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Traditions Inspire Original Storytelling
BaoBao Festival Gears Up for March Performances in Colorado

For each of the past seven years, the BaoBao Festival has graced Colorado audiences with drumming, dancing and storytelling. Akramah Cofie has been creating original stories for the BaoBao Festival, since 2007. The Festival draws upon the African tradition of gathering around the Baobab tree to tell stories, drum and dance. Cofie's stories connect ancient traditions to modern times and themes.

Cofie says, "The reason why most of my stories are original is that I have always been a strong advocate for creating new things to add to our traditional repertoire. I believe that there should always be new dances, new songs and new stories to tell the story of Africa's journey through the globe's different epochs."

Cofie was born in Ghana, as are all of the dancers and musicians that participate in BaoBao Festival. He grew up in Accra, the capital city, and was raised by his mother along with four brothers. After Graduating from the University of Ghana with a degree in Theater arts he joined 'Abibigromma', the resident theater company of the School of Performing Arts in the University of Ghana, Legon.

For each annual Festival a new vision and theme is contemplated and then story, song and dance are woven together to create a piece which is visually alive and exciting for the audience. Cofie states, "I believe that all the people who have participated in the BaoBao festival with me are collaborators." It is no easy task to collaborate, as the Festival performers live in various cities from Portland, to Houston, to New York City.

The theme for this year's celebration is "The Measuring Stick". The theme is inspired by and encrypted in the West African Adinkra symbol HWE MU DUA which literally means 'measuring stick' or 'yardstick'. It is a challenge to all humans to examine the criteria they use for measuring their neighbors' worth. Is it by the clothes they wear, the color of their skin or their ethnicity?

While the main focus of the festival is the storytelling, dance and music, a festival in Africa means more than that. It is a weeklong celebration showcasing the works of all the artists and craftsmen within an area. That is why the festival endeavors to feature many performers from Boulder. Pan-Africa Ensemble, Blue Moon Dance Company and Streetside Dance Studios are groups based in the Boulder area who have all featured on the BaoBao stage.

2010 Boulder Guest Performance Groups include:
Hip-hop dance troupes from Streetside Studio
Grupo Macando led by Carmen Nelson
1,000 Voices singing group led by Nii Armah Sowah
Original dance pieces by students of Adjei Abankwah
Students from Running River School

BaoBao Festival 2010 is sponsored by:

- Colorado College
- Laughing Goat Coffee House
- KGNU
- Metropolitan State College
- Ozo Coffee
- Ras Kassa's Ethiopian Restaurant
- Southside Walnut Cafe
- Wish Garden Herbs

BaoBao Festival 2010 Main Performance Schedule:

Other performances, workshops, classes, and events will be listed at www.baobaofest.org

Thursday, March 4, 7 pm

Colorado College

Packard Hall

5 W Cache La Poudre St, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

719-389-6607

Tickets: Free

Friday, March 5, 7 pm

Auraria Higher Education Center

Kenneth King Center, Recital Hall

855 Lawrence Way, Denver, CO

Box office: 303-556-2296

Tickets: \$10 general, \$8 seniors, \$5 students

Saturday, March 6, 7 pm

Boulder Theater

2032 14th Street, Boulder, CO

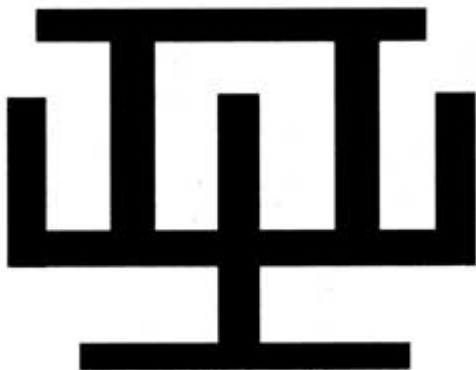
Box office: 303-786-7030

Tickets: \$19 general; \$15 students & seniors; children under 10 are free

Please see www.baobaofest.org for press photos from past events.

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Graphics:



Adinkra Symbol Hwe Mu Dua: The Measuring Stick



Akramah Cofie and Santemu Aakhu perform storytelling at the 2009 BaoBao Festival