



Giwayen Mata presents ***Echoes of Africa***

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

All Ages

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Giwayen Mata will present songs, rhythms, and a dance of Africa and the African Diaspora. The African Diaspora is a term that simply refers to all the various places around the world where people from African nations and their descendants live. No matter where African people and their descendants live, millions of them have managed to keep the essence of Africa alive in their hearts and minds through colors, clothing, hair styles, cuisine, worship practices, music, dances, ways of speaking, and more. Just like various parts of the African Diaspora, the women of Giwayen Mata have been seasoned with the essence of Mother Africa and therefore continue to look back to her for ways to celebrate through tradition, movement, music, and song.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The term “Giwayen Mata” comes from the Hausa ethnic group of Nigeria and West Africa. It means “Elephant Women” and often refers to the leaders of women’s organizations. For a group of dancers and drummers who came together in Atlanta in 1993, it was the perfect term for their trailblazing performance style.

Atlanta’s Giwayen Mata first brought their drums together for a gathering of Muslim women. The women wanted to dance, but their faith did not permit it in front of men. At the time, only a handful of women in the Atlanta area were playing the djembe and other African drums which are traditionally played by men. Several of the female drummers assembled for the event and had such a good time that they stayed together, eventually coalescing into a drum and dance performance group.

Now, Giwayen Mata not only performs, but also teaches classes and workshops in drumming and African dance. They perform traditional dances as well as modern works inspired by the dances of Mali, the Ivory Coast, South Africa, Guinea, and others. And since 1993, these “elephant leaders of women” have become a fixture on the Atlanta arts scene.

Georgia

United States



**WEST
AFRICA**

ABOUT THE DANCES

Key - cc: choreography credit; ma: musical arranger

Baba's Song - taught to Giwayen Mata by our beloved Baba Chuck Davis, this song is performed to honor the connection between the ancestors and the living as well as the elders and the youth. Known to all as "Baba Chuck", he played a critical role in the presentation of African performance art and was a faithful teacher, mentor, and supporter of Giwayen Mata. A notable quote from him is, "I look back to honor the contributions of my ancestors".

Giwa Speaks - Giwayen Mata's own way of welcoming audience members into this performance circle, acknowledging the purpose for gathering here together, and sharing a little "Giwa her-story".

Mama's Beat - based on the dance Fanga originally created by renowned dancer and anthropologist Dr. Pearl Primus, this selection is a formal welcome through dance, rhythm, and song. Dr. Pearl Primus was the first Black modern dancer whose signature 6 feet high dance jumps have inspired countless performers and told many stories about the lives of Black people all over the world.

cc: Omelika Kuumba
ma: Omelika Kuumba

Jalidon/Dansa

This is one of the dances included in the Lamban family of dances from the Mali Empire. It dates back to the 14th Century and was originally performed by the sacred dancers of the king's court. Later, the dance was performed by the village historians (griots) for the king. "Jali" means *griot* or oral historian. "Don" means dance. Thus, *Jalidon* is the dance of the oral historian. Originally danced to a stringed instrument called a kora, often while a griot would sing, it is now performed to djembe by the Malinke, Kasonke, and Bamana people of Mali and Senegal and the Susu people of Guinea. The dance is done to celebrate rites of passage of life such as births, marriages, birthdays, initiations, weddings, funerals, and good harvest.



Dansa is a rhythm that is included in the Lamban family of rhythms from the Mali Empire. It is from the Kayes and Kita region of southern Mali associated with the Kasonke and Bamana ethnic groups. Originally played as a competition dance for young men, it is now a popular rhythm played all over West Africa. Giwayen Mata plays it in celebration of their inherent royalty.

cc: Amamansa Whitten
ma: Mahiri Keita

So Sinte - originally danced by the Nalu people of Guinea for girls and their mothers during rites of passage, this piece is performed in a unique dancing-drummer style by Giwayen Mata to celebrate the pivotal relationships between mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends. This piece is dedicated especially to the women of Ayodele Dance and Drum in Chicago as well as the 2018-19 class of 8th grade dancers at Price Middle School in Atlanta.

cc: Adiellah Bates, Amamansa Whitten, Lealah Henderson, Tamba Omiyale Harris, et al.

ma: Tamba Omiyale Harris, Omelika Kuumba, et al.

Hand JIVE Polyrythm- a polyrythm is more than one rhythm play together to make music. This piece empowers the audience to use handjives/ handshakes to make music together.

ma: Tamba Omiyale Harris, et al.

