

***Dear festivalier,***

*The Festival on the Niger was created in 2005 for the development of our beautiful area, Ségou.*

*The principal objective of the Festival on the Niger is:*

- *to develop perennial cultural tourism and to advance sustainable development in the area of Ségou.*

*The specific objectives are:*

- *to promote, and participate in the safeguard of the artistic and cultural expressions*
- *to support the local economy*
- *to create an international platform for exchanges and discussions through the Forum*
- *to make Ségou an artistic and cultural capital*
- *to participate in the safeguard of the environment, in particular the Niger river*
- *to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS*

*The Festival on the Niger is preparing its 4th edition, and has already obtained very encouraging results from the first three editions:*

- *at the local level and also at the international level, the appreciation for our artistic and cultural expressions has increased considerably*
- *thanks to the festival the incomes of thousands of people increases: each year we employ many people (almost 1700 in 2007), and with the multitude of festival participants many others gain indirectly (all the food chain, tradesmen, craftsmen, etc)*
- *these benefits, as much on the cultural level as also on the economic level create a great source of hope, motivation, and inspiration for the populations of the area*
- *each year the Forum treats a topic which touches on the local problems and ultimately leads to recommendations adapted to local realities.*

*Following these successes, we decided to achieve even more, namely*

- *to take part in the safeguard of the environment, in particular the Niger river, through sensitizing citizens and by concrete actions for the protection and the reinforcement of the banks of the river*
- *to contribute to the fight against HIV, through various forms of sensitizing.*

*By visiting the Festival on the Niger, you support us in our efforts to develop our area. We thank you warmly, and we offer you a very rich program of high quality: masks and*

*traditional puppets, music and dances, tales and legends, big concerts on the river with some of the biggest stars in the region, and lots more.*

### ***Our tariffs are related to our expenses***

*Generally people do not realize of all the expenses the organization of a festival requires. They think that the fees of the stars accounts for the majority of the budget. That is far from reality. We also pay all the traditional troops, and we employ nearly 1700 people; we have the expenses of installation of the site, are paying for sound and the lights, operating expenses of the office, marketing, transport, etc.*

*However, others say, festivals in developed countries are less expensive, and that astonishes them. There are several explanations for the differences in pricing:*

- festivals in the Western world work especially with volunteers, but we preferred to create jobs*
- festivals in the West easily find sizeable sponsors, who finance sometimes up to 80% of the budget. In our region, the majority of the sponsors are small companies which give small amounts.*
- festivals in the West easily attract great numbers of festival attendees, which allows them to lower the cost by visitor. On our site, the number of festival attendees is still timid.*

*Nevertheless, we understand that it is not a given that everyone is prepared to spend 100 euros. In order to allow all the purses to take part in the festival, we founded the daily tariffs (20 euros Sunday, 50 euros Saturdays, and 50 euros Friday).*

*Why a preferential rate for the Malians? Because the Festival is organized around the Malian culture, and the Festival could not be a true festival without the Malians. We want them to participate in large numbers, but our tariffs would exclude the majority of them, therefore we offer them this preferential rate.*

*Thank you for your comprehension.*