

JAH BABA

PRESS KIT 2017-18



“PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THEMSELVES IN MY MUSIC.”

Jah Baba (Oladipo Abiala) is an internationally-recognized Beninese singer, multi-instrumentalist, producer, composer and bandleader, known for his innovative blend of traditional West African drumming with jazz, juju, afrobeat, reggae, and gospel music.

Born to Yoruba parents in Pobé, Benin, Jah was encouraged by his paternal grandmother Oyin Ade to pursue his music as a form of social and cultural activism. He went on to become a master of the bata and gangan (dun-dun) drums, as well as the Oro and Gèlèdè masquerade traditions of his native region. His original compositions and dynamic live performances are deeply rooted in this rich cultural heritage and convey pride in the inherent beauty of African culture.

At the same time, Jah brilliantly navigates the confluence of many rivers, fusing the traditional rhythms of his homeland with jazz improvisation, gospel harmonies, and social justice themes. Inspired by greats such as Fela Kuti, Bob Marley, and Miles Davis, he carries the spirit of Africa to the world, and is both a mirror and bridge for those seeking a way home. No where is this more evident than in his latest release *Emi (Vieille Transe - The Old Trance)* featuring noted international jazz musicians Danilo Pérez, George Garzone, and Kevin Harris.

Among his many talents, Jah is also a gifted audio engineer, cultural promoter, and arts educator who owns and operates Africa Sound City, the prestigious performance venue and recording studio, dubbed by visitors as the “cultural pulse” of





“MY SONGS ESSENTIALLY SPEAK ABOUT THE NEED FOR A RISE IN AFRICAN CONSCIOUSNESS.”

Cotonou, West Africa. From this home base, he dedicates a significant portion of his time to training youth and cultivating the next generation of Beninise artists.

In 2013, Jah took his teaching international to impart a master class and workshop for the Global Jazz Summit at the famed Berkeley College of Music and a collaborative educational performance at Harvard University. Shortly thereafter, the United States Embassy in Cotonou designated Jah a liasion for intercultural exchanges and performances.

In August 2017, he performed a live concert in Cotonou with British soul singer Joss Stone and released [a video collaboration](#) with her as part of her Total World Tour.

Jah Baba is currently based in Brooklyn, New York for the next six months, and will be performing and conducting educational workshops across the United States through April 2018.



"The sun was shining and the musical sounds of Afro Jazz made the perfect vibes. Music like this really does put a smile on your face....I loved singing with Jah Baba he is an amazing man who multitasks like no other."

**JOSS STONE,
BRITISH SOUL SINGER**



"Jah Baba shared with my students the joy and innovative artistry of traditional West African drumming and the spirit of the original black man."

**RÉGINE ROMAIN, ARTS
EDUCATOR AND FOUNDER OF
BROOKLYN TO BENIN: VODOU
PILGRIMAGE PROJECTS**



FACT SHEET

Discography:

- *Emi (Vieille Trance - The Old Trance)* - 2016 [Amazon, Tidal, iTunes/Apple Music, and Spotify]
- *Arise* - 2011

Video:

- Video Collaboration with [Joss Stone](#)
- Live at the [French Cultural Institute of Cotonou](#)
- Live at [Cotonou Couleur Jazz Festival](#)
- Music Video for [Odéré](#)

Press:

- Kreyol Music, "[People Recognize Themselves in my Music](#)"
- Afropop Worldwide Podcast, "[Benin Roots Alive!](#)"
- Afropop Worldwide, "[Field Report: Port-Au-Prince International Jazz Festival](#)"
- CREAD NYC - "[Diaspora Spotlight: Jah Baba](#)"
- Elegba Folklore Society - "[Jah Baba Will Bring the Sounds of the Motherland](#)"

International Tours & Festivals:

- Port-Au-Prince International Jazz Festival (**Port-au-Prince, Haiti**) February 2016
- Visa for Music Showcase (**Rabat, Morocco**) November 26-30, 2014
- US Tour (**Massachusetts, New York, Virginia**) April 2014
- MASA Festival (Plateau Jazz) (**Abidjan, Ivory Coast**) May 20-25, 2014





- Bassline Festival (**Johannesburg, South Africa**)
March 1-8, 2014
- Redcarpet Festival (**Johannesburg, South Africa**)
December 4, 2013
- Felabration (**Lagos, Nigeria**)
November 10, 2013
- Creative Hub for the Reinvention of Africa (**Adiss-
Ababa, Ethiopia**)
October 29, 2013
- US Tour - (**Georgia, Massachusetts, New York**)
April - June 2013
- Global Jazz Institute Summit with Brian Blade, Joe
Lovano, Danilo Pérez, Dave Lierberman Marco
(**Boston, Massachusetts**)
May 20, 2013
- Koudougou Festival (**Ougadougou, Burkina Faso**)
December 2012
- US tour (**Georgia, Alabama, Washington DC,
Virginia**) December 2012
- Wafou Festival (**Abidjan, Ivory Cost**) May 17, 2012
- Music Festival Espace T'chif (**Cotonou, Benin**)
March 5-23, 2012
- LISSA Festival (**Cotonou, Benin**)
March 30-31, 2012
- Sub-regional tour (**Ghana**)
April 2012
- Sub-regional tour (**Benin & Senegal**)
June 2011

TECHNICAL RIDER

SOUND

- a) Six (06) Micro-foot SINGING type SM-58;
- b) Four (04) Micro-foot Instruments type SM-57;
- c) Six (06) Instruments Micro-clamp type AKG or SM-57;
- d) A public address kit (SHURE) for the drum kit;

DRUM KIT

A complete drum kit (YAMAHA, PEARL or SONOR):

- a) BASS DRUM 22 "(before the skin should have a hole) + PEDAL (Single);
- b) TOM 8 "; TOM 10 "; TOM 12 ";
- c) LOW TOM 16 "; LOW TOM 18 ";
- d) SNARE 14 "(the skin should be sanded) with stand;
- e) Four (04) Cymbals (Zildjian or Sabbian): Ride 20 "Thin Crash + 14 "+ Crash 16" Splash 10 + ";
- f) Four (04) CYMBAL STANDS (SIMPLE);
- g) PEDAL STAND FOR CHARLESTON;
- h) CHARLESTON 13"
- i) Adjustable Drum Throne

KEYBOARDS

- a) Keyboard KORG 01/WFD
- b) Stand keyboards
- c) Piano YAMAHA (whatever kind)

BASS

- a) Bass Guitar Amplifier TRACE ELLIOT AH600, or equivalent with a minimum of 200W

CONTACT

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