



Dear friend of Kulu Mele,

With community help, we published a book, coloring book and poster in celebration of Kulu Mele's 50th anniversary. These materials are not ends in themselves. They are tools we learn from and with. Ways that we fulfill commitments to share back collective legacies and build the futures we need.

We value word of mouth and community knowledge. These publications are first compilations of shared experiences, incomplete offerings. Call and response is ongoing, raising corrections and additions. Recirculation processes (like publishing) stimulate memories and movement. Details can shift, come back, come alive, change.

To aid this process of collective reflection, we recirculate this sampling from our research. Two Kulu Mele programs and five Philadelphia Tribune articles give close-up glimpses of Kulu Mele's earliest years (1968-1976). The 50-year working timeline (used in the process) offers contextual glimpses.¹ With thanks to John Wilkie, KM historian and to Alonzo Kittrels and the *Philadelphia Tribune*. Enjoy and reflect!

Materials include:

1. "Muntu Cultural Festival Attracts Wide Interest." *Philadelphia Tribune* (16 July 1968) 9.
2. *An African American Dance Company. Kulu Mele meaning "Speaking for our Ancestors."* [KM program] 4 pp. c. 1971-2.
3. "Kulu Mele to Open Black Arts Festival." *Philadelphia Tribune* (31 October 1972) 22.
4. "Black Arts Tribute to Black History." *Philadelphia Tribune* (12 February 1974) 8.
5. "Afro-American Dancers Speak for Their Ancestors on Sunday." *Philadelphia Tribune* (2 August 1975) 7.
6. "Free Open Air Fest Continues at Lee Ctr." *Philadelphia Tribune* (3 August 1976) 11.
7. *Kulu Mele Afrikan-American Dance Ensemble. The Authenticity of Afrikan American Culture. . .* [KM program] 4 pp. c. 1976-7.
8. Kulu Mele: African Dance & Drum Ensemble (1969-2019->): movement stories [an abbreviated 50th anniversary timeline] 5 pp, 2019.
9. Full set of KM O&tP postcards [6]

We invite you. This project is collectively sourced and co-created. Share your thoughts on Kulu Mele, O&tP, the premiere performance, any and all of these publications and materials, and where we go from here: kulumele50@kulumele.org

¹ Additional materials are in the KMO&tP 2018-2020 Project Archive.

What is Ogun & the People to you?

Kulu Mele's Ogun & the People / Celebrating 50 years (1969-2019)

www.kulumele.org • kulumele50@kulumele.org • 484.202.0524

Inspired by the voices of its ancestors, Kulu Mele African Dance & Drum Ensemble preserves, presents and perpetuates the traditional dance and music of West Africa and the African Diaspora. In 2018 Kulu Mele traveled to Cuba to study and develop a new dance-drama, choreographed by Dorothy Wilkie, called *Ogun & the People*. The Orisha, from the Yoruba pantheon, are embodied forces, known by their colors and behavior, and the subjects of traditional stories, or pataki (like this one) in which the Orishas bring their forces to bear to bring Ogun back, and rebalance the world.

Experience KM's O&tP with Aidan Un films:

Cuba experience: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80Kitt-zPzQ>

The pataki of Ogun & Oshun: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ--odSfXBw>

Meet the Orishas: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oy4v_rBYWb0

The Ancestors Live: <https://www.youtube.com/user/KuluMeleDanceandDrum/playlists>

KMO&tP Publications available: <http://www.kulumele/shop>

Kulu Mele's Ogun & the People: Celebrating 50 years (1969-2019). Groundbreaking Kulu Mele history, transformative practice and relevance for this moment: 50+ voices show and tell African-centered vision, method and culture, affirming Black lives and many kinds of movement. 124 pp. \$35 (pb) / \$65 (hb) / \$125 hb collector's limited first edition.

The Story of Ogun & the People. The pataki (Yoruba parable) retold in a coloring book for all ages. Illustrations by Damali Beatty, based on photographs of Kulu Mele in Cuba learning O&tP. 12 pp. \$10.

Keepsake 50th birthday commemorative poster. Elaborates the O&tP storyline and KM's real-life version of rebalancing the world with love (a 50+ year timeline). Two large-scale introductions to KM culture, past/present/future. \$10.

These are among documents and tools developed through the Kulu Mele O&tP project: a forward-looking 50-year celebration and participatory practice. (*There is also swag!*) To respond, purchase, learn more, bring Kulu Mele to your school or community, for information about Kulu Mele classes and programs for young people and adults, and to keep up with what happens next with O&tP: Contact: kulumele50@kulumele.org / 484.202.0524, visit www.kulumele.org • Consider making a special 50-year donation in honor of Kulu Mele. • Purchase materials at kulumele.org/shop

Ogun & the People has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.



Muntu Cultural Festival Attracts Wide Interest

A very exciting and colorful festival took place in Fairmount Park, Saturday, June 29, when the Muntu Cultural Festival began at 7 a.m. and ended at 7 p.m., attracting an overflow crowd. They came with their picnic baskets, and began situating themselves in good vantage points to enjoy the lively entertainers and numerous speakers.

The all-day event offered music, singing, dancing, all with African cultural orientation. Different types of African dances were exhibited by the Yoruba Temple Group. Also on the program were the Robert Kenyatta African Drummers who provided the mood for the occasion, making all the visitors take notice of the beautiful earth-

y sounds being produced. Some danced, some sat and listened, but all were moved.

During the festival, the controversial Muhammad Ali spoke and advised the gathering not to forget their duties as black men and women.

To provide a fitting education, to have a proper home and to have proper respect for each other is of prime importance, he said.

"THE TIME IS NOW"

The champion acknowledged that we all must realize that "Black is beautiful," but he cautioned the group to avoid "getting into the bag," of wearing dashiki's and Afro's and letting that be the extent of their blackness. He said we must look to the future, and not be slowed down with overglorification of the past. Ali cautioned, "The time is now."

