

CHRISTOPH SCHLINGENSIEFS  
**OPERNDORF  
AFRIKA**



Stiftung  
Partnerschaft  
mit Afrika e.V.

## **IN EXILE: Festival au Désert Coming from Timbuktu to Berlin** From 8-10 January 2014 the African festival is guesting at the *Berliner Volksbühne, Akademie der Künste* and *Kino Babylon* venues

At the invitation of Christoph Schlingensief's *Operndorf Afrika (Opera Village Africa)* and the *Stiftung Partnerschaft mit Afrika e.V. (Partnership with Africa Foundation)*, for the first time ever the "IN EXILE: Festival au Désert" is presenting films, discussions and a major concert in Germany.

This year due to the political unrest and difficult security situation in Mali, the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Festival au Désert* – by now one of the largest and most important music festivals in West Africa attracting some 5,000 visitors – could not be held in Timbuktu. Currently, the musicians of the Tuareg nomads are presenting their "festival in exile" at different locations in West Africa. Since 16 November 2013, the "caravan of peace" has been underway from Morocco to Burkina Faso. The musicians see themselves as promoters of a peaceful exchange between the peoples, by providing a forum for the music cultures of West Africa and serving as their window to the world.

The Partnership with Africa Foundation (SPA e.V.) regards the festival's guest appearance in Berlin as an opportunity to bring African and German music, soundscapes and artists together. The festival is expected to culminate in Christoph Schlingensief's *Operndorf Afrika (Opera Village Africa)* in Burkina Faso at the end of January 2014.

"Our cultural heritage, the one that unites us, will always be stronger than the forces trying to silence us. No one is going to succeed in splitting up our culture; we don't intend to give up our goals of tolerance and plurality, and we hope to be able to return to Timbuktu eventually. But for that, we're really looking forward to coming to Berlin in January with the festival groups **Orchestre Amanar de Kidal** and **Khaira Arby**, together with the music of the Tuareg nomads, and having an opportunity to present the idea behind the festival in Berlin and Germany," commented **Festival Director Manny Ansar**, who was awarded the Freemuse Award just recently for his work and efforts.

For **Aino Labrenz, Managing Director the Opera Village**, the guest appearance in Berlin fulfils a vision: "Giving contemporary African art a platform in Germany was one of Christoph Schlingensief's incredible dreams – when he was planning the idea for the Opera Village in 2009, he contacted German TV networks and theatres about making broadcasting time and stages available for images of Africa that have been created by Africans. So as such it really makes me proud that now, three years after his death, the *Volksbühne*, the *Akademie der Künste* and the *Babylon Kino* venues are keeping their promise about making major stages available for us to present contemporary music culture from Africa. Being able to welcome the *Festival au Désert* to the Opera Village in Burkina and on-stage Berlin is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for us to show that the idea behind the Opera Village is really working out, and the village is gaining international acclaim as a free location for the promotion of art."

"Art and culture influence and shape our social perceptions in a multitude of ways," says **Dr. Katja Böhler, Chairperson of the Partnership with Africa Foundation (SPA e.V.)**. "For this exact reason, creative encounters between artists from Africa and Germany has such a high importance for our foundation. And this is matched by the music's unifying power, its ability to reach beyond borders and bring people together. One of our aims here at the SPA e.V. is to give people a chance to get to know each other and realise that, despite the vast distances between them, the people in Germany and in the countries of Africa have similar desires, dreams and hopes. Or if I may quote the famous violinist Yehudi Menuhin: "Music speaks for itself – provided we give it a chance." And in this spirit, may I wish the musicians from the *Festival au Désert* and the German artists an inspiring musical exchange."

The aim of the three-day event in Berlin is to encourage a musical exchange in a spirit of partnership, as well as to promote a German-African discourse in Germany today.

Programme:

**08.01.2014**

**Kino Babylon at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz**

**19.45** Cinema screening: "Woodstock in Timbuktu"  
Director: Désirée von Trotha, Germany 2013

Followed by an **open discussion on film** with Désirée von Trotha (filmmaker), Manny Ansar (director of the *Festival au Désert*), Ahmed Ag Kaedi (musician in the Orchestre Amanar de Kidal) and Aino Laberenz (*Opera Village Africa*)

Presenter: Jan Lerch [www.woodstockintimbuktu.de](http://www.woodstockintimbuktu.de)

**09.01.2014**

**Akademie der Künste at Pariser Platz**

**16.00-18.00** "German-African Soundscapes – A Workshop with Mali and German Musicians"

**18.00** Open discussion

**19.00** Panel discussion on the topic of "Beyond Clichés? Why the German-African Cultural Dialogue Means More Than Just Singing, Drumming and Dancing"

Part of the supporting programme **Film Projections of Short Films**, in co-operation with Afrikamera.

**10.01.2014**

**Volksbühne at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz**

**20.00** "Schlingensief in Timbuktu" – Concert event with the Orchestre Amanar de Kidal, Khaira Arby, the singer Nneka and band, and the Hamburg group Kante

**From 23.00** Closing party at the Roter Salon with "Awesome Tapes from Africa"

Further information is available at:

**Festival au Désert** [www.festival-au-desert.org](http://www.festival-au-desert.org)

**Operndorf Afrika e.V.** [www.operndorf-afrika.de](http://www.operndorf-afrika.de)

**Stiftung Partnerschaft mit Afrika e.V.** [www.german-african-partnership.org/de/](http://www.german-african-partnership.org/de/)

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Afrika und Deutschland  
Gemeinsam Zukunft gestalten

Stiftung  
Partnerschaft  
mit Afrika e.V.

Mit finanzieller Unterstützung des

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