

GLOBAL GROOVES
presents
AFOXÉ
SAT 1ST AUG 09



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'Afoxé Manchester' was about sharing deep-rooted Afro-Brazilian heritage with the UK's community in an urban modern setting in an attempt to encourage the meeting of minds, and to inspire and invigorate musical and creative experience.

The Global Grooves team shared the music and dance disciplines of the Brazilian Afoxé parade in a series of workshops for the UK's drumming and dance community culminating in a special one-off performance in Manchester City Centre.

The project pays homage to the Candomblé tradition of Brazil, allowing its participants to become modern-day story tellers passing on the stories of this centuries-old art form through a beautiful and powerful demonstration of drumming, dance and song. This event was one never seen before in Manchester, and we put our unique own stamp on it by including a special brass section!

This vibrant carnival-style drumming, dancing, singing, and brass-blowing bloco saturated the streets of Manchester with its effervescent energy spreading hope and light to all who chose to follow.

This report documents the journey the participants made through the Afoxé project, whilst providing background information about the Afoxé tradition, how the Global Grooves team delivered this spectacular event, and is supported with participant and financial information. Enjoy!





2.

About Afoxé

The roots of Afoxé are in the ritual music of Candomblé; an African routed religion commonly associated with the Nigerian Yoruba culture and its Brazilian Diaspora. In Brazil, Afoxé is mainly performed by *blocos afros* - groups of mostly black or *mulatto* (mixed heritage) musicians who work primarily with the African side of Brazilian music. The group 'Filhos de Gandhi' is responsible for making Afoxé popular with their established status within the musical and cultural scene in Brazil. Afoxé is commonly performed in the streets of Brazil to spread love and good energy, and to cleanse the streets in preparation for, and after, carnival.

In January 2009, we decided to develop an Afoxé to be performed in the streets of Manchester. Rather than trying to recreate a solely 'traditional' Afoxé parade, we chose to deliver a performance that drew inspiration, ethos and meaning from the Brazilian Afoxé parade but with a contemporary Manchester twist.

We wanted to share our experiences, stories and cultures with a wider audience in Manchester to hopefully encourage people to smile, have fun, get along and share good times together. In today's world there is often conflict and issues that arise around the Globe due to lack of understanding and lack of communication. The Afoxé was about sharing our love, energy and peace, communicating this through music, dance and costume.



In addition to this, in 2008 the Global Grooves team carried out an evaluation of our services and provisions and opportunities currently available for the Northwest's international percussion and dance community. It was noted that in Manchester, there are decreasing opportunities for public performances, especially outside in the streets of the City Centre where many of these groups were first established.

'Afoxé Manchester' responded to this by bringing together members from groups based across the Northwest and beyond and delivering a performance, bringing vibrance back to the streets of Manchester once again. The Afoxé showed the importance of cultural performances in the City Centre with a view to encouraging further links and opportunities on the streets of Manchester for all.

3. ✨ ✨ ✨

About Global Grooves

The Global Grooves programme was initially developed to raise awareness of the African roots of international percussion and dance styles studied and practiced nationally. Many artists working within this area have little or no opportunity to continue their studies to an in-depth, professional level, and the few opportunities available have been too expensive and difficult to access for participants based in the North of England.

'Global Grooves 2008' responded to this demand by offering affordable training opportunities with tuition from the most knowledgeable and experienced music and dance tutors available in the UK. The project comprised of a number of different elements including short courses, master-class weekends, group development, professional development opportunities, visual arts, and showcase evenings. The 2008 programme worked with over 200 workshop participants, over 350 performers, more than 17 performance groups, and hundreds of audience members.



'Global Grooves 2009' is well underway and has already proven a great success. 2009 will see the development and delivery of seven short courses in percussion and dance, plus two more master-class weekends.





Planning and Research

The Global Grooves artistic management team share a wealth of experience in delivering, performing in, and managing participatory arts projects celebrating international performance arts and culture. Drawing upon the experience of the whole team and other specialists within the UK's percussion and dance community, the initial inspiration and ideas generated were a catalyst for the development of the Afoxé. It was agreed that although we were fortunate enough to have access to the experience and advice of UK-based artists with in-depth expertise, further research and development was also important. Supported by Bangdrum Workshops and British Airways, three of our core team visited several groups in Brazil to discover more about the Afoxé tradition and source traditional instruments and materials for the project. This was a great success and many new links and friendships were made throughout the research trip.