Also on the guest list was the famed Jeremiah X, along with radio personalities Sonny Hopson, Rocky G. and Georgie Woods. Other guests were Yatahma Olukeye, Adetunbo, Playthell Benjamin and Stanley Branche, director of the Black Coalition.

The Muntu Cultural Festival was sponsored by The Black Coalition, Circle of African American Unity, Muhammad's Mosque No. 12, the Young Militants, and the Ofro Brothers.

Various other groups provided entertainment, lively discussions and inspirational poetry. Among these group were: The Black Cultural Group, The Original Slaves, The Visitors and the KuluMele Sextet.

This gathering was the first of many such programs planned for the summer, that will be featuring African and Eastern cultural attractions.

AN AFRICAN AMERICAN DANCE COMPANY



KULU MELE



meaning...

"Speaking for our Ancestors"

Rick - 684-2936

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Since its creation some five years ago, the Kulu Mele Afro-American Dance Ensemble has established a national reputation as a unique and dynamic performing company. Under the direction of Baba Ibikunly Bey, the Ensemble's repertoire of music and dance is an exciting blend of West African creativity, ancestral tradition, Caribbean, and North and South Afro-American culture. The company portrays the whole spectrum of African culture, embracing as well the many musical forms and instruments of Nigeria, Ghana, Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti, as well as authentic black American expression.

The Black American is almost like a new person on the face of the earth. He is the product of two entirely different cultures, the African and the American, and must relate to both. He is striving to create something which is a carry-over from Africa but that is still basically his, as an American, as well.

The Kulu Mele ensemble has incorporated many of these influences in the creation of the new and traditional works which make up the ensemble's repertoire. Each traditional dance as well as each new one, is authentically costumed and choreographed to vividly convey its meaning within the original society that it represents.

Cultural dance embraces fundamental concepts of society's life style. It tells a story of social realities and the unique oneness of the people. It is woven together spontaneously, beautifully, and eloquently. All dances are a manifestation of self. Kulu Mele, an African American Dance Company, embraces the true spirit of African Dance and Drumming. The intricate rhythms and highly executed dance patterns are true reflections of ancestral creativity and artistic discipline.

The company's artistic director, Mr. Bey, has been Artistic Director and Composer on Broadway and off Broadway productions. They included Dr. Katherine Dunham, director of her own dance company and a faculty member at the University of Chicago's School of Fine Arts and Department of Anthropology, and Dr. Saka Acquaye, who studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Dr. Acquaye, a Ghanaian, is one of the world's most respected African musicologists and is currently on the faculty at the University of Ghana at Accra

Dr. Michael Olatunji, a musician by profession but also a doctoral student in Public Administration at New York University, continues his professional relationship with Mr. Bey in the pursuit of excellence. Dr. Om Poco, Director of University of Ghana's Cultural Program, worked with two Nigerian musicologists, Dr. Shola DaGilva and Solomon Ilori, in their program presentations and instruction in Mr. Bey's many professional engagements. Mr. Bey spent a one-year stint at UCLA under the guidance of Mr. Acquaye in the Department of Anthropology. He is presently a faculty member at Temple University's Department of Dance.

The managing director of the company is Lawrence L. Smallwood, Jr., writer, cultural choreographer, and cultural and urban anthropologist. A Philadelphia native, born of Afro-Cuban parents. Mr. Smallwood is a full-time assistant professor of anthropology at Antioch College's Philadelphia undergraduate campus.



OUR OBLIGATION IS TO RELATE OUR HERITAGE TO OUR PEOPLE

PERCUSSIONIST & INSTRUMENTALISTS

BABA IBIDUNLE BEY: Artistic Director, Music Composition

JOHN E. WILKIE: Stage Director, Music Coordinator

JOHN W. SCOTT: Stage Technician, Program Coordinator

KASHKA OMJATA: Assistant Stage Technician

MARVIN GRAHAM: Assistant Stage Director

KENNETH FAUNTLEROY: Assistant Stage Mgr.

ABEWOLE OMOWALE: Stage Manager

HERB SIMON: Assistant Stage Manager

SONNY ADKINS: Music Coordinator

GREGORY JACKSON: Equipment Manager

DANCERS & SINGERS

SAUDAH BEY: Choreographer, Dance Teacher

DOROTHY GORDON: Choreographer, Dance Teacher

ANNETTE RICHARDSON: Wardrobe Mistress, Dance Teacher

EVELYN SMART: Assistant Wardrobe Mistress, Dance Teacher

OMOMOLA IYABUNMI: Sekere Instructor

LINDA WILLIAMS: Dancer

BEVERLY BROWN: Dancer

ENOMWOYI KOBIE: Dancer

JACKIE WILLIAMS: Dancer

BARBARA BROWN: Dancer



THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN KULU MELE.

MR. LAWRENCE L. SMALLWOOD, JR. - Exclusive Manager of Kulu Mele Dance Ensemble

PROGRAM

PART I

KENYA (introduction)

- hand-clapping: sekere, honi and agogo. All call to the praise of Kenya.
- rhythm: solo, with honi and seekere.
- sekere solo in 6/8 time

RUMBA

- Cuban chant
- call to Orisha
- drum and chant to the Orisha
- people's chant, all drums and agogo.

