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Marshall University Music Department Presents the Marshall University African Drumming & Dance Ensemble, Steven Hall, conductor

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SCHOOL of MUSIC and THEATRE

presents

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY AFRICAN DRUMMING & DANCE ENSEMBLE

Steven Hall, conductor

Monday, April 28, 2014
Smith Recital Hall
8:00 p.m

Program

Gota

Ewe
Ghana & Benin, West Africa

Sikyi

Akan
Ghana, West Africa

Bantaba

Djolla, Ballanta and Mandingo
Senegal and Guinea, West Africa

Bamaya

Dagbomba
Northern Ghana, West Africa

 Program Notes 

Traditional African music is a community activity and is functional. Traditional African music maintains deep connections with the aspects of the daily lives of the people including the history of their ancestors. Most traditional African music has four aspects: drumming, dancing, singing, and costumes.

This program is presented by the College of Arts & Media through the School of Music and Theatre with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

Gota

This social dance for youth in the Volta Region of Ghana is a community dance among the Ewes. Usually a duet for the opposite sex, the dancers use the non-verbal language of dance through flexible torso and pelvic movements.

This movement flow is interjected with a sharp silence freeze. This pause is unique in its own right because that total silence is part of the Gota music and dance. The master drummer commands the entire dance piece. The music is polyrhythmic, interwoven in a fabric of sound created by many distinct and contrasting phrases played simultaneously. The basic rhythm of each instrument is carefully crafted to contribute to the power of the overall rhythm. As the parts repeat, the players reach their aesthetic goal: a beautifully integrated whole with subliminal nurturing undercurrents to elevate the mind and soul.

Sikiyi

Sikiyi, social music and dance of the Akan people in Ghana, is a dance of flirtation between the sexes.

Bantaba

Bantaba is a festival music and dance of the Djolla, Ballanta and Mandingo people of Senegal and Guinea. *Bantaba* would normally be performed at the end of harvest season and would involve everyone in the community. The purpose for this music is to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest and to bring the community together in celebration. *Bantaba*, therefore marks the end of the harvest season.

Bamaya

Bamaya, meaning, "The river valley is wet", is the most popular social music and dance performed among the Dagbombas of Northern Ghana. Originally used for religious performances and performed only by men, Bamaya is now performed by both genders for funerals, festivals and other social occasions.

Two different but similar origination stories seemingly explain the creation of Bamaya: During a drought and famine in the 19th century, sacrifices made by rainmakers to their land god Tingban(a) were futile. The Dagbomba men decided that prayers by women to Tingban got a faster response so they dressed in women's clothing and went with the head priest to a grove where they believed the god resided. Due to their vigorous dance, the god was touched by the plight of the "women" and sent down an abundant rainfall. The name, Bamaya, was given to the dance as a form of gratitude and joy on the behalf of the dancers who brought the plentiful rains.

Bamaya, a Dogbane harvest dance usually performed by men in ladies' skirts, involves wiggling of the pelvis. This special dance is based on the story of a man who maltreated his wife, resulting in a plague of famine for the whole territory. It was revealed that in order to humble the man in question to his wife, all the men in the village had to dress like women - hence the Bamaya costume. The gender equality element furnishes us with food for thought...be nice to all living things. Some schools of traditional thought links the dance movements of Bamaya to fanning off mosquitoes.

African Ensemble Personnel

Bartlett, Mason	Blankenship, Stephen
Boggs, Jeremy	Brown-Dolinski, Tracey
Coe, Kaitlynn	Crowe, Joseph
Farrell, Morgan	Fisher, Brooke
Grandstaff, Jarohn	Hall, Allison
Hall, Emily	Hawkins, Corynn
Horner, Jesse	Jasper, Allyson
Kiser, Charles	McGuffin, Katelyn
Meeks, Kelli	Michaelis, Arika
Patrick, Ross	Potter, Brody
Powell, Charles***	Rankin, T'Asia
Rivera, Amanda	Roles, Mirissa
Scarberry, Christopher	Settle, Colten
Staley, Derek	Stevens, Shane
Stradwick, Christina	Walls, Brandon
Weisz, Jordan	Woods, Danielle

*** - graduate student

I owe a great deal of gratitude to Ms. Betsy Jordan for her assistance in working with the dancers.

----Steve Hall



The Marshall University School of Music and Theatre is grateful for the support of many families and individuals who help make our department strong and vibrant.

If you would like to support the Department of Music through a donation and assist with student scholarships, academic travel for students and ensembles, or general support of the department please contact:

Melanie Griffis, Director of Development

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