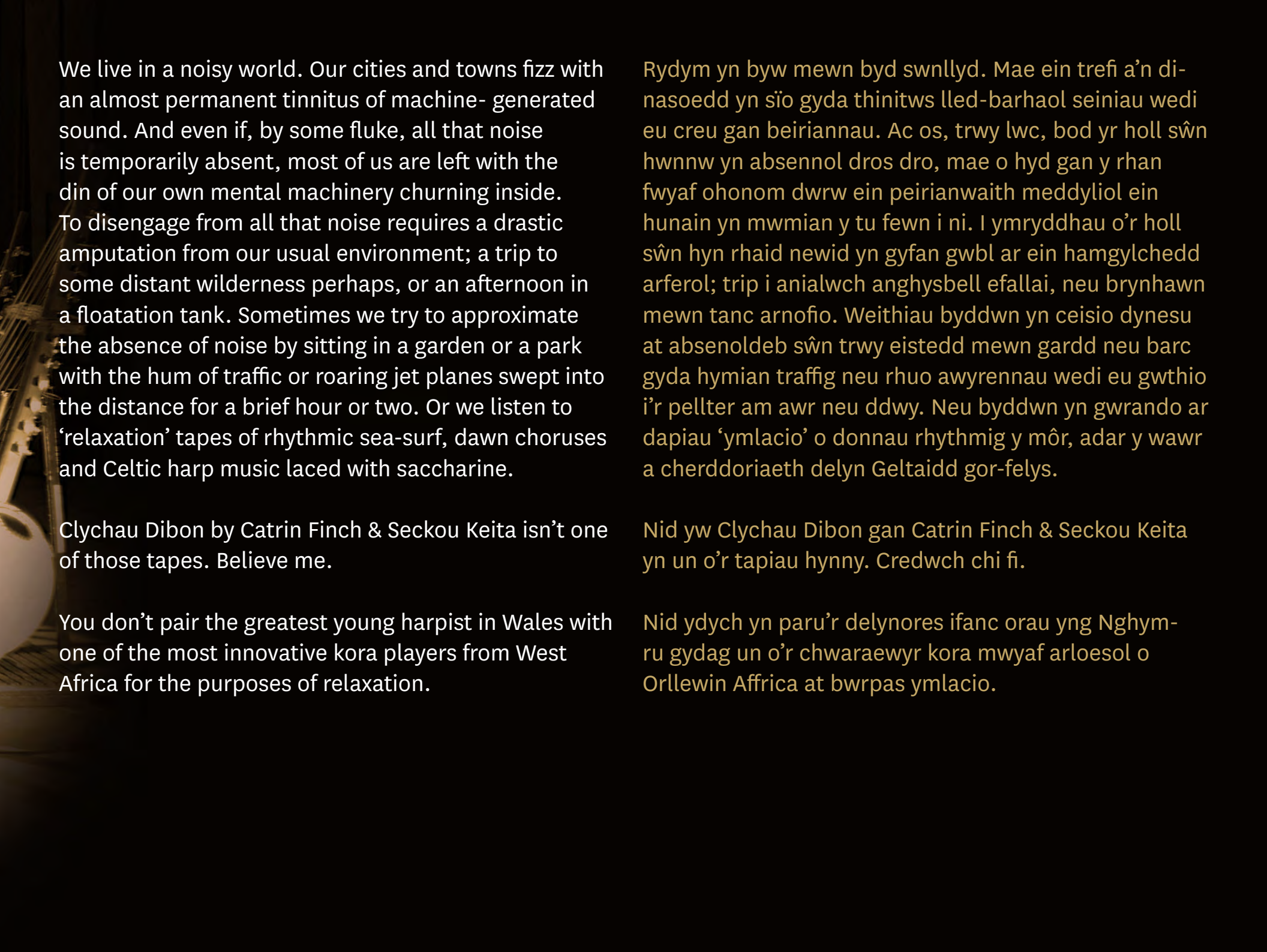


A woman with long dark hair is lying on her back in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. She is wearing a dark blue patterned dress and has her eyes closed, looking up towards the sky. In the background, a man in a dark, hooded robe is standing, holding a long wooden staff or pole. The scene is set in a vast, open field under a bright, hazy sky, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

CATRIN FINCH  
SECKOU KEITA  
CLYCHAU DIBON





We live in a noisy world. Our cities and towns fizz with an almost permanent tinnitus of machine-generated sound. And even if, by some fluke, all that noise is temporarily absent, most of us are left with the din of our own mental machinery churning inside. To disengage from all that noise requires a drastic amputation from our usual environment; a trip to some distant wilderness perhaps, or an afternoon in a floatation tank. Sometimes we try to approximate the absence of noise by sitting in a garden or a park with the hum of traffic or roaring jet planes swept into the distance for a brief hour or two. Or we listen to ‘relaxation’ tapes of rhythmic sea-surf, dawn choruses and Celtic harp music laced with saccharine.

Clychau Dibon by Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita isn’t one of those tapes. Believe me.

You don’t pair the greatest young harpist in Wales with one of the most innovative kora players from West Africa for the purposes of relaxation.

Rydym yn byw mewn byd swnllyd. Mae ein trefi a’n dinasoedd yn sio gyda thinitws lled-barhaol seiniau wedi eu creu gan beiriannau. Ac os, trwy lwc, bod yr holl sŵn hwnnw yn absennol dros dro, mae o hyd gan y rhan fwyaf ohonom dwrw ein peirianwaith meddyliol ein hunain yn mwmian y tu fewn i ni. I ymryddhau o’r holl sŵn hyn rhaid newid yn gyfan gwbl ar ein hamgylchedd arferol; trip i anialwch anghysbell efallai, neu brynhawn mewn tanc arnofio. Weithiau byddwn yn ceisio dynesu at absenoldeb sŵn trwy eistedd mewn gardd neu barc gyda hymian traffig neu rhuo awyrennau wedi eu gwthio i’r pellter am awr neu ddwy. Neu byddwn yn gwrando ar dapiau ‘ymlacio’ o donnau rhythmig y môr, adar y wawr a cherddoriaeth delyn Geltaidd gor-felys.

