

Women Drummers International

Born To Drum 2025

Class Descriptions

Afia Walking Tree

Demba (Drum) Djembe from Source 1 & 2
Awaken Your Drum Voice. Stoke Your Inner Fire.
All Levels

This multi-level class is for anyone ready to ignite their rhythm from the inside out. Whether you're feeling unsure, small, or stuck in your drumming journey—this is your moment to rise. We'll dive deep into Yamama and Guinea Fare, two soul-shaking rhythms I learned while living in Guinea—both pulsing straight from the source.

Spark the Fire: Class 1

Ignite your inner rhythm; Awaken your drum voice.

Own the Power Class 2

Build confidence; Fine-tune your groove; Drum with strength and purpose.

Come ready to explore: What is your drum voice? | What is your drum song? | How does your rhythm reflect who you truly are?

Let's drum, sweat, laugh, and PLAY—together. Because when you drum from the source, you don't just make music—you become the music.

Soul Songs: Sounding Thru the Self into the Collective
Awaken Your Soul's Voice. Remember your light.
All Levels

Through breath and sound, we'll tap into our unique Soul Songs—personal healing sounds and chants that reconnect us to our essence, uplift our spirits, and help heal emotional wounds. Using chakra-based-soundwork and collective frequency, we'll create a space for deep remembrance and transformation. Songs shared will be drawn from the Orisha, the elementals, beloved teachers, and the Ancestors that carry frequency of wellbeing. We'll sing for ourselves, for our ancestors, and for the healing of our communities.

No experience necessary to be in this space. Bring a shaker, sound bowl, tuning fork.

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Afia Walking Tree continued

GOURDSONG Shekere!

Shake, groove, and connect with the spirit of the gourd.

All Levels

Dive into the vibrant world of **Shekere** and **naked gourd** playing through hands-on rhythm exercises, movement, and cultural her/history. We'll explore the fundamentals and techniques of this dynamic instrument in a joyful, embodied way—no experience needed, just heart and rhythm! Bring your own or borrow one if possible. Come ready to move, groove, and celebrate the joyful power of the gourd!

Bring your own or borrow one if possible.

Amikaeyla Gaston

ROOTS OF THE CAULDRON!

All Levels

Honoring your Inner Oshun & YEMAYA! Heal from within through the Sacred Sounds, Spells, and Ceremonial Practices for Water.

Join us for a transformative and immersive experience in the Sacred Sounds of Water ~ a Self-Healing & Sound Bath unique workshop which combines the healing properties of water, the vibrational power of sound, and the art of crafting personalized healing baths and pouring libations for the water Orishas Oshun, Yemaya, and the ancestors. Guided by an experienced Lukumi water priestess, herbalist, and vibroacoustic healing practitioner, participants will learn songs and ceremonies to honor Sacred Water Goddesses from multiple indigenous traditions as well as create sacred herbal baths that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Sonic Sound Healing Tent at Born to Drum Women's Drum Camp

All Levels

Step into a sanctuary of sound at this year's **Born to Drum** camp, where rhythm meets resonance. The **Sonic Sound Healing Tent** is a sacred space dedicated to integration, restoration, and deep healing—an offering to support your journey before, during, and after the transformative experience of all that drum camp has to offer.

Within this tent, you'll find skilled practitioners offering "**Snack Paks**"—bite-sized yet powerful sound sessions using modalities such as **crystal bowls, gongs, chimes, shamanic sound tools, hang drum, and vocal toning/song**. These sessions are designed to help you rest, reset, and reconnect with the wisdom awakened by the drum.

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Amikaeyla Gaston continued

Drumming opens portals to presence, shifting consciousness and awakening waves of light and sound that move through our bodies in sacred rhythm. In the Sonic Sound Tent, you're invited to continue that journey—to feel, not think—to allow sound to carry you deeper within for your own personal healing...as well as the healing of this planet.

Come rest. Come receive. Come realign.