Following this research, all of the artists and management team came together to develop the separate areas of the Afoxé including costume, percussion, brass, dance and song. After the basic structures of the pieces were established, our artists team went to work on writing and arranging these various creative elements, designing and fabricating the costumes, and promoting the workshops. It was agreed that we would base the project on six of the Afro-Brazilian 'Orixás' / deities celebrated through Afoxé. These were Exú, Oxum, Oya, Oxossi, Xango and Oxala. (See glossary for further information).



5.

Costume Development

One key area of progress and a new area of the Global Grooves 2009 project was the costume development. Following insights gathered from research carried out by Global Grooves in 2008, it was evident that an important area of development for the Northwest was carnival costume, especially Brazilian carnival arts.

Global Grooves provided core funding, organisational development and core materials to develop a new carnival arts resource; Cabasa Carnival Arts. Global Grooves successfully supported Cabasa Carnival Arts in opening a new studio, fund raising and business development. Through the launch of Cabasa Carnival Arts the Northwest's creative industries now have access to a fully resourced studio and expert advice and tuition in carnival arts development. (Visit: www.cabasacarnivalarts.com for more information).

Global Grooves commissioned costume designer and Cabasa's new artistic director Emily Wood to take on the project management, design, development and fabrication of the Afoxé costumes. The project was a great success and over 80 costumes were designed and completed from scratch. This costume design process involved over ten volunteers and over two hundred hours of combined hard work. Each section of the Afoxé required different designs to represent the colours of each Orixá; Oxum - yellow, Oya - red, Oxala - white and Xango - red and white (see glossary for more information on the Orixás). Special attention was also paid to individual fittings, and each participant had a tailored costume to suit their size.



The sheer scale of costume development was an amazing achievement in itself, and the project - including the studio development and launch of Cabasa Carnival Arts - was expertly completed within two months!





6.



Brass Development

In our early artistic planning meetings, one of the clear goals of the project was to make a unique Afoxé style parade with a Manchester / UK twist.

Although many of the percussion arrangements and choreographies focused on traditional rhythms and movements, we added an extra flavour to the mix with interesting brass melodies, harmonies and styles not normally played in Afoxé.

Delivered by Tim Chatterton in partnership with Band on The Wall, five Brass players had the opportunity to explore a unique use of brass within a large ensemble drawing upon age-old traditional Nigerian melodies and western pop culture lovingly arranged by Tim and our guest composer Joe Harrison. This was a pilot project and proved to be an amazing success with the brass becoming a core element to the performance. Global Grooves will definitely explore further possibilities with Brass players in future projects.



The Brass section was dressed in yellow and white costumes representing the goddess Oxum whose colour is yellow and metal is Brass and gold. (See glossary for more information about Oxum)



Vocal Choir

An important element of any Afoxé - and most other world music traditions - is singing. Many traditional Afoxé groups play only one rhythm (Ijexá), celebrating each Orixá through different songs from the Yoruba roots of Candomblé. Global Grooves delivered five vocal development sessions to study the songs to accompany each arrangement.

Melody within percussion groups in the Northwest has only just started to become popular, greatly due to the introduction of Candomblé and other folkloric styles to the area.



As a result of the Afoxé's success, singing and melody will become a key area of development for Global Grooves, and provides the last piece of the jigsaw for the many international performance groups in the Northwest. Our vocal section was dressed in red to represent the Orixá Oya (the goddess of wind and storms of which were represented through the breath of the vocalists delivering powerful harmonies and unison phrasing).



8.



Percussion Ensemble

Over 40 percussionists from the Northwest and beyond took part in nine development workshops delivered at the 'Zion Arts Centre' in Manchester and 'The Arts Organisation' in Nottingham. The Afoxé brought together members from many different locally and nationally established community and performance groups. As well as learning about the rich tradition of Afoxé, participants had the opportunity to use new instruments, some of which were sourced directly from the Afoxés in Salvador, Brazil. Participants studied traditional arrangements and explored new exciting ways of using these rhythms to create modern fusion grooves with influences from Samba Kabila, Ijexá, funk and even disco!

