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Applause Series event brings traditional and contemporary tunes for the West African “Kora” to a western Mass audience.

(Agawam, Mass.) The Agawam Cultural Council’s *Applause Series* continues with a concert by Sean Gaskell, (pictured) who will present the *Music and History of the West African Kora* at the Agawam Senior Center on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 7:00 PM.



Gaskell will feature traditional songs on the West African Kora, a 21 stringed instrument 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. The Kora is a melodic and seemingly peaceful instrument, somewhat contrary to its musical repertoire of songs telling ancient stories of war and hardship, and others praising people of high political status and those who helped expand the Mande Empire. Though the Kora is only 300 years old, some commonly played songs can be traced back 800 years to the Mande Empire’s founding.

Gaskell has studied extensively under the instruction of Malamini Jobarteh and Moriba Kuyateh of Brikama, Gambia, and Kane Mathis of Brooklyn, NY. He has been featured at numerous festivals in the US, Gambia, and Senegal.

Additional information on the entire *Applause Series* is available at the Agawam Cultural Council web site, www.agawamcc.org.

The Agawam Cultural Council is an all-volunteer local partner of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and is funded, in part, by the MCC. The ACC is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.