*All are welcome. The **Snack Pak schedule** will be posted at the **Sonic Sound Tent** and the **registration table** onsite. Practitioners offer these healing sessions from their hearts and graciously accept donations by way of Venmo, or a “giving bowl” onsite. Website: www.amikaeyla.com*

Karen Smith with Amikaeyla

Juba Song Circle

Please see Karen Smith's Class Description.

Amy Vitro

Shekere Playing and Technique

All Levels

We will explore shekere as practiced in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa. The shekere, like other drums, has its own distinct forms and cultural applications, as well as being used in other genres and mixed musical groups. This will be an all-levels class, with opportunities to play shekere, bell, and other percussion. We will work on techniques, polyrhythms, and ways to bring the energy of the shekere.

Bullerengue Dance/Song/Percussion

All Levels

Amy Vitro will be leading the percussion section-**You!** Bring your djembes and maracas and/or an alegre, which is the Colombian drum used in this rhythm. *(Please see Rebecca Rodríguez's Class Description.)*

Ava Square

West African Dance

All Levels

Come have fun with Ava and dance, dance, dance.

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Avotcja (pronounced Avacha)

When Ancestors Speak Through Rhythm

All Levels

It is all about La Palabra Musical, The Music Of The Word, the Rhythm that speaks in us & through us & our responsibility in using this most sacred of gifts wisely. Be ready to write, bring your instruments & be prepared to surrender your egos to each other & the Music of the Word. I want to unlock a waterfall of poetic metaphors as strong as any Rhythm you have ever heard played on the Drum & see where it takes us!!! I am ready, are you?

Carolyn Brandy

The Conga Drum!

Some conga drums will be available.

Beginning Class, Friday

We will learn basic technique and sounds; how to sit and hold the drum; and a few simple rhythms to get us started with this charismatic drum. We will also learn some of the history of the development of this drum from Africa to Cuba to North America.

Orisha Song Class, Saturday

Orisha are the powers of nature. The mythology and culture of Orisha philosophy originates from the Yoruba people of Nigeria. The majority of the songs praise the power of the wind, ocean, rivers, the herbs etc. Other songs tell the ancient stories from the mythology of the Orisha. Come join us to learn some of these beautiful songs.

MOZAMBIQUE!, Sunday

Intermediate: There are parts for All Levels

This rhythm is so much fun, melodic, and energetic. Created in 1961 by Pello El Afrikan in Havana, Cuba for Carnival, the rhythm instantly became super popular in Cuba and in the US. This is an Intermediate rhythm but there are parts for all levels

Carolyn Brandy continued

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Advanced Conga Class, Monday **Advanced**

This class will explore contemporary patterns for the Conga drum. We will be exploring historical context and patterns for Rumba: Guaguanco, Guarapachangeo, possibly Rumba Columbia, and Quinto depending on time.

This is an advanced class. Students must have an understanding and be able to play rumba clave, palito, tumbadora, and tres dos (Segundo).

Debbie Fier

Middle Eastern Percussion **All Levels**

Come enjoy the wonderful connection that we will create in our circle of drummers! We will warm up and then move into learning drum technique and Middle-Eastern rhythms. Come enjoy the power of the drum!

Class is open to all levels. It is a basic skills class so is very accessible for beginners. Bring your dumbeks, riqqs, tars and hand percussion. All hand drums are also welcome! There will be a limited number of drums to borrow on a first come, first served basis.

Drums, Percussion & Rhythms of Morocco

We will begin with warming up our hands and drums and then dive into rhythms. We will build our rhythms and then explore percussion instruments unique to Morocco as we play. Come enjoy a deep dive into some beautiful trance rhythms!

Bring your dumbeks/darbukas, bendirs, tars (frame drums), Qrakebs – and, of course, other hand drums welcome. There will be a limited number of drums to borrow on a first come first serve basis.