Learning resources were also given to participants in the form of basic notation and recordings of the final pieces. The arrangements were co-written by Leon Patel and Ravin Jayasuriya and co-directed by Eraldo de sa Marques and Holly Prest.



The percussionists' costumes were aptly based on the red and white colour scheme of Xango, the powerful lord of the drum. There was also a special community feel within the performance group, as a number of participants were families, friends, or couples.

Delivered by skilled dancer and choreographer Adriana Rosso, the project took its influences from Candomblé and other Brazilian dance styles.

The routines represented several different deities from Candomblé tradition. As well as unison Orixá dances by all of the participants, the performance also focused on individual characters telling the stories of the gods and goddesses by portraying the different traits in the deities personalities. The dancers were dressed all in white in traditional Brazilian costume. Inspiration was also drawn from the Samba Schools of Brazil with playful solo performances during some of the fusion arrangements.



A key area of development for Global Grooves in the future will be focusing on the interplay and relationship between musicians and dancers. In many traditions this relationship is of up most importance to the styles of performance and is often overlooked here in the UK. Although this was a short course with the dancers only meeting on five separate occasions, this focus was delivered throughout the process in collaborative rehearsals after each development workshop.



10.



Volunteers

The Afoxé would have simply not have been possible without the help from volunteers both young and old. The Afoxé volunteers played a major role in each area of project delivery and development including parade crew, photographers, costume makers, flower givers, van drivers, fund raisers, project managers, coordinators, video and audio artists, web designers, performers and tutors. All of the parade crew also had full costume to add the finishing touch to the production. Some of the volunteers even learnt the arrangements and choreographies during the process for a surprise performance in the encore..



With a shared interest in offering development opportunities for all, the Global Grooves team hope to offer further volunteering opportunities in all areas of its future project.

During the development workshops, the Afoxé achieved far more than anyone had originally anticipated. This was greatly due to the rapid growth of opportunities that had recently become available to musicians and dancers in and around the Northwest. Previous development work with the UK's artistic community meant that participants already had some knowledge of the featured subjects and many of the foundations for the performance aspect were already in place. The group's repertoire consisted of seven separate arrangements and choreographies celebrating six different Orixás.

The Afoxé performance had two different elements that required different approaches from our tutors team and had different impact upon the audience.

Afoxé Parade

Afoxé is traditionally performed in a parade format throughout Brazil. Our parade performance started off at Piccadilly Gardens and continued slowly down Market Street entertaining literally thousands of visitors to the City Centre. The reaction from the audience was fantastic as we filled the City Centre with powerful rhythms, beautiful folkloric melodies and energetic dancing. To help spread the ethos of the Afoxé and pass on a smile to spectators, our volunteer parade team gave out beautiful white flowers as gifts to encourage the audience to have fun and join the amazing and powerful spectacle that was 'Afoxé Manchester'.

Static Performance

The Afoxé culminated with a spectacular open air static performance as part of Manchester Jazz festival outside their Albert Square stage. Many of the audience who saw the parade followed us until the end of the performance, flowers in hand and beaming smiles all round. In full costume, all seven arrangements were performed including a special encore that had the whole of Albert Square on their feet and dancing to a classic Michael Jackson disco tune. Each area of the performance was a great success and after the final piece, audience and performers alike were at one with hugs and smiles passed around the square.







Participant Data

Global Grooves reached participants from throughout the UK both young and old. Over 90 performers, tutors and volunteers took part in the project. Some of the facts and figures are detailed below.

