



African Dance and Drumming
Artist: Alseny Yansane



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About the Artist:

Alseny Yansane, dynamic teacher and fourteen year performing artist with *Ballets Africains* offers exciting performances and residencies that dazzle audiences of all ages with powerful dance movements, daring acrobatics, melodious songs and exhilarating percussion music. Alseny is a multi-talented performer and versatile teacher whose very presence vividly conveys the joy and passion of West African culture.

Since age seven, Alseny Yansane has been immersed in the musical and dance tradition of his native country Guinea, West Africa. Alseny trained and performed in many competitions as a dancer, drummer, and acrobat in the dawning of the republic's newly won independence from France. Historically, this was a time when art and cultural appreciation and cultivation were at an all-time high and the training that artists received was rigorous and systematic. Artists had to compete on a national level annually as a way of moving up to higher levels of artistic status. These competitions were held in the heart of

Alseny's neighborhood and attracted groups from all over Guinea who represented specific art and culture from various regions and ethnic groups.

This has given Alseny a wealth of knowledge about the history and cultural diversity behind Guinean performance arts, a solid artistic foundation and a strong drive for excellence.

Alseny is a wonderful teacher who is energetic, multi-faceted, inspiring, and fun. He knows how to make West African dance and drumming accessible to a variety of levels by breaking things down and using fun games that reinforce important concepts while being patient and encouraging. His joy and passion for his work motivates students of all ages and backgrounds.

About the art form:

African dance is tailored to fit dancers of all skill levels, grades K-12 and adults. Dancers will learn traditional and contemporary dance steps while improving upon their fluidity, expanding on their movement vocabulary, deepening their awareness of space and kinesthetic art, developing physical strength and endurance while emphasizing both artistic and technical growth. Students will also learn the integral connection between the music and the dance, how to recognize musical signals and improve upon moving together as a group. This dance class which is accompanied by live drumming will improve student attendance rates, foster cooperation between classmates and boost the confidence of academically challenged students.

Performance Detail:

The African drumming performance offers authentic drumming instructions from an artistic source that provides experience and information for grades K-12 as well as adults. Learn traditional poly-rhythms and songs along with their cultural significance and history as well as proper hand positions, clarity of notes, and sound projection. Using traditional, handmade African instruments students will improve upon their hand eye coordination and sense of rhythm as well as receive a deeper understanding of the wealth and diversity of West African culture. Student outcomes from Alseny's drum class include enhanced student focus, heightened listening skills and improved math skills.

Dance and drum workshops are taught in combination with each other, building students' skills simultaneously while reinforcing the relationship between the music and the dance. These workshops are specially tailored to reach all grades and skill levels K-12 to adult. A culminating event with student performances can be arranged to follow in school residencies.

Performances are thrilling and educational, combining music, song and dance with fascinating cultural tidbits that expand participants' world views and encourages acceptance and inclusiveness of all people.

Workshop Limit and Equipment Needed:

Depends upon activity chosen and desired goals.

Special Equipment for performances includes two standing microphones and an amplified CD player.

Space Needs:

- Dance- Any large and open space like a gymnasium, cafeteria or stage.
- Drum-A classroom that enables chairs for each student to be arranged in a circle.

Performance Fee:

| Price | Performance |
|-------------|--|
| \$75 | Residencies materials fee for use of the traditional handmade African instruments. |
| \$360-600 | Assembly Program depending on event's scope and location |
| Contact SAA | Half day workshop |
| Contact SAA | Full day workshop |