

TAPS 1390: Contemporary Mande Performance: Know Thyself

Semester II of 2018-19

Jiridon so don yeredon de nyogon te. N'i filil' I yerema I laban ko b'i kono'nogan

Translation: "While it is excellent to know how to ride a horse, wonderful to know how to swim, nothing is better than to know thyself. If you don't know yourself your future is uncertain and you won't know what to do in life".

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This course is mandatory S/NC:

70% Attendance, Participation, Application

20% Three-dance tests/ Final Mande Performance

10% Research Projects, Blog

Required Meeting Times: Total 183 hours

I. Core Class Times: M-W-F @1pm-2:50 (36 x2=72 hours)

Plus Additional Choreography Sessions: (9 hours per dance)

Movement Labs: T-W-F @ 12-12:50pm and TH 4-4:50pm(12 hours)

II. TESTS: (during class-times)

Madan: February 15th

Vogue Femme: March 13th

Sunu: April 8th

Wasalunka: May 3rd

Final Exam/Performance: May 12th@ 4pm Call/5pm Go (3 hours)

Dress Rehearsal: May 11th@ 4pm-7pm (3 hours)

III. Readings/Research to Performance Projects/ Blog: (10 hours)

March 20th: Keita (AMC)

April 10th: Traore (MH)

April 17th: Sangare (TP)

April 24th: Coulibaly (JB)

General Class Structure:

Each class will begin with meditation, yoga-based warm-up in families,

Tai chi breath-body work, group reflection, and singing together.

Drummers will generally be in class on Monday and Fridays around 2pm.

Wednesdays will offer another way for us to engage with an emphasis on family collaborations, family research presentations, films, lectures, discussions, guests, and deeper focus on the improvisational aspects of Mande performance.

MBC and TA's will teach one of the four 50 minute movement labs: TWF 12-12:50 and TH 4-4:50. You are required to sign-up for one.

REQUIREMENTS/VALUES

PARTICIPATION, MINDFULNESS, RESPECT, COMPASSION and COMMUNICATION ARE PRIMARY VALUES.

1. ATTENDANCE!!! NO more than three unexcused absences will be allowed. After two, you will automatically receive a warning.

2. FOUR DANCE TESTS: You will be learning four dances with accompanying songs, proverbs and choreographic concepts. These dances represent different cultural groups and age sets with their own movement vocabularies, musical traditions, dialects, folkloric histories and embodied expressions. This semester we are studying the life cycle and celebratory dances from the Bambara and Malinke peoples of Mali, West Africa with choreography Vogue Femme from NYC.

Preparation for the TESTS:

You will be required to meet outside of class time to prepare choreography for each test. These are costumed, conceptualized and performed in class, filmed and critiqued from the filmed tests and written feedback.

Vogue Femme is choreographed to DJ music and you all will have to create the overall choreographic concept.

You will be assessed on:

*Singing the songs rehearsed in class for each Mande dance,

*Properly executing the rhythm of the djoun djoun in a performative manner,

*Executing the step order and specific choreography,

*Being clear about the transitions between steps,

* Keeping the integrity of the rhythmic pulse and relationship between the downbeat of the djoun-djoun rhythm and articulated torso of the djembe accents,

*Expressing clear communication amongst your family and ability to stay together as one unit, supporting each other.

*Expressing “Coolness” at all times; “cool on the outside, hot on the inside” as a cultural value, with youthful vitality, luminosity, and endurance.

*Originality and execution of family step. Each family is required to co-create an original step invented from movement motifs already explored in the dances’ vocabulary with a final button.

*Family spirit is a value we want to address in these tests.

3. BLOG/Family Research to Performance Projects

You are required to keep an ongoing record of your work together throughout the semester in the form of a blog. Each student will post personal reflections and detailed accounts of the work with our guest artists, in- class exercises, films, discussions, movement labs, and on the research being done for your family research projects. It is important that we have a method of processing the meditation, Tai Chi, Yoga, Vogue Femme and Mande aesthetic.

