



CROSSING

T h e P a t h B e f o r e U s

What has guided and sustained us throughout this journey is our love and respect for tradition, and our gratitude to our Masters — our musical fathers and mentors. We know that who we are today is the living echo of the experiences, stories, and teachings handed down through generations by those who came before us. They brought us into the world and led us along the path of learning — revealing to us the codes, the beauty, and the hidden secrets of music.

This first work is, above all, an offering — a tribute to our

ancestors and to those who lit the way before us. We chose the title "The Path Before Us" as a wish for a long journey together — now that our personal roads have crossed again, tracing a new path to walk side by side.

And finally, our thanks go to you, dear listener, for welcoming us into your world, even if just for the time of a listening. May our music make that time fuller, deeper, and more precious — a shared moment suspended between us.

Enjoy the journey!

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Petit Solo Diabaté | *Kora, Kamale Ngoni, Balafon, Voice*

Nino Martella | *Percussion, Kamale Ngoni, Voice*

Marco Schiavone | *Cello*

Ne Ma Lon

“Ah Ne Ma Lon Te
Dja Douniya Be Te”

“I didn’t know the world was like this!”

Observing nature and the cycles of life, it is easy to believe that the world was created for our well-being. Beauty surrounds us, nature teaches and nourishes us, and the wonder of creation constantly spins in perfect cosmic balance above our skies, while we are suspended in space on this incredibly beautiful blue marble.

So why is the world like this? Why do envy, greed, and discontent grow ever stronger in these hard and suffering-filled times? At what point did humanity lose its way, its connection to that which is closest to God within us?

We do not know, yet we continue to ask ourselves.

Mah Koro

A traditional song in Bambara language dedicated to the ancestors, interwoven with an original chant in the Salentino dialect.

A common thread between these two seemingly distant cultures — the Pan-African and the Southern Italian — is the deep respect and spiritual connection with the departed, especially with the figure of the grandparents.

In a time when families seem more fragmented than ever, and the gap between past and present generations grows wider, we begin to feel a loss of belonging, an identity unanchored. A feeling that would be unthinkable in traditional African or Salentina societies, where each of us has always been — and still is — someone's child or grandchild.

Djandjo

Djandjo is a sacred traditional song within the Mandeng culture.

It was composed long ago, during the time of the Mandeng Empire, for the men of words and the men of honor — those who fought for the liberation of their homeland, risking or sacrificing their lives for a greater ideal. It may also be sung in praise of people whose honesty and integrity have shone throughout their lives.

This is not a song to be played lightly.

The elders say that it should never be performed on a sad day, for it would only deepen the sorrow. Yet, when played at the right moment, it has the power to make even the brightest day more radiant.

Bobo Sira

“Bobo Sira” means “the road to Bobo” in the Dioula language.

In Burkina Faso, about 350 km west of the capital, lies a dusty, colorful, and vibrant city called Bobo Dioulasso.

Bobo Dioulasso is a constant swirl of life — musicians, artists of every kind, street vendors, and beautiful women carrying sacks of rice on their heads: a whirlwind of beneficial, generative African chaos, always in motion.

To reach Bobo Dioulasso, one takes a bus from the capital. The experience of traveling and retracing that road, journey after journey, is intense and unique. It carries at once the sweet taste of returning home and the spicy, adventurous flavor of exploration.

Sa Mamadou Traore

As already mentioned in the album's introduction, this work is dedicated to our musical fathers and masters.

Sa Mamadou Traoré is a balafon player and balafon maker from Bana, a small village in Burkina Faso. Since 2016, he has been the primary mentor and guiding figure in Burkina Faso for Nino Martella. In 2021, their relationship reached such a level of intimacy that Nino Martella was welcomed into the spiritual circle of Sa Mamadou Traoré's ancestors, following the traditional ritual held every three years in the village of Torosso.

This piece is a dedication to his wisdom and to the profound value his teachings have brought into our lives — a simple composition for kora, kamale ngoni, and cello.

A ni tché Baba Sa Mamadou

I Traore!

CREDITS

Clara "Blavet" Calignano | flute

Hope

“Hope” is a prayer for better times, a better future, for greater understanding among people and nations, and for the end of conflicts — both inner and outer.

A piece dedicated to a future filled with light and Life.

Nomad

This song is dedicated to the glorious Fula people, native to the African continent.

The Fula (also known as Fulani or Peul) are among the most widespread ethnic groups in Africa — from Mauritania to Sudan, reaching as far as Southeast Africa, including the Sub-Saharan region and all the lands of the ancient Mandengue Empire, covering an immense and diverse territory.

Their existence has long been intertwined with the herding of great cattle herds, and it is for this reason that they are a nomadic people.

The pattern played on the Kamale Ngoni in this piece is a traditional rhythmic motif of the Fula people. It was passed down to us by Petit Solo Diabaté, who, though not of Fula origin himself, is a profound connoisseur of the many musical cultures that flourish across West Africa.

CREDITS

Emanuele Coluccia | soprano sax

Kare Brah

We are deeply honored to have Petit Solo Diabaté with us on this project.

Not only is he an exceptionally talented musician and generous master, but he is also a true guardian of the musical culture of his ethnic group, the Siamou.

This piece, titled “Kare Brah”, is an interpretation of a traditional Siamou song connected to one of the many moments of initiation into the traditional knowledge of the community.

The jingles you hear are tied to the hand movements of the balafon player. With a musical conception far removed from Western aesthetic standards, the jingles do not serve a specific or defined rhythmic function, yet they contribute profoundly to the sound of the sacred balafon tradition in Burkina Faso.

Even the singing in the opening section of the piece is in the traditional Siamou language — a rare tongue spoken by just over 60,000 people, all concentrated in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Ivory Coast.

Song for a Friend

In October 2024, during one of our first jam sessions together, we were struck by the tragic news of the loss of a dear mutual friend.

With hearts full of sorrow and a sense of helplessness, we turned to music, allowing ourselves to be guided into a long improvisation, from which this simple yet immensely powerful melody emerged.

This piece is a tribute to Life and friendship, dedicated to one of the brightest, kindest, and purest souls we have ever known — this piece is for you, Francesco.

Music is a universal language: we are certain that this song will reach you.

CREDITS

Mohammed Tounkara | *jeli ngoni ba, jeli ngoni*

Clara "Blavet" Calignano | *flute*

Emanuele Coluccia | *soprano sax*

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The Path Before Us

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Thanks to our guardian angel

Francesco C. – may this music reach you in the parallel dimension and delight your beautiful, bright, and eternal soul.

Thanks to our friend **Meissa Ndiaye**, and to the great griot and shaman from Bana Village, **Sa Mamadou Traoré**.

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And with heartfelt thanks to our **ever-understanding families**.

Thank you for your listening and attention, without which music would have no reason to exist.

See you on the next album!