WOBI

- dancers call Orisha with agogo and sekere
- group praises the gods - honi and sekere
- dance solo, call to prayer, honi solo and and thanks to the people

SEKERE

- chant - Orisha
- chant with sekere to each orisha
- rhythm, give thanks to all orisha
- solo by master sekere

Intermission (12 minutes)

PART II

IBO

- drums give call; sekere, agogo gives salute, dancers call Orisha
- dancers give salute to drums and Orisha
- dancer's solo; showing world their strength and spiritual function





DUNDUN SOLO (Talking drum)

1. Exciting rhythm by all drummers chanting proverb.
2. Proverb "e ma je won o lo."

AGOGO SOLO

1. Exciting parts $3/4$, $4/4$, $6/8$, $5/4$.
2. Solo $2/4$, $12/8$, $12/16$, $4/2$, $8/4$.

AJO D ALE

1. Drums call dancers to salute.
2. Drums and dancers salute Olorun.
3. Dancers challenge drummers.

JUBA D FEET

1. Drummer plays with feet as well as hands.



Kulu Mele to Open Black Arts Festival

The Kulu Mele Dance Troupe will make their debut at the Civic Center Museum when they open the new Black Arts Festival Tuesday, November 14 at 8 p.m. in the newly renovated Gold Ballroom.

The entire series is being co-sponsored by the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania and is free to the public.

The Kulu Mele Dance Troupe is a Company of 12 dancers

and they're based here in Philadelphia.

The Black Arts Festival series will continue on Tuesday, December 12 with the Victory Chorale. Also featured on the program will be Kisha, folk singer.

Following on January 30 will be the popular Dan Jones Jazz Troupe and on March 6 Andrew Foster's "Recital in Black."

The series will close on April 17 with a joint recital, "Together Again" with soprano Bonita Glenn and mezzo-soprano Florence Quivar. Both are Philadelphia artists now successfully launched in their careers in New York. For free tickets, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "TICKETS," Museum of the Philadelphia Civic Center, 34th and Civic Center Blvd., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104.



KULU MELE, will perform rituals of the Yoruba culture at the Thomas Nabried Center at 7:30 p.m. Saturday. On the same program will be the Mass

Approach, a young revolutionary group of singers from New York.

Black Arts Tribute to Black History

A three day "Black Arts Tribute to Black History" program will open on Thursday, February 14, at the Thomas Nabried Center for Marxist-Leninist Education, 2347 North Broad Street. "The First Militant Minister" is a one act play given by an Afro-American theatre group will open at 8:00 P.M., followed by a film (to be announced). On Friday, February 15 at the Thomas Nabried Center there will be a lecture on "The role and contribution of Afro-American culture and artists in revolutionary struggle" delivered by Antsar Sudan Karara Mberi, poet and teacher of Black literature at Ohio University. Audience discussion will follow.

On Saturday, February 16, from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. at Beacon Presbyterian Church, Broad and Diamond Streets there will be a graphic arts display featuring the works of Gra-

terford Prison inmates. At 1:30 P.M. Wilbert McCabe, pianist, will play works of Black composers such as Samuel Coleridge Taylor and William Grant Still. He will be followed by Michael Monteiro who will sing spirituals and songs made famous by Paul Robeson.

The Kulu Mele, a group of artists will perform rituals of the Yoruba culture at the Thomas Nabried Center at 7:30 on Saturday evening. On the same

program will be the Mass Approach, a young revolutionary group of singers from New York.

The Black Arts Tribute to Black History is a salute to the history of Black peoples' struggles. It will bring the work of Black artists to the Black community. The tribute is being sponsored by the Thomas Nabried Center for Marxist-Leninist Education. For further information please call PO 3-6190.



THE KULU MELE ENSEMBLE OF DANCERS

Afro-American Dancers Speak For Their Ancestors on Sunday

An Afro-American ensemble of dancers will "speak for their ancestors" on Sunday, Aug. 3, on the steps of the Museum of the Second Congress commemoration.

Performing under the name Kulu Mele ("Speaking for Our Ancestors"), the group will be joined on Sunday by the Sharpstown Baptist Church Youth Tour Choir, made up of 70 high school teenagers from Texas. Their concert will include secular as well as sacred music.

THE 15 KULU MELE dancers are native Americans living in the Philadelphia area. In addition to their

grueling rehearsal regimen, members of the troupe maintain families, full time jobs and, in many instances, full academic loads at various campuses in and around the city.

The performances, like all Parkway Sundays, will begin at 2 p.m. with the dancers. The youth choir will begin at 2:00 and the dancers will return for another 30-minute performance at 3:30. The commemoration of the Second Congress — which convened in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775, and adopted the Declaration of Independence 14 months later — is highlighted by a wide variety of special events scheduled through the rest of the summer and into the fall by Philadelphia '76.

Militia reviews and musters, neighborhood festivals, and daily street theatre, puppet shows and parades are part of the celebration, along with the Sundays on the Parkway series. The opening event was The American Way last spring.

HERE IS some background on the two groups scheduled to perform on Sunday afternoon:

The Kulu Mele African-American Dance Ensemble, organized in 1969, has as its 'mission,' a responsibility to present, interpret and protect African culture in America as a necessary element in the lives of Black Americans and in the enrichment of America's pluralistic society.

Drawing principally from ancestral civilizations centered in Africa's Western Sudan (Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Dabonney, Guinea, Togo, Senegal and Mali), the group also portrays a wider spectrum of African culture through varied musical forms found in the Caribbean (Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Martinique, Trinidad), and South America (Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Surinam, Guyana).

SINCE 1971, KULU MELE has been featured in countless appearances in the area, particularly at Philadelphia's Civic Center, in the Bell Telephone Company-sponsored,

Franklin Concerts-produced, 'Black Arts Concert Series.' In addition to these exciting attractions, KULU MELE has performed at: Philadelphia County Prisons; the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary and Graterford Prison, both in Pennsylvania; Gannon College; Albright College; the University of Scranton; Temple University; Philadelphia Community College; Delaware State College; The Temple University Music Festival; The People '76 Festival (Phila.); The International House (Phila.); and The Painted Bride Art Gallery, also in Philadelphia and numerous other civic and community organizations and functions. The Dance Company was featured in the Philadelphia Zoo's opening of its magnificent 'African Plains Animal Exhibit.' A stellar concert was given by KULU MELE in March, 1975 at Philadelphia's Walnut Theater for the 'Philadelphia Style Auction Dinner,' a program of Philadelphia '76, The Walnut Theater and The Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. Interwoven among these many engagements, have been several local television appearances on Channel '6's' nightly program — 'Perspective,' hosted by Joe Hunter.

