

INSPIRATIONAL MEETINGS

Two of the major players in the UK world music industry have joined forces to bring a unique creative learning opportunity to UK schools. Music agency Access All Areas and WOMAD Foundation work with musicians from some of the remotest regions of the world. Jointly they have many years experience working within the education sector providing the kind of inspirational meetings that bring real engagement and vibrancy to the learning experience. WOMAD Foundation is working directly with visiting musicians to offer such inspirational meetings which have direct links to the curriculum for KS1 and KS2 including a concert and workshop in school accompanied by an education resource pack for extended work following the visit.

Malam Mamane Barka - The last Master of the Biram

This is a great opportunity to spend time with visiting musicians Mamane Barka and Oumarou Adamou from Niger, West Africa and to experience the music, history, traditions and life of a nomad from this little known country.

The Musicians

Mamane Barka of the Toubou people of Niger is now the only known master of the 'biram, the ancient stringed instrument of the Boudouma tribe of Lake Tchad. Mamane is a celebrated Nigerien musician who has now devoted himself to promoting the traditional spiritual music of the Boudouma people with this rare instrument. The 'biram' is a remarkable five stringed, plucked harp, traditionally played by chosen members of the Boudouma. It has a carved wooden boat shaped body, which resembles the shape of the fishing boats on the lake and is covered with animal skin. Occasionally it can be played by two musicians at once, being plucked at one end and also being played by the percussionist at the other, to create a completely integrated piece of music.

Oumarou Amadou is a master percussionist, music teacher and a lifelong friend and musical colleague of Mamane. He plays an exceptional range of percussion including the spiritual 'douma' of the Hausa people... the 'kalangou', a small hourglass shaped wooden drum, played under the arm and beaten with a curved stick and the 'calebasse', a large globe shaped instrument, the body made from a dried gourd, with skin covering the open end, tensioned with strings which encircle the whole instrument.



Primary School workshop

Mamane and Oumarou will share their culture and tradition through songs, stories and experiences of life in Niger. Mamane will capture the children's imagination as he takes them on his continuing musical journey. In the half day programme the musicians will present a short performance (20 mins) to a whole school assembly and two 60 minute interactive workshop sessions linking with a number of national curriculum areas which include the following topics:

- A short introduction to the instruments and the music
- A short introduction to Niger, geography, climate, clothing and foods
- Story telling and songs in Niger
- Family
- Traditions and beliefs
- Life as a nomad

Mamane has a vast repertoire of songs, which describe the lives of the people and their ancestors, which capture the spirit of a nomadic life, the landscape, vegetation, animals and birds. Students will have the opportunity to learn some songs, rhythms and play percussion alongside Mamane & Oumarou.

The workshops sessions are suitable for Key stage 2

There is an educational resource to accompany Mamane's visit with background information and ideas for follow up work.

A CREATIVE LEARNING PROJECT
A collaboration between Access All Areas and The WOMAD FOUNDATION
This project is supported by Arts Council England