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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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American Folk Festival Welcomes Musician Balla Kouyate for Special “Festival Warmup” Activities

Three events to take place over two days this week

BANGOR, MAINE – The 2013 American Folk Festival on the Bangor Waterfront is getting underway a couple of weeks ahead of schedule with its inaugural “Festival Warmup Tour. Balla Kouyate, considered to be among the greatest balafon players in the world today, will be performing in three locations over two days this week in Bangor.

"Thanks to a grant from the Maine Community Foundation, we had the opportunity to bring in an additional artist, expanding the level of performances that you can see and hear at the American Folk Festival for members of this community who might not have experienced it in the past," said Heather McCarthy, Executive Director of the American Folk Festival. "Balla is an amazing performer and does a lot of work with children, so we think that these three performances will be both exciting and engaging for families in Eastern Maine."

Balla Kouyate will appear from 11 a.m. – 12 noon on Wednesday, August 14 at Bangor Public Library; from 11:30 – 12:30 on Thursday, August 15 at the Bangor Housing Community Center; and from 2 – 3 p.m. on Thursday, August 15 at the Maine Discovery Museum. All performances are free and open to the public.

Balla Kouyate was raised in the Djeli (Griot) tradition in Mali. Balla began formal training of performing at the young age of six in his native land. Balla has performed all over the world, including a month-long residency for children in 2004 with Sidiki Conde at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

"Bringing in a performer with the talent of Balla Kouyate ahead of the festival is a testament to the level of talent we have on tap this year for the American Folk Festival," said McCarthy. "We are really proud of this year's lineup and cannot wait to bring all of these performers to Bangor."

This year's performer lineup includes 16 groups, performing the traditional arts of their region, their culture, and their heritage. Blues, Chinese Opera, Rockabilly, Bluegrass, Zydeco, Gospel, Quebecois, Irish and Greek are a few of the styles of music that will be present at the 2013 American Folk Festival.

Among the performers festival-goers can expect to see, The Yves Lambert Trio offers a Quebecois sound that is unmatched in the modern day. Yves Lambert performed in Bangor as a part of the 2002 National Folk Festival, and returns with his trio, delivering new ideas in unexpected form, while carefully preserving the soul of the music. The Yves Lambert Trio is sponsored by Cashman Communications and "The Nite Show with Danny Cashman."

American Folk Festival attendees will also be delighted by Sonny Burgess and the Legendary Pacers, a group that has spanned seven decades, having toured with the likes of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, and Patsy Cline. The group plays the rockabilly music of the 50s that they helped create, and were inducted into the Rockabilly Hall of Fame in 2002. Sonny Burgess and the Legendary Pacers are sponsored by Deighan Wealth Advisors.

For a complete listing of performers, vendors, or more information on the American Folk Festival, visit www.americanfolkfestival.com. For more information about Maine Internet Radio, visit www.maineinternetradio.com.

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