



# MURIEL KOUYATÉ

An accomplished, generous, dynamic and **passionate female percussionist**, Muriel, a Franco-Guinean national, is recognized in the professional world and has a wealth of diverse experience in both tradition and modernity.

Her brilliant, colourful playing leaves no one indifferent. Her musicality pushes the boundaries away and captivates.

## A CHILDHOOD UNDER THE SIGN OF DIVERSITY

Born in France in 1970 from a father with Malagasy origin and a French mother, she takes great pride in this cultural mix.

Her paternal malagasy grandmother transmits to her all her love for Madagascar and its wealth, whether through the great history of the family there or through the tasty and spicy cooking, traditional music, traditions...

Her parents love to share and receive friends and family on a regular basis. Very young, lulled by mixed music, such as music from the West Indies with the Creole Company, Kassav, Malagasy groups ... that her parents love, music is for her synonymous with celebration, sharing and friendship.

**Mixed music became her first influences.**



## MUSIC, A PASSION

Her love for music will be reflected in his training. Muriel, a dynamic young girl who loves to laugh and express herself, is also a **hypersensitive child** who sometimes has difficulty managing her emotions. She began music with classical

piano training at the age of eight. During no less than 7 years of learning, the piano will bring her discipline, concentration but also and above all perseverance and an incredible way to express her emotions.

## MUSICAL START ON THE COLLEGE'S BENCHES

At the age of 12, she joined her first music group, the « Instrumental Club », at the heart of her school as a pianist and rubbed shoulders with budding drummers, harpists, flutists, guitarists and saxophonists. This very formative experience gave her the passion for the stage and rehearsals. She is also a member

of her college's choir. **Muriel loves to play and sing, it's obvious.**

**First Music Festival in France, first prize in the children's contest :**

At the very first Fête de la Musique organised in France in 1982 by the Minister of Culture Jack Lang, she won the first prize

in the children's competition organised for this occasion in her region, as a duo (Piano/Violoncello). An experience that confirmed her feelings: Music is a part of her life.

She will then continue her quest by trying her hand at drums, guitar...



## THE REVELATION

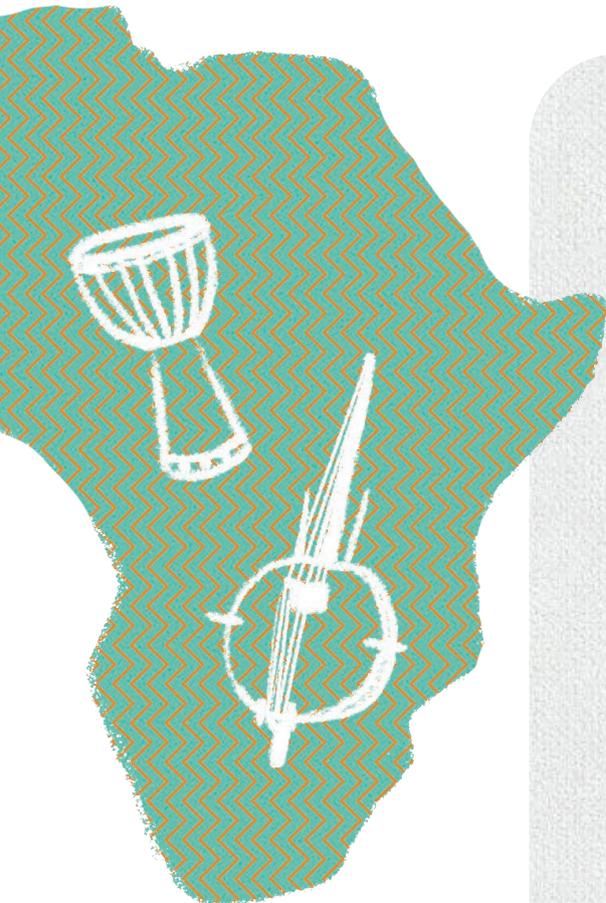
During her high school years, Muriel, attracted by Africa, the continent of her origins, listens to artists such as Johnny Clegg, Youssou N'Dour, Salif Keita, Touré Kounda, Mory Kanté... She goes out to all the African evenings in Besançon and attends concerts. As a committed teenager, she doesn't hesitate to take the streets to protest against causes

such as Apartheid and militates for the liberation of Nelson Mandela. She is very involved in the Third World club of her high school. An open door to African culture.

A decisive musical encounter takes place: a Malian musician gives a concert at the Lycée and offers to try the Djembe.