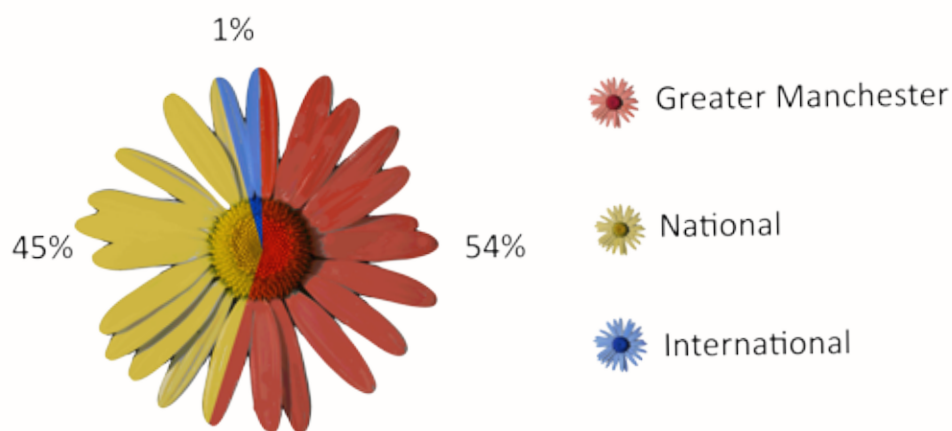
Gender



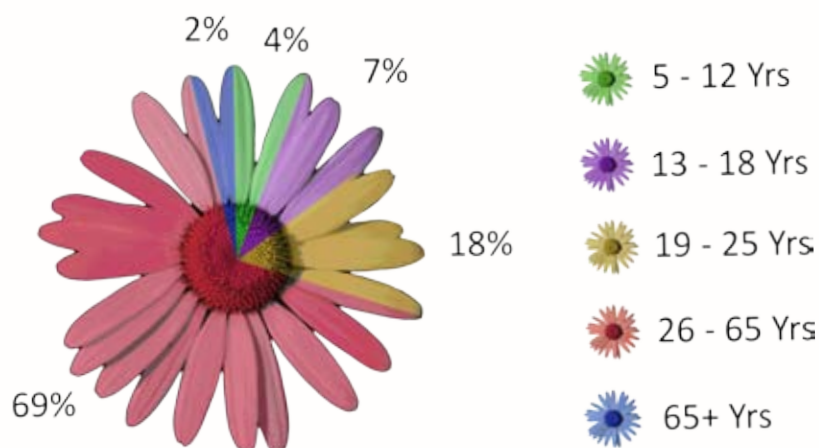
Total 93



Location



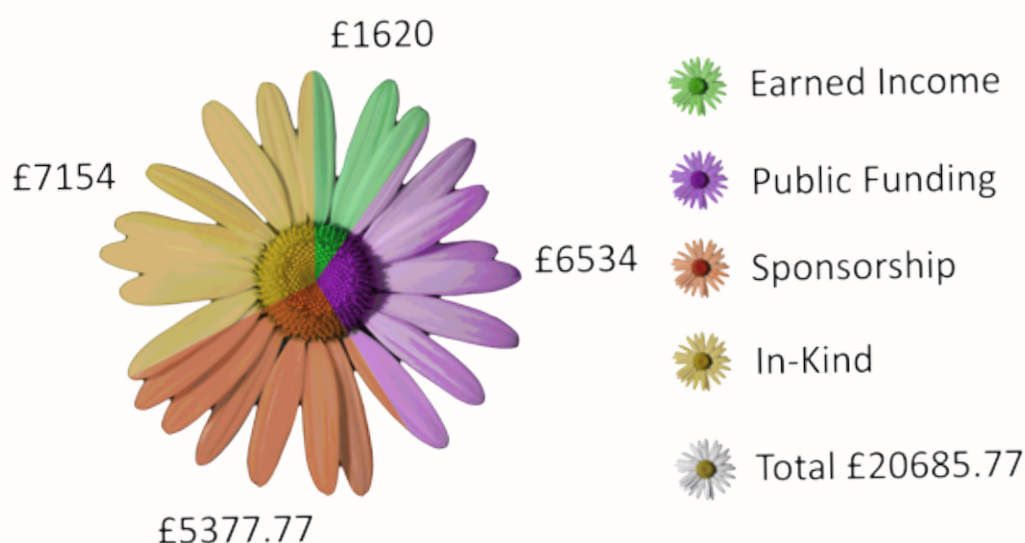
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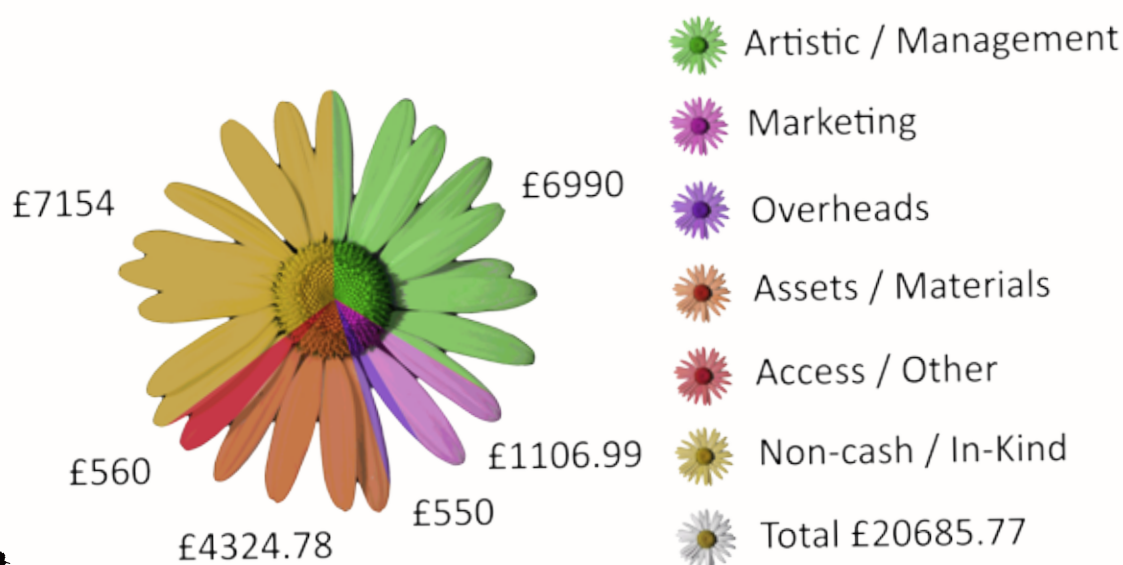
Financial Information

