

TALKING DRUMS SYMPOSIUM
Sponsored by Jackman Humanities Institute
University of Toronto
October 9 & 10, 2008

Thursday, October 9, 2008

1. Lecture by John Miller Chernoff – Walter Hall, Faculty of Music as part of Thursday Noon Series – 12:00 Noon

“Music and Historical Consciousness in Northern Ghana”

.Chernoff’s lecture uses audio and video media to discuss the significance of the *luna*, or talking drum, in the performance of epic Homeric historical narratives among the *Dagbamba* in northern Ghana. He demonstrates drum proverbs as dance rhythms, tells their meaning, and explains what the drummers are actually doing in bringing historical knowledge into social gatherings.

2. Lecture/Demonstration

Walter Hall, 1:00 pm

Comparison of talking drum styles and language of the *Dagbamba*, *Ewe*, and *Akan* of Ghana. Walter Hall, Faculty of Music

Fred Kwasi Dunyo, Ewe master drummer

John Miller Chernoff

3. Storytelling in Music, Walter Hall, Faculty of Music 2:00 pm

Dan Yahinsky and Nexus

Discussion of storytelling in music, and a performance/demonstration of *Tongues*, with story by Dan Yashinsky and music by Nexus played on an *mbira*, traditional thumb piano of the *Shona* of Zimbabwe, and other instruments from West Africa and the Caribbean

4. Graduate Colloquium, Walter Hall, Faculty of Music 4:00 pm

John Miller Chernoff

“Storytelling in cultural description in a postcolonial context: *Stories of an African Bar Girl*.”

Friday, October 10

Pre-concert talk, Walter Hall, Faculty of Music 6:30 pm Russell Hartenberger
Discussion of music on the evening's concert including the use of African rhythms in the melodic construction of *The Invisible Proverb*, and the use of African rhythmic ideas and vocalizations or "drum language" in Steve Reich's *Drumming*.

Concert by Nexus, John Miller Chernoff, Dan Yashinsky Walter Hall, Faculty of Music
7:30 pm

The Invisible Proverb Russell Hartenberger

1. *Okarche*
2. *Drumtalker*
3. *Darkwater*
4. *Sky Ghost*

Tongues Nexus

Nexus and Dan Yashinsky

Bambaya Traditional Dagbamba

Nexus and John Chernoff

Intermission

Drumming Steve Reich

Nexus, University of Toronto Percussion Ensemble, Vocalists, Piccolo and Whistler

Details

John Miller Chernoff is author of the landmark book on African music, *African Music and African Sensibility*. He is also the author of two more recent books: *Hustling is Not Stealing: Stories of an African Bar Girl* and *Exchange is Not Robbery: More Stories of an African Bar Girl*. All books by The University of Chicago Press.

Fred Kwasi Dunyo is an *Ewe* master drummer from Ghana and teaches West African Drumming and Dancing at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto.

Dan Yashinsky is an internationally known storyteller, author of *Suddenly They Heard Footsteps: Storytelling for the Twenty-first Century*, and director of The Tellery.

Nexus, www.nexuspercussion.com, is Ensemble in Residence at the Faculty of Music.

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