**Souleymane Solo Sana**

**West African Dancer, Instructor and Choreographer**

**Mande Tradition**

**603 C Dalton Drive, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452**

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**KEY QUALIFICATIONS:**

Souleymane Solo Sana is an accomplished traditional dancer from Mali, West Africa. A principal member for one of the premiere companies of Mali, Ballet Du District de Bamako, he has proven himself as a leader among the artists. Solo’s presence at local ceremonies and festivals is in high demand, performing with renown griots and musicians. He has also performed with internationally known artists such as Djeneba Seck and Oumou Sangare. With an extensive knowledge of traditional dances of the Mande culture he is has become a highly sought after instructor for private and group lessons. Solo has taught students from France, Italy, US, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Morocco, and other countries of Africa. Most notable he has instructed internationally acclaimed dancers from the United States that include university instructors and Broadway performers. Solo’s work in Mali with Ballet du District included partnering with international NGOs on development projects to create dramas using theater and dance to educate, deliver societal messages and entertain. He is currently in the US performing, teaching workshops and leading school residencies for Jeh Kulu Dance in Drum Theater, at the University of Vermont as well as independently. In 2012 he was a featured Artist in Residence at UNC-Greensboro creating original choreography for Robin Gee’s Sugarfoote Productions. Recently he has participated in a cultural exchange in Liberia working with local artists who are reviving their music and dance scene after more than a decade of struggle due to a 13 year civil war.

**Selected Companies:**

Jeh Kulu Dance and Drum Theater, USA 2011-Present

Ballet Du District de Bamako, Mali 2005- 2011

Troupe de Farafinko, Burkina Faso 2002-2003

Troupe de Lonkoba, Burkina Faso 2000-2001

**Professional Experience:**

Oct 2011 - Present, **Performer, Instructor and Choreographer**, Jeh Kulu Dance and Drum Theater**,** Burlington Vermont. Performed, taught weekly classes, workshops, and school residencies, and created original choreography for Jeh Kulu, a traditional West African Dance and Drum Ensemble founded in 1993 in Vermont. Assisted with the creation and direction of the 2012 *Premiere of Sundiata Keita: The Lion King of Mali.* Residency work involves working in schools across Vermont, New Hampshire and New York. Notable residencies include Tap Kids Summer Intensive and Middlebury Language Camp

October 2013, **Guest Choreographer** for Maimouna Keita African Dance Company, New York, NY. Choreographed multiple traditional works in preparation for Maimouna Keita’s Concert on Broadway at the 22nd Annual Dance and Drum Conference in April 2014.

August 2013, **Team Leader**, *More Than Me* *Foundation* Residency, Monrovia, Liberia. Designed and planned a month long residency for select students of the More Than Me School for girls. The Foundation focuses on getting young girls of the most vulnerable part of Monrovia off the street. Solo brought Liberian musicians and dancers on site to teach and choreograph a traditional Liberian dance for the girls to perform at the grand opening of the More than Me Academy, attended by President Sirleaf- Johnson. ([www.morethanme.org](http://www.morethanme.org))

November 2012, **Artist in Residence and Choreographer**, University of North Carolina –Greensboro. Instructor for advanced intensive West African Dance Classes for degree students in the dance department. Created original choreography for Robin Gee’s Sugarfoote Productions.

2013 Fall Semester, 2012-2013, 2011-2012, **Dance Instructor**, University of Vermont

October 2013, **Guest Dance Instructor,** East Carolina University

2012, 2013, 2014, **Dance Instructor** Brown University, Rhythm of Change Festival

2011, 2012, 2013, **Dance Instructor,** Vermont’s Annual West African Dance and Drum Festival

2005-2011 **Performer and Choreographer** for Ballet Du District, Mali

2004-2011 **Performer** on Tour with International Recording Star Djeneba Seck - Cote D’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Mali

**Other Performances with Notable Artists (2003-2011):**

Babani Kone, Mali

Djeneba Seck, Mali

Djelika Diawara, Mali

Chorus de Oumou Sangare, Mali

Fati Nationale, Mali

Abdoulaye Diabate, Mali

Kadiatou Bagayojo, Mali

Fantany Toure, Mali

Aminata Kouyate, Mali

Oumou Sangare, Mali

Deniba Sanogo, Mali

**Music Video Appearances (2003-2011):**

Djeneba Seck, Mali – *multiple productions*

Djelika Diawara, Mali - *multiple productions*

Fati Nationale, Mali

Super Gala, Mali

Kadiatou Bagayojo, Mali - *multiple productions*

**Awards-Competitions Fundings:**

Biennal Festival du Mali – 2006 – ***First Place***

Competition de Top Vacances Couture au Burkina *–****Second Place***

**Notable Festivals:**

Festival International de Volubilis, Morocco - 2009

Le Voir du Bamako - 2007

Biennal Festival du *Mali (Performances and Choreography)* - 2005, 2008, 2010

**Other Professional Experience:**

CareGiver, Home Instead Senior Care, S. Burlington, Vermont November 2013- Present

Sales Associate, Macy’s Burlington, Vermont January-June 2013

**Certifications:**

* American Red Cross CPR and First Aid Certified
* US Green Card and Work Permit

**Languages:**

Bambara, Doula, Mosse, French, English