




The University of Florida
Center for World Arts
Center for Latin American Studies
School of Music
Department of Theatre and Dance
present



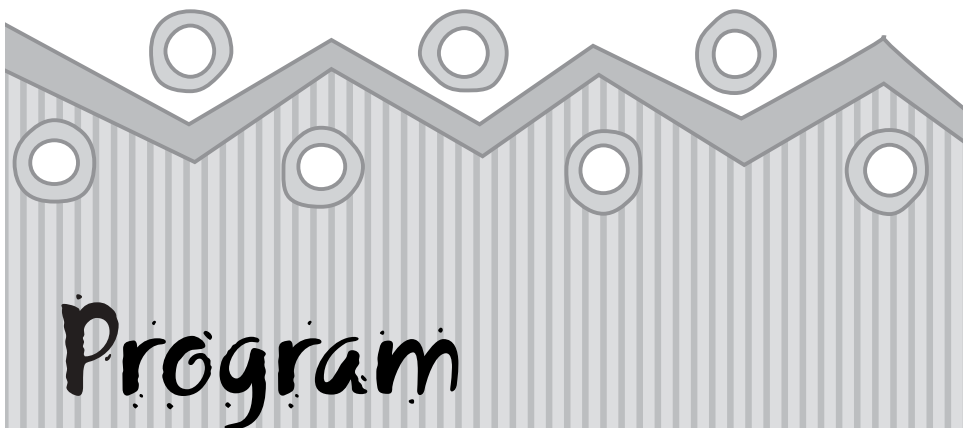
vodou theater

Jacaré and
Caiman Haiti

Featuring guest artists
Frisner Augustin
Erol Josvé



University Auditorium
April 12, 2003
8:00 pm



In Haiti, people who serve the spirits (the *vodou* in the language of the Fon of Benin) call their most dramatic celebration the “dance.” Through music and dance, they invoke the spirits of their various ancestral nations to come feast with them. Vodou initiates (*ounsi*), directed by a priest (*oungan* if male, *manbo* if female), offer themselves as mediums so that the spirits may communicate with the congregation. Tonight, we perform a staged representation of Vodou.

I *Minokan*

The master drummer opens with a medley of rhythms. *Minokan* refers to the collective forces that make up the Vodou pantheon.

Frisner Augustin, *master drum*

II *Behind Mountains*

The name Haiti, or Ayiti, meant “land of mountains” in the language of the indigenous Tayino people. Haitians launched their remarkable slave revolution from the mountains. This piece honors them.

Frisner Augustin, *master drum*
Sunni Witmer, *flute*

Open Forum

Directly after the performance, we invite the audience to an open discussion with the artists about the staged representation of Vodou—moderated by Dr. Lois Wilcken.

III *Bitasyon Vodou*

Vodou Village, an Afro-Haitian dance suite

Erol Josué, *choreographer, vocalist*

Frisner Augustin, *master drum*

Jacaré and Caïman Haiti, University of Florida *musicians and dancers*

Poetry by Patrick Sylvain

Louwèti

Opening. The *manbo* summons the *lwa* (spirits) and the congregation enters the sacred space with salutations to Ountò, spirit of the drums. As the cosmic heartbeat represented by the drum ensemble, Ountò works with the priest to direct the flow of the dance.

Legba

Legba serves as gatekeeper at the cosmic crossroads. Orienting themselves toward the four cardinal points that emanate from the crossroads, servants pour libations for him near the beginning of Vodou rites.

Sevice Marasa

The child spirits, who appear as Twins, represent the division of the first cosmic totality and, by consequence, the twinned nature of humans—male and female, matter and spirit, mortal and immortal.

Musical Interlude

Sirèn Songs

Lasirèn, the mermaid, represents the sea's life-giving and life-taking aspects. Haitians tell many stories of Lasirèn's abductions. She keeps her captives beneath the sea for a year and a day, and then releases them with *konesans*, the special knowledge that marks priests.

Sali Nago

Choreographer/dancer Erol Josué performs a solo in honor of the Nago nation. Originally from Nigeria, the Nagos embody power, especially power that is responsible and protective.

