



Dr. Poppy Spowage
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To whom it may concern,

I am writing in my capacity as the Co-Founder and Creative Producer of the East African Soul Train (EAST) - an interdisciplinary arts residency and research programme, investigating new ways of collaborating virtually and engaging audiences across geographical boundaries – to confirm my strong support of Maimouna Jallow's application to CISP's ArtXchange Storytelling programme.

I am a long-term collaborator of Maimouna's, having worked with her on EAST in 2017 running the writing master classes and on EAST 2019 in an advisory capacity. This year, we have invited her to be the Artistic Director of our hybrid residency, guiding the artists as they explore the theme of Lost + Found. As an artist herself, who has produced work across disciplines, including theatre and film, and who interrogates relationships between past and present in creating contemporary stories rooted in traditional African storytelling forms, her engagement with the project is an asset.

As the Artistic Director, Maimouna has shown exceptional leadership and I am delighted to see her plans to continue to evolve her work with an exciting range of artists and organizations across Africa. In our current and previous collaborations, Maimouna has always ensured broad consultation with all members taking part in the project. She is hands on, present every step of the way, from inception and beyond. Her emphasis on tailoring content for the needs of the participants and creating safe spaces for collaboration means that her workshops are engaging, relevant and build the capacity of participants to engage with storytelling as a form of self-expression and a tool to influence societal change in the long-term.

Maimouna is a remarkable facilitator, writer and creative with and I strongly believe that she will contribute positively to your programme, and bring all her expertise and enthusiasm to the process.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Poppy Spowage