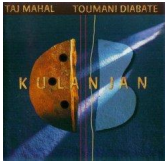


Taj Mahal – Kulanjan (1999)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Queen Bee* 02. *Tunkaranke* 03. *Ol' Georgie Buck* 04. *Kulanjan* 05. *Fanta* 06. *Guede Man Na* 07. *Catfish Blues* 08. *K'an Ben* 09. *Take This Hammer* 10. *Atlanta Kaira* 11. *Mississippi-Mali Blues* Personnel: Taj "Dadi Kouyate" Mahal (vocals, guitar, piano); Kassemady Diabate, Ramatou Diakite (vocals); Banning (guitar); Ugouye Koulibaly (kamalengoni); Toumani Diabate, Ballake Sissoko (kora); Bassekou Kouyate (ngoni, bass); Lasana Diabate (Mande balafon).

This informal collaboration between veteran American bluesman Mahal and Malian kora (it's a 21-stringed lute-like instrument) master Diabate was recorded in an Athens, GA, studio with a sextet of West African string instrumentalists and vocalists. It sounds like a half a world away, with the two mixed cultures merging to create traditional blues based on non-traditional musical values. Mahal's gruff, weary voice is soothed by the Malian crew's sweet tones; conversely, the leaders' picking styles sound as if they were harvested from the same land. Natural, unpretentious, and occasionally sensual, *Kulanjan* is classy world music without the stuffy undertones. ---Michael Gallucci, Rovi

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