BLOG DUE DATES:

These should be part of your visual representation for your family research to performance projects. Dates are listed in the beginning of syllabus.

REPEAT: These blogs must be part of your **family presentation**.

Each family will be assigned specific topics, readings and additional resources in collaboration with MBC.

The family presentations must be performative, highly researched, and include dance, cooking Mande food, singing, scripting, BLOGS, musical selections, costuming, and a prepared Q and A afterwards to highlight your main points. MBC will meet with each family to go over resources that will be up under FILES on Canvas.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

By the end of the semester you should be able to clearly identify, understand, or perform:

1. Three specific Mande dance traditions with their accompanying musical and oral performance traditions, plus two different youth-based Contemporary forms-Coupe De’Calle and Vogue Femme.

These dances and rhythms will be taught as highly codified languages, with specific phrasing structures, spatial focus, qualitative affinities and alternating centers. Each movement and rhythm can be studied as part of a larger lexicon where intonation, syncopation, interiorities and exterior embodiments respond to cultural ideas.

By learning selected songs, folktales and proverbs alongside Mande physical traditions, we hope to engage each student in an “embodied” approach to history, to assist you in understanding the high functionality of Mande Performance, and how these traditions resonate in our own cultural expressions.

2. Mande culture aesthetics as they apply to your overall awareness, kinesthetic intelligence, and respect for Mande pedagogy. Notions of improvisation, spontaneity, “ephebisim”, and “getting down” will be taught in light of their relevance to preserving and maintaining cultural values. The conventions of call-and-response (antiphony), repetition, transformation, competition, improvisation, syncopation, multiple meter, “coolness”, and balance in body and mind are clear goals that integrate mind, body, breath and community.

COURSE MISSION AND DESCRIPTION

The mission of this class is to inspire a more expansive world-view through the lens of Mande Dance, Music and Culture. As an Engaged Scholarship supported course, we will study weekly with master dance and drumming folklorists Seydou Coulibaly and Moussa Traore, plus world-renowned dance artist Omari Wiles Mizrahi.

Through this exchange we will deepen our understanding of the social values being ‘played out’ by our traditional teachers through cross examination, research, and by embodying the strict codes and important Mande social values such as:

1. Cultural cohesion over personal gain,
2. Generosity over attachment,
3. Respect for self, others and elders,
4. Humility and flexibility in body and mind,
5. Responsibility for your part of the whole,
6. Outward manifestations of being a good citizen
7. By building a mindful, respectful relationship with a culture not our own, we seek to create an egalitarian exchange of art and ideas between the members of our on-campus class, our teachers from Mali, local community members, and with students learning the same material at other institutions.

Class Schedule of Events

WEEK ONE: 1/23-25

Introductions. Application

Syllabus discussion. Family and section organization.

Dance: Madan dance and practice

Film clips from NWWT/Bloodline in Mali. (Bach-Coulibaly).

WEEK TWO: 1/28-2/1

Readings and discussion: *An Aesthetic of the Cool*. Robert Farris Thompson.

Due: 1/30

Dance and Song: Madan

Films: Dansa Africaine du Mali para Miriamni, La celebre Troupe District de Bamako

WEEK THREE: 2/4-6-8

Films: YouTube footage from the Yeredon Centre avec Troupe Yeredon,

Djoumanzana, Mali (MBC)

Dance: Madan

WEEK FOUR: 2/11-13-15

Dance: Madan

2/13: Review all steps

2/15: TEST#1: Madan

WEEK FIVE: 2/20-22

2/20: Films of Sunu, Weddings, Street parties

WEEK SIX: 2/25-27 and 3/1

Dance: Sunu

2/27: films on Balon'ni ceremony: Djarabikan Balafon, Balafoniks, Soiree bala fonde
Neba Solo lors d'un mariage Sikasso

WEEK SEVEN: 3 /4-6-8-9 Rhythm of Change Festival.