Nid yw Clychau Dibon gan Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita yn un o’r tapiau hynny. Credwch chi fi.

Nid ydych yn paru’r delynores ifanc orau yng Nghymru gydag un o’r chwaraewyr kora mwyaf arloesol o Orllewin Affrica at bwrpas ymlacio.

Their music is too deep, full-blooded and yet fragile for that. It engages you rather than disengages you from life and it fronts a hinterland of history, myth and tradition, of places, lives and legends that mirror each other in curious, even startling ways. Music with that kind of depth can never be relaxing. Too much old blood runs through it.

The harp and the kora appear to us like old instruments, designed for quieter sparser times. They can seem out of place in this cacophonous world. True, they are old. If you have a mind to go back to their beginnings, you'll need to try and imagine that first hunter gatherer who plucked the string of his bow and made music. Killing, skinning and eating animals were essential, but there was a need to talk to the spirits and only music could do that. The many different harp-like instruments you can find around the world, including the kora, the classical concert harp and the Welsh harp, are the descendants of that hunter's bow, just as every human descends from Lucy, our common grandmother.

Mae eu cerddoriaeth yn rhy ddwfn, nerthol ond eto'n fregus am hynny. Mae'n eich ymrwymo at fywyd yn hytrach na'ch ymryddhau ac mae'n ffrynt i gefndir o hanes, chwedl a thraddodiad, o leoedd a chwedleuon sy'n adlewyrchu ei gilydd mewn ffyrdd chwilfrydig, ysgytiol hyd yn oed. Ni all cerddoriaeth gyda'r math hwnnw o ddyfnder byth a bod yn ymlaciol. Mae 'na ormod o hen waed yn rhedeg trwyddi.

Ymddengys y delyn a'r kora i ni fel hen offerynnau, wedi eu dylunio ar gyfer adegau mwy tawel, llonydd. Gallant ymddangos fel petaent allan o'u lle yn y byd aflafar hwn. Maent yn hen, mae hynny'n wir. Os ydych yn bwriadu mynd yn ôl at eu tarddiad bydd eisiau i chi geisio dychmygu'r heliwr-gasglwr cyntaf hwnnw a phlyciodd dant ei fwa gan greu cerddoriaeth. Roedd lladd, tynnu croen a bwyta anifeiliaid yn hanfodol iddo, ond roedd hefyd ganddo'r angen i siarad â'r ysbrydion a dim ond cerddoriaeth allai wneud hynny. Mae'r nifer o wahanol fathau o offerynnau tebyg i'r delyn sydd i'w canfod ar draws y byd, gan gynnwys y kora, y delyn gyngerdd glasurold a'r delyn Gymreig, i gyd yn ddisgynyddion o fwa'r heliwr hwnnw, yn yr un modd y mae pob bod dynol yn ddisgynydd o Lucy, ein mam-gu gyffredin.



About three hundred years ago, in an old West African kingdom known as Kaabu, simpler harps made from the tough gourd of the calabash, an African cousin of the melon too bitter to eat but good for just about everything else, were fused to create a new instrument with 21 strings, an instrument of majestic complexity and sophistication. Every griot or 'bard' in West Africa has his own version of how the kora was born, but they all agree that it was handed to man by the djinns. In other words, it was born in the spirit world before being passed on to the human one. Which makes sense. All great music comes from the other side.

Like the Welsh harp, the kora's original purpose was to help the griot sing the praises of great men, especially noble warriors and fighters. Hence its original name, koring bato - the box of the koring, who were the warriors of the Manding people of West Africa.

