



## ArtSmarts

2005-2006 Wells Fargo School Matinee Series

# Children of Uganda

January 27 and 30, 2006 11:00am

Jackson Hall, Mondavi Center

Dear Teachers:

We hope you find this CueSheet helpful in preparing your students for the school matinee presentation of Children of Uganda. This guide provides background information on the company, traditional East African music, and the country of Uganda as well as study questions and a review of audience etiquette.

Mondavi Center gratefully acknowledges the institutional donors supporting the Arts Education Program during the 2005-2006 Season of Performing Arts:



NORDSTROM, INC



WESTAF

With additional support provided by ArtesAmericas, Bank of America Foundation, River Cats Foundation, UC Davis Health System, Teichert Foundation and UC Davis School/University Partnerships.

## CHILDREN OF UGANDA: INCEPTION AND MISSION



Winner of the Best Performers Award at the acclaimed 1993 Children's Festival at Wolf Trap in Washington, DC, Children of Uganda is composed of 22 children ranging in age from 6 to 20 years. The performers live in one of several orphanages and schools supported by the Uganda Children's Charity Foundation (UCCF). The Children of Uganda serve as goodwill ambassadors for the 2.4 million orphans living in their country today.

Uganda's devastating crises of civil war and AIDS during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century have seriously disrupted the complex fabric of family and village life that previously nurtured and depended on a rich and varied oral culture. Traditions of storytelling, teaching and performance that had been transferred from generation to generation over time have become seriously threatened. Children of Uganda began as an effort by the Daughters of Charity Orphanage to teach orphaned children the traditional songs and dances and, thereby, the lessons and history they convey, and to empower these children with the hope and joy that singing and dancing offer. In addition, in a country with a high illiteracy rate and no public education system, Sister Rose Muyinza recognized a real and important opportunity for the children to become advocates for HIV/AIDS prevention. They began performing as part of local ceremonies such as weddings, births,

and other events and now travel throughout the world sharing their message of hope, instructing the public and celebrating the rich heritage and history of their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

The Children of Uganda troupe is sponsored by the Uganda Children’s Charity Foundation (UCCF) and has toured in the U.S. biennially since 1994. Through appearances at universities, community and civic theaters, schools and churches, their tours are designed to promote global awareness of the AIDS-related crisis in Uganda and to raise funds to provide basic necessities and education for Ugandan orphans.

The Uganda Children’s Charity Foundation (UCCF) is a non-profit organization based in Dallas, Texas. Because of the financial commitment of its donors, UCCF directly supports over 850 orphans—paying for their education, food, medicine, and shelter. UCCF’s support also extends to two orphanages, two primary schools, a school for the disabled and a special outreach program for children of HIV-positive widows.



## PROGRAM SAMPLE

The songs and dances performed by the Children of Uganda feature a wide selection of Ugandan dialects as well as English and Swahili. Some of the pieces are named for drum rhythms (Bakisimba and Ekitaguriro); others are named after the featured instrument (Embaire, Engoma). Master of Ceremonies Peter Kasule will offer brief introductions throughout the program. The school matinee performance will include selections from the following repertoire:

**Maama Affrica** – This vocal composition by Peter Kasule and Betty Nakato tells of the struggle to overcome war, disease and strife, and asks Mother Africa to listen, unite and set her children free.

**Amagunju/Skia Ngoma** – Long ago a Bugandan king died without a male heir. A pregnant woman from the court was seated on the throne in anticipation that her son might be the next king. An heir was indeed born, and as a king should never cry, ‘Amagunju’ was sung and danced to entertain the infant. Here it is fused with a Swahili song ‘Skia Ngoma.’ *“Listen to our drums,”* the lyrics proclaim. *“This is the sound of Uganda, presented for you here today.”*

**Ding Ding** – This piece comes from the Acholi people in the northern part of Uganda who are highly regarded for their dark complexions and tall statures. Girls developing into young women perform this high-energy dance, with its engaging melodies and intense, syncopated rhythms. ‘Ding Ding’ features drums, addungu, xylophone, okalele, and a whistle.

**Engoma** – Drums (Engoma) are emblematic of African culture and are an ever-present link from the past to the present. Performed by the boys of the troupe, this work combines patterns and sequences from many regions of Uganda, showcasing a diversity of rhythms and celebrating their adoption and adaptation by musicians around the world today.

**Anjolinaye/Watoto-Bamagala** – ‘Anjolinaye’ praises the beauty of an African girl, admiring her gleaming eyes, long neck, the great teeth, etc., while the ‘Watoto-Bamagala’ proclaims *“We the Children of Uganda are happy to be who we are and to be awakened by such singing birds to do our chores.”* ‘Kanyonza’ (pot dance) is set to these songs, highlighting the grace and talent of the performers and showing appreciation for women of three different Ugandan regions: Ankole in the west, the Swahili-speaking people of the East, and the Acholi of the north.

