



Claude Debussy

West African Kora Music
And
Western Classical Music

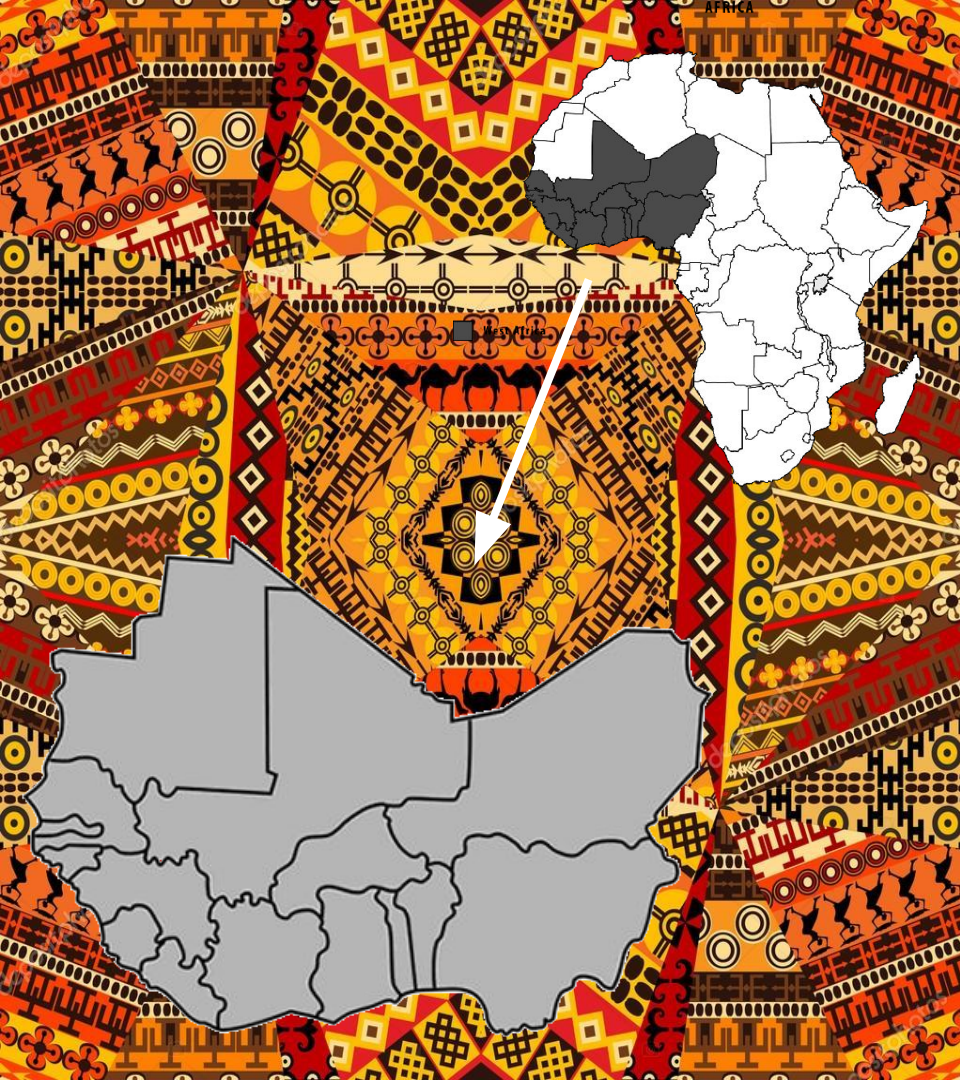
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Sona Jobarteh





West African Kora Music



West Africa

Population

375,663,655 as of November 14th 2017

Ethnicities

Over 30 different ethnicities, ranging from Caucasian to Arab to indigenous peoples, like the Mandinka or Fula people

Religions

Some have converted to Christianity and Islam, while others stay with their traditional African religion customs

Land Mass

8 million square feet



Influences

(Brief History)

Muslims began to colonize in about 1000 CE, building up cities and trade centers.

Portuguese set up forts and trading posts in west Africa, mainly for gold.

- + Began to convert people to Christianity in order to keep control over their kingdom in Africa

Dutch broke into Portuguese monopoly of sea trade, starting the Dutch West India Company and destroying the Spanish naval power.

