

# MUSIC AND DANCE GROUPS

## *Caribbean Cultural Heritage: A Day of Celebration!*

Saturday, September 17th, 2016 10am to 8pm



### **SEGUNDA QUIMBAMBA**

*Segunda Quimbamba* is a Jersey City-based percussion and dance ensemble that performs authentic Bomba and Plena, the drum music of Puerto Rico. The ensemble was founded by director Juan Cartagena and his wife Nanette Hernandez as Los Pleneros de la Segunda (The Pleneros from Second Street) in 1989 during the Christmas season to preserve the Puerto Rican tradition of caroling called parrandas. Over the years, family members joined the group, which began playing Bomba in

1995. In 1997 the name was changed to Segunda Quimbamba in honor of both Second Street, Jersey City, where most of the members live or have lived and Quimbamba, the mystical place described in a poem by the famous Puerto Rican poet Luis Pales Matos, called “Majestad Negra”. In 1997 the nonprofit Segunda Quimbamba Folkloric Center, Inc. was created to promote Bomba and Plena in New Jersey and the rest of the country. The Center produces a Newsletter about Bomba and Plena called *Guiro y Maraca* and conducts music and dance workshops in these genres to share these traditions with the public and younger generations.

### **VIVA VALLENATO BADASS ACCORDION BAND**

*Viva Vallenato Badass Accordion Band* performs vivacious *cumbia* & *vallenato* folk music of Colombia, South America. Wild Latin rhythms and joyful accordion melodies! These happy songs contain the cultural memory of a people with roots in Africa, Native America and Europe. Viva Vallenato has been featured on WPIX, Univision, Telemundo & the New York Post. The band was formed in 2013, and is named for the original *vallenato* music that they bring to new audiences & new ears.



### **LA TROUPE MAKANDAL**

*La Troupe Makandal* is a New York based performance and teaching ensemble focused on the power of Haitian drumming and dedicated to preserving the life and legacy of Master Drummer Frisner Augustin. The Troupe's mission is to capture the power of Haitian drumming to represent the spirit of Haiti's history and culture in theaters and schools. Most of their company's repertory derives from Vodou, the vibrant spirituality that African ancestors carried to Haiti. The repertory includes, as well, the music and dance of springtime festivals, work, and play. Following the direction and legacy of Master Drummer Frisner Augustin, La Troupe Makandal educates, entertains, and heals

racial and cultural divisions—generating dynamic experiences one does not soon forget.



### PAT HALL DANCERS

*Pat Hall Dancers* (New York based Haitian dance group) in collaboration with *La Troupe Makdal* have prepared a special performance for the Caribbean Festival at WheatonArts titled *The Drum and the Seed*. It is a neo-folktale of struggle, hope, and respect for Earth. Ti Zwazo's wicked stepmother has put the child to an impossible task: go to the house of the Spirit of Death and bring home his most vital secret. On her journey she meets three nature spirits and a magic bird, each of whom helps her win entrance to the underworld—and the secret. Can she use this

sacred knowledge to bring life back to her dying village? Featuring **Sheila Anozier** (traditional Haitian choreographer / dancer) as Ti Zwazo.

### TROPIC TOPIC

*Tropic Topic* is a Caribbean band with roots in the Trinidad and Tobago's Calypso and Soca music. Reggae is also a part of its primary musical focus. The band, however, plays other musical genres such as jazz, Latin jazz, Brazilian, and multiple other styles that came out of the American experience of the musicians. The core band is a rhythm section with Lenn Mendoza on base guitar, Clint Mendoza on lead and rhythm guitar, and Freddie Hamilton on drums. The band presents vocalists and



features lead and steel drums that vary depending on each performance. When we feature steel drum as the lead instrument we go by the name *steel rhythm*, with Michael Cunningham on lead tenor pan and Larry Cross on key board. The band performs at community events, corporate celebrations, weddings, anniversaries and other parties. The aspiration of the band is to develop a style that is unique with a high level of expertise and to inspire fellow musicians of the Caribbean to explore their talents and help spread the impressive tunes of Caribbean music throughout the world.



### THE BRAATA FOLK SINGERS

*The Braata Folk Singers* are proud ambassadors of and the foremost authority on Jamaican and Caribbean folk music performance in the United States. *Braata* has constantly wowed audiences on some of the most prestigious stages both locally and internationally and has reaped awards of excellence from the world's most astute connoisseurs of choral music. The group has established itself among Jamaicans and others in the wider Caribbean Diaspora for its unique and dynamic presentation of the region's folk music, combining new choral arrangements with intricate

choreography, design elements and costume. The result is a theatrical presentation best described as "choral theater." As part of its mission, *Braata* Folk Singers seeks to serve as a proponent of culture, through the promotion and preservation of Caribbean folk culture and its history. The group fuses music, movement and drama with an emphasis on a cultural context. Included among its repertoire is a wide range of folk forms including Mento, Kumina, Dinki-Mini, Revival, Ring Games and Nine Night.