**Embaire** – This large xylophone originated with the Abanyore peoples of Northeast Uganda near the border with Kenya, and was adopted by the Basoga in the southeast of Uganda. Due to its full range of pitches and great resonance, the Embaire is often played by itself, without the accompaniment of drums, by six people divided into a rhythm section and a melody section. The Embaire is played at all types of occasions.

**Ekitaguriro** – This dance belongs to the nomadic Banyankole of western Uganda who cherish the cattle they tend for a living and are sometimes ribbed by their country-men for their great devotion. This dance praises the long-horned cows of Ankole and Rwanda – found nowhere else on earth. The dancers imitate the sounds, rhythms, and the movements of the graceful cows. This piece features the omukuri, a flute used to herd the cattle.

**Afer Miyamo** – *“Greetings to you friends, lovers, children, and supporters of Children of Uganda. We thank and respect you.”* – A dance dedicated to our audiences as Children of Uganda celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Addungus, plucked bow harps, are featured here.

**Bakisimba** – This is a traditional dance of the court of Buganda, the largest ethnic group of Uganda. Originally performed only by women, it celebrates the creation of banana wine for the King. The drummers’ rhythms and the dancers’ movements mirror the king’s words of thanks, “speaking” for him and reflecting his increasingly celebratory mood.

# TRADITIONAL EAST AFRICAN AND UGANDAN MUSIC

African music is as broad a category as the continent is large and the tribal cultures diverse.

Percussion instruments are the source of rhythm and melody in African music. Percussion is an instrument, such as drum or piano, in which the sound is produced when one object strikes another. Instruments are used not only to maintain a specific beat for the dancers or the singers, but also are voices on their own, whose “conversations” may be held independently or in connection with vocal lines and danced phrases.

Drums predominate in Ugandan music and come in a variety of shapes and sizes. A heavier grade of leather, usually cow or goat hide, will be used to cover one of both ends of the drums, which is then played using wooden sticks or with the hands. Drums play a major role in traditional ceremonies such as the installation of chiefs and kings, healing practices, ancestral observances and puberty rituals. Often, specific songs and dances will accompany the rite. Contemporary African music can be a combination of indigenous traditions and colonial European influences, as exemplified in the music of Cameroon which was ruled by both Britain and France before it gained independence.

## INSTRUMENT AND COSTUME GLOSSARY

<b>Agwara</b>	Trumpets
<b>Akogo</b>	Thumb piano
<b>Amadinda</b>	Log xylophone, based on a pentatonic scale, to which all other instruments are
tuned	
<b>Addungu</b>	Arched harp with nine strings that is plucked
<b>Bakisimba</b>	The large main drum tuned to a high pitch
<b>Calabash</b>	Modified gourds used as percussive instruments
<b>Endigidi</b>	Tube fiddle with a single string that is bowed
<b>Enkwanzi</b>	Pan pipe
<b>Embaire</b>	Large Xylophone
<b>Empuunya</b>	Drum used for keeping a regular, metered pulse
<b>Endege</b>	Ankle bells
<b>Endere</b>	Pan pipe
<b>Engalabi</b>	Long, narrow popping drum
<b>Engoma</b>	Drums
<b>Enggombe</b>	Horn
<b>Nankasa</b>	Small drum used for signals
<b>Obuuti</b>	Sticks for playing the xylophone; drumsticks
<b>Okalele</b>	A flute from the Busoga region
<b>Omukuri</b>	A flute from the Ankole region

**Costumes:** Traditional Ugandan clothing and accessories come in a variety of materials and styles: skins, belts, aprons, girdles, hairdressings and headdresses. In addition, a Ugandan may sport facial, neck, arm, and leg ornaments. Here is a brief glossary of Ugandan clothing styles:

<b>Akaliba</b>	Long hair goat skin, usually tied around the waist, for dancing
<b>Ebinyege</b>	Leg rattles worn by boys in the <i>Orunyege</i> dance
<b>Ebitambaala</b>	African head pieces
<b>Ekikoyi</b>	Multi-colored Ugandan cloth worn most often by women on special occasions or celebrations as a long skirt, or belted around the waist
<b>Ekisenso</b>	Raffia skirt
<b>Ekyesubizibwa</b>	Belt
<b>Embira</b>	Beads around the neck
<b>Emigaala</b>	Head dress from Rwanda
<b>Ensiimbi</b>	Cowry Shells
<b>Entogoro ring</b>	A cloth ring tied around the waist for the <i>Orunyege</i> dance
<b>Gomesi or Obusuuti</b>	A long traditional Bugandan dress
<b>Kanzu</b>	A white long gown worn by Bugandan men on special occasions; also worn as a costume for the King's dance <i>Omugundu</i>
<b>Leesu</b>	Large, multicolored cotton fabric used as a wrap or belt around the waist