Guest Artist: OMARI WILES -Vogue Femme

***3/9: RoC@ 3-4:30: Seydou Coulibaly w/Moussa Traore

5-7pm: Omari Wiles

WEEK EIGHT: 3/11-13-15

3/11: Review and work Vogue Femme

3/13: TEST on Vogue

3/15: Sunu song and rhythm

WEEK NINE: 3/18-20-22

3/18: Sunu footage: Mali Dance ML1029

3/20: Family Presentations: Keita/Sunu

3/22: Sunu

WEEK TEN: 4/1-3-5

4/1: Guest Artist: Marcel Gbeffa- Yoruban Priest

4/3: Sunu Review

4/5: Sunu Review

WEEK ELEVEN: 4/8-10-12

4/8: Sunu TEST
4/10: Family Presentation: Traore/ Start Wasalunka
4/12: Waslauka

WEEK TWELVE: 4/15-17-19

4/15: Wasalunka dance and song introduction
4/17: Reading and quiz on: Lucy Duran's *Birds of the Wasalu*
Duran, Lucy. "Birds of Wasalu: freedom of expression and expressions of freedom in the popular music of southern Mali" /British Journal of Ethnomusicology, Vol.4. pgs. 101-134.
4/17: Family Presentation: Sangare
4/19: Wasalunka song and dance

WEEK THIRTEEN: 4/22-24-26

4/22: Wasalunka
4/24: Family Presentation: Coulibaly

WEEK FOURTEEN: 4/29, 5/1-3

Review/Choreography for Wasalunka
5/3: Wasalunka TEST #4

*****WEEK FOURTEEN/FIFTEEN: 5/4-5-6-8-10**

Madan

5/4@ 10-1pm and 5/7 @ 5-8pm

Sunu

5/4@ 1-4pm and 5/8 @ 6-9pm

Omari

5/5 @5-8pm

Wasalunka

5/5 @ 10-1pm and 5/9 @ 5-8pm
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5/6@ 1-2pm Feedback for Wasalunka in families

2-3pm: Run all dances

5/8 @1-3pm Work Family Presentations

5/10@ 1-3pm Run all Choreography with Drummers

DRESS REHEARSAL and FINAL EXAM on Ruth Simmons Green

Saturday, May 11th 4pm call/5pm GO: Full Dress-costumes, props, transitions

Sunday, May 12th 4pm call/5pm GO: Performance

Accommodations:

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform us early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may

Speak with us after class or during office hours. For more information, please contact: [Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#) at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu.

Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office

SONGS FOR EACH DANCE

MADAN:

Ya ya lay ya ya Mali den nu yo, aye yeah
Ya ya lay
Ya ya faso den nu yo
Sara tey de ya bella.

Call all the people of Mali.
Where do your parents come from (faso)
Not everyone finds success in their life,
Sometimes when we meet someone we automatically like them (sara). Not everyone can have this quality so we shouldn't worry about what we have.

SUNU

A dunu
A dunun'ni cambora
Ah Dunun yo
Sitan aye Dunun'ni Cambora

A Seydou
Ah Seydou'ni cambora
Ah Seydou yo
Sitan aye dunun'ni cambora

Saninka n'dege mogola ne bey n'dege kelena, njanya
Mogowari cononto
Ne bey n'dege kelena

WASALUNKA

Dunu koroni kasi kan ko di
Aye yeah wololalu

Dunu koroni kasi kan ko di
Dey wololalu yeah tono dun baga yeah

Translation:

This song is a blessing for the mother of the bride or for the bride herself so she is encouraged to raise any child as her own. This is sung at the marriage ceremony to teach loving-kindness to all children. She is compared to a chicken, who raises any other birds' egg as its own.