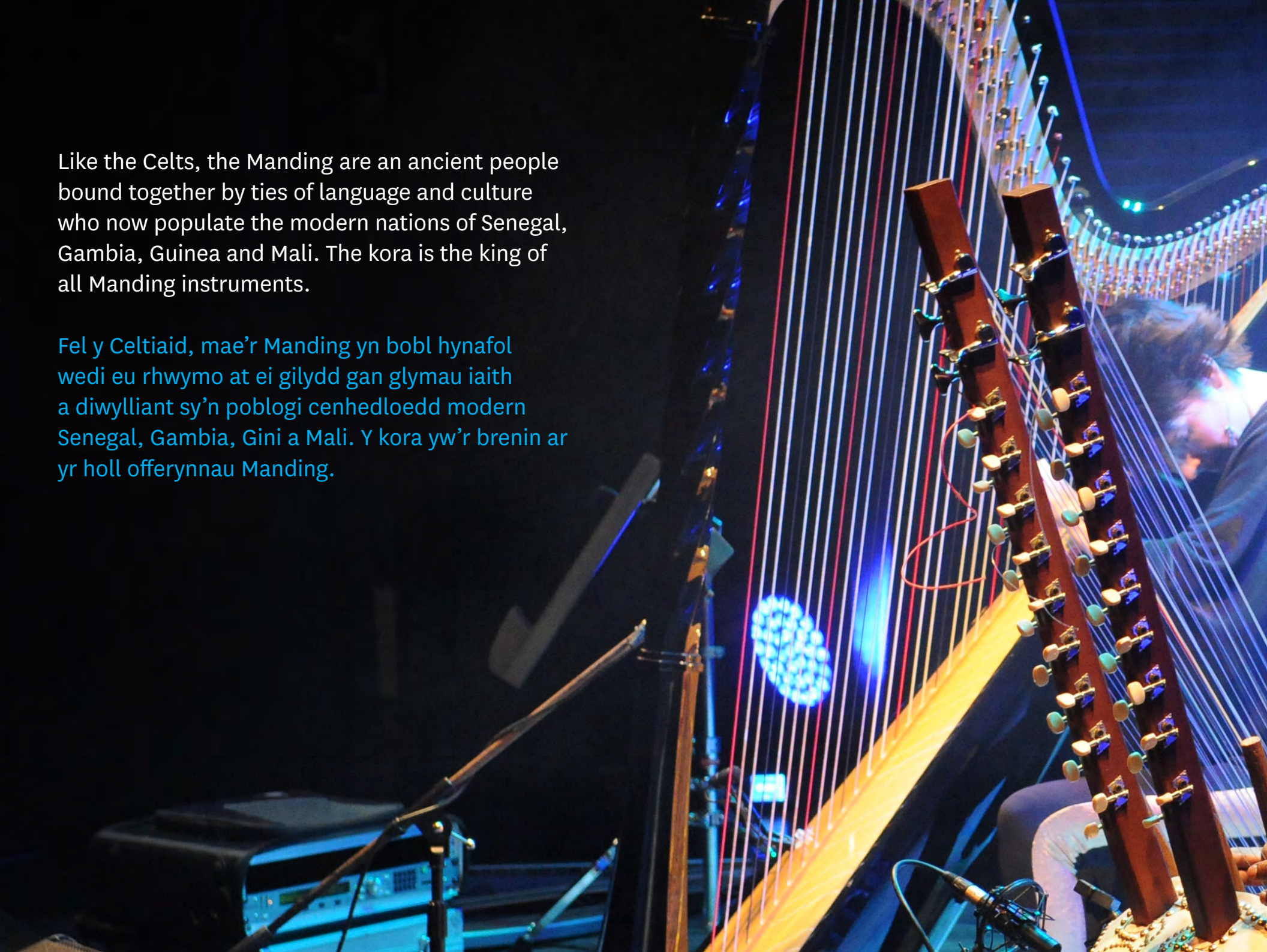




Tua thri chan mlynedd yn ôl, mewn hen deyrnas yng Ngorllewin Affrica a elwir yn Kaabu, cafodd telynau mwy syml, wedi eu ffurfio o gowrdiau gwydn y calabash, cefnder Affricanidd i'r melon, sy'n rhy chwerw i'w fwyta, ond sy'n dda i bron pob dim arall, eu hasio i greu offeryn newydd a chanddo 21 tant, offeryn o gymhlethdod a soffistigedigrwydd mawreddog. Mae gan bob griot neu 'fardd' yng Ngorllewin Affrica ei fersiwn ei hun o sut cafodd y kora ei eni, ond maent i gyd yn cytuno y cafodd ei gyflwyno i ddyn gan y djinns. Hynny yw, cafodd ei eni ym myd yr ysbrydion a'i basio ymlaen i fyd dynion. Sy'n gwneud synnwyr. Daw pob cerddoriaeth dda o'r ochr arall. Fel y delyn Gymreig, pwrpas gwreiddiol y kora oedd helpu'r griot i ganu mawl i'r dynion mawreddog, yn enwedig rhyfelwyr ac ymladdwyr bonheddig. Ac o hyn daw ei enw gwreiddiol; koring bato - blwch y koring, sef rhyfelwyr Manding Gorrlewin Affrica.

Like the Celts, the Manding are an ancient people bound together by ties of language and culture who now populate the modern nations of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Mali. The kora is the king of all Manding instruments.

Fel y Celtiaid, mae'r Manding yn bobl hynafol wedi eu rhwymo at ei gilydd gan glymau iaith a diwylliant sy'n poblogi cenhedloedd modern Senegal, Gambia, Gini a Mali. Y kora yw'r brenin ar yr holl offerynnau Manding.





Seckou Keita was born in southern Senegal, in a town called Ziguinchor that sits on an arm of the great Casamance river. His mother was the daughter of a great griot whose lineage stretched back into a distant and foggy past. Seckou's father was a Keita, in other words, a descendent of the great Manding king Sundiata Keita, who founded the Mali empire in the 14th century. The bluest of blood runs in Keita veins.

Seckou learnt the kora under his grandfather's stern eye. He later rebelled and took up the drums as well. His entire clan, the Cissokhos, are griots and kora players of international renown. Many younger Cissokhos are scattered around Europe, surviving on their wits, their charm, their affability and their music. Seckou has made England his base since 1997.

Catrin Finch was born in Aberystwyth, west Wales, of English and German parents. She grew up in a tiny village near Aberaeron, on the shores of Cardigan Bay, with the sound of the sea in her ears. She fell in love with the harp when she was six years old, after seeing the Spanish harpist Marisa Robles play at the Lampeter Music Club.

Cafodd Seckou Keita ei eni yn Ne Senegal, mewn tref o'r enw Ziguinchor sy'n eistedd ar lannau Afon Casamence. Roedd ei fam yn ferch i griot mawreddog a'i achau barddol yn ymestyn yn ôl i orffennol pell a niwlog. Roedd tad Seckou yn Keita, hynny yw, yn ddisgynnydd o'r brenin Manding mawreddog Sundiata Keita, a sylfaenodd Ymerodraeth Mali yn y 14eg ganrif. Mae'r gwaed mwyaf brenhinol yn llifo yng ngwythiennau Keita.

Dysgodd Seckou ganu'r kora o dan lygad llym ei dad-cu. Yn hwyrach gwrthryfelodd gan ddysgu'r drymiau'n ogystal. Mae ei dylwyth cyfan, y Cissokhos, yn griots a chwaraewyr kora o fri rhyngwladol. Mae nifer o'r Cissokhos iau ar wasgar ar draws Ewrop, yn goroesi ar eu synnwyr craff, eu swynion, eu hynawsedd a'u cerddoriaeth. Mae Lloegr yn gartref i Seckou ers 1997.

Cafodd Catrin Finch ei geni yn Aberystwyth, Gorllewin Cymru, gyda rhieni Saesneg ac Almaeneg. Cafodd ei magu mewn pentref bychan iawn ger Aberaeron, ar lannau Bae Aberteifi, gyda sŵn y môr yn ei chlustiau. Syrthiodd mewn cariad â'r delyn pan yn chwe blwydd oed, ar ôl gweld y delynores Sbaeneg Marisa Robles yn chware yng Nghlwb Cerdd Llanbedr Pont Steffan.