# UGANDA

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Republic of Uganda

**CAPITAL:** Kampala

**TOTAL AREA:** 236,040 sq km (slightly smaller than Oregon)

**POPULATION:** 24.6 million

**MONETARY UNIT:** Ugandan shilling

**LANGUAGES:** English (official national language, taught in grade schools, used in courts of law and by newspapers and some radio broadcasts), Ganda or Luganda; other Niger-Congo languages; Nilo-Saharan languages; Swahili; Arabic

**RELIGIONS:** Roman-Catholic (33%); Protestant (33%); indigenous beliefs (18%); Muslim (16%)

**INDEPENDENCE:** October 9, 1962 (from Great Britain)

**UGANDA:** is a landlocked African plateau country straddling the equator and bordered by Sudan to the north, Congo to the west, Rwanda and Tanzania to the south and Kenya to the east. The country lies in a cradle of mountains on its east border with Kenya, Mount Elgon and Mount Moroto in the northeast and in the southwest Rwenzori ranges. Much of the country lies in the "Interlacustrine Region" (between the lakes) of Africa. The region receives abundant rainfall and is rich in tillable land. Major products include coffee, sugar, cotton, and building materials.

The nation of Uganda is the result of the unification of ancient kingdoms as well as many smaller independent chiefdoms. In all, Uganda has 52 different ethnic groups, each with its own language. The largest cultural group (tribe) is the Buganda people, whose kingdom is located in Central Uganda, and who have always been influential in Ugandan affairs. Their language is Luganda. Other major tribes include the Acholi, Batoro, Karamajong, Banyankole, Banyoro, Basoga, Basamia, Bagisu, and the Lugbara. Music and dance are an integral part of all of these cultures as is a rich tradition of storytelling and folklore.

# MAP OF UGANDA



-map taken from <http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

## HIV VIRUS IN UGANDA

It is difficult for many Americans to understand the nature and severity of the crisis which faces Uganda today. Over the past decade, as Uganda's government, religious and community leaders have been tending to the primary needs of infrastructure, the HIV virus has emerged as an overwhelming threat. Uganda has the highest number of reported HIV cases in all of Africa. AIDS is a leading cause of death in Ugandan adults, taking its greatest toll on the 25-40 year old population and leaving more than 2 million orphans since the epidemic's onset. UNICEF predicts a rising rate of 120,000 to 140,000 new orphans each year primarily due to the AIDS virus.

## PREPARING YOUR CLASS

Although they are young, the performers in the Children of Uganda troupe are cultural ambassadors and educators. They are touring the United States with three very important goals: to introduce American audiences to Ugandan music, dance and song; to raise money to help support their orphanage; and to provide information about the disease that has killed so many of their parents, relatives, and friends. Ask your students to consider ways in which they serve (or might serve) as educators to their peers, parents, and neighbors. In what ways can children make a difference in their communities?

### OTHER RESOURCES

For more information about the Children of Uganda, contact: UGANDA CHILDREN'S CHARITY FOUNDATION, PO Box 140963, Dallas, TX 75214 or <http://www.childrenofuganda.org>.

Also, consult these reference books: *Encyclopedia of Africa: South of the Sahara*, John Middleton, editor; *World Music: The Rough Guide* (chapter 7: "Central and East Africa")

## THINK ABOUT IT!

Talking with your teacher, friends, and family about a performance after attending the theater is part of the experience. When you share what you saw and felt, you learn more about the performance. You can now compare ideas and ask questions and find out how to learn even more. Here are some questions to think about:

- 1) How would you describe traditional Ugandan music to a friend?
- 2) What feelings did you have while you listened to the music?
- 3) What did you like best about the concert and why? Was the program different from what you expected? How?
- 4) Write a poem capturing your impressions of the performance: what you saw (colors, dance movements, instruments); what you heard (for instance, find words to describe the function of the drums and rattles); and the kinds of feelings and thoughts that you had during the time of the concert.

This CueSheet was written by Anett Jessop, Graduate Researcher, Davis Humanities Institute.  
With production assistance from Janelle Davila.

# ATTENDING THE THEATER

## *What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:*

- \* Enter the auditorium quietly and take seats immediately;
- \* Show courtesy to the artist and other guests at all times;
- \* Demonstrate appreciation for the artist's work by applauding at the appropriate times;
- \* Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements;
- \* Please eat lunch before or after the performance to avoid disruption;
- \* Please turn off cell phones and pagers;
- \* Flash photography is strictly prohibited;
- \* Relate any information acquired from the pre-matinee discussion to the new information gained from the matinee.

## *What you can expect of your experience in a performing arts theater:*

A theater is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theaters are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience: whispering, rustling of papers, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these upset everyone's concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best possible work. The audience shows respect for the performers by watching attentively. Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, such as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. While the audience at a dance performance will sit quietly, other types of performance invite audience participation.