KULU MELE has played background music for film documentaries and special educational formats, and is now grooming for at least two international tours (Europe and Africa, 1975/76)... a musical stage drama, an extensive American tour and a full schedule of local bookings as Philadelphia and the nation prepare for America's Bicentennial celebration.

Many members of the Sharpstown Baptist Church Youth Tour Choir have sung in the Sharpstown Baptist choir program from age four. This choir rehearses one hour weekly during the winter and two hours weekly from May to September, singing regularly for the evening worship services. They learn and perform anthems from every religious era and mode. In addition they present secular concerts of either a classical or popular nature.

Free Open-Air Fest Continues at Lee Ctr.

Lee Cultural Center, under the direction of Shuna Ali Miah, Jr., at 44th & Haverford Ave. the Cultural Mecca of Black Philadelphia for the past 11 years, has recently announced a series of open-air cultural festivals.

The concurrent theme is "embracing family unity and mutual entertainment." The tradition of Lee Cultural Center is being brought forth, that of providing quality talent in all major forms of the arts in unison with community endorsement.

All of the scheduled open-air festivals will be held on Sundays, from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m.

LEE CULTURAL Center has one of the most unique settings in the city. It sits in the middle of a beautiful seven and a half acre tract of green land, all within the inner-city. What more perfect an environment for an open-air jazz concert, clothesline art exhibit, dance concert, drama and poetry presentations or a good feeling, foot-stomping gospel concert than Lee Cultural Center!

Highlighting the festivals are the talent which have helped to carry

on the creative atmosphere of the center; individual artists and aggregations which have thrilled thousands of Pennsylvanians in appearances throughout the state.

(August 15) Gospel, featuring Philadelphia's leading groups; (August 29) drama, *Symphony of Sympathy*, children's drama, *Kulu Mele* and *Positive Vibes*.

All of the above festivals are offered free for the total enjoyment of the entire family unit. There will be exhibits by various individuals and organizations at each outing. There will also be plenty of food and refreshments at a nominal cost. It is requested you bring your own blanket.

EXHIBITORS ARE asked to make prior arrangements before setting up. Contact Warren Haskins or Ray Wright for space accommodations and clearances at MU 6-1776, Ext. 73-171.

Lee Cultural Center is a facility of the Department of Recreation, City of Philadelphia. As an added attraction to the festivals, swimming also may be enjoyed by all at the beautiful Lee Swimming Pool, under the direction of Mr. Boston.



KULU MELE ENSEMBLE performs an authentic Yoruba African dance. — Arthur Brown, Jr., Photo

KULU MELE

These are the people who participate in KULU MELE.

Their strength, beauty, and creativity are of West African creativity, and ancestral tradition. The African American's obligation is to return to his traditional greatness. KULU MELE portrays the whole spectrum of African Culture, embracing as well as the many musical forms and instruments of Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti.

PERCUSSIONIST & INSTRUMENTALISTS

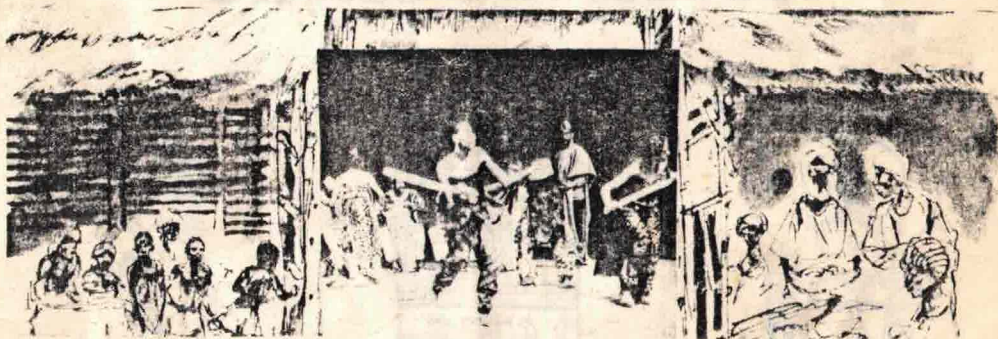
BABA IBIKUNLE JOWOMODE
JOHN E. WILKIE
JOHN W. SCOTT
GREGORY JACKSON
ADEWOLE OMOWALE
ORIMOLADE OGUNJIMI
MARVIN GRAHAM
ALFRED HARDY

DANCERS & SINGERS

SAUDAH AMIN BEY
DOROTHY GORDON
ANNETTE RICHARDSON
MELVINA RICHARDSON
THERESA CLARK
EDDIE SPIVEY
WILLIE McCRAY
FAIME AL-AKBAR