She'd done and dusted all her grades by the age of nine and was soon filling the cupboards of her family home with trophies and stringing gigs with the National Youth Orchestras together with solo concerts and the occasional appearance on Blue Peter. The child prodigy turned into an A-list student at the Royal Academy of Music in London and, at the age of 19, was invited to become the first Harpist by appointment to the Prince of Wales.

Now in her thirties and living in south Wales, Catrin Finch enjoys star status in the classical music world, although her instrument, the harp, is still the Cinderella of the classical orchestra, considered good enough for the musical expression of sparkling brooks, fluffy clouds and angelic dreams but not much else. That's something Catrin would like to change. Her collaborations with the Colombian cowboy virtuosos Cimarron and now Seckou Keita provide proof of her desire to leap over cultural barriers and roam in mapless musical territory.

Yn naw mlwydd oed, roedd Catrin wedi llwyddo i weithio'i ffordd trwy'r holl raddau a chyn hir roedd yn llenwi cypyrddau'r cartref teuluol gyda throffiau ac yn perfformio gyda'r Gerddorfa Genedlaethol ynghyd â chyngherddau unigol ac ambell ymddangosiad ar Blue Peter. Trodd y plentyn talentog yn fyfyrwraig neilltuol yn Academi Brenhinol Cerdd Llundain ac, yn 19 oed, cafodd ei gwahodd i fod y delynores gyntaf i'w hapwyntio i Dywysog Cymru.

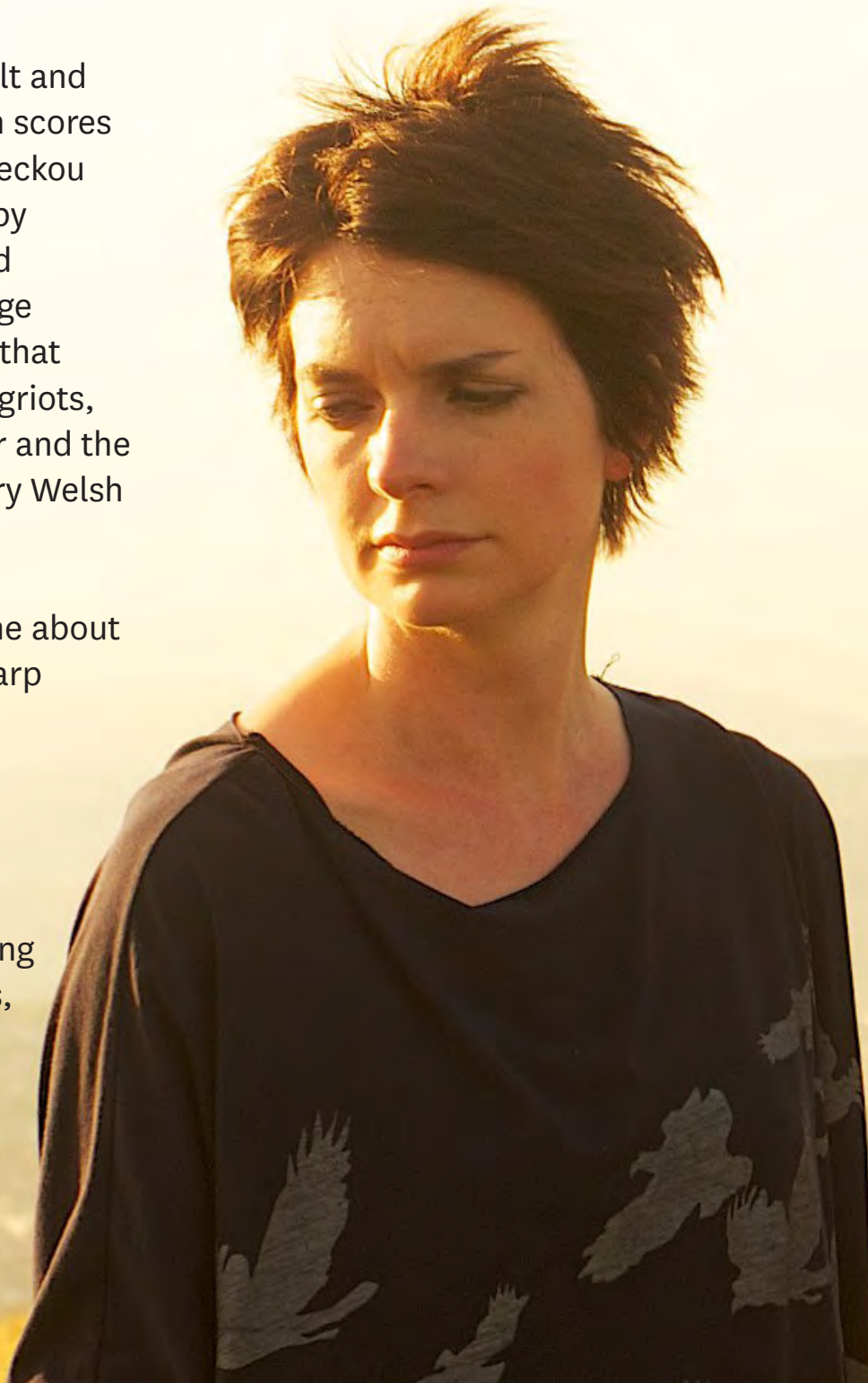
Erbyn hyn yn ei thridegau ac yn byw yn Ne Cymru, mae Catrin Finch yn mwynhau statws seren ym myd cerddoriaeth glasurol, er bod ei hofferyn yn dal i fod yn Sinderela y gerddorfa glasurol, wedi ei ystyried yn ddigon da ar gyfer mynegiant cerddorol nentydd gloyw, cymylau gwlanog a breuddwydion angylaidd ond dim llawer mwy na hynny. Mae hynny yn rhywbeth hoffai Catrin ei newid. Mae ei chydweithrediadau gyda'r meistri cowboi Cimarron a nawr Seckou Keita yn amlygu prawf o'i hawydd i neidio dros rwystrau diwylliannol a chrwydro mewn tiriogaeth gerddorol heb ffiniau.

