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CHAMWINO
ARTS CENTER
Kituo Cha Sanaa Chamwino

May 2024 Quarterly Newsletter

CAC Staff at Work for the Cigogo Festival

The staff of Chamwino Arts Center is in full gear as they prepare for the Festival, set for July 19-21, 2024. Managing Director Frank Mgimwa (middle of top row) is joined by a hard-working staff of devoted Gogo villagers, some of whom have been working on Festival preparations since its inception in 2005, including Sospeter Mapana, Kenneth Ulanga, Rehema Chibutu, Nasson Mazengo (pictured below). They selected the performing groups from various Gogo villages who will perform at this summer's festival. The CAC staff is traveling to villages to attend practice sessions of the performing groups. The villagers will learn a "mass song" from the staff. All groups perform the "mass song" together at the start and finish of the festival.

The staff of Chamwino Arts Center is dedicated to creating opportunities for villagers to celebrate their cultural heritage in music, the arts, and education.



Chamwino Arts Center Staff

Kedmon Mapana, Founder, Chamwino Arts Center

Dr. Kedmon Mapana, head of Tanzania's National Arts Council, was born in Chamwino village, Tanzania. A singer, director of choirs, and multi-instrumentalist (guitarist, too!), Kedmon excelled in his studies in the village school. He then trained to be a teacher, taught school in Tanzania, and eventually made his way through graduate studies to become an internationally renowned music educator. To this day, he continues to hold on to his Gogo cultural traditions. He also continues to celebrate Gogo heritage through the annual Cigogo Festival.

From Dr. Mapana: "The festival brings many hundreds of Gogo villagers together to engage in *ngoma*, the multi-sensory integration of music, dance, and pageantry. I

started the festival so that villagers might celebrate Gogo life and so that we might prevent our traditions from vanishing. Today, children and youth are learning their Gogo identity through performances that fill the festival days. Chamwino Connect is a great partner for the efforts of Chamwino Arts Center. Every donation to Chamwino Connect will go to festival costs - the sound system, a small stage, meals for the village performers. By supporting the festival, Gogo people, and their culture, are recognized, validated, and continued.”



Kedmon Mapana, multi-instrumentalist (including guitar!)

Chamwino Connect Board Member Visits Chamwino Arts Center

Cindy Strong, Chamwino Connect board member, met with the staff of Chamwino Arts Center in February, 2024. She was in Tanzania under the auspices of Fulbright

to work as a specialist with the libraries at the University of Dodoma. (Dodoma is the captiol city of Tanzania - located about 40 minutes drive from Chamwino). Cindy took time out from her Fulbright duties to meet with the CAC staff and hear about their current work and future plans for music, the arts, and eduction. including the upcoming annual Cigogo Festival.



Cindy Strong with Chamwino Arts Center Staff in front of the CAC building

Treasures of the Chamwino Secondary School Library

At the Chamwino Secondary School, Cindy Strong met with staff and students in the library. Several years ago, she spear-headed a campaign for Chamwino Connect to

bring generous donors together in partnership with Worldreader, a non-profit in California. This resulted in the library receiving 175 e-readers. Additionally, funds from donors were used to purchase books, shelving, computers, glass windows, and a new floor. When there, in February, Cindy learned that a former Peace Corps volunteer, Lincoln Las, recently contributed to the library, expanding the building in order to house an influx of books for students and teachers.



Uniformed students in the Chamwino Secondary School Library

photo credit: Cynthia Strong

The Colorful Kitenge Cloth of Tanzania

In Tanzania, and throughout much of East Africa, the kitenge, a colorful thick fabric of various patterns, is popular among women as a wrap around the waist or chest, or as a baby sling. Occasionally, men will don a shirt made of kitenge material, and women are sometimes seen with short and long dresses made from kitenge cloth. Today's young people may shape kitenges into hoodies and travel-bags. The wax-print designs of the kitenge, as worn by the Gogo of Chamwino villagers, are bright. Sometimes they have Swahili sayings, images of flowers, geometric shapes, and even fanciful animals of land and sea. When visiting Chamwino, or the Tanzanian cities of Dodoma and Dar es Salaam, kitenge fabric is seen almost everywhere. In these cities, many Tanzanian shops sell kitenge.



Women of Chamwino, Tanzania, wearing kitenge

Meeting the Needs of a Tanzania Village

Chamwino's Needs for Music, Arts, and Education Projects

Please help the sustainability of Gogo music, arts, and culture through education in schools and out in the community.

- **\$6** for the breakfast-lunch-dinner of one Gogo festival participant
- **\$26** pays for the Chamwino Arts Center's monthly electricity bill
- **\$86** for the bus transportation of participants from the remote village of Kawawa to the Cigogo Festival this coming July
- **\$98** for the fabric to make Gogo traditional dancing outfits for 14 children.
- **\$400** for the PA/sound system for the Cigogo Festival

Won't you please help?

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