

# CENTER FOR THE ART OF PERFORMANCE AT UCLA

Press Release

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## CAP UCLA Presents Noura Mint Seymali & Tal National at Royce Hall

*Join us for a Desert Rock Revue, Sat. March 5, 8PM*



Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA is proud to present Noura Mint Seymali, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania's defining artist on the international stage, along with her band. This evening of desert rock begins with Nigerian trance-rockers Tal National. Tickets (\$19-\$39) for Saturday, March 5 at 8 p.m. are available now at [cap.ucla.edu](http://cap.ucla.edu), via Ticketmaster and at the UCLA Central Ticket Office at 310.825.2101.

### **ABOUT NOURA MINT SEYMALI**

Noura Mint Seymali is a nationally beloved star and one of Mauritania's foremost musical emissaries. Born into a prominent line of Moorish griot, Noura began her career at age 13 as a supporting vocalist with her step-mother, the legendary Dimi Mint Abba. Trained in instrumental technique by her grandmother, Mounina, Noura mastered the ardine, a 9-string harp reserved only for women. Seymali Ould Ahmed Vall, Noura's father and namesake, sparked her compositional instincts, himself a seminal scholar figure in Mauritanian music; studying Arab classical music in Iraq, devising the first system for Moorish melodic notation, adapting the national anthem, and composing

many works popularized by his wife, Dimi. Reared in this transitive culture where sounds from across the Sahara, the Magreb, and West Africa coalesce, Noura Mint Seymali currently drives the legacy forward as one of Mauritania's most adventurous young artists.

Fueled by the exploratory sound of her husband **Jeiche Ould Chighaly's** emotive psych guitar lines, Noura and Jeiche formed their first "fusion" band in 2004. Jeiche, a master of the tidinit, brings the force of yet another important line of Moorish griot to bear, translating the tidinit's intricate phrasing to a modified electric guitar with heroic effect. His unique sound, mirroring vocal lines and then refracting their melodies into the ether, was born out of years presiding over wedding ceremonies, directing the dance often as the sole melodic instrument. In addition to his work with Noura, Jeiche remains one of Nouakchott's most sought after guitarists for traditional ceremonies.

After two albums - *Tarabe* (2006) & *El Howl* (2010) - released locally in Mauritania and years of experimentation adapting Moorish music to various pop formations, Noura Mint Seymali's current band is a concise return to the roots. Backed by a declarative, funk-speaking rhythm section, composed of **Ousmane Touré** (bass) and **Matthew Tinari** (drums), the band has made a formidable debut on the international stage, releasing two EPs: *Azawan* (2012) & *Azawan II* (2013). The band's first full-length album for the international market - *TZENNI* - was released via Gliiterbeat Records in 2014.

In a rare merger of cultural authority and experimental prowess, Noura Mint Seymali applies the ancient musical traditions of the griot with a savvy aesthetic engagement in our contemporary moment, emerging as a powerful voice at nexus of a changing Africa.

## **ABOUT TAL NATIONAL**

By the time Tal National reached international acclaim with 2013's *Kaani*, the band's first release outside of Niger, they had spent more than a decade crisscrossing their native country, usually on dirt pathways through the Sahara, playing epic five-hour sets, seven days a week, selling their CDs on street corners and roundabouts. In the process, they became Niger's most popular band, with songs constantly blasted on national TV and cell phones everywhere. Following FatCat's release of *Kaani*, Western audiences and critics quickly embraced the band's singular and finely-honed sound. FatCat release the dazzling follow-up, *Zoy Zoy*, in April 2015.

Niger borders Nigeria, Mali and Ghana. Collected within this former French colony can be found Songhai, Fulani, Hausa, and Tuareg populations, all of whom are represented in the membership of Tal National. This rich and varied background gives their music a hypnotic blend of Tuareg blues, Hausa percussion rhythms, and Songhai's griot guitar.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

General tickets are available at [cap.ucla.edu](http://cap.ucla.edu), all Ticketmaster outlets, by phone at 310.825.2101 or in person at the UCLA Central Ticket Office on campus. Student rush tickets, subject to availability, are offered at \$15 one hour before show time to all students with valid ID.

**PRESS REVIEW TICKETS/PHOTO PASSES/INTERVIEW REQUESTS:** Contact Ashley Eckenweiler at [ashley@theaceagency.com](mailto:ashley@theaceagency.com)

**IMAGES:** Available for download at [cap.ucla.edu/press-images](http://cap.ucla.edu/press-images). Register for access.