



College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MSU African Diaspora Percussion Ensemble

Kevin Jones, director
Angel Hernandez, co-director

Friday, November 1, 2024
Fairchild Theatre, 8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Rhythms and Songs from Congo

Nzobi	arr. Kevin Jones
Aire Pinoeré	Traditional
Ngoma Ba Congo	Traditional
Yembala	Titos Somba
Ganza	Titos Somba

Rhythms and Songs from Cuba

Bembé	Sacred Rhythm & Dance
Matanzas Rumba Guaguancó	Traditional Cuban Rhythm
Congo Yambumba	Jesús Alfonso Miró (1948–2009)
Rumba Columbia	Traditional Cuban Rhythm Angel Hernandez and Cory Doran, soloists

Intermission

Djembe Orchestra

Sorsornet	Guinea Traditional Rhythm
Sinte	Guinea Traditional Rhythm
Sunu	Traditional Rhythm arr. Kevin Jones
Mendiani	arr. M'bemba Bangoura
Zaouli and Kuku	arr. Mamady Keita & Djobi Irie Simon

PROGRAM NOTES

Nzobi (arrangement by Kevin Jones) is a rhythm from Northern Congo which is used for healing and mental health wellness. Originally, it was played with drums other than congas and the Congolese Ngoma but has been adapted in this case for modern times.

Aire Pionéré is a traditional celebration rhythm played all over the Kongo Kingdom. This rhythm can be heard in such celebrations as marriage, harvest, and other celebrations in the community.

Ngoma Ba Congo roughly translates to “Drums of the Ba Congo People”. This is a secular rhythm played in the streets and various communities throughout the Congolese Diaspora.

Yembala, by composer and arranger Titos Somba (born in Brazzaville, Congo), is a song and arrangement utilized for villagers to bless hunters’ safety and success. The rhythm is a traditional rhythm called **Zebola**.

Ganza, by composer and arranger Titos Somba, is a traditional rhythm, dance and song to celebrate the rite of passage for young boys to become men.

Bembé comes from the Yoruba people of West Africa. Depending on the context, the term “bembé” can refer to one of many things. However, for our purposes, it is a specific rhythm played on congas and a dance that is sacred in nature. A Bembé is also a ceremony honoring the orishas in the Lucumi traditions derived from the Yoruba people.

Matanzas Rumba Guaguancó is a group of rhythms that have their origins in Africa, particularly Congo and West Africa. Matanzas Rumba Guaguancó is traditional rhythm from the Matanzas region of Cuba. The song **Congo Yambumba** is based in these rhythms and composed by Jesús Alfonso Miró, one of the founders of the group “Los Muñequitos de Matanzas”.

Rumba Columbia is a traditional rhythm and dance from Cuba. Created by dock workers in Cuba, it was traditionally danced by only men to show off their skill and machismo.

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

Djembe Orchestra

Djembe drumming has been around for centuries, originating in the Mali Empire which is now the West African countries of Guinea and Mali. In this region, people played this percussive music for all daily life events for such a long time that eventually the music blended into the culture and traditions, and it has remained that way ever since. A Guinean traditional orchestra is composed of eight or more percussive instruments, the Djembe being one of them. The bass drums of the orchestra are called Dundunba drums. Each instrument of the orchestra plays a different percussive pattern.

Sorsornet is a Guinea traditional rhythm and arrangement. The mask, Sorsornet, is one of the masks that is seen as bringer of good luck and considered to be almost a deity. When this mask is inside the village, the rhythm Sorsornet is played and the mask moves through the village. Today, Sorsornet is also a popular rhythm to which men as well as women dance.

The **Sinte** dance originates from the Boke region in the northwest area of Guinea, where the Nalu people have lived since ancient times. It was originally performed in preparation for the initiation of the young. The adults would dance to inform the young people of some of the trials they may encounter as they mature.

Sunu(n), a traditional rhythm (arrangement by Kevin Jones), is a popular rhythm played at all popular festivities. Originally named after a female dancer named Sunun, the rhythm has seen many variations over the years and most of the songs are about weddings or marriage.

Mendiani (arrangement by M'bemba Bangoura) is a traditional rhythm and a dance for young girls from age six to thirteen.

Zaouli and Kuku (arrangement by Mamady Keita and Djobi Irie Simon) - **Zaouli** is a mask dance originating from the Gouro people of Cote d'Ivoire. Each village and family has their own mask and typically the movements of the dancers are coordinated with the drummers. In modern times and with the advent of ballet, Zaouli is often paired with Guinean rhythms Kassa or **Kuku**, which is a celebration rhythm known as the "fishing dance".

ARTIST-FACULTY BIO

Percussionist, bandleader, producer and educator **“Bujo” Kevin Jones** has played percussion for 54 years. Growing up in Englewood, New Jersey, he was immersed in jazz, soul, gospel and blues. Surrounded by excellent teachers like Master Drummers Karl Potter and Babatunde Lea, he was touring by age thirteen with “Spoonbread”, a soul group opening for acts like The Four Tops, War, and The Chi-Lites. At the age of sixteen, Jones joined Tanawa, a Drum and Dance Company under the leadership of Congolese Master Drummers and Dancers Titos Somba, Coster Massamba, and Malonga Casquelourde. He studied with Max Roach and Archie Shepp at UMASS Amherst. His studies and playing led him to a number of disparate stages, including years of touring and recording with The Isley Brothers, Whitney Houston, and jazz greats Archie Shepp, Reggie Workman, Winard Harper, Charles McPherson, John Benitez, and Hilton Ruiz. An eternal student of the drum, Jones continues his study of multiple African Diaspora musics with Djobi Irie Simon (Ivory Coast), M'bemba Bangoura (Guinea), as well as Afro-Caribbean music with Luisito Quintero. Jones currently resides in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and has been teaching African Diaspora World Percussion to students at MSU for three years.