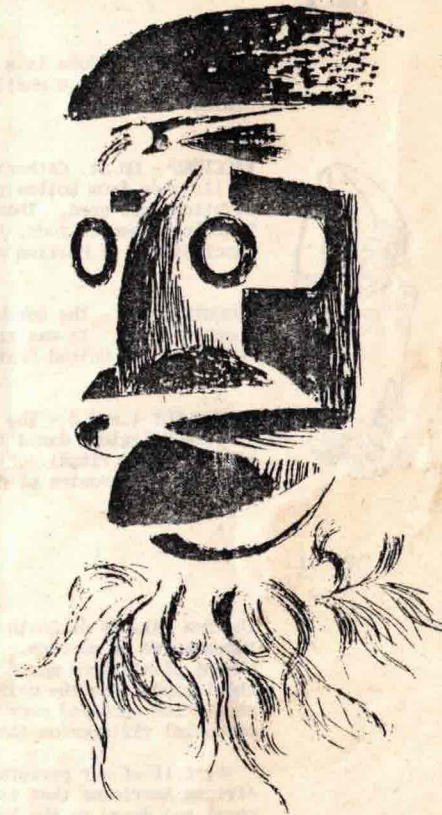
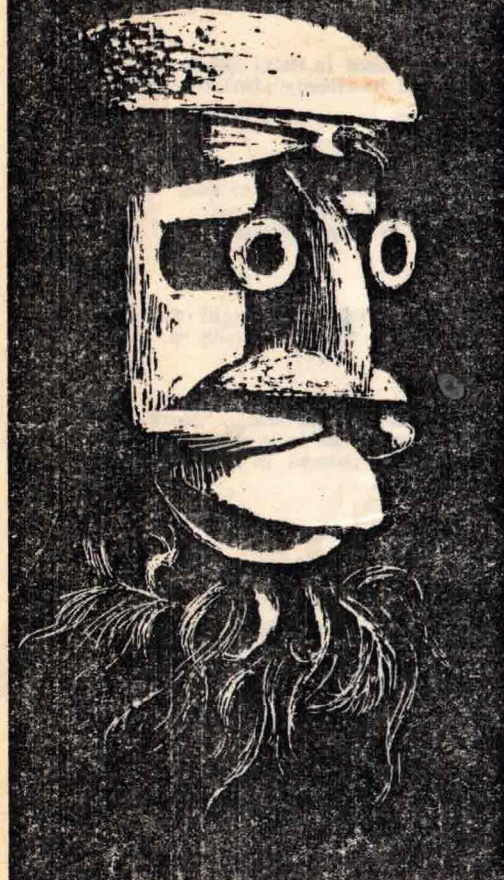
*u
m
A*



LEE CULTURE CENTER, 4400 Haverford Ave.

KULU MELE

AFRIKAN-AMERICAN DANCE ENSEMBLE



THE AUTHENTICITY OF AFRIKAN AMERICAN CULTURE

"AFRIKAN AMERICAN DANCE IN COLONIAL AMERICA"

[1600-1802]

For the African, the fullest expression of art is dance. Africans use their bodies to reflect their emotions, their joys, sorrows, love, culture and religion.

COVER by JOHN E. WILKIE

PROGRAM

PART I

JUBA d' FEET - Juba is a dance that is found in Haiti and Southern Louisiana. It is a challenge dance and is closely similar to the 'Chica' of Cuba.

VACCINES - On St. Catherines Island on the Georgia seacoast, quills made from hollow reeds that had been arranged to form whistles were used. These 'whistles' were descended from "vaccines" bamboo rods, formed to make wind-instruments. The vaccines are of Haitian origin.

MUSQUITO DRUM - The northern part of Nigeria is the origin of the Musquito Drum. It was transplanted during the slave trade to Haiti and the United States.

RING SHOUT 1 and 2 - The 'Ring Shout' is from the Arabic "Saut". It is a religious dance that had been practiced by Muslims in their "Kaaba" ritual. Ring-Shout became prominent in the baptisms and other ceremonies of Black Baptists.



PART II

The Sea Islands of South Carolina has historically been used as sanctuaries by maroons. Slaves who had escaped from the slave-owning plantations would swim the 10 mile stretch that separated the islands from the main land. Over a two year period, the island population exceeded over 9,000 Africans who had escaped and established communal villages on the island.

Part II of our performance will project the true culture of African Americans that is practiced in the New World today. We will chant and dance to the Yoruba Gods of our Ancestors.



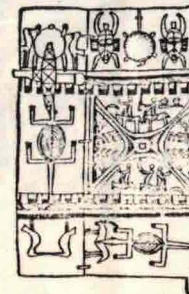
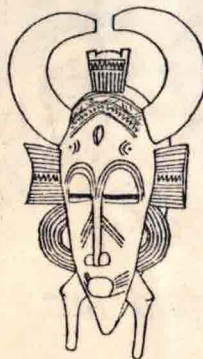
PROGRAM NOTES

To Africans, dance is much a way of life as eating, working and sleeping. For the African, the fullest expression of art and culture is dance. They dance, sing and play music on all social occasions such as ceremonials, births, weddings, funerals and festivals. The head moves in one rhythm, the shoulders in another, the arms in still a third and the feet in a fourth. Africans use their bodies to reflect their emotions, their joys, sorrows, love, culture and religion.

Thousands of miles from it's origin and altered by alien customs and traditions, the heritage of African culture and dance has never been destroyed even by the oppression and degradation of slavery. The history of dance in the New World has been strongly influenced by the African slave who was shipped to the Americas -- and no African has had greater influence on New World culture than the Yorubas. Decendants of the Yoruba, some of whom can speak the Yoruba language, are found in Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, Trinidad, and the United States where Yoruba traditions are still preserved.

Kulu Mele, African American Dance Ensemble, in their performance of The Authenticity of African American Culture, will present the history of African American Dance in Colonial America from 1600 to 1802.

To see an African dance is to witness his cultural past and present.



