

Ladji's Bar

Ethnic group: Jula

Language (dialect): Jula

Country: Burkina Faso

Recording date:

Recording location: Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

Total Recording time: 16:46

Technician: Brian Nowak

Group members:

Track names -- duration

1) Baara - 4:59

2) Minyanba - 5:06

3) Jarabi - 6:41

Group introduction:

Guitarist Ladji, who is a Malinke from Guinea, owns a bar and plays lead guitar with a fluid group of musicians in Bobo Dioulasso. This ensemble features two griottes - a woman griot - performing two popular songs and the famous Jeli (griot) ballad "Minyanba." The women had just come from singing at a wedding all day and a kid replaced a drummer who did not show that night. This recording allows a glimpse into the bar band scene, filmed at Ladji's casual neighborhood bar. Ladji is Malinke but the singers sing in Dioula, the main Mandekan variety of Bobo-Dioulasso.

Recording context:

Ever since guitars entered the Mande repertoire, musicians from all corners of this linguistic empire incorporated griot traditions while creating new popular genres of modern expression. In larger towns and cities, bar bands often play weekly, sometimes more often, in venues defined more by the music than the drinks.

An often super-relaxed crowd listens attentively. Individuals may sporadically get up to dance, give money to musicians or dancers, and those in the audience who can sing may even join the band for a song.