Starting in the 1440's, the Portuguese began to transport slaves in order to fulfill labor needs in America

- + By the 1620's, the Dutch West India Company joined in

Soon after, the British and French began to colonize in order to exploit the tropical soil for agriculture

Music

West African music tends to consist of:

- Drums
- String Instruments
- Percussive Instruments
 - (ie. maracas, tambourines)

and ranges from heavy metal to traditional



The Balafon



Djembe,
kalimba, kora,
and others

The Kora



The most highly developed string instrument of Africa.

"West African harp"

Family: bridge harps / harp-lutes

Found in all Mande cultures (Mande - family of ethnic groups that speak any of the related languages)

Male tradition, 7 centuries old - played at royal courts

Mentioned in literature for the first time in 1799 as the *korri*

Belongs exclusively to griot families

Sona Jobarteh



The first female Kora virtuoso born into one of five principle west African Griot family

- Griot - a west African historian, storyteller, poet, or musician

Age 4 - started learning kora from her brother

Age 6 - started to learn cello, piano, and harp

As a young teenager, she was accepted into the Royal College of Music and Purcell School in UK to further studies in western music

Became a permanent member of her brother's ACM Ensemble and toured the world

Worked with her father intensely in her late teens on the Kora

Completed degree in African Culture and Linguistics at SOAS University in London

Composed film score for *Motherland*, a multi-award winning documentary

In 2011, created an album called "Fasiya" that showed her abilities on many instruments, in her voice, and most importantly, on Kora





Idiom: mix of
traditional
and hip hop

Specific Culture:
griot families

A photograph of Sona Jobarteh, a Malian kora player, is centered in the slide. She is wearing a white, long-sleeved, patterned dress and is playing a kora, a traditional West African stringed instrument. The background is dark, and she is illuminated from the side, creating a dramatic effect.

<https://www.facebook.com/Deng.Voices>

“Mamamuso” by Sona
Jobarteh



Western European Classical
Music

Claude Debussy

Born on August 22, 1862 in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France

Age 7 - began taking piano lessons

Age 10 - entered the Paris Conservatory, where he was recognized by his talent but found strange in his musical innovations

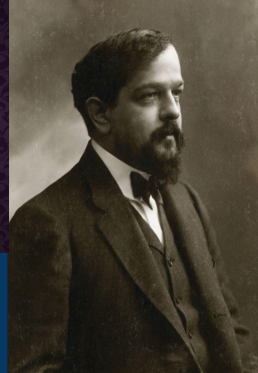
Age 18 - began to tutor a Russian woman's children and accumulated experiences in Russia that would turn towards his compositions

Age 22 - entered one of his pieces (*The Prodigal Child*) into the Prix de Rome, a competition for composers, and took home top prize, studying for 3 years in Italy

He returned to Paris in 1887 and began to write numerous complete compositions, with the most famous masterpieces including:

- *Forgotten Songs (1888)*; *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun (1892)*; *String Quartet (1893)*; *Pelleas et Melisande (1895)*; *The Sea, Images, and Suite bergamasque (1905)*; *Iberia and Children's Corner Suite (1908)*

In his later years, he wrote as a critic, and died of colon cancer on March 25, 1918





"Clair de Lune" by Claude
Debussy

Clair de Lune

PIANO

Andante très expressif

pp con sordina

The image shows the first four systems of the musical score for 'Clair de Lune' by Debussy. The score is for piano and is marked 'Andante très expressif' and 'pp con sordina'. The first system includes a treble and bass clef with a 9/8 time signature. The subsequent systems show various musical notations, including triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

E. 1404 P.

Idiom: solo piece for piano

Interesting characteristics:

- No solid tempo (rubato)
- Two different key signatures, switches in between
- Compound triple time signature - 9/8
- Style ranges from multiple runs to simple whole notes

Clair de Lune

- + One part out of four in *Suite Bergamasque*
- + Piano suite
- + Tempo: unset, many accelerandos and ritardandos
- + Time Signature: 9/8
- + Key signature: switches from Db major to E major multiple times

Switches back to main melody
multiple times

End very softly

Begins with unset tempo

Mamamuso

- + Singular song on an album
- + Multiple instruments
Kora, acoustic guitar, vocal, djembe,
bass guitar, drum set, tambourine, etc. - a
band
- + Tempo: 108
- + Time Signature: 4/4
- + Key signature: unset, multiple
accidentals from many of the instruments
used, cannot determine

Secondary Link

Both pieces begin with a softer and more “improvised” melody, as the kora is soloing in “Mamamuso” and the right hand is showcased in “Clair de lune” on the higher octaves.



