

Study Guide for Teachers

W. Che Cartafalsa

Hands – on West African Drumming

Grades 3-12



Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning
Connecticut

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Che' Cartafalsa is a professional musician, instrument maker and educator whose work has brought him from concert halls and orchestras to rock bands and onto West African street weddings.

Che' is a member of Toubabou and the White-Eyed Lizard Band which have played throughout the Northeast for the past several years.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about rhythm
- Students will learn improvisation and specifically assigned parts
- Students will learn the different drums of the djembe orchestra
- Students will learn about communication in a drum ensemble

DJEMBE ORCHESTRA

Djun Djun family of drums:

Djembe (Lead, shaped like wine glass)

Dundumba (Largest, deepest)

Sangban (Mid range, matches tone of djembe)

Kenkeni (Smallest, highest pitch)



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Che' emphasizes instrumental technique, listening skills, and the building of multilayered rhythms (polyrhythms) in percussion. Che' has lived in Africa and has learned from the percussion masters and passes this knowledge onto his students.

A multitude of authentic instruments are utilized in the workshop to help students learn the traditional rhythms from Mali, Guinea, and Nigeria. Students will play a wide variety of percussion instrument native to the countries of Africa.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

Learn to listen...

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polyrhythm>

- Play the "not difficult rhythm on this website"

Rhythm

- Find rhythm in nature
- Listen to Clave rhythm
- Listen to any piece of music and find its percussive rhythms

For the very young – try the exercise at this site:

<http://cnx.org/content/m11833/latest/>

OTHER INSTRUMENTS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA



(l-r)

1. Gankogui, a double-bell or timekeeper from Ghana
2. Balafon, the African precursor to the xylophone
3. Talking Drums, double headed drum from Nigeria whose pitch can be changed by squeezing the strings.
4. Mbira, or thumb piano, is found throughout the continent of Africa
5. Shekere or Axatse, played largely by the Ewe people of Ghana
6. Set of Atoke bells from Ghana

RESOURCES

BOOKS/INTERNET:

<http://www.african-drumbeat.co.uk/index.html>

CURRICULAR LINKS

World History - Historical Themes

Students should be able to:

- Recognize that people develop traditions that transmit their beliefs and ideals
- Examine family life and cultures of different peoples at different times in history
- Give examples of the visual arts, dance, music, theater and architecture of the major periods of history and explain what they indicate about the values and beliefs of various societies

Arts Education - Music

Content Standard #9 - Understanding Music in Relation to History and Culture

Students should be able to:

- Classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications
- Identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them
- Identify various roles that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements
- Identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that serve to define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context
- Identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences



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