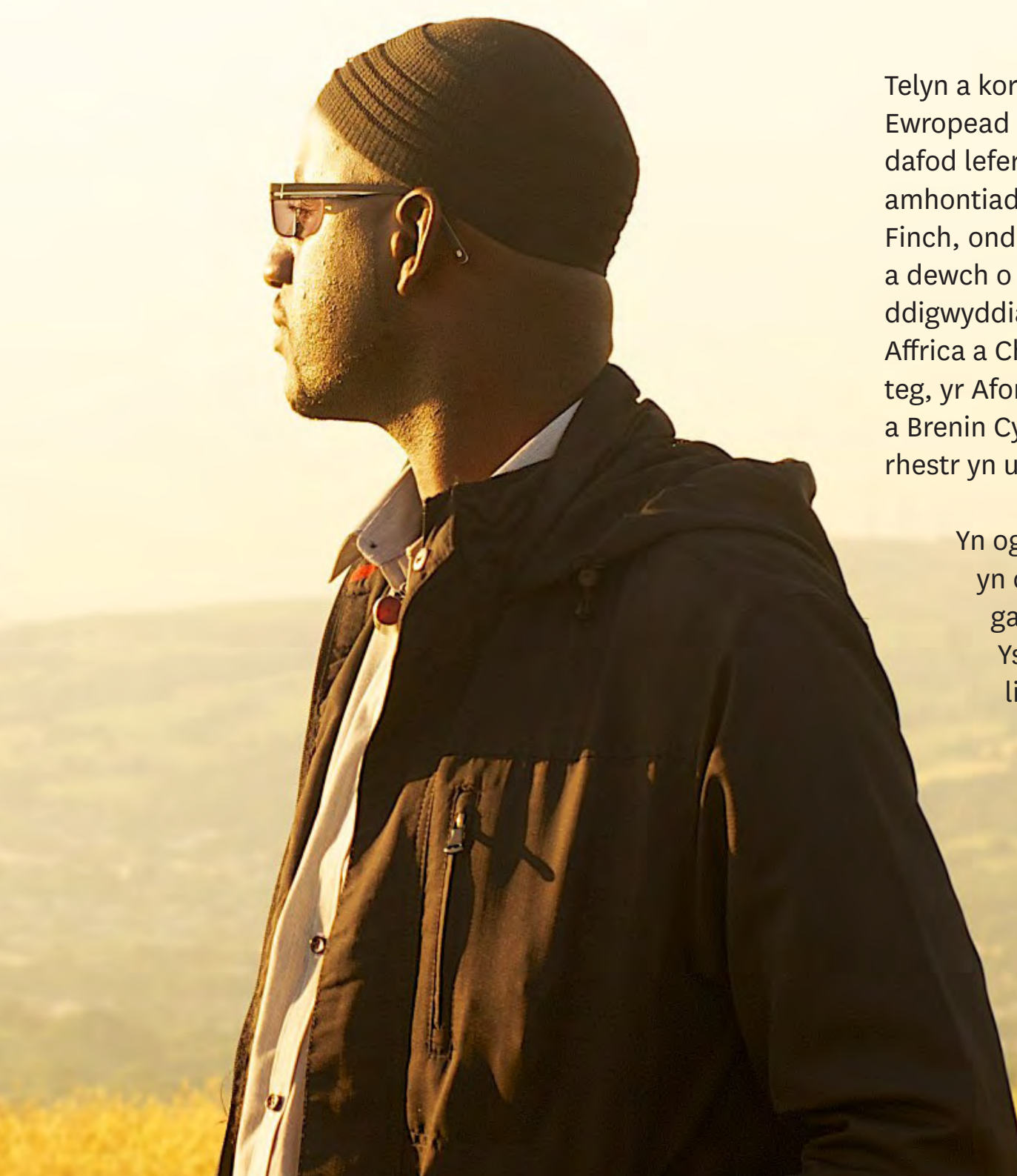




Harp and a kora, woman and a man, Celt and Manding, European and African, written scores and word of mouth; you might expect Seckou Keita and Catrin Finch to be separated by unbridgeable cultural chasms, but you'd be wrong. Go deep and you'll find strange symmetries and fabulous coincidences that bind West Africa and Wales, bards and griots, djinns and faeries, the Casamance River and the Teifi, Sundiata Keita and the 10th century Welsh King Hywel Dda.

The poet Dylan Thomas once wrote a line about the sea singing in its chains. Both the harp and the kora make music that flows like water and expresses its essential melancholy. 'Ceffylau' ('Horses') is a groove that Seckou dreamed up in a moment of nostalgia and longing. It's doused in the sadness of leaving, of being thrown out onto the mercy of the waves, never to return.





Telyn a kora, dyn a menyw, Celt a Manding,  
Ewropead ac Affricanwr, sgorau ysgrifenedig ac ar  
dafod leferydd; gallech ddisgwyl hafn ddiwylliannol  
amhontiadwy i wahanu Seckou Keita a Catrin  
Finch, ond byddech yn anghywir. Ewch i'r craidd  
a dewch o hyd i gymesureddau rhyfedd a chyd-  
ddigwyddiadau aruthrol sy'n rhwymo Gorllewin  
Affrica a Chymru; beirdd a griots, djinns a thylwyth  
teg, yr Afon Casamance a'r Afon Teifi, Sundita Keita  
a Brenin Cymru'r 10fed ganrif Hywel Dda, mae'r  
rhestr yn un hir.