**It is a musical love at first sight for this instrument.** The sound and the energy of the percussion give her such pleasure that it is obvious to her that she will learn this instrument.

Carried by her passion, she leaves France and settles in Belgium, in Brussels to study Djembé and Dununs .



## TRANSMISSION, A PASSION

Transmitting this musical culture is one of her missions. She has been doing it for about twenty years with N'faly: workshops, courses, cultural and musical trips in West Africa.

They founded together **Namunkanda** in 1996, **Cadence Mandingue** in 2004. She also teaches at N'faly's school Namunschool since 2013, and has developed various cultural projects in Guinea with this structure. [Saut de retour à la ligne] She teaches online courses, Masters Classes in Mexico with TTM Djembe Academy of M. Keita.

Since September 2020, she is a professor at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels.

## TWO ENCOUNTERS, ONE DESTINY

1992

### MAMADY KEITA, MASTER PERCUSSIONIST

She joined the TamTam Mandingue Djembe Academy of the famous Master Djembefola Mamady Keita in 1992 to follow 6 years of intensive training.

She is internationally certified. This training brings her a remarkable professional level: Mamady Keita gives her an incredible technical knowledge, a unique playing spirit and a deep knowledge of the Mandingo culture. Self-taught, she continues her training through numerous trips to West Africa.

As a percussionist in many traditional bands in Belgium, Muriel took part in 1997 in the «Tabaski Tour» in Guinea with the graduated students of TTMDA.

An incredible trip, a unique experience and a participation in the Dvd «Mamady Keita - Messengers of Tradition» (report of this trip), as well as the didactic Dvd of Mamady Keita «The Rhythms of Mandeng» (Vol4).

**Africa is the mother of her inspirations**



1994

### N'FALY KOUYATÉ, GRIOT, FAMOUS KORA PLAYER

**The meeting of her life.**

It took place in 94 in the Belgian capital, in the music world. The fusion is total and a great love story begins. They get married, she marries his culture which becomes hers. Officially bearing the name Kouyaté, she becomes a Griotte.

N'Faly transmits her and initiates her to griotism, it is the beginning of a formidable initiatory journey. They also begin to work together. It is for Muriel a total blossoming. N'faly pushes her to open her playing and to open herself to the percussions of the world, as well as to electronic percussions. He integrates her into his musical projects.

It is the beginning of a great and wonderful adventure with very diversified international projects.



## THE STAGE, AN ACHIEVEMENT



### MAMADY KEITA & SEWA KAN

Muriel is a member of the group of the legendary djembefola master Mamady Keita.

A world reference in traditional percussion groups.

She has taken part in several European tours. It is for her the **greatest mark of recognition** since she plays with very big names.



### N'FALY KOUYATÉ

Percussionist in several projects of this immense artist (double Grammy Award nominee).

Incredible experiences that take her to the top.

- **Kora Strings, Afro-Classical style :**

Symbiosis of African instruments (kora, balafon, calabash, djembe) and Western instruments (classical symphony), all crowned by polyphonic singing.

Tours in Belgium.

In 2011, she records on the album «Kora Strings».

- **N'Faly Kouyaté & Dunyakan (the voice of the World in Malinke language of Guinea), world music style, Afro-Rock :**

She has toured the international stages in Europe, Africa (North, East, South and West), North America and the Caribbean, with festivals such as Womad, Couleur Café, Francofolies de Spa, Dranouter, Black History Month UK, Nuits d'Afrique Montréal, Womadrid Spain, Francophonies of Cairo, Francopholies de Bucarest, Sauti'za Busara Zanzibar, Awaysome Africa Durban...

She recorded on the three albums, « Kora Grooves », « Tunya » and « N'na Kandjé ».

## « INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCES THAT TAKE HER TO THE TOP »

- **N'Faly Kouyaté & Change Project , style Afrotronix :**

Tasty mix of polyphony, traditional Guinean instruments and electronic music. Engaged texts without aggressiveness but without complacency either. They recount real-life experiences, deal with real-life issues such as HIV or famine, and denounce wars, arms trafficking and the flagrant violation of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Tours in Asia, Europe and Africa. Highlights such as the Penang World Music festival in Malaysia, L'Ancienne Belgique, Masa D'Abidjan, Beautiful Day festival UK... She recorded on the album « Change ».

- **Music for Water, Music for life, style Afrotronix :**

A brand new participatory project which aims to support the drilling of boreholes (water conveyance) by raising sufficient funds through the band's tours.

MUSIC GIVES SOUL TO  
OUR HEARTS AND WINGS  
TO THE MIND.

PLATO