Kuku Bantaba- the Bantaba is the community dance circle that is a safe place for everyone to feel the beat moving through their feet. Kuku, a social dance from the Susu people of Guinea was originally performed by the women to celebrate the fishing harvest. It is now performed for all kinds of celebrations. Giwayen Mata celebrates the opportunity to share African culture with everyone and invites the audience to join in on this finale dance.

cc: Amamansa Whitten, Nicole El, Ayana Cofer, et al

ma: Omelika Kuumba

ACTIVITIES

Before the Performance

- Talk about modern drums and how they are used in America. Explore types of drums and percussion instruments in the music room (if available). Find pictures or videos of African drums online. How are they different? What are they made of? What is different about how they are played?
- Locate the African regions mentioned on a map. Talk about the indigenous people from these regions. What is their lifestyle like? How do they communicate? What types of rituals do they have and how are they different from one another?
- Listen to audio samples of African drumming.



The Day of the Performance

- Remind students how to be good listeners. Practice how students can show their appreciation as audience members to the performers.

After the Performance

- Using everyday materials, have students make drums and other simple percussion instruments. Experiment creating polyrhythms by assigning different groups of instruments a different rhythm.
- Patterns are very common in music, dance, and drum beats. There are also patterns in nature. Research and see if you can come up with some examples of patterns in nature.
- Learn about other countries that use drums in their native and cultural music. What traditions do they have and how to they celebrate them?

VOCABULARY

- **Polyrhythms** - rhythm that makes use of two or more different rhythms simultaneously.



- **Kora** - a 21-string lute-bridge-harp used extensively in West Africa



- **Jembe** – a goblet shaped drum that you play with your hands

• **Call-and-response chants** - a melody is stated in a phrase that is then followed by a second phrase that completes the idea. The first phrase is presented like a question, prompting the second phrase - the reply.



- **Sekere** – an instrument with shells wound around a large and polished gourd

RESOURCES

Books

African Dance: Drumbeat in Our Feet by Patricia Keeler and Júlio Leitão

African Dance: World of Dance by Kariam Asante

Zomo the Rabbitt: A Trickster Tale from West Africa by Gerald McDermott

The Adventures of Spider: West African Folktales by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Sundiata: Lion King of Mali by David Wisniewski

Great Rulers of the African Past by Lavinia Dobler and William A. Brown, illustrated by Yvonne Johnson

Africa: A Biography of the Continent by John Reader

Internet

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_dance

<http://www.artslynx.org/dance/afro.htm#Master>

<http://www.alokli.com/site/video/video.html>

<http://www.afro.com/children/discover/guinea/guinea.html>

http://dance.lovetoknow.com/History_of_African_Dance

<https://www.binoandfino.com/blog/2015/12/15/a-list-of-some-traditional-dances-from-different-african-countries>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/world_music/music_africa2.shtml

<http://www.music-mosaic.com/articles/african-drum-music.htm>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-an-African-Drum>

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS AND STANDARDS

Standard	Explanation
MK-5GM.6	Listening to, analyzing, and describing music a. Identify specific music events in an aural example, given appropriate terminology. b. Identify characteristics of musical elements in music which represent diverse genres and cultures.
MK-5GM.7	Evaluating music and music performances. a. Evaluate musical performances of themselves and others. b. Explain personal preferences for specific musical works and styles using appropriate vocabulary.
M6-12GM.9	Understanding music in relation to history and culture a. Perform, listen, move and/or distinguish between music from various historical periods and cultures (e.g., various world regions). b. Describe how music and musicians function in various cultures. c. Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior for the context and style of music performed
Program Focus	
SS7G1	The student will locate selected features of Africa.
SS7G4	The student will describe the diverse cultures of the people who live in Africa.
DK-5FD.1	Identifies and demonstrates movement elements, skills, and terminology in dance
DK-5CR.2	Demonstrates an understanding of dance as a way to create and communicate meaning a. Improvises movement based on own ideas, feelings, concepts, and kinesthetic awareness b. Recognizes and accurately describes movement and dance elements. c. Moves expressively to music or other accompaniment (e.g., sound, text)
DK-5CO.3	Integrates the use of technology and new media a. Explores dance as an art form through the use of media and technology

DK-5CO.1.g.	Describes the similarities and differences in various dance styles (e.g., ballet, jazz, tap, folk)
TAMS6-12.7	Integrating various art forms, other content areas, and life experiences to create theatre a. Identifies similarities between theatre and other art forms
TAMSK-5.11	Engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member in theatre or other media experiences a. Models appropriate audience behaviors b. Analyzes the relationship between an audience and a performer