Yn ogystal, mae'r delyn a'r kora ill dau  
yn creu cerddoriaeth sy'n llifo fel dŵr  
gan fynegi ei phrudd-der anhepgor.  
Ysgrifennodd y bardd Dylan Thomas  
linell am y môr yn canu yn ei  
gadwyni. Mae 'Ceffylau' yn grŵf a  
gyfansoddodd Seckou mewn eiliad  
o hiraeth. Mae wedi ei drochi  
yn nhristwch ymadael, o fod  
wedi taflu allan ar drugaredd y  
tonnau, byth i ddychwelyd.





Both the enticement and the loneliness of an empty horizon is expressed in 'Llongau Terou-bi', in which the old Welsh air 'Llongau Caernafon' ('The Ships of Caernarvon') is played out on a quay or terou near Dakar in Senegal, gulls screeching overhead, fishermen unloading their catches, the eyes of a young boy transfixed by that endless coming and going of shore life. Poverty drove many Welsh men and women to take to the sea. Near Terou-bi beach in Dakar lies the Island of Gorée, from which so many Africans were forcibly embarked on ships bound for the new World. Both were enslaved in their own ways.

Caiff hudoliaeth ac unigrwydd gorwel gwag eu mynegi yn 'Llongau Terou-bi', lle mae'r hen alaw Gymreig 'Llongau Caernarfon' yn cael ei chwarae allan ar gei neu terou ger Dakar yn Senegal, gwylanod yn sgrechian uwch ben, pysgotwyr yn dadlwytho'u dalfeydd, llygaid bachgen ifanc wedi'u hudo gan holl fynd a dod diddiwedd bywyd ar y glannau. Gyrrodd tlodi nifer o ddynion a gwragedd o Gymru i hwylio dros y môr. Ger traeth Terou-bi yn Dakar mae Ynys Gorée, ac o'r man hwn cafodd nifer o Affricanwyr eu llwytho yn erbyn eu hewyllys ar longau yn hwylio i'r Byd newydd. Roedd y ddau yn gaeth yn eu ffyrdd eu hunain.



But the sea, together with the inlets, creeks, swamps and tributaries that are its limbs, is also an enchanter. The island of Carabane at the mouth of the Casamance river and the wide Bae Aberteifi, or Cardigan Bay, are places of magic for Seckou Keita and Catrin Finch. Those Bras de Mer ('Arms of the Sea') inspire the currents that flow through their fingers.

Ond mae'r môr, ynghyd â'r cilfachau, nentydd, corydd ac isafonydd sydd yn ymestyn oddi wrtho, hefyd yn swyno. Mae ynys Carabane ar aber Afon Casamance a bae llydan Aberteifi, yn fannau hudol i Seckou Keita a Catrin Finch. Y Bras de Mer (Breichiau'r Môr) hynny sy'n ysbrydoli'r cerhyntau sy'n llifo trwy eu bysedd.





When they were working on the song Les Bras de Mer, Seckou remembered this old Welsh tune that he'd once played with another Welsh harpist by the name of Llio Rhydderch, but he couldn't recall its name. Together with producer John Hollis they found it on the Internet. It was called 'Conset Ifan Glen Teifi', 'The Concert of Ifan Glen Teifi'. Teifi is the name of the river that runs through Cardigan. It's a lush and beautiful Welsh waterway and the tune fitted Seckou's Manding melody 'Bolong', meaning 'The Arms of the Sea', like a hand fits an old glove. Then John remembered an ancient Manding piece called 'Niali Bagna', named after an old Wolof king. He'd first come across it when he worked with Toumani Diabaté in the 1980s. Finally Catrin overlaid 'Clychau Aberdyfi' or 'The Bells of Aberdovey'. Everything found its place in the whole without coercion, like the pieces of a puzzle or the water of many rivers joining together for their final journey to the sea. That's how most of Clychau Dibon came together. Strange symmetries. Strange coincidences.


Pan oeddent yn gweithio ar y gân Les Bras de Mer, cofiodd Seckou am hen dôn Gymreig roedd wedi ei chwarae unwaith gyda thelynore Gymreig arall, Llio Rhydderch, ond ni allai gofio ei henw. Daeth y cynhyrchwr John Hollis o hyd iddi ar y Rhynggrwyd. Ei henw oedd 'Conset Ifan Glen Teifi', Cyngerdd Ifan Glan Teifi. Teifi yw enw'r afon sy'n rhedeg trwy Aberteifi. Mae'n ddyfrffordd Gymreig ffrwythlon a phrydferth a gwnaeth y dôn weddu at felodi Manding Seckou, 'Niali Bagna', wedi ei henwi ar ôl hen frenin Wolof, fel mae llaw yn ffitio'n esmwyth tu fewn i hen faneg. Yna ychwanegodd Seckou hen felodi Manding o'r enw 'Bolong', sy'n golygu, 'Breichiau'r Môr'. Yn olaf, troshaenodd Catrin 'Clychau Aberdyfi'. Daeth popeth o hyd i'w le yn y cyfanwaith heb unrhyw orfodi, fel rhannau jig-so neu ddŵr sawl afon yn llifo i'w gilydd ar gyfer y daith derfynol i'r môr. Dyna sut daeth y rhan fwyaf o Clychau Dibon ynghyd. Cymesureddau rhyfedd. Cyd-ddigwyddiadau rhyfedd.

Like the strange imaginary encounter between the Manding king Nialing Sonko, famous for collecting too much tax from his people, and Robert Ap Huw, the 16th century musician who invented his own baffling form of notation and wrote down many of the old Welsh harp tunes before history could consign them to oblivion. Seckou chose to name his contribution after Nialing Sonko because it echoed the pure Casamance kora style of his youth and Sonko was a Casamance king. Catrin rummaged in the Ap Huw canon and pulled out a tune called 'Caniad Gosteg'. Once again, the fit was seamless, uncanny, the old courtliness of medieval Wales echoing the old-world dignity of the Casamance style. Then, returning to his childhood again, Seckou added an exercise that all aspiring kora players have to master, Kelefa Koungben, the rhythm of Kelefa. Kelefa Sane was another old Manding warrior whose name is intimately tied to the birth of the kora itself.