Denise Solis & Ansarys Andino

Afro-Puerto Rican Bomba ***Dancing the Drum (Saturday and Sunday)*** **Intermediate**

In the tradition of Afro-Puerto Rican Bomba, the interaction/conversation between the dancer and the drummer is key. This is an improvised conversation and friendly challenge led by the dancer whose movements the lead drummer (Subidora(or) interprets. The dancer is inspired by the song and/or rhythm and enters the Batey (circle/cypher that Bomba happens in) and tells their story by way of their dance, an improvised set of

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Denise Solis & Ansarys Andino continued

movements that the lead drum person interprets in real time. Students will see this interaction modeled and learn how to start this conversation with the dancer in the Rhythms of Sica and Yuba. (With Denise Solis and Ansarys Andino)

Improvising language in 6/8 Bomba Rhythms (Monday) **Intermediate**

El subidor me llama (Call and Response phrases on the drum)

Students will review 6/8 family of rhythms starting with Yuba, and other variations and then practice some intro language phrases with a call and response exercise between the Buleadoras (accompanying drum) and the Subidora (lead drum).

Elizabeth Sayre

The Batá Drum! **All Levels (see note below)**

The batá drums of Cuba are part of the collective musical genius preserved and still developing in Afro-Cuban communities in Havana and Matanzas. The batá drums salute the revered forces of nature known as orisha (the crossroads, iron, the forest, the mountain, the wind, thunder & lightning, the river, the seas, etc.) and are part of a living spiritual tradition. They have also over time become part of the national cultural heritage of Cuba.

This class will introduce a bit of history (or herstory—crucial in the case of the batá for women students and players), correct posture and hand technique, several fundamental rhythms (such as Lalubanche, Ogún, Yakotá, Egbado [Rumba Obatalá] or others) and possibly some orisha songs. We will cover different material in each class.

At least one year of hand drum study and knowledge of 6/8 bell patterns/clave are recommended for the classes. The batá have their own hand technique (similar to congas and bongo) and require the constant development of listening and ensemble-playing skills.

Students at all levels are welcome: beginners will have a crash course in the batá; intermediate and advanced players can try a part or drum they have not played before.

Please bring batá drums (no other type of drum) and maracas (or a similar type of shaker with a handle and a clean sound). Some drums will be provided for those who don't have them!

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Class Descriptions

Jeni Swerdlow

Restorative Rhythms – Drumming for Transformation

All Levels

Got stress? Get relief! Restorative Rhythms is an empowering drumming experience designed for all skill levels. This workshop offers a safe and supportive space where we can connect with each other and explore the healing power of rhythm. Through guided exercises and improvisational play with drums and assorted percussion instruments, participants will drum out negativity and “womanifest” positivity, while also engaging in mindfulness techniques and self-care practices. Whether you’re looking to try something new or deepen your existing drumming practice, Restorative Rhythms offers a unique and transformative experience for drummers seeking to connect with their inner rhythm.

Jnana Gowan

Creating a Gratitude Bundle - Ritual

All Levels

Join us in the Healing Tent as we will create a *haywaricuy* (hai-wah-ree-kwee), also known as a *despacho*—a traditional Andean gratitude bundle. This sacred offering is an act of *ayni*, or sacred reciprocity, honoring our relationship with the spirit world and unseen realms.

Shamanic practitioner, Jnana Gowan guides you to create your own special *haywa*. Each item placed in the bundle carries prayerful intention and becomes a living map of gratitude, healing, and connection. This ritual allows us to give thanks for what has been, offer blessings for what’s to come, and restore harmony within ourselves and the world around us.

The *haywaricuy* is both ceremony and medicine—opening the heart, clearing energy, and aligning us with the flow of life. All are welcome.

Karen Smith with Amikaeyla

Juba Song Circle

All Levels

Community music making is a powerful tool for healing, empowerment, for resistance, for expressing joy and moving through sorrow, for culture keeping, building relationships and community, for celebrating the mundane and significant events in our lives.

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Karen Smith with Amikaeyla continued

Karen and Amikaeyla will teach chants/songs from a variety of traditions including the African-American and Caribbean Folk Tradition, Cuban, Haitian and Brazilian spiritual traditions and maybe even a little bit of a Hawaiian Chant.

