

Discovery Theater

presents

Farafina Kan

About Farafina Kan

Farafina Kan literally translates to “the sound of Africa.” This professional performing arts company is dedicated to maintaining the history and integrity of traditional African drumming and dancing. Under the tutelage of international performing arts legends, Farafina Kan seeks to sustain the work initiated by these legends through professionalism, artistry, continual learning and proactive intergenerational transmission of African culture through music and movement.

Farafina Kan is a family, comprised of young African-American artists who have been reared in various other dance companies, including Memory of African Culture, Sankofa Dance Theatre, Kankouran West African Dance Company, Dono Drum and Dance Ensemble, Maimouna Keita West African Dance Company, and Wose Dance Theatre.

The members of Farafina Kan say, “*We are eternally grateful to our parents for having the foresight to search for the traditions of our ancestors and the many elders who have and continue to pave the way for us to do what we do today.*”

For performer bios, good links, and more, see www.farafinakan.com.

A REPRODUCIBLE LEARNING GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

This guide is designed to help you and your students prepare for, enjoy, and discuss *Farafina Kan*. It contains background information, vocabulary, and activities. Appropriate for all ages.

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Learning Guide: Anne Stewart O'Donnell

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The Smithsonian Associates

Guenther and Siewchen Yong Sommer

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See our website for tickets, location, directions, resources for teachers, and much more!

Activity: Hey! Pass it On!

The members of Farafina Kan learned about African music and dance from their parents and other elders who preserved and passed on these traditions. You can do the same thing!

Talk to your favorite grownup. Ask him or her to **sing you a song (or tell you a story) passed down in the family.**



Then ask:

- When did you first hear the song? Where were you, and how old were you?
- Who taught it to you? Where do you think *they* heard it?
- Why did you remember it? What did you like best about it?

Finally, keep the oral tradition going—**sing the song** to your friends!

Check These Out!

- ***Mamady Keita and Sewa Kan*** and ***Only the Water Separates Us***—Two great CDs from Farafina Kan; order them from www.farafinakan.com.
- ***Talking Drums of Africa***, by Christine Price (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973). A poetic, beautifully-illustrated tribute to the drums and drummers of Nigeria and Ghana. All ages.
- ***Kofi and His Magic*** by Maya Angelou (Random Library, November 1996). A positive and realistic visual portrait of West Africa, through the eyes of a young boy. Ages 4-8.
- **www.rhythmweb.com** has links to GREAT STUFF about percussion from many cultures. Ideas for instruments kids can make are only the beginning!
- ***Rhythms of Life, Songs of Wisdom: Akan music from Ghana, West Africa***—CD from Smithsonian/Folkways recordings.
- **www.pbskids.org/africa**—Kid's Africa!

DISCOVERY THEATER, the Smithsonian Institution's theater for children, is dedicated to offering the best in live educational performing arts for young people. Each year, more than 50,000 children and their adults visit DT on the National Mall to explore American history and cultures, folk tales from around the world, and fun, accessible science and math programs. Discovery Theater performances unite ideologies, enact themes that reflect the diversity of its audiences, open avenues of self-reflection, and offer an enjoyable means for parents and teachers to demonstrate life's lessons. DT also collaborates with distinguished partners such as the Library of Congress and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Favorite DT programs tour schools and museums, while our partnership with Round House Theater in Silver Spring, MD means that DT's special brand of educational entertainment for kids is more widely available than ever before. For details, call 202-633-8700 or see www.DiscoveryTheater.org.

Vocabulary

Culture—the customs, art, beliefs and so on shared by a group of people.

Percussion—one thing tapping or hitting another.

Rhythm—a repeated pattern of sound.

Tradition—a custom, belief, etc. handed down through generations.