Fel y cyfarfod dychmygol rhwng y brenin Manding Nialing Sonko, yn enwog am gasglu gormod o dreth wrth ei bobl, a Robert ap Huw, y cerddor o'r 16eg ganrif a ddyfeisiodd ei ffurf ddryslyd ei hun o nodiant ac a gofnododd nifer o'r hen alawon telyn hynny cyn iddynt ddiflannu a mynd yn angof. Dewisodd Seckou enwi ei gyfraniad ar ôl Nialing Sonko gan fod y dôn yn adlewyrchu arddull bur kora Casamance ei ieuenctid, ac roedd Sonko yn frenin Casamance. Chwiliodd Catrin yn nhrysordy ap Huw a thynnodd allan felodi o'r enw 'Caniad Gosteg'. Unwaith eto, roedd y ffit yn ddiasiad, yn rhyfedd, hen natur fonheddig Cymru'r canol oesoedd yn atseinio urddas hen fyd yr arddull Casamance. Yna, gan ddychwelyd i'w febyd unwaith eto ychwanegodd Seckou ymarfer y mae'n rhaid i bob chwaraewr kora addawol ei feistrolï, Kelefa Koungben, rhythm Kelefa. Roedd Kelefa Sane yn hen ryfelwr Manding arall y mae ei enw'n cael ei gysylltu â genedigaeth y kora ei hun.







Seckou dedicated another of his tunes, which he called Bamba, to the great Senegalese holy man and anti-colonial resistance leader, Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Mbacké. He was a man who devoted his life to the welfare of those around him and deeds and miracles have been praised in endless tales and poems. The tune leaves a sense of wisdom, kindness and gentleness - the qualities of true sainthood - in its wake.

Cyflwynodd Seckou un arall o'i donau, a elwodd yn Bamba, i'r gŵr sanctaidd mawreddog o Senegal ac arweinydd y gwrthwynebu gwrthdrefedigaethol Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Mbacké. Roedd yn ddyn a gysegrodd ei fywyd er mwyn lles y rhai hynny o'i gwmpas. Mae ei weithredoedd a'i wyrthiau wedi eu canmol mewn straeon a cherddi diri. Mae'r dôn yn gadael synnwyr o ddoethineb, caredigrwydd ac addfwynder - gwir rinweddau sant - ar ei hôl.

Downstream, across oceans, we come to 'Genedigaeth Koring-bato', 'The Genesis of the Koring-bato', in other words, the birth of the Kora. The piece is dedicated to Toumani Diabaté, probably the greatest kora player in the world, who, in March 2012, pulled off an unforgettable tour of Wales with Catrin Finch, despite illness and the military coup that had just shattered the peace and wellbeing of his native Mali. That tour, the brainchild of producers John Hollis and Dilwyn Davies of Theatr Mwldan in Cardigan, is the genesis of the album Clychau Dibon.

But there's more. Seckou often had to delve back into the old Manding melodies of his youth, to the genesis of his own style and his own life as a musician, in order to find the necessary symmetry with old Welsh songs such as 'Beth Yw'r Haf I Mi', ('What is the summer to me?'), melodies that cry tears of loss and longing and tell us that Wales is not all about emerald hills and sun-kissed bays, but also boarded-up mines and factories, enforced migration, callousness and poverty, chapel and bible, hopelessness and damnation.



Ychydig i lawr y llif ac ymhellach allan ar draws moroedd eang, fe ddown at 'Genedigaeth Koring-bato', hynny yw, genedigaeth y kora. Mae'r darn wedi ei gyflwyno i Toumani Diabate, mwy na thebyg y chwaraewr kora gorau yn y byd, a gyflawnodd daith fythgofiadwy o Gymru ym mis Mawrth 2012 gyda Catrin Finch, er gwaethaf salwch a'r coup milwrol oedd newydd ddistrywio heddwch a lles ei wlad frodorol, Mali. Y daith honno, sef syniad y cynhyrchwyr John Hollis a Dilwyn Davies o Theatr Mwldan, Aberteifi, oedd man cychwyn yr albwm Clychau Dibon. Ond mae 'na fwy. Yn fynych, byddai'n rhaid i Seckou gloddio yn ôl i felodïau Manding ei febyd, i ddechreuad ei arddull ei hun a'i fywyd fel cerddor, er mwyn darganfod y cymesuredd angenrheidiol â hen ganeuon Cymreig megis 'Beth Yw'r Haf i Mi', melodïau sy'n tywallt dagrau colled a hiraeth ac sy'n ein hatgoffa nad yw Cymru'n fryniau glas a baeau heulog i gyd, ond yn lofeydd a ffatrioedd caeedig hefyd, ymfudiad gorfodol, dideimladrwydd a thlodi, capel a beibl, anobaith a damnedigaeth



That's the tone with which Clychau Dibon opens, a Welsh love story gone awry. Out of it, the kora emerges holding down a simple riff taken from a tune called 'Macki', named after an old king who was kind to orphans. It's then overlaid with more longing, this time for a love left behind in Pontypridd, to which the kora answers with a tune called 'Kelefa Ba', the 'Great Kelefa', the warrior who will not succumb. Not just musical notes, but whole stories and worlds are blended here.

Why? To create something new out of the old. We're dealing with young hearts whose desire to break new ground is strong. Future Strings is a fine example of the uncharted territory into which Seckou is pushing his kora, a territory in which classical themes can trip lightly from Catrin Finch's fingers. The highly structured and complex world of European classical music is blended with the oral traditions of West Africa. Each make compromises, the kora moving into a more structured world that it is perhaps used to, the classical harp jettisoning the strictures of notation and over-bearing reverence for the ancestors to roam more freely...