Hommage to the Ibos

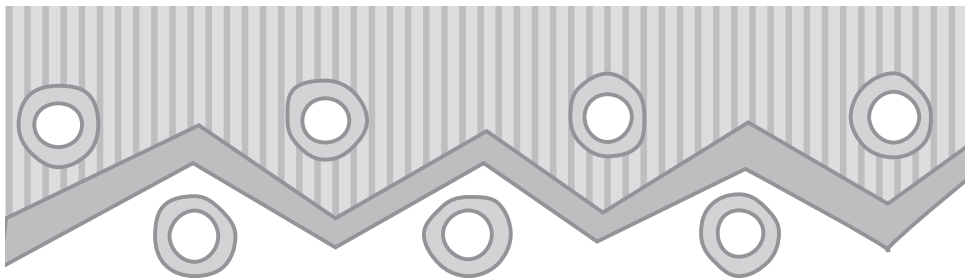
The Ibo people of Nigeria gained a reputation for their proud resistance. Many chose to take their lives in preference to enslavement. Today, the Ibos guard the *kanari*, a clay vessel that, when broken during funeral rites, releases the soul for its rebirth in the ancestral home.

Gédé's Rara

Vodou rites end with the spirit Gédé, master of death and regeneration. Because he brings new life out of death, Gédé plays a leading role in Haiti's rites of spring, including Rara, a festival culminating on Easter Sunday.

IV *Finale*

Frisner Augustin and Jacaré musicians perform a medley of tunes with guitar (Jeff Ladenheim) and bass (Brent Swanson) added to the mix.

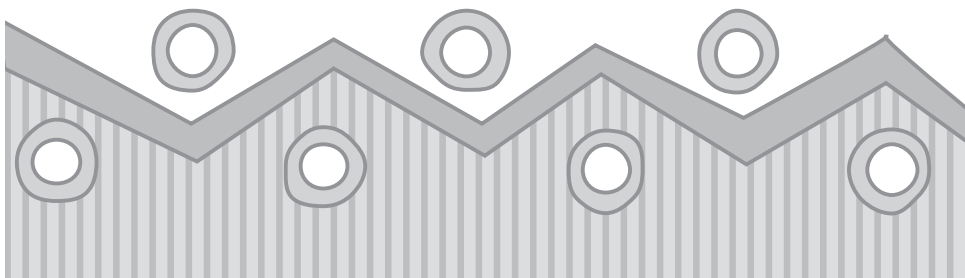


A word about tonight's performance

Tonight's performance culminates a multi-faceted artistic and scholarly project exploring staged representations of Haitian identity involving one of its most recognized traditions: the African-based religion of Vodou. Spearheaded by Lois Wilcken (musicologist and executive director of La Troupe Makandal), this project has been fully integrated into the University of Florida's World Music and Dance curricula headed by Larry Crook (School of Music) and Joan Frosch (Department of Theatre and Dance). Frisner Augustin (Haitian master drummer and artistic director of La Troupe Makandal) and Erol Josué (*ougan* and celebrated Haitian choreographer, dancer, and singer) have been in Gainesville for three months as this year's Center for World Arts' Latin American Artists-in-Residence. Major funding support for the project comes from a Rockefeller Foundation's Religion in the Americas Fellowship Program, Center for Latin American Studies, Center for World Arts, Department of Theatre and Dance, School of Music, and UF Student Government.

To date, the project has reached over a thousand of Florida's school children with workshops and performances and has touched hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students at UF through lectures, seminars and rehearsals. To Lois Wilcken, Frisner Augustin, and Erol Josué who have worked directly with our student artists to create and rehearse the new work they present tonight, we offer a sincere and heartfelt thank you. The experience we have gained has been a transformative one. A true intercultural collaborative experience has been engendered in ways that the abstract study of a subject cannot accomplish. We are truly enriched.

