

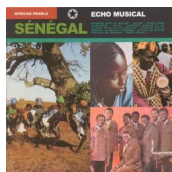
## African Pearls - Senegal - Echo Music (2010)

Written by bluelover

Monday, 05 September 2011 19:15 - Last Updated Saturday, 01 October 2016 14:52

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CD1 01 *Super Diamono - Adama Ndiaye* 04:27 02 *Sangewel International De Daka* 05:05  
03 *Star Band De Dakar - Mbassa* 04:56 04 *Etoile De Dakar - Ngone Ndiaye* 08:38 05  
*Waato Siita - Bajuda* 05:55 06 *Orchestra Guelwar De Banjul -* 08:15 07 *Xalam - Alai*  
07:44 08 *Youssou Ndour & Super Etoile -* 06:09 09 *Super Diamono - Indu Wade* 06:27

[play](#)

10 *Ifang Bondi - Sutukum* 08:26 11 *Star Band De Dakar - Thioro Ba* 04:51 12 *Gorom -  
Dounga Kagne Laye Sey* 04:48

CD2

01 *Gorom - Ayaye Bimbam* 05:43 02 *Orchestra Baobab - Aaduna Janu* 04:17 03 *Canari  
De Kaolak - Sutukum* 10:13 04 *Star Number One De Dakar - Kou* 05:10 05 *Xalam - Bere  
Baxu Gor* 06:28 06 *Orchestre Guelewar De Banjul -* 06:49 07 *Bstar Band De Dakar -  
Djiguene* 06:13

[play](#)

08 *Diarama De Saint-Louis - Touba* 05:58 09 *Xalam - Yumbeye* 05:38 10 *Ouza -  
Teranga* 05:43 11 *Super Diamono - Madiara Ngone* 04:27 12 *La Sahel - Khandiou* 07:26

The seventh volume of the African Pearls series presents popular music from Senegal in the 1970s. Musically, the era seems to have been a transitional one, when the dominant Afro-Cuban influence on Senegalese pop music brought to the port city of Dakar by seamen travelling from Cuba since the 1930s was quickly becoming just one of the many styles heard by Senegalese musicians. The 1970s featured Senegalese music merging with a huge array of U.S. funk, rock and soul, Sufi vocal styles and tonal systems common in Middle Eastern music. Add to this elements of traditional Senegalese dance rhythms and musical/narrative performances by griots (West African bards / wandering praise singers), performed by musicians from Senegal and other parts of Africa — perhaps in Dakar, perhaps in Paris — and this ain't no encounter of some authentic, pure, "tradition." It's a rediscovery, or perhaps more accurately, a new discovery of "tradition" by a younger generation of Senegalese in the 1960s and '70s who lived and loved the music of Jimi Hendrix and Santana and approached their roots

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as the new thing to do.

All this eventually adds up to an emerging genre called mbalax (mbalakh), a popular dance genre which Youssou N'Dour, along with his groups such as the Super Etoile de Dakar, and Omar Pene et Le Super Diamono, helped to make famous in the 1970s. Emphasizing the Senegalese side of things, these bands switched from English lyrics to Wolof, the most widely spoken language in Senegal. The Star Band de Dakar was one of the first to incorporate Senegalese tama drums into Afro Cuban rhythms. These artists, along with Gorom, Orchestra Baobab, Xalam and Le Sahel are included in this compilation, produced by Ibrahima Sylla.

The two-CD set provides ample evidence of the highly cosmopolitan and urban nature of a vibrant Senegalese music scene. It's ill-conceived, then, that the packaging of the album is presented by an album cover that shows women wearing colorful headscarves and long skirts dancing around a baobab tree — especially when the compilation features no women in the bands, but does feature the electric guitar quite prominently (which would be much better off plugged into an outlet inside an urban dance club rather than a tree in the middle of an arid outdoor landscape). The title of the compilation — *Écho Musical* — also fails to do justice to a collection of original music that borrows from other places or groups no more and no less than any contemporary French or American pop group would have been doing. Calling the sounds of the Senegalese bands as “echoes” unfairly casts them as secondhand renditions of music from other centers (America, Cuba), with maybe a bit of local distortion.

In a curatorial sense, *Écho Musical* wants to make urban pop music into a world music relic of the past: some kind of curio of authentic African music. But the music doesn't support such framing. The array of influences and interpretations of different styles suggests everything but a static jewel of “Africa.” Instead, it strongly suggests from the Senegalese side that Dakar runs on the same clock as other urban musical centers and is one powerful node in the network of transnational musical influences. --- Miki Kanada, [dustedmagazine.com](http://dustedmagazine.com)

Syllart Productions presents a 2CD collection of music from '70s Senegal. More than any other country in West Africa, Senegal has been strongly influenced by Cuban music coming to Dakar through Cuban sailors. Widely broadcast, the Afro-Cuban repertoire stands at the bottom of modern Senegalese music. Mornas and coladeras from Cabo Verde are also to be heard along Dakar streets. Luis Vera Da Fonseca is one of the unsung pioneers of this musical melting pot.

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Under the name Fonseca & Ses Anges Noirs, he recorded quite a number of records in France and Belgium, starting in the late '50s. Links between Dakar and Habana seem natural as evidenced by recordings of orchestras such as Star Band de Dakar or Orchestra Baobab and many bands within this musical constellation. The impact of Star Band is pivotal in the history of modern Senegalese music. So are the names "stars" and "étoiles" with bands such as Youssou N'dour's Super Etoile, Star Number One, Etoile de Dakar and Etoile 2000 studding the musical landscape of the region. The Star Band orchestra was set up by entrepreneur Ibrahima Kassé, one of the founding fathers of Senegalese music and owner of the Miami Club, located in the effervescent Médina neighborhood.

The orchestra consisted of musicians of various origins such as Guinean percussion player and singer Amara Touré, Gambian singer Laba Sosseh and Nigerian saxophone player Dexter Johnson. Under Kassé's aegis, the Star Band turned into a terrific dancing machine, with electric instruments and a powerful horn section. At first, its repertoire was largely based on rumbas, merengué, pachangas and other cha-cha-cha, but wolof, mandingo and peul folk songs slowly made their way into the band's repertoire as a way to embrace the local musical traditions.

As famous as the Star Band outside of Dakar, the Diarama de Saint-Louis was one of the regional province's better-known orchestras, possessing a strong jazz and Cuban musical culture. Super Diamono was influenced by Ifang Bondi and Guelewar mandingo beat from Gambia, while Xalam was named after a Wolof instrument, restoring traditional sounds such as tama drums. The Senegalese music of this era was a mélange of various influences, musical fusions and explosive new combinations. Includes a 16-page booklet with full-color photos and notes in French and English by Florent Mazzoleni. --- cdroots.com

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