Together in this juba song circle, we will use two of the most powerful tools we have, our voices and bodies – to cultivate harmony, connection, understanding, trust and interdependence with each other in our community.

Mabiba Baegne

Dunun (Bass Drums) from Guinea **All Levels**

Those drums are the heart of the Malinke rhythm: the bass drum are made from hallowed tree trunks cut to a cylindrical shape and covered with cowhide at both end: the musician strikes the drum with a wooden stick on one hand, while the other hand simultaneously holds a metal stick that is used to strike an iron bell attached to the drum. The Dunun comes in three different sizes.

The names of the drums are: Kenkeni, the smallest and the keeper of the time; Sangban, the middle one is the heart; Dununba gives power and heat to the rhythm as well adding great rhythmic dimension; the bells bring another tonality and fill the space between the beats. In some regions they play one or two. Only in Kurussa and Kankan region, they play all three Dununs and bells.

West African and Congolese Dance with Live Drums

Mar Stevens

Drum Meditation **All Levels**

Open your morning with the drums in a spirit of meditation. Deepen your connection with the drum, the breath, and the healing that is manifested.

Bring your drums and percussion instruments. Loaner drums and percussion are available on a first come first serve basis. All are welcome to come and participate in the meditation. You can sit, lie, or stretch while listening to the drums.

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Class Descriptions

Mar Stevens continued

Djembe Vibrations

All Levels

Come and experience the power of the drum through traditional West African rhythms. Class will start with a short warm up to connect with the vibrations of the drum as you start your journey. We will transition into a West African rhythm that will be upbeat and fun. This class will help improve your technique, timing, listening skills, and confidence as you sit with the drum.

Bring your djembe, djuns, congas, hand percussion, etc. There will be extra djembes available on a first come, first served basis.

Michaelle Goerlitz

Rio-style Samba Batucada

All Levels

We'll work out technique on Brazilian instruments tamborim, agogo, surdo, repinique caixa (snare drum). Then explore how they lock together create the rhythms that move dancers down the street!

Some instruments are provided, but feel free to bring yours as well, including djembe or conga.

Afro-Brazilian Hand Drumming

All Levels

Congas or djembes are welcome at this class, where we'll play popular rhythms samba de roda (the "original" samba) and Ijexa...

Neena McNair

Native American Drum

All Levels

We will be sharing songs and respect for the mother drum indigenous to the Great Plains. We will make drumsticks, while discussing origin of materials, and share songs, rhythms and dances specific to this particular drum. Also, we will explore reasons women are called to this style of drumming and find another community of nurturing support. Please come share your knowledge and gather some, too.

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Class Descriptions

Ouida Lewis

Opening Nyahbinghi Blessings. prayer with Binghi (Friday)
Mento to Reggae Origins (Friday)

All Levels

We go where it all started with mento to reggae journeying through the folk forms

DRUMVERSATIONS (Saturday)

All Levels

Reconnecting with internal Joy, creating meaningful dialogue using the language of the drums with the rhythms of the heart. Feeling the four.

Real Rootz... Journey through the Rootz of Jamaican rhythms (Sunday)

All Levels

A deep dive into the Jamaican Congolese TAMBÚ.

Put It All Together (Monday)

All Levels

The Nyahbinghi rhythm and chants.

Closing blessings with The Nyahbinghi rhythm and chants (Monday)

Peta Robles

Cajon Master Class – Atepukrep

All Levels

Peta Robles invites you to participate in a **unique master class**, where we will explore the essential rhythms of the Afro-Peruvian cajón. Peta is also bringing a dancer to teach us some of dances that go with these rhythms such as: Festejo | Landó | Zamacueca | Panalivio.

Through practical, dynamic, group exercises, and traditional sequences, this class offers an enriching experience for all levels, from beginners to experienced musicians.

Join in an opportunity to immerse yourself in the Afro-Peruvian tradition and rhythm with an internationally recognized teacher!

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Class Descriptions

Qween Hollins