## **GAMAE GARIFUNA PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY**

To safeguard the indigenous Garifuna language, the GAMAE Garifuna Performing Arts Company (GPAC) was created for the sole purpose of promoting, protecting and preserving the Garifuna culture and language through the performing arts. The Habinaha Garinagu (Dance Garifuna) Language and Performing Arts Program is a Program designed and created to help with the current language endangerment crisis of the Garifuna people, particularly the children, youth and young adults. The GPAC Habinaha (Performance) Program has a curriculum that combines the teaching of the Garifuna history and traditional Garifuna music and songs. The program also include modern artistic genre such as Garifuna drama and poetry taught to Garifuna children, youth and young adult through the performing of the Habinaha program.



## **DUBWAY REGGAE BAND**

The Dubway Reggae Band is honored to be the creative conscious musical platform for social justice issues normally overlooked or purposefully derailed from the creative conversation. We call for local and global disarmament of destructive ideals and intellectual, spiritual, economic empowerment and upliftment of all peoples regardless of class or social circumstance.

Timi Tanzania and the Dubway Reggae Band featuring Dub Poet Dave Benjamin brings a unique blend of authentic original rhythms and eclectic influences from Jimi Hendrix to Bob Marley. With mesmerizing lead guitar and vocals by Timi Tanzania, infectious baselines by Bert bassie Harris pulsating drum patterns by Neil Simpkins and powerful vocals / spoken word by Dave Benjamin. Audiences move to the revolutionary rhythmic sounds versatility and are inspired by the positive messages we bring that speaks to social justice issues and human empowerment. Experience The Dubway Reggae Band !

## **CONJUNTO CRIOLLO**

*Conjunto Criollo* was founded in the late 80s by Ray Berrios, Lucy Afanador, Trío Los Lirios and Héctor Vega, and Pepe Robles. The musicians come together to perform Conjunto for Christmas Cultural And Heritage Party, weddings, marathons, and birthdays. The band performs regularly for the Vineland Puerto Rican Festival, for festivals and community events in Pensgrove, Woobine, Salem, Hammonton as well as other events in South Jersey, all with the major aim of keeping our culture and music alive. Our vocal Lucy Afanador is well know singer, who has performed with many different groups and trios for over 30 years. Hector Vega is on the lead guitar, Gran Mateo is on the bass, Ed Sanpol is playing the second guitar. Carlos Rodriguez is on Bongos and Guiro and Luis DeJesus - on Conga. Ray Berrios, Director *Tim Balero* and *Tom Bora*. We play different music from the Caribbean including Bolero, Bachata, and Merengue. During the Caribbean festival at WheatonArts the band will collaborate with *Raise Boriqua*, which is a Vineland based Dance Group, performing Bomba and Plena dances for various cultural and heritage events of the Puerto Rican community in South Jersey.





### **WISDOM CHILD**

*Wisdom Child* is an infectious mix of soulful Pan African roots musical styles from the Caribbean to the Americas, blending experimental arrangements of traditional songs with original tunes inspired by time honored folk music sung in English, French, Haitian Kreyol, Spanish and Swahili with a mission to pay homage to African based ancestral music that keep the stories and cultural ways alive. Founded and led by vocalist / songwriter Nadine LaFond, steeped within an inventive imagery rich

storytelling style inspired by her Haitian heritage and multicultural musical upbringing and delivered through passionate wide ranging performances, *Wisdom Child* gathers musicians of varying styles and cultures, including guest artists to infuse unexpected energy and points of view from many of the world's musical traditions to celebrate and share the differences and commonalities when creative voices come together.



### **KULU MELE**

Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *Kulu Mele* has been a highly regarded cultural institution in the Delaware Valley for nearly 50 years. *Kulu Mele*'s performance repertoire features authentic, traditional dance and drumming from West Africa, the Caribbean and (coming October, 2016) Brazil, as well as contemporary American hip hop. *Kulu Mele* performs year-round throughout Philadelphia and tours nationally and internationally. *Kulu Mele* has performed at some of world's most prestigious performing arts venues, including the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Jacob's Pillow Dance

Festival and the Frank Gehry-designed Disney Hall at The Los Angeles Music Center. In September 2015, *Kulu Mele* performed as part of the official entertainment during the Philadelphia visit of Pope Francis. *Kulu Mele*'s extensive arts education program, *Omo Kulu Mele*, serves thousands of Philadelphia school children annually. Founded in 1969 by Baba Robert Crowder, *Kulu Mele* has been led by artistic director Dorothy Wilkie for more than 25 years.