Thanks to generous sponsorship, funding and in-kind support, we are pleased to outline our financial summary below. Final figures include items that will be used to develop future Global Grooves activities from costumes and materials to instruments and marketing resources. Most importantly, the management team's shared learning and new experience from the whole project has been invaluable to the future development of all our activities.

Income



Expenditure





14.

Afoxé Manchester 09' is...

The Creative Team

Adriana Rosso, Emily Wood, Eraldo de sa Marques, Holly Prest, Iain Mellor, Joe Harrison, Leon Patel, Ravin Jayasuria, Steve Bryan, Tim Chatterton & Zac Sargent.

The Percussionists

Adam Watkins, Alan Burlison, Anne Griffiths, April Pickett, Bayhass Eljazari, Ben Lee, Ceri Howells, Charlotte Skinner, Dave Higgins, Dave Peters, David Mason, Dennis Palmer, Eddie Collier, Elle Manning, Fiona Whelpton, Gary Bowerbank, Hamish Bebbington, Heather Cockell, Ian Cohen, James Burlison, Jenny Thomas, Jo Bebbington, Joan Davies, Joyce Harasimiuk, Julian Harris, Leandro de Oliveira, Marcus Hicks, Mika de Oliveira, Olly de Lange, Owen Davies, Paddy McSweeney, Pat Selden, Paul Rogerson, Rome Mosabbir, Sue Ferner, Tim Denby & Ursula Jones.

The Dancers

Aisha Malik, Alicja Zajac, Bridget Withycombe-Wharton, Claire Platt, Danny Henry, Hannah McHugh, Joao Paulo Baqueta, Kirsty Louise Jones, Nicky Thompson, Sally Kelly, & Steve Davies.

The Singers

Alyss McBirney, Beth de Lange, Carrie Mason, Claudia Spencer, Dan Jones, Gemma Bartholomew, Jane Harris, Lis Murphy, Marco Hough, Nikki Norton, Stefan Pope, & Yusra Warsama.

The Brass Section

John Fitzpatrick, Martin Smith, Neil Simon, Tim Chatterton, & Tony Marshall.

