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CHAMWINO
ARTS CENTER
Kituo Cha Sanaa Chamwino

Chamwino Connect Quarterly Newsletter (December, 2024)

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The Giving Season 2024

We've arrived again to "the Giving Season." Hopefully, we are energized (or maybe exhausted!) from the goings-on of our lives this year. It's a time for taking stock of the year's accomplishments and for reflecting on the needs of others, and to find ways to give to the community. For some, "giving" is a year-round plan to offer assistance to those in need. Others may respond more spontaneously to unpredictable disasters, community needs, and world events. Gracious charitable giving is a beautiful thing. Many people around the world have multiple needs at this time, and our acts of giving will help to feed and shelter them. Our acts of gracious charitable giving will offer them hope for the future.

As you consider giving, please keep in mind the educational needs of the children and youth in the village of Chamwino, Tanzania and the desire of older Chamwino villagers to ensure that their young people will maintain Gogo cultural identity. The sustainability of Gogo heritage happens in Chamwino in these ways, through the good graces of donors:

- at the annual Cigogo festival every July
- at workshops for artists who seek to build their capacity to communicate and educate others
- in the development of the secondary school library
- in the ongoing ngoma music-and-dance sessions for schoolchildren
- through the collection and recording of the oral-tradition stories of Gogo elders

Donations to Chamwino Connect go directly to the Chamwino Arts Council, which continues to support the Gogo people in their quest to own their rich cultural heritage, sustain it, and celebrate it.





From Dr. Kedmon Mapana, Secretary General of the Tanzania Arts Council

In 2005, I initiated, in Chamwino village, Tanzania, the first Cigogo Music Festival. Five years later, in 2010, I organized the Chamwino Arts Center (CAC) as a Non-profit Governmental Organization (NGO). The main objective of CAC has always been to revive and promote the musical traditions of the Wagogo (Gogo) people in the Dodoma region and across Tanzania at large. It seems that the survival of musical traditions of any nation rests upon the work of musicians who engage in the practice of singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments, and in the support of them by their families, communities, and audiences to do so. A healthy musical humanity requires the efforts of those who perform the music as well as those who support the performing musicians.

Our belief in the human need for musical expression, and our recognition of the beauty of Gogo music as core to Gogo cultural identity, has been foundational to our fostering of the creation and continuing of the Cigogo Music Festival. This festival is organized every July by the Chamwino Arts Center in partnership with CAC's fund-raising arm, Chamwino Connect. I'm raising a call to those who care about the sustainability of Gogo music, arts, and culture in Chamwino, Tanzania, to join us in our efforts to continue our efforts. Together, the Cigogo Music Festival will continue to be a HUB for the training of Gogo artists as well as a catalyst for preserving the expressive practices of the Gogo people.



Join Imani Matonya in Preserving Tanzania's Cultural Heritage

Meet Imani Stanley Matonya, dedicated chair of the board for Tanzania's Chamwino Arts Center (CAC). Prior to this position, Imani was a passionate CAC volunteer for 10 years. As a hub of education, culture, and community development in Central Tanzania, the Chamwino Arts Center staff, volunteers, and board members have pioneered various initiatives—from the annual Cigogo festival, to the development of the secondary school library, the story-telling collection, music-in-schools, computer literacy classes for school students, and education scholarships. Imani was one of those scholarship recipients, funded by donations from Chamwino Connect. Even in the midst of his university studies for undergraduate, MA, and now PhD degrees, he continues to be ever-present for CAC events and helps to ensure that the vision of CAC is realized.

Imani offers his statement: "Through the Cigogo Music Festival, CAC has connected so many people in Tanzania to the world (and the world to Tanzania). This festival has been economically beneficial to people in Chamwino, in that Gogo culture is celebrated, impacted and sustained with happiness and joy. The festival and various initiatives are offering hope for the future of children, youth, and adults of the community. Your donation to Chamwino Connect is greatly appreciated, and will help the CAC mission: To preserve Tanzania's cultural heritage."



Be a Friend of Chamwino Arts Center

Please consider becoming a “Friend of Chamwino Arts Center.” Monthly donations (for example, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$100) are welcome by the people of Chamwino, Tanzania, in support of their annual Cigogo Music Festival and various projects through the year.

A monthly Donation of \$10 monthly (amounting to \$120 annually) supports meaningful projects, such as:

- 12 visits by Gogo musicians to schools
- 9 recording sessions of Gogo folk tales by elder Gogo storytellers
- Seminars for village musicians on arts management for their sustainable development
- Transportation by CAC staff to village rehearsals, and village musicians to the festival
- One cow for a Gogo festival meal (to feed 40 villagers for 3 days),
- Books and magazines for Chamwino’s village secondary school library

See the [Chamwino Connect](#) website and consider signing up for a monthly donation for the sustainability of Gogo culture through music, the arts, and education. From

the people of Chamwino, Tanzania, and the Chamwino Connect board, thank you for your generosity!

The Muheme Drum in Ngoma Practice

Ngoma in Kiswahili means drum, dance, instruments, music and the events that include these. One kind of drum that you will see at the Cigogo festival is the *Muheme* drum. Made of local lightwood from the muheme tree that grows in Chamwino village, it is used in Wagogo women's muheme music. Young women (and even a little girl depicted below), will play these hourglass drums as part of their muheme music and dance: Ngoma is alive and well in Chamwino!





We are committed to preserving the spirit and culture of Tanzania. Part of that work includes fundraising. Please join us.

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