Kulu Mele African Dance & Drum Ensemble (1969–2019–>): movement stories [an abbreviated 50th anniversary timeline]

[comments please: kulumele50@kulumele.org or 484-202-0524]

Key KM moments [yellow]

Key Phila cultural moments [orange]

Key cultural global / political movements & moments [green]

*Illustrative moments [white] / **bold** names & events in **KM's O&TP: celebrating 50 years (1969-2019)** book [see below]*

1930s-1950s: **Asadata Dafora Horton** (1890-1965) performs & tours African dance

Late 1930s: **Katharine Dunham** establishes dance company in Chicago

1932-3: **Zora Neale Hurston** produces "The Great Day," staged performance of Bahamian dance in NYC

1944: Federal desegregation of Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC): precursor to SEPTA

1945: Katharine Dunham opens Dunham School of Arts & Research in NYC

1946: **Marion Cuyjet & Sydney King** open Sidney-Marion School of Dance. **John Hines** (b. 1925) starts teaching Dunham technique there (1946). **Baba Crowder among the drummers.**

1947: Dunham publishes her MA thesis as *Dances of Haiti*

1948/50: **Pearl Primus** to W. Africa with Rosenwald fellowship

1947-1948: **Syvilla Fort** teaches Dunham at Sidney-Marion School of Dance

1947: Guinean **Fodéba Keïta** founds *Les Ballets Africains* while a student in Paris

c. 1948: **Baba** hears **Chano Pozo** w/ Dizzy Gillespie band at Academy of Music

1950-55: Persecution of radicals & activists. **Paul Robeson** blacklisted. McCarthy Red scare

Early 1950s: **Dorothy Wilkie** (DW) starts going to "Interpretive" (African) dance classes. **John Wilkie** (JW) playing

1950: **Olatunji** comes to US to study at Morehouse College

1951- 1970s: Uptown Theater "golden years" as N. Philly Apollo: artistic and cultural mecca

1952: **Julito Collazo** moves from Cuba to join Dunham company, settles NYC (1955)

1950s: **Ione Nash** studies with Joe Nash & **John Hines** at Judimar. Nash in **Saka's & Arthur's** ensembles c. 1953-59->

1953: **Olatunji** starts drum and dance group in NYC

1953: **Maya Deren** publishes *Divine Horsemen*

1953-1959: Ghanaian **Saka Acquaye** comes here to study sculpture @ PA Academy of Fine Arts. Recruits musicians & dancers from Judimar (c. 1953). Establishes musical groups. Begins African Dance Ensemble with **Robert Crowder, Ione Nash, Arthur Hall** and others.

1953-1959: Cuban Revolution

1954: Brown vs. Board of Education

1955: Emmet Till murdered 8/28/55. Montgomery bus boycott 12/5/55-12/20/56

1957: Ghana becomes independent

Late 1950s: **Ladji Camara**, master dancer & djembefola (from *Les Ballet Africains*) settles in NYC

1958: Guinea gains independence: Sekou Touré renames *Les Ballets Africains de Guinea*, making it Africa's first National Ballet (and sends them on a tour). Saka was here.

1958: **Arthur Hall**, directing Sidney King Dance Theater, choreographs "African Sketches" based on what he learned from Saka: the start of Hall's Afro-American Dance Ensemble

1959: Cuban Revolution. **Lázaro Prieto** (bass player, drummer) & mother **Rita Prieto** (Orisha priestess) from Matanzas come to Philadelphia, meet Baba and others.

1959: **Conjunto Folklorico de Oriente** is founded: first folk group in Independent Cuba

1959: Pearl Primus presents traditional dances of Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria on stage (Baba attends)

1959: **Saka Acquaye: Gold Coast Saturday Night** (LP)

1950s-1960s: **Baba Crowder** in NYC & Phila; meets, performs and studies with **Ladji Camara, Katharine Dunham, Maya Deren, Julito Collazo, Jean Leon Destiné, and John Hines**

1959-60: **Kwame Nkrumah** (studied @ Lincoln) speaks at Broad & Diamond & praises **Saka, Baba & Garvin**

8/14/59 & 10/1/59 Olatunji records Drums of Passion in NYC (released 2/15/60)
1959: Melvin Deal begins African Heritage Dancers and Drummers in DC
1960: Founding meeting of SNCC
2/1/60: Greensboro 4 sit-in
1/17/61: Lumumba assassinated in Congo
May 1961: JFK begins secret operations against Vietnamese
1961-1964: Cambridge, MD: fight to desegregate public accommodations on Rt. 40
1962: Obalumi Ogunseye sent to Philadelphia by Queen Mother Moore. Starts Philadelphia Yoruba Temple
1962: Founding convention of the Northern Student Movement (NSM)
1963: March on Washington for Jobs and Justice
6/2/63: Medgar Evers assassinated. Arthur Hall stays home in protest, is fired: commits to dance
11/22/63: JFK assassinated
1964: Columbia Avenue Uprising (8/28-8/30/64). Freedom Library (Ridge Ave). Freedom Summer
August 1964: Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
c. 1964-1966: Baba Crowder goes to UCLA with Saka Acquaye who is studying/teaching opera/ theater arts
1964-1965: Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, Immigration Act signed into law
1964: Freedom Summer
2/21/65: Malcolm X assassinated
1965: Johnson initiates massive bombing. US troops enter Vietnam. "Rolling Thunder": 3/2/-65 11/2/68
5/11/65-5/16/65: the Watts Rebellion
1965: Girard College protests. Black Power Unity Movement established
1966: Freedom Theater founded. Black Unity / Black Power rallies
1967: Arthur Hall teaches at Lee Cultural Center
1967: Olatunji opens Cultural Center in NYC. In CA: Grape boycott begins
11/17/67: Philadelphia student walkout and march on Board of Ed
1967: Baba plays pandeiro w/Sonny Fortune @ Last Way Out [club @ 22nd & Walnut]
1968: Chuck Davis establishes Chuck Davis Dance Co. (NYC)
6/29/68: KuluMele Sextet performs at Muntu Cultural Festival, Fairmount Park
1968: Phila Black Panther party opens office at 1928 W. Columbia Ave.
1968: 3rd Nat'l Conference on Black Power at Church of the Advocate.
4/4/68: MLK assassinated. Arthur Hall ensemble performs w/ Max Roach: <i>Freedom Now</i> suite
1/30/68-9/23/68: Tet offensive
6/29/68: Kulu Mele Sextet debuts: "Muntu Cultural Festival Attracts Wide Interest" <i>Philadelphia Tribune</i> . P. 9
12/69: First draft lottery since WWII
1969: Arthur Hall opens Ile Ife Black Humanitarian Center
1969: Reggie Schell becomes defense minister of Phila Chapter Black Panther Party
1969: Sonia Sanchez publishes <i>Homecoming</i>
1969: Black Emergency Cultural Coalition founded, demands representation of Black artists & curators in museums
4/4/69: Chicago Police & FBI murder Fred Hampton & Mark Clark
1969: Robert Crowder starts Kulu Mele with Saudah Bey , Penny Marshall & others
1969: Saka Aquaye's LP reissued as Voices of Africa: Highlife & Other Popular Music