The Volunteers

Alex Smith, Brett Mercer, Chris Burlison, Clive Hunte, Gareth Hacking, Gemma Connell, Georgina Withycombe, Jacob Bebbington, Jacqui Warner, Janice Shore, Jean Jones, Joe Harrison, Katie Wood, Liz Kenny, Mariam Muhammad, Mark Burlison, Martha Millar, Matt Kowalczyk, Monica Baba, Mrs. Arshad, Natasha Hough, Pete Patel, Renata Patel, Sarah Coutadier, Richard Cross, Stephanie Roe, Stuart Thompson, Sylvia Hutchinson, & Zubaida Muhammad.

15.

Thank you!

Global Grooves would like to thank all the people and organisations that made 'Afoxé Manchester' such a tremendous success.

Sponsors and funders:

Arts Council England
British Airways
Grassroots Grants
MusicLeader

Partners:

The Angel Centre
Band on the Wall
Bangdrum Workshops
Cabasa Carnival Arts
Edun Ara
Manchester Jazz Festival
Manchester City Council
Meninos Oldham
Nottingham School of Samba
One Voice Music
Reform Creative
Rhythmix
Soar Valley Music LTD
Zion Arts Centre

The Global Grooves Team:

Adriana Rosso
Emily Wood
Eraldo de sa Marques
Holly Prest
Iain Mellor
Leon Patel
Ravin Jayasuriya
Steve Byran
Tim Chatterton
Zac Sargent





Candomblé: During the hundreds of years of the trans-atlantic slave trade, millions of Africans from many regions, including from the Dahomey empire, Yoruba kingdoms and the Congo and Angola nations, were forcibly shipped to the 'new world' to work in the European colonies. Africans of Yoruba descent were brought to Cuba primarily from Nigeria, and to Brazil mainly from Benin (formerly Dahomey). They brought their traditions with them, and despite harsh conditions and long periods when they were prohibited from expressing their own culture, they managed to retain many of their religious beliefs and practices, although several customs were lost. In Brazil and Cuba the Yoruba traditions have formed the basis of two new religions: Candomblé in Brazil, and Santería, or Regla de Ocha in Cuba. Central to both these religions is the worship of deities known as Orixás in Brazil and Orishas or Orichas in Cuba. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Orixá: The Yoruba believe that the Orixás are divine beings directly connected with natural forces such as thunder, lightning, wind & rain and with activities such as hunting, or working with herbs and plants or with metals. They believe Olodumare created the universe, that all life is related and that human beings are not separate from other elements in the universe. According to tradition each of us is born with a guiding Orisha or Orishas to whom we must make offerings including sacrifice if we are to maintain balance and harmony in our lives. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Exú: (In Cuba 'Elegua') Greeting: Laroye, Symbol: hooked staff (painted red & black) / whistle, Day: Monday
Colour: black or red & black.

Exú is the messenger between humans and the Orixás and between the Orixás and the creator, Olodumare. He is a warrior and opens the way/path. He is the entrance and the exit and always the first and the last to be honoured in rituals and ceremonies. He presents choices in our lives and his domain is the crossroads. There are many aspects of Exú including the child and the trickster. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Oxum: (In Cuba 'Ochun') Greeting: Ora Ye Ye O, Symbol: gold fan / brass mirror / peacock feather, Day, Saturday, Colour: gold / yellow / amber.

Ochun is fresh, sweet water and female sexuality. She bathes in rivers, streams and at waterfalls. She is love, honey, beauty, gold, sensuality and the seducer. She helps women to conceive and is the protector of pregnant women. She carries a fan made of gold with a mirror in the middle. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Oya: (Other names: Iansa / Yansa) Greeting: Epa Hei, Symbol: fly whisk (black horse tail) / copper crown with 9 points, Day: Wednesday, Colour: red / white / brown / pink.

Oya is strong winds, storms, hurricanes, lightning, fire and female power. She is courageous, a brave warrior and a remarkable tactician. Together with Chango (his third and favorite wife), they led their army to many victorious battles. She had nine children and in Yoruba, Iansa means mother of nine. She lives at the cemetery gates and is the guardian of the dead. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Oxossi: Greeting: Oke Aro, Symbol: bow & arrow, Day: Thursday, Colour: turquoise blue / green.

