe 'til we come

Churches burning in the southern night  
Shadows of a shameful past  
The light of progress will be shining bright  
And reason will prevail at last.

When we believe that we are brothers  
Our blood is red, our hearts beat strong  
Compassion is the only answer  
Love is always right and hate is always wrong  
Yes, we will leave our troubles here below  
Heavenbound we go.

Mercy, Lord have mercy  
Mercy, Lord have mercy on us all.



## Once Upon a Time (*Lebone*)

*main rhythm: sounou bamabara*

*bridge rhythm: mbalax rythme*

“This is a very old Senegalese song that begins like many tales all over the world with the words ‘once upon a time...’ A rabbit and a giraffe and a hyena... it’s a long story.”

Leni Stern: vocals, electric & prepared guitar

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, backing vocals

Mamadou Ba: bass

Gil Goldstein: accordion

*lebon nippon amonafi dana am*

*niamala kai wuyou sa yay  
sama yay domo worwe paka  
niombore sen te goudou nopp  
gat gen te mana dao*

*niamala dawal teynga de*

*dawol dawol buki nginiaw*



## Dark Blue (*Natinga*)

*rhythm: Serrer tribe's n'djook*

“I have never composed a song for my husband Michael, although he has written many beautiful melodies for me! This is my first.”

When the moon is gently floating through the night,  
And all the stars are shining bright,  
I need you.

In your arms I feel that heaven's in my sight,  
That all has gone from wrong to right,  
I see you.

In constellations nighttime mysteries,  
Reflecting.

Diamond bright, far as the eye can see.

We're starlight, we're golden.  
Stardust, forever is tonight.

In the blueprint of creation there's a line,

Where you and I were meant to find,  
Each other.

natinga natinga natinga  
ay natinga cheri boy natinga

Leni Stern: acoustic and electric guitar, vocals

Alioune Faye: calabash and shaker

James Genus: acoustic bass

Karen Waltuch: viola

Jonathan Goldberger: guitar, tape echo

Nalani and Sarina Bolton: vocals

## Dark Blue *reprise*

*rhythm: Serrer tribe's n'djook*

Leni Stern: acoustic and electric guitar, vocals

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion

James Genus: acoustic bass

Shane Theriot: guitar

George Brooks: soprano sax

Nalani and Sarina Bolton: vocals



# Oshune

*intro rhythm: mbarra bukki*

*main rhythm: faye 6/8*

“Oshune is the name of the spirit in the river.

Here’s the story that inspired me to write this song.

In a small village by the Niger River lived a small albino boy with his family. His older brother was in charge of him, as is the custom in Africa. He carried him on his back, played with him and looked after him. Now many people in Africa believe that albinos have magical powers, that their blood can cure, that you have to make a pact with the devil to bear an albino child. So the poor older brother got tormented by the other children and by some grown ups in the village. One day he couldn’t take it anymore and when they played by the shore he pushed his little brother into the river. He must have felt awful because he ran back to the village and told that his brother had fallen in. All the fishermen went to their boats and fished the albino child out of the water.

I thought it must have been the spirit in the water that saved the child so I sing her song in Uruba:

*Azur etete kogun madjeoo oshune oshune o gbogbe me ogbe.”*

*Oshune mamiya oshune maya*

*Oshune mamiya oshune*

*I went down to the river,*

*And I pushed my brother in.*

*I told them in the village he fell, he’s gone,*

*May god take care of him.*

*Azur etete kogun madjeoo*

*Oshune oshune ogbogbe me ogbe*

*But the spirit that lives in the river*

*Called all the fishermen.*

*They threw their nets in the water,*

*And brought my brother back to shore again.*

*Azur etete.....*

Leni Stern: vocals, electric and acoustic guitar

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion

Mamadou Ba: bass

Shane Theriot: acoustic guitar

Nalani and Sarina Bolton: vocals

Emily Elbert: vocals

Alioune Faye: vocals



# Malisadio (*traditional*)

*intro rhythm: gisao ragin*

*rhythm: ta ge*

“Malisadio may be the most famous Malian song.

It tells the story of the love between a white hippopotamus and a beautiful Malian girl.