Where? To a world where you can hear chiming Bells of the Dibon bird: Clychau Dibon. The second bass string on the left hand side of the kora is named after the Dibon, otherwise known as the West African Ground-Hornbill. During the day, the male and female Dibon do everything and go everywhere together. But at night they part to sleep alone, each in their own nest. The next morning they call to each other, a mix of low male tones and higher female ones, so that they can reunite and face the new day.

What are all these old tunes from West Africa and Wales except old pop songs that remain doggedly tenaciously alive. Listen to them carefully. They've found each other and created a new sound, another kind of noise to add to the tinnitus of modern life. But listen again and see if you can't find a different kind of peace in there, not the emptiness relaxation or switching off, but the fullness and peace that only come once you have travelled through life, love and loss, to emerge sadder and wiser on the other side.

A dyna dôn agoriadol Clychau Dibon, stori gariad Gymreig sydd wedi mynd ar gyfeiliorn. Allan o hyn, mae'r kora'n ymddangos gan ailadrodd riff syml wedi ei gymryd o dôn o'r enw 'Macki', wedi ei enwi ar ôl hen frenin oedd yn garedig i blant amddifad. Yna caiff ei droshaenu gyda mwy o hiraeth, y tro hwn am gariad wedi ei adael ar ôl ym Mhontypridd, gyda'r kora'n ateb â thôn o'r enw 'Kelefa Ba', 'y Kelefa Mawr', y rhyfelwr ni wnaiff ildio. Caiff straeon a bydoedd cyfan, nid geiriau'n unig, eu cyfuno yma.

Pam? I greu rhywbeth newydd o'r hen. Rydym yn delio â chalonnau ifanc a chanddynt awydd cryf i dorri tir newydd. Mae Future Strings yn esiampl dda o dir dieithr lle mae Seckou yn gwthio'i kora, tir lle gall y thema glasurol lithro'n ddiymdrech o fysedd Catrin Finch. Mae byd hynod strwythuredig a chymhleth cerddoriaeth glasurol Ewropeaidd yn uno â thraddodiadau llafar Gorllewin Affrica. Mae'r ddau yn cyfaddawdu, y kora yn symud i fyd mwy strwythuredig na'r arfer efallai, y delyn glasurol yn diosg cyfyngiadau nodiant a pharchedigrwydd gormesol i'r cyndeidiau i anadlu'n fwy rhydd...

Ble? I fyd lle mae Clychau'r aderyn dibon - Clychau Dibon - yn seinio eu sain chwerwfelys. Mae'r ail dant bas ar yr ochr chwith o'r kora wedi ei enwi ar ôl y dibon, neu Gornylfin Daear Gorllewin Affrica. Yn ystod y dydd, mae'r dibon gwrywaidd a benywaidd yn gwneud pob dim ac yn mynd i bob man gyda'i gilydd. Ond gyda'r nos maent yn gwahanu i gysgu ar eu pen eu hunain, yn eu nythod eu hunain. Y bore trannoeth, byddant yn galw ar ei gilydd, cymysgedd o donau isel gwrywaidd a rhai benywaidd uwch, fel y gallant ailuno a wynebu'r dydd newydd.

Beth yw'r holl hen donau hyn o Orllewin Affrica a Chymru os nad yn hen ganeuon pop a erys yn benderfynol ac yn afaelgar o fyw. Gwrandewch arnynt yn ofalus. Maent wedi darganfod ei gilydd ac wedi creu sain newydd, math arall o sŵn i ychwanegu at dinitws bywyd modern. Ond gwrandewch eto a cheisiwch ddod o hyd i fath gwahanol o heddwch yno, nid gwacter ymlacio na throi i ffwrdd, ond llawnder a heddwch sydd ond yn dod unwaith i chi deithio trwy fywyd, cariad a cholled, i ymddangos yn dristach ac yn ddoethach ar yr ochr arall.





## 1. GENEDIGAETH KORING-BATO

*Beth Yw'r Haf I Mi. Macki. Pontypridd. Kéléfa Ba.*  
Pour notre frère Toumani Diabaté

## 2. FUTURE STRINGS

## 3. BAMBA

## 4. LES BRAS DE MER (CARABANE - BAE ABERTEIFI)

*Conset Ifan Glen Teifi. Bolong.*  
*Niali Bagna. Clychau Aberdyfi.*

## 5. ROBERT AP HUW MEETS NIALING SONKO

*Part I Nialing-Caniad Gosteg*  
*Part II Kéléfa Koungben-Caniad y Gwyn Bibydd*

## 6. CEFFYLAU

## 7. LLONGAU TÉROU-BI

Tracks 1, 4, 5 and 7 traditional arranged by Catrin Finch,  
Seckou Keita and John Hollis  
Tracks 2, 3 and 6 written by Seckou Keita

All tracks published by Astar Artes Publishing, administered  
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Traciau 1,4,5 a 7 wedi ei drefnu'n draddodiadol gan Catrin  
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Traciau 2, 3 a 6 a ysgrifennwyd gan Seckou Keita

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Koras Seckou Keita

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And to everyone who buys this album, comes to  
the shows and feels the force .... Diolch - Abaraka!

Telyn Catrin Finch  
Koras Seckou Keita

Cynhyrchwyd gan John Hollis  
Cynhyrchwyr gweithredol Dilwyn Davies a Drum  
Peiriannwyd a chymysgwyd gan Owen Shiers  
Mastro gan Simon Heyworth ac Andy Miles  
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David Alston, Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru, Cyngor  
Celfyddydau Lloegr, Llywodraeth Cymru.  
Ac i bawb sy'n prynu'r albwm hon, neu sy'n dod i'r  
soeiau ac yn cael y profiad.... Diolch - Abaraka!



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4. LES BRAS DE MER 5. ROBERT AP HUW MEETS NIALING SONKO  
6. CEFFYLAU 7. LLONGAU TÉROU-BI

PRODUCED BY JOHN HOLLIS



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