Oxossi is a warrior and the hunter that never misses. His domain is the forest and the woods. He is the aim you want to achieve in life, constantly striving and always focussed. He is the younger brother of Ogun and the king of Ketu (Benin). Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Xango: (In Cuba Chango) Greeting: Kao Kabiesile, Symbol: double-headed axe / thunderbolt / castle, Day: Saturday, Colour: red & white

Chango is fire, thunder, lightning, rain, virility and male power. He lives in rocks and minerals and in volcano lava. He hates injustice and cowardly behaviour. He is a strategist and a king (Alafin) from Oyo, Nigeria. He is Lord of the drums (the Bata are his ceremonial drums). He had three wives, Oba, Ochun and Oya. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Oxala: (In Cuba Obatala) Greeting: Epa Baba, Symbol: fly whisk (white horse tail) / all things white. Day: Friday, Colour: white & silver / white with transparent blue or red. As an old man, Obatala is known as Obalufon (Cuba) and Oxalufan (Brazil). His domains include the sky and mountain tops. He is purity and wisdom. He is the father of the Orixas, merciful and tender and the protector of all humans and sculptured the human form. As a young man he is known as Ajaguna (Cuba) and Oxaguian (Brazil) who is agile and happy. Source: www.edunara.co.uk / One voice music.

Filhos de Gandhi: In 1949, a group called Filhos de Gandhi began playing Afoxé during Carnival parades in Salvador; their name translates as Sons of Gandhi, associating black Brazilian activism with Mahatma Gandhi's Indian independence movement. The Filhos de Gandhi's 1949 appearance was also revolutionary because, up until then, the Carnival parades in Salvador were meant only for light-skinned people. Source: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_of_Brazil

Ijexá: Ijexá is the primary rhythm used in the Afoxé parades rooted in the Candomblé tradition of Brazil. It is also Oxum's rhythm. Ijexá is now commonly played and performed all over the world and has influenced many styles of music from outside of the context of Afoxé.

Samba School: A Samba School is basically an association of people from the same neighborhood, usually a working class community (or favela) in most cases located in a suburban area. They get together on a regular basis for samba nights and rehearsals at their samba court (quadra). Samba schools provide invaluable jobs to the community, that is employed year-round in the production of costumes and floats. Each year samba schools choose a different theme. Samba Schools may take to the parade anything from 3,000 to 5,000 members, and from 6 to 8 floats. They try to illustrate the theme chosen. All costumes and floats are original, made from scratch every year. Source: www.ipanema.com/carnival/parade.htm

Bloco: Blocos are community organizations that represent and work with residents of a certain urban locale in Brazil. One reason for their existence is the failure of their government to address the social problems of the community. The blocos answer this need through social programs and the development of community self-reliance. Blocos are largely run by leaders of musical groups, which represent each of the blocos and provide them with an identity. Source: www.gorogoro.info/gorogoro/blocos01.htm

Samba Kabila: Samba Kabila is commonly played throughout Brazil and makes up some of the roots of the rhythms and traditions played in the Samba Schools. Samba kabila is often played in Candomblé de Angola celebrations and songs are sung in praise of the various Orixás.

Funk: Funk is an American musical style that originated in the mid to late 1960s when African American musicians blended soul music, soul jazz and R&B into a rhythmic, danceable new form of music. Today in Brazil these rhythms and flavours are also used within many traditional percussion ensembles and samba schools. Source: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Funk

Disco: Disco is a genre of dance music that originated in African American, gay and psychedelic communities in New York City and Philadelphia during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Latinos and women also embraced disco, and the music eventually expanded to several other popular groups of the time. Source: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disco

Band on the Wall: Band On The Wall is one of the cornerstones of Manchester's music scene for the greater part of the last century, it was at the centre of Manchester's punk scene in the late 1970s when Buzzcocks, The Fall and Joy Division first played. Since then it has played host to many internationally acclaimed artists including Mica Paris, Bjork, Art Blakey, Carleen Anderson, John Martyn and countless others. Closed in 2005 for re-development, the venue opens in September 2009 with state-of-the-art new facilities and incorporates The Picturehouse in the adjacent building that will provide a new social space and host complimentary events throughout the year. www.bandonthewall.org



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