STUDENT BIO

Angel J. Hernandez is a percussionist specializing in Afro-Cuban music. He is currently pursuing his master’s degree in Percussion Performance at Michigan State University under the direction of Dr. Jon Weber, Professor Gwendolyn Dease, and Professor Kevin-Dalton Jones. Angel has performed with various groups such as the MSU Wind Symphony, MSU Salsa Verde, Orquesta Ritmo, MSU Drumline, MSU African Diaspora Ensemble, LanSINGout Men’s Chorus, and more. Angel is currently the instructor of percussion at the Community Music School in East Lansing and is the assistant director of the African Diaspora Ensemble at MSU. Angel is active in the Lansing/East Lansing and Grand Rapids area

PERSONNEL

African Diaspora Percussion Ensemble

Angel Hernandez - co-director

Ethan Strickland

Cory Doran

Evan Moore

Adrienne Evans

Isaac Hinshaw

Sam Melkonian

John Soave

Cadence Miller

Zander Swon

Spencer Gravel

UPCOMING EVENT

11/21 Thursday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble

Cook Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

TICKET PRICES

\$ \$12 Adults, \$10 Seniors (age 60 and older), Students with ID and anyone under age 18 are free but require a ticket for admission.

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- **Sam and Mary Austin** (Musique 21 concerts)
- **Sam and Mary Austin Fund for New Music** (Wind Symphony, Oct. 25; Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 27; Musique 21, Oct. 28; Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **Ken and Sandy Beall** (Cello Plus Chamber Music Festival Series; Jazz Spectacular)
- **James and Susan Bonfiglio** (Symphony Orchestra, Apr. 26; Fall Opera)
- **Jenny Chung and Family for Human Rights Fund** (Jazz Nonets concerts)
- **Joanne and Bill Church** (West Circle Series)
- **April Clobes and Glen Brough** (Celebrating the Spectrum; Whirlwinds)
- **Trustee Emerita Dee Cook in memory of her husband Byron Cook** (Baroque Fest)
- **Susan Davis** (Fall Opera)
- **Dean Transportation** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Alena Fabian, M.D.** (Votapek, Sept. 25; Piano Monster)
- **John and Gretchen Forsyth** (Sinder, Feb. 16; Oboe, Trumpet and Organ, Feb. 11)
- **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowment for Chamber Music** (Happy Birthday Mozart!)
- **Thea Glicksman** (From Vienna with Love, Jan. 17)
- **Howard and Pam Gourwitz** (Lulloff, Nov. 25)
- **Anne Hiller** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Lauren Harris** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Taylor Johnston Early Music Series Endowment established by Taylor Johnston** (Taylor Johnston Early Music Series)
- **Hari Kern and the late Ralph R. Edminster, M.D.** (Votapek, Mar. 27)
- **Michael and Paula Koppisch** (Zuber, Feb. 17)
- **Robert Last and Jill Canny** (MSU Federal Credit Union Jazz Artist in Residence, J. Clayton, Dec. 8; Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest Concert)
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- **Ann, John and Abby Lindley** (Holiday Glory; Wind Symphony, Nov. 24)
- **Merritt Lutz** (Celebrating the Spectrum; Wind Symphony, Apr. 24)
- **Clare Mackey** (Pass a Good Time, Oct. 6; Oboe, Trumpet and Organ, Feb. 11)
- **Joseph and Jeanne Maguire** (A Jazzy Little Christmas)

- **Patrick and Victoria McPharlin Guest Artist Endowment for Jazz Studies in the College of Music** (Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest Concert)
- **Pat & Mary McPharlin** (Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **Dr. Roy and Christine Meland** (Vive La France)
- **Gordon E. Miracle** (Votapek, Sept. 25; Helton, Oct. 31)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union** (Showcase Series; Spartan Spectacular; Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union Entrepreneurial Musical Artist-in-Residence Endowed Fund** (Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **George Orban and Rae Ramsdell** (Red Cedar Organ, Sept. 15)
- **Milton Powell, in memory of Sue Powell, accomplished pianist and organist** (Red Cedar Organ, Sept. 15)
- **Liz and Tony Raduazo in honor of Andrew Raduazo** (Sensory Friendly Spartan Concert, Nov. 9 and April 8)
- **Nancy and Charlie Seebeck** (MSU-Stanford Piano Quartet)
- **Michael and Elaine Serling** (A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
- **Leonard and Sharon Tabaka** (Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
- **TechSmith** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Dr. Robert W. Uphaus and Dr. Lois M. Rosen** (Symphony Orchestra, Sept. 27; Woodward String Quartet, Mar. 13; Bagratuni, Mar. 31)
- **Linn Van Dyne and Mike Knox** (Symphony Orchestra, Feb. 7)
- **Barbara E. Wagner** (Wagner Chamber Music Competition)
- **Dr. Charles and Philippa Webb** (Beacon Hill Music Series)
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