1969-70: Rizzo's raids on Philadelphia Black Panthers
1970: Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention held at Temple
1970: Toni Cade Bambara publishes <i>The Black Woman</i>
1971-1975: Barbara Bullock directs Art Department for Hall's Ile Ife Model Cities Cultural Arts Program
1971: Dottie Wilkie (DW) & John Wilkie (JW) join Kulu Mele. Rehearsals are at Lee Cultural Center
1971, 1973: <i>Les Ballets Africains</i> tours to Philadelphia with dance-dramas and djembe
1972-1978: Peache Jarman tours with Mongo Santamaria
11/14/72: Kulu Mele Dance Troupe debuts : opening new Black Arts Festival . <i>Phila. Tribune</i> 31 October 1972, p. 22
1972: Muntu Dance Theater founded in Chicago
1973: Roe v. Wade
1973: Paris Peace accords
1973-1976: Walter Edmonds, Richard Watson paint murals at Church of the Advocate
c. 1974: K'shaka sends Fernando Ortiz book to Baba Crowder . Baba, JW, Adewole, Peache, Lamb and Facundo "start studying that book. And then we started studying the culture." - JW
2/14/74: Kulu Mele, "a traditional Yoruba dance troupe" performs "rituals of the Yoruba culture" in "A Black Arts Tribute to BLACK HISTORY" At Thomas Nabried Center for Marxist-Leninist Education, 2247 N. Broad St. (and see <i>Phila. Tribune 12 February 1974, p. 8</i>)
1974: ODUNDE begins (as Oshun festival): Kulu Mele performs continuously
mid-late 1970s: Peache goes to NYC, plays with Julito Collazo and Mongo Santamaria
mid-late 1970s: Gene Golden , one of Baba's NYC students, shows movies of Orisha dancing in Cuba
mid-1970s: Baba teaching African dance at Temple University. JW his drummer
1974: Barbara Smith et al write Combahee River Collective Statement
1974: Taller Puertorriqueño established.
1974: Nixon resigns after Watergate scandal revealed
1974: Arthur Hall and 18 dancers go on 1st tour to Ghana, Togo, Nigeria.
1975: US formally out of Viet Nam; reunification of country.
1975: African Liberation Support Committee: Africa Liberation Day 5/24/75
1975: The Second World Black and African Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC 1973-75), exhibit held @ Penn Museum, organized by Allen Edmonds, goes on (with same collectivity) to found Brandywine Workshop.
1975: Kulu Mele gets non-profit status
1976: Cutumba forms, developing out of Conjunto Folklorico de Oriente, to focus on Oriente culture
1976: Saka Acquaye brings performers from Northern Ghana here for the city's controversial Bicentennial celebration. Counter-demonstrations include July 4th Coalition & Rich Off Our Backs Coalition. Rizzo is mayor
1976: AAMP (as Afro-American Historical & Cultural Museum) founded
6/16/76: Soweto uprising
1976: Marta Moreno Vega founds Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (NYC)
1976: Asona Aberade shrine (Akan culture of Ghana), established in Phila
1977: <i>Kulu Mele performs w/ Angela Davis @ Young Workers Liberation League 3rd Nat'l Convention Rally for Youth Rights</i>
1977: Chuck Davis begins DanceAfrica festival
1977: MOVE in Powelton.
c. 1982-1984: Peache in LA performs in bands and olucumí ceremonies w/ Francisco Aguabella, Willie Bobo, Cal Tjader & Papa Ladi Camara
1980: Mariel boatlift: Enrique Aldama Admiral comes to Philadelphia

