

San Bernardino Public Library to Host a Music Program Featuring the West African Kora

Musician Sean Gaskell will be coming from North Carolina to give a performance/educational demonstration on the Kora, an ancient 21-stringed harp from West Africa. He will feature traditional songs that are the heart and soul of the Koras musical repertoire, in addition to some of his own personal compositions.

The performance will take place in the Bing Wong Auditorium at the Feldheim Central Library, 555 West 6th St. in San Bernardino, CA on Thursday, January 14th at 4pm.

The Kora is native to the Mande peoples who live within the countries of Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau. The music is traditionally played by oral and musical historians known as Griots (Gree-ohs). The Kora is a melodic and seemingly peaceful instrument, which is somewhat contrary to its musical repertoire. Many songs tell ancient stories of war and hardship, while others praise people of high political status and those who helped expand the Mande Empire. While the Kora is only 300 years old, some commonly played songs can be traced back 800 years to the Mande empires' founding. Gaskell has studied extensively under the instruction of Malamini Jobarteh and Moriba Kuyateh of Brikama, The Gambia, and Kane Mathis of Brooklyn, NY. Gaskell has been featured at numerous festivals in the US, Gambia, and Senegal.

For more information call the library at 909-381-8238, or visit our website at www.sbpl.org or Friends of the San Bernardino Public Library on Facebook. For more on Sean Gaskell visit his website at www.seangaskell.com

This all-ages program is free to the public. It is sponsored by The Friends of the San Bernardino Public Library and by Homewood Suites by Hilton, 885 East Hospitality Lane in San Bernardino.

“Need more proof that music is the greatest international language? Listen to how eloquently Sean Gaskell, a young fella from the grunge and coffee mecca of Seattle, plays the 21-string West African Kora, a gourd-bottomed harp that delivers both acres of melody and gently rippling rhythms.”Tom Surowicz – Minneapolis Star Tribune

“An amazing evening with an incredible talent! Thank you, Sean Gaskell, for sharing the contemplative sounds, history, legends and stories of the Kora! What a beautiful instrument, handled by yourself, with such respect and regard of its culture. We thank you for the experience!”Sherie Borges- Co owner, Poor Richards Book Shoppe, Charlotte, NC