—Larry Crook





Center for World Arts

Directors, Larry Crook and Joan Frosch
Programs Coordinator, Sunni Witmer

The Center for World Arts at the University of Florida promotes artistic diversity and encourages collaborative, multidisciplinary, and intercultural perspectives in the arts. Housed within the College of Fine Arts, the Center values artistic process as a critical way of understanding and interpreting the contemporary world. Through collaborations with local and international artists, the Center explores new modes of learning that stretch educational experiences in the arts for performers and audiences.



La Troupe Makandal

In 1973, a group of young musicians and dancers from Port-au-Prince founded La Troupe Makandal and named the fledgling company after a remarkable Haitian revolutionary. The pieces they created drew on a long tradition of struggle. They evoked power, resistance, and magic. In 1981, the company left Haiti for New York, where it sought the assistance of Master Drummer Frisner Augustin. Mr. Augustin, also from Port-au-Prince, had come to New York in 1972 and established himself as a performer and drum instructor. He introduced La Troupe Makandal to Haitian immigrants in Brooklyn through community festivals. In 1982, Makandal came to the attention of the wider public and began to appear in diverse educational and theatrical venues.

Makandal performs and teaches traditional Haitian music and dance. In the theater, the company presents suites based on the dances of Vodou (Afro-Haitian spirituality), Carnival and Rara (springtime festivals), and the *konbit* (cooperative work). In schools, libraries, and museums Makandal conducts workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and residencies that link music and dance with Haitian history and society. The company has conducted a workshop in Haitian drumming at Hunter College since 1983, and its *Krik! Krak!* program provides classes for children at three community centers in Brooklyn. Makandal has made three recordings and is featured on three others.

La Troupe Makandal channels the power of traditional Afro-Haitian music and dance to represent Haiti's history and culture. Most of the company's repertory derives from the rites of Vodou, widely known in the United States as "voodoo." Where the mass culture disparages Vodou, the Troupe's performances and workshops educate, entertain, and heal racial and cultural divisions. La Troupe Makandal creates dynamic experiences one does not soon forget.





Tonight's Featured Guests

Frisner Augustin was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where he studied ritual drumming in the temples of Vodou. In 1972, he emigrated to New York and established himself as a master drummer in Vodou rituals, as a performer for Haitian community festivals, and as a drum instructor. In 1981, Mr. Augustin took over the direction of La Troupe Makandal. His recordings with the Troupe (*A Trip to Vodoo*, *Èzili*, and *The Drums of Vodou*) feature his settings of traditional Afro-Haitian dances. He has recorded as well for jazz artist Kip Hanrahan and for the soundtrack of the film *Beloved*. Mr. Augustin teaches a workshop in Haitian drumming at Hunter College, the *Krik! Krak!* workshop for children at three sites in Brooklyn, and classes and lecture-demonstrations through the Brooklyn Arts Council and City Lore. Above all, his dynamic drumming continues to tempt the spirits to the Vodou houses of New York. In 1999, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded him a National Heritage Fellowship, this nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. He is the artistic director and master drummer for La Troupe Makandal.

Erol Josué is a Haitian Vodou priest, singer, composer, and dancer and has directed Company Shango in Paris. He has used his creativity to defend the culture of Vodou, and he links his artistic work to the struggle against anti-immigrant discrimination and violence. The European public knows him for his innovative interpretations commissioned to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the French government's abolition of slavery. Since 2001, Mr. Josué has been working in the United States. He directed and performed in Anna Wexler's *Gullah Jack's Bag*, which uses the story of the Denmark Vesey uprising in 1822 Charleston to explore festering memories of slavery. The piece debuted in Boston in June 2002. In New York, he is currently creating his premiere CD with Soundscape Productions and will travel to Benin, West Africa to record with Gangbé Brass Band. La Troupe Makandal has recruited him as dance director to develop and advance its repertory, particularly that related to Independence Bicentennial celebrations. After his residency at UF, Mr. Josué begins a dance and healing project at the Boston Medical Center.

