

You
don't
need
feet to **dance**

88 min, Stereo, Digital File, 1.77:1



FIRST RUN FEATURES

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Synopsis

Alan Govenar's intimate new documentary reveals the extraordinary life of African immigrant Sidiki Conde, a man overcoming his disability one day at a time in New York City.

Sidiki was born in 1961, in Guinea, West Africa. At age fourteen, polio left him almost completely paralyzed. Sent to live with his grandfather in a village deep in the forest, Sidiki learned to manage his disability, building his upper-body strength so that he could walk on his hands. When faced with the dilemma of dancing in a coming of age ceremony, he reconstructed the traditional steps by dancing on his hands instead of his feet.

In time Sidiki ran away to Conakry, Guinea's capital city, where he and his friends organized an orchestra of artists with disabilities recruited from the city's streets. They toured the country, striving to change the perception of the disabled. In 1987, he became a member of the renowned dance company Merveilles D'Afrique, founded by Mohamed Komoko Sano. Sidiki became a soloist and served as rehearsal master, composing and directing the company's repertoire. He also worked as a musician and arranger with Youssou N'Dour, Salifa Keita, Baba Maal and other popular musicians.

In 1998, Conde's music brought him to the United States, and he founded the Tokounou All-Abilities Dance and Music Ensemble. In the United States, he has continued to perform and teach, instructing people of all abilities in schools, hospitals and universities, and served as artist in residence at a Bronx public school for children with multiple disabilities.

In *You Don't Need Feet to Dance*, Sidiki balances his career as a performing artist with the almost insurmountable obstacles of life in New York City, from his fifth-floor walk-up apartment in the East village, down the stairs with his hands and navigating in his wheelchair through Manhattan onto buses and into the subway. Despite the challenges, Sidiki teaches workshops for disabled kids, busks on the street, rehearses with his musical group, bicycles with his hands, and prepares for a baby naming ceremony, where he plays djembe drums, sings, and dances on his hands.



Sidiki Conde works with children with disabilities in New York City, as seen in *YOU DON'T NEED FEET TO DANCE*, a film by Alan Govenar. A First Run Features release. Photo by Alan Govenar.

Credits

Directed by
Cinematography by
Edited by
Location Sound by
Production Assistants
Produced by
Funded in part by
Special Thanks

**ALAN GOVENAR
DIDIER DORANT
JASON JOHNSON-SPINOS
ALAN GOVENAR
JONATHAN YANIV, GIL LEVY, ALEX GOVENAR
DOCUMENTARY ARTS
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
SIDIKI CONDE, DEBORAH ROSS, KALETA DOOLIN,
DAVIS CONNELLY, PETRONE PHILIP, AARON PHILIP
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CHILDREN, CHALLENGED ATHLETE FOUNDATION,
THE CITY OF NEW YORK, NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT**

Live Music by
Recorded Music from the CD
CD Produced by

SIDIKI CONDE and AFRO-JERSEY
SIDIKI
RICK DEPOFI, NY Noise

Musicians

SIDIKI CONDE - Vocals, Doun Doun Drums
BALLA KOUYATE - Balafon, Bass, Drums
MOUSSA SISOKO – Guitar
YACOUBA SISSOKO – Kora
PABLO SEKOU DEMBELE – Djembe
BOUBA SAKOU – Guitar
ROBIN MACATANGY – Guitar
OZ NOY – Guitar
FATU KEITA – Vocals
GARY HAASE – Bass
CONRAD KORSCH – Electric and Acoustic Bass
SHAWN PHELTON – Drums
DANNY LOUIS – Trumpet, Organ
ROGER SQUITERO – Percussion
RICK DEPOFI – Drums, Keyboards, Flute, Horns, Percussion

Background Vocals

FATU KEITA, FATOU CAMARA, IBA BANGOURA, YOYO CAMARA, TERRE ROCHE, SUZZY ROCHE, MACHAN TAYLOR, ABDOULAYE DIABATE, DANNY LOUIS, RICK DEPOFI

The Dalina Children

ALEX CELLUM, JAMES CELLUM, ELISA HERNANDEZ, EMILY JUSTICH, KERRY JUSTICH, KEVIN JUSTICH, DANIEL MONROE, MASHA PUCHKOFF, OONA MAE ROCHE, KIGHLA CARLSON, EAN CARLSON

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