1981: 1st International Conference of Orisa Tradition & Culture, Ile-Ife (Nigeria)
1982: Louis Massiah begins Scribe
1982: Yacub Addy begins Odadaa (DC)
1983: KanKouran West African Dance Co. established
1983: Maimouta Keita School of African Dance started by Marie Basse-Wiles & Olukose Wiles
1982-1984: William Powell and Enrique Aldana Admiral form the group Cumbayé with drummers JW , Facundo, Truck, Hector Rivera, Nick, Ernesto Patilla, Guillermo, and Yanqui. After six months, dancers joined: Carol Butcher, Evelyn Smart, Omomola Iyabumi, DW .
c. 1985: Cumbaye's last show, at Temple University
1985: City bombs MOVE on Osage Avenue
1986: Louis Massiah and Toni Cade Bambara: <i>The Bombing of Osage Avenue</i> . Hourlong documentary
1986: Traditional African American Drum Society (re)established.
1987-1996: Africamericas Festival begun by Kofi Asante, Arthur Hall alum
1988: Benita Brown begins Spirit of Sankofa through Temple PASCEP
1985-1990: Darryl Kwasi Burgee establishes Jaasu , w/ James Marshall, Jackie Corley, Steve Jackson, Baba Crowder, JW, Arthur Driscoll, Vernon Forrest, Oyin Harris, DW, Sandy Pugh, Wilhemina Fisher, Fasina Wilkie
c. 1985-early 1990s: DW dances with Orlando " Puntillo " Rios' Nueva Generación
1987: National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) established
1988: Omomola Iyabunmi starts Women's Sekere Battery @ Africamericas, evolves into Women's Sekere Society
1988: Arthur Hall (1934-2000) leaves city
1991: Jaasu disbands, Dottie starts incorporating West African dance into KM repertoire
1991: Hodari Banks and Jeannine Osayande begin Ibeji Performing Arts Company
1992: Oyin Harris-Hardy begins Troupe Da Da
1993: Leeway Foundation refocuses to support women and trans artists
1990s-2010s: "I just kept going, studying, learning stuff and putting it back."—Dottie Wilkie. Kulu Mele studies with M'Bemba Bangoura, Yusuf Kombassa and others.
1993-1999: Dorothy Wilkie teaches Afro-Cuban dance @ African Rhythms (UPenn). [1999: <i>Ama Schley starts</i>]
1994: DW choreographs and (w/JW and others) presents social dances for ODUNDE's "Hucklebuck to Hip-Hop"
1995: Baba Crowder receives a Pew Fellowship; goes with Dottie to Ghana to reconnect with Saka Acquaye
1995: DW studies Orisha dance with Xiomara Rodriguez
1996: Darryl Kwasi Burgee creates Spoken Hand (@ Africamericas)
1997: Barbara Bullock receives Pew Fellowship in the Arts
1998: KM apprenticeship with M'Bemba Bangoura
2000: Peache Jarman gets Pew. Peache, Baba Crowder, Dottie, Wilk, Paul, and Kenny go to Papo Angarica in Havana, Cuba. Peache receives aña drums: the first for Philadelphia
2000: Dottie Wilkie has a Senegambian dance apprenticeship in Guinea with M'Bemba Bangoura
2000: Arthur Hall passes
2000: Kiyoshi Kuromiya passes (1943-2000): civil rights, anti-war, AIDS activist, founder Critical Path AIDS project
2000: RNC (Republic National Convention) in Philadelphia becomes opportunity for movement-building
2000: Ama Schley (& sons) join Kulu Mele
2001: Payin Schley joins KM
2001: DW goes to Santiago for Fiesta del Fuego with Osubi Craig & Nzinga Metzger . Meets Danys LaMora Perez
2002: Cutumba comes to Philadelphia for Moonstone's/Salzmann's <i>El Festival Cubano</i> . KM works with them.
2003: Eddie Smallwood joins KM

2003: DW, JW, Baba, Oyin, Okikilu & Wilk to Cuba. Company apprenticeship in Guinean dance with Tenenfig Dioubate . Kulu Mele @ Dance Africa
2004: DW goes to Santiago, Cuba with JW & others. Apprenticeship in Senegalese dance with Assane Konte. Robert Crowder receives Pew fellowship. DW choreographs Lantern Theater production
2005: Baba Crowder goes to Ghana to see Saka, Dottie and Barbara Cox go with him
2005: Ira Bond joins KM
May 26-27, 2006: Kulu Mele premieres mix of Yankadi w/hip hop @ PFP's Dance Happens Here
2007: Saka Acquaye passes
2007: Dottie receives Pew fellowship. Trips to Santiago & Havana: Kenny, Henry, DW, Wilk
2008: KM trip to Guinea to study with M'Bemba Bangoura and Les Ballet Africains and work on Mali Sajo
2008: Fasina Wilkie & Kia Holifield Wimmer joins KM
2008: Nana Korantema Ayebofo (Arthur Hall company alumna) receives Pew fellowship
2009: Peache Jarman passes (12/18,/47 - 8/3/09)
2009: Renelle Hopkins, Cachet Ivey, Alakee Bethea & Tekeytha Fullwood join KM
2009-10: DW, JW go back to Havana to do ceremony. Kenny receives aña drums
2011: Black Star Film Festival starts
2012: Baba Crowder passes
2012, 2015: Lela Aisha Jones choreographs Gathering / Undercurrent for Kulu Mele
2013: #BlackLivesMatter created by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman
2013: Crystal Gatling joins KM
2014: Michael Brown, Jr. murdered in Ferguson
2014 Patricia Peaches Jones joins KM
2018: Kulu Mele travels to Santiago, Cuba to develop Ogun & the People with Ballet Folklórico Cutumba
2019: 50th anniversary
Incomplete: comments to kulumele50@kulumele.org / 484.202.0524
FOR STORIES behind the dates & more information, see KM O&tP publications:

- **Kulu Mele's Ogun & the People: Celebrating 50 years (1969–2019)** . **New book published! Groundbreaking Kulu Mele history, transformative practice and relevance for this moment: 50+ voices show and tell African-centered vision, method and culture, affirming Black lives and many kinds of movement. 124 pp.
- **The Story of Ogun & the People**. A coloring book for all ages. Illustrations for coloring by Damali Beatty, based on photographs of Kulu Mele in Cuba learning O&tP. The story of the pataki in twelve images for you to imagine. 12 pp + cover.
- **Complimentary Keepsake 2-sided poster** elaborates the O&tP storyline and KM's real-life version of rebalancing the world with love (a 50+ year timeline).Two large-scale introductions to KM culture, past/present/future. 38" x 19." Free. Available for pick-up only, please call 917-238-0756.

LIMITED EDITIONS: kulumele.org/shop

This timeline was produced in counterpoint to the narrative traditions told by John and Dottie Wilkie and included in KM's O&tP (the book). The timeline is an artifact of the process, a product of collective labor. It is suggestive (not definitive!) and a tool for seeing KM in wider contexts. KM O&tP Project Archive includes selected documents and tools developed through the Kulu Mele O&tP project, a forward-looking 50-year celebration and participatory practice. (There is also swag!) To purchase, participate, learn more, bring Kulu Mele to your school or community, for information about Kulu Mele classes and programs for young people and adults, and to keep up with what happens next with O&tP, visit www.kulumele.org • Consider making a special 50-year donation in honor of Kulu Mele. Contact: kulumele50@kulumele.org / 484.202.0524 / <https://kulumele.org> and find us in virtuality and here.