As soon as the piece dives deeper into the melody, though, more instruments are added in/the lower octaves and harmonies are introduced.



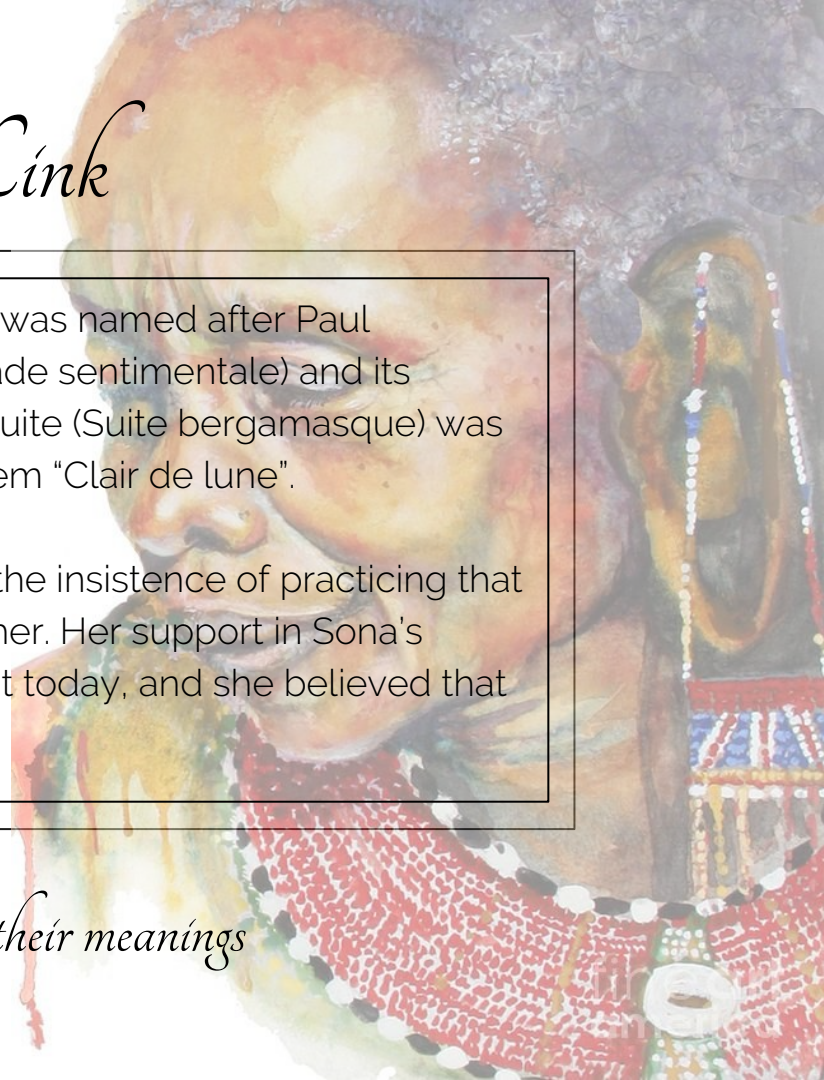
Additions of countermelodies/accompaniments/other instruments as the piece progresses

Primary Link

Clair de Lune, the third part of a four part suite, was named after Paul Verlaine's poems, both original name (Promenade sentimentale) and its current existing name. The name of the entire suite (Suite bergamasque) was also named after a stanza in Paul Verlaine's poem "Clair de lune".

Mamamuso was written in order to appreciate the insistence of practicing that Sona's grandmother would always push upon her. Her support in Sona's destiny in music was what got Sona to this point today, and she believed that a song for her grandmother was necessary.

What the pieces represent / their meanings



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