MALINKE PEOPLES: Madan origins

The Malinke are the second largest ethnic group in Guinea, Mali and Ivory Coast and closely related to the Mandinka people of Gambia and Senegal. They all share a common ancestry to the Mali Empire which first came to prominence under the leadership of Sunjata Keita in the 13th century. Common social practices include following a patrilineal line of descent, living in extended family compounds, and organizing in to a system of hereditary castes. These castes include the *horon* or nobility who settled, farmed and ruled the major regions of Mali, the *nyamakalan* or highly skilled artisan groups including oral historians and musicians (jesere), metal, wood and leather smiths, and *jon* or the slave caste.

KHASSONKE PEOPLES: Sunu Origins

Located in the Kaye region of North Western Mali, the Khassonle are an ethnic group descended from the Fula and Malinke Khasso Kingdoms who speak a language called Khassonke'/Xaasongaxango. Their musical instruments include the djounjounba, jingo, the tantanwo plus an assortment of lutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-k9rzGMcEY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFhGMfY4KI>

WASALU PEOPLES: Wasalunka Origins

The Wasalu is a geolinguistic region in southern Mali and eastern Guinea that can trace its roots to the settling of Fulani warrior Yoro in the times of Sunjata Keita. It is known for it's remote location, where the musical styles are a blending of dialects from Malinke peoples and Peul peoples who settled in the Sikasso cercles (administration regions) of Yanfolila, Kolondieba, and Bougoni. The musical styles are based in hunter musical rhythms and explore ideas of freedom and family.

Required Books/Articles/Papers/Films:

These are all on canvas for you or will be handed out in class.

MADAN:

Articles:

Thompson, Robert Farris. "An Aesthetic of the Cool: West African Dance. Handout in class.

Book: Keita, Cheick M. Cheriff. "Outcast to Ambassador. The Musical Odyssey of Salif Keita". Mogoya Books. 2011. This will be on-line for you in Canvas.

Films: "Salif Keita-Citizen Ambassador"/World Music Portraits/Shanachie Entertainment Corp./by Jean Pierre Limosin. c2005.

Book Chapters:

Thompson, Robert Farris. African Art in Motion; Icon and Act. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Frederick S. Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles. 1974. pgs. 1-46.
On canvas

Film Clips from "Street Party in LafiaBougou", Saffo Masquerade and Koteba Night Ceremonies, Jinijela Ceremonies of Che Blenke. Bach-Coulibaly, Michelle. 1993-2010. Shown in class.

WASALUNKA

Articles:

Duran, Lucy. "Women, Music, and the "Mystique" of Hunters in Mali". Chapter 5 (p 137-183). The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective. Routledge 2003. Edited by Ingrid Munson.

Duran, Lucy. "Birds of Wasalu: freedom of expression and expressions of freedom in the popular music of southern Mali. British Journal of Ethnomusicology".

Article research:

This webinar will introduce "soulfulness" as an approach to contemplative practice that centers a synergistic integration of the psychological, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of soul. Soulfulness is characterized by themes emerging from diasporic African cultural influences and inspired by an African American cultural sensibility. These themes include an ethos of interconnectedness (with persons, community, nature, ancestors, Spirit), a relational/communal orientation, the centrality of spirituality, creativity and improvisation, a holistic orientation to human experience, emotional expressiveness, resilience and overcoming adversity, and struggles for liberation in the context of historical and ongoing dehumanization and oppression. The webinar will provide an overview

of the SOUL-Centered Practice (SCP) framework as a foundation to guide theory, research, and practice. Soulfulness seeks to contribute to increasing efforts to improve the cultural attunement of mindfulness meditation and other contemplative practices, and inform the development of culturally-syntonic strategies and exercises. The framework provides a structure for integrating soulfulness into contemplative work, as well as guidance in the development and implementation of soulfulness practices. The approach is intentional in its attention to healing and resisting the dehumanization, soul assaults, and soul wounds of racism and intersectional stress/trauma experienced by historically oppressed, marginalized, minority-status, and stigmatized groups. The ultimate goal of the emerging soulfulness approach is to contribute to the utilization of contemplative practice for the elevation our collective well-being as an interconnected human community in the context of cultural diversity and the ongoing struggles for liberation and social justice.