She was sitting at the edge of the Niger River when Malisadio the white hippopotamus found her. She was so beautiful he couldn't help but fall in love. Everyday he waited for her and she came and they talked. But there also lived an evil red hippopotamus in the Niger River. He observed the two and got so envious that one day he killed Malisadio. When the girl returned to the river the next day she waited in vain for Malisadio. She felt so sad when she didn't get to see her friend, to talk to him. She returned day after day and she started singing *eh Malisadio dali mam bete, Bafulabe Malisadio.*” That is the story of Malisadio. My friend Ami Sacko, the great Malian griot taught me to sing it.”

Leni Stern: vocals, electric guitar, loops, n'goni

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, voice

Mamadou Ba: bass

Bouba Sacko: n'goni

George Brooks: soprano saxophone



# The Sun Went Down

rhythm: mbalax / n'gewoll

The sun went down across a western sky.

The water in the lake downhill turned black.

The wind came up and made the willows sigh.

My heart woke up, my happiness came back.

Wadji mingi niow, dila won boppom

Wante lingey khalat nekoul chi mom

Khebate bahul, m'ba sewol nit

Byelen kheb, khebate bahul

Gis nit ke di dokh, nirohk talibe

Nekete e'oh nitu yalallah

Some people know to read the planets.

Some look at stars or shells and hands.

The gift of second sight is magic,

Begins at birth and never ends.

Wadji mingi niow...

I know there are many faces hidden,

Behind the faces that we see.

But I don't know why I was thinking,

That you could shift your shape into a bird,

And fly away at night,

Or be a cat and go to sleep, still purring,

Curled up at my feet.

Wadji mingi niow

I know there are many faces hidden,

Behind the faces that we see.

But I don't know why I was thinking,

That you could shift your shape into a bird,

And fly away at night,

Or be a cat and go to sleep, still purring,

Curled up at my feet.

Wadji mingi niow

Leni Stern: vocals, baritone guitar,

n'goni, electric guitar

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion,

voice

Mamadou Ba: bass



# **Patience** (*Munial*)

*rhythm: gumbe*

This is a composition Mamadou wrote in the memory of Aïtta Dia.

Leni Stern: guitar, loops, vocals

Mamadou Ba: bass

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion

Lara Bello: vocals

Mike Stern: electric guitar



# Hide and Seek (*Kelengeti*)

*rhythm: mam seng seng*

Children all over the world play hide and seek.

And every language has a different song that goes with the game. This is how it is played in Senegal.

Leni Stern: vocals, guitar

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, voice

Mamadou Ba: bass

Shane Theriot: guitar

George Brooks: sax and arrangement

Keith Fluit: voice

Leo Genovese: Farfisa organ



# Tuareg Dance

*rhythm: lambar*

This song is inspired by the music of the Malian Tuaregs and their n’goni bass grooves.  
The blues of northern Mali.

“My African journey started at the Festival in the Desert, the Tuareg festival in northern Mali. In the winter of 2006 I got invited to perform there. It took place on a sand dune four hours north of Timbuktu in the middle of the Sahara Desert. Based on a traditional annual gathering of the Tuareg tribes, it was a celebration of peace with music from all over the world, traditional markets and camel races. This is where my African journey, that took me to play with Salif Keita, Toumani Diabate, Baaba Maal and Bassekou Kouyate, began. I started playing with Ami Sacko and Bassekou in their tent. I went on to record five records in Mali and two in Senegal.”

Leni Stern: guitar, solo #1

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, voice

Mamadou Ba: bass

Shane Theriot: guitar, lap steel, solo #2

George Brooks: sax



# Mercy reprise

*rhythm: alioune faye mbalax*

Leni Stern: vocals, acoustic and electric guitar  
Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion, voice  
Mamadou Ba: n'goni bass  
Bouba Sacko: n'goni  
Karen Waltuch: viola  
Kofo: talking drum





# Dedication

“This collection of songs is dedicated to the memory of Vieux Seng Seng Faye.

He was one of Senegal’s greatest drummers and teachers. He had many sons and daughters and he taught them everything he knew. I study with his son Ehadji Alioune, so I am also Vieux Seng Seng Faye’s student because he taught Alioune everything.

When Seng Seng was buried in Dakar everybody came to pay their respect. His lifelong friend, the great drummer Doudou N’daye Rose, stayed after everyone had gone home. “I need to have a word with Seng Seng,” he said. He died that night and in one week’s time Senegal had lost its two greatest musicians.

We’re all alone now, that’s what I say, *wey tel nanou.*”

Leni Stern: vocals

Seng Seng Faye Ensemble: percussion

Jonathan Goldberger: guitar and tape echo