

African Pop Music Concert

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Streamed online

Center for the Arts
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut
www.wesleyan.edu/cfa

PROGRAM NOTES

This concert features varieties of popular music styles that emerged from Africa in the 20th century. African pop music, first and foremost, is an urban genre. Its origins go back to the early 1900s when, because of European presence in the coastal areas of West Africa, and later spreading to other parts of the continent, new musical instruments, ideas, and imaginings became available. Today, popular music is the driving force of the music industry in Africa. The songs performed in this concert derives from a myriad of styles from West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, and South Africa.

Songs List

- Ozimzim:** This was a hit song in West Africa in the early 1990s. It was composed by Armah Pino of the Marriots International Band in Ghana. The song celebrates the rhythmic vitality of African music. As stated in parts of the lyrics, “this rhythm is hard to resist.” Do not hesitate to jam to the rhythm when the groove hits you!
Lead Singer: Drew Hill
- Melee Niyaa:** This is a folk song of the Ga people of Ghana arranged in a reggae style for the pop band by John Dankwa.
Lead Singers: Allegra Green, Yaje Nshanji
- Thina Sizwe:** Thina sizwe – a struggle song of the apartheid era in Zulu/Xhosa. The words translate as follows: “We the black nation, we cry for our land that was taken by the white man. Let them leave our land.”
Lead Singer: Mallory Elliott
- Malaika:** This is a Swahili love song popularized by Miriam Makeba, the South African songstress. Boney M recorded a disco version in the 1980s. The version performed by this ensemble is an arrangement by Prof. Dankwa, featuring West African highlife guitar playing styles, horn phrases, and rhythmic orientations.
Lead Singer: Allegra Green

Season: "To everything there is a season." This song is Professor Dankwa's original composition. It fuses several African pop styles in the instrumentation: The guitar intro and the 2nd guitar interlude are based on soukous music from the Congo basin, followed by "Yaa Amponsah", the popular Ghanaian palm wine guitar phrase. The drums/percussion is a combination of the zobrazo style of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghanaian kpanlongo drumming.
Lead Singers: Drew Hill, Mallory Elliott

Ozamina: This arrangement by Prof. Dankwa is based on *Gyama*, an improvisatory music performed by youth groups in recreational events. *Gyama* literally means to "give fire." The name derives from the hot, energetic, and vigorous nature of the performance. *Gyama* songs literally lift the spirits of its participants and listeners. Like "Season", Prof. Dankwa fuses soukous guitar styles with palm wine guitar playing, a rhythmically robust bass part, and an energetic horns part which stir up dancing.
Lead Singer: John Dankwa

Heaven Knows: This song was originally composed by Osibisa, a pan African Rock Band founded in London, in the late 1960s. Several arrangements have been performed by other groups in recent times. This arrangement by Professor John Dankwa employs palm wine guitar playing styles, a "walking" bass patterns, and a sonorous horns section. The drums and percussion feature *agbadza* rhythms of the Ewe people of Ghana.
Lead Singer: Yaje Nshanji

Performers

Guitar: Jace Arouet, Ian Jacobson, Alex Trip
Bass: Nicholas Catalan
Keyboard: Pablo Puente, Angel Santana, Luisa Bryan, Gib Bernath
Drums/Percussion: Clay Rodgers, Jocelyn Pleasant, Tim White, Selena Delgado, Iddi Saaka.
Horns: Benjamin Russman (Trumpet), Benjamin Lyon (Sax), Noah Lilienthal (Sax), Alvin Kibaara (Trombone)
Vocals: Drew Hill, Allegra Green, Yaje Nshanji, Mallory Elliott, John Dankwa.

OZIMZIM SONG LYRICS

Verse 1

Hmm! Music grown in Africa
Come let's enjoy together;
Music grown in Africa,
Come let's enjoy forever
After hard day's work
We need to celebrate
After hard day's work
We need to jubilate
Listen to what they sing
And just help me sing

Chorus

Call: Ozimzim
Resp: Oyaa
Call: Ozimzim
Resp: Oyaa
Call: Music Ozimzim
Resp: Oyaa
Call: Ozimzim
Resp: Oyaa
It will make you rock your body
It will make you move your body
It will make you groove your body
Ah, Ozimzim Oyaa

Verse 2

Ozimzim Oyaa is your kind of music
Ozimzim Oyaa is my kind of music
The move is alright; Let's groove it all night
Don't get so lazy; Yes somethings so crazy
Listen to what they sing and just help me sing
Ah Ozimzim (*Chorus*)

Verse 3

Swing your arms, move your feet to the rhythm
Swing your arms, move your feet to the rhythm
Cos this rhythm, is too hard to resist
Cos the rhythm, is too hard to resist
After dancing to the rest, you got to jump the dance
After dancing to the rest, you got to jump the dance

We gonna rap rap too;we gonna rap together
We gonna jump jump too; we gonna rap together

We gonna rap rap too; we gonna rap together
We gonna jump too; we gonna rap together
We gonna rap rap too, we gonna rap together
We gonna jump jump too, we gonna jump forever
After dancing to the rest, you got to jump to the rest

Chorus

Call: Ozimzim

Resp: Oyaa

Call: Ozimzim

Resp: Oyaa

Call: Music Ozimzim

Resp: Oyaa

Call: Ozimzim

Resp: Oyaa

It will make you rock your body

It will make you move your body

It will make you groove your body

Ah, Ozimzim Oyaa

Abata kari wee, Ozim Oyaa

MEELE NI YAA

MEELE NIYAA Meele niyaa ee

Də mə shi ma shəbo Meele niyaa ee

Də mə shi ma shəbo

Ketəle yaake?

Manchea Taki'a ke mii bi le. Ke negbe wə yaa?

Wə yaa 'Dabraka"

Wamə gbə.

Verse 2

Meele niyaa ee

Də mə shi ma shəbo Də mə shi ma shəbo

Meekə Adabraka

Meekəyε den?

To deliver your message to the one you love

To the one you cherish

Wei nti aa na Meekə

THINA SIZWE

Thina sizwe esimnyama

Sikhalela izwe lethu

Elathathwa ngamabhulu

Sithi mabawuyek'umhlaba wethu

Abantwana eAfrica
Bakalela izwe labo
E la thatwa a ba mhlobe
Sithi mabawuyek'umhlaba wethu

MALAIKA

Malaika, nakupenda Malaika.
Malaika, nakupenda Malaika.
Nami nifanyeje, kijana mwenzio,
Nashindwa na mali sina, we,
Ningekuoa Malaika.

Kidege, hukuwaza kidege
Kidege, hukuwaza kidege
Nami nifanyeje, kijana mwenzio,
Nashindwa na mali sina, we,
Ningekuoa Malaika

Pesa, zasumbua roho yangu
Pesa, zasumbua roho yangu
Nami nifanyeje, kijana mwenzio,
Nashindwa na mali sina, we,
Ningekuoa Malaika.

SEASON

There is a season to everything
There is a season to everything in life
There is a time to be born
A time to live, and a time to die
There is a time to plant
A time to uproot; these have their seasons
A time to hurt, a time to heal
To everything there is a season

Biribiara wə ne bre
Yareε wə ne bre
ɔyaw wə ne bre
Osu wə ne bre
Awerehoɔ wə ne bre
Anigye wə ne be bre
Anigye bre nie
Asa bre nie
To everything there is a season

HEAVEN KNOWS

We are going,
Heaven knows where we are going,
We know we will.
We will get there,
Heaven knows how we will get there
We know we will.
It will be hard we know,
And the road will be muddy and rough
But we'll get there,
Heaven knows how we will get there,
We know we will.