Dr. Lois Wilcken is Executive Director of La Troupe Makandal and a musicologist. A native New Yorker, she has had the pleasure of researching the traditional music and dance of Haiti in Port-au-Prince and New York City's Haitian neighborhoods. She shares her experiences with academic and general audiences, and she taught in the Music Department of Hunter College of the City University of New York. In addition to administering and developing programs with La Troupe Makandal, Dr. Wilcken works for City Lore, a center for folk arts in New York City. White Cliffs Media Company published her book, *The Drums of Vodou*, in 1992. In 1998, the Institute for the Study of American Music/ University of Illinois Press published *Island Sounds in the Global City*, which she co-edited with Dr. Ray Allen. She also has recently published a chapter in *Caribbean Dance from Abakuá to Zouk: How Movement Shapes Identity* edited by Susanna Sloat (University Press of Florida).





Musicians

(UF World Music Ensemble, MUN 2491)

Larry Crook and Welson Tremura, Directors

David Akombo, Kale Dennis (treasurer), Tom Hurst, Lindsay Koons, Robert Ladkani, Yvaquito Pericles, Rosanna Rivero, Marta Strambi, Cliff Sutton, Brent Swanson (president), Amber Whatley, Sunni Witmer



Dancers

(UF World Dance and Intercultural Performance, DAA 2381)

Joan Frosch, Director

Fabiola Avignon, Ayide Borges, Teonia Nicole Burton, Jacques Clervil, Scarlett DeLeon, Tarnessa Gaines, Natasha Gaziano, Jeanene Griffin, Nora Hoare, Shanpriale Holland, Diedre Houchen, Diana Itacy, Rayllensons Itacy, Sony Laventure IV, Eli Mizrahi, Xaritzia Morales, Michael Pipkin, Natalie Robinson, Jasmine Rogers, Julie Salamon, Kristi Seymour, Guerline Thomas, Sabine Thomas, Ana Carolina Victoria



Technical Staff

Michelle Benoit, costumer; Ryan Byersocks (Spinal Tech), lighting; Brent Swanson, rehearsal sound technician; Pete Theoktisto (Everyman Sound), sound; Rosalinda Herrera, stage manager; Diedre Houchen, Kristi Seymour, and Xaritzia Morales, costume assistants

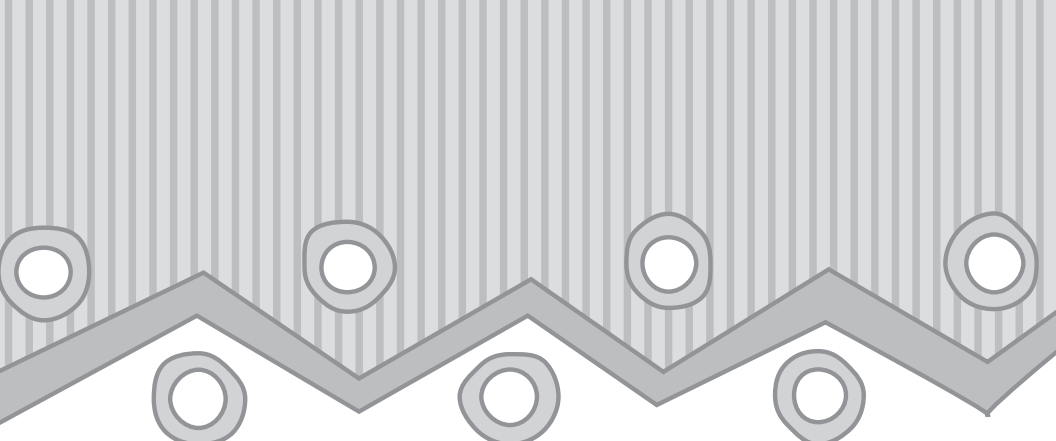


Acknowledgements

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Tonight's program is part of the 51st annual conference of the
Center for Latin American Studies held at the University of Florida

Religion in the Americas: Agendas for the Future

(April 10-12, 2003)

Organized in collaboration with the Departments of Religion and Political Science and the Center for World Arts, the conference marks the successful culmination of the Rockefeller residential fellowship program entitled "Religion in the Americas: Constructing Self, Community, and Nation in the Age of Globalization." All conference events take place on the University of Florida campus.

Program number 102 in School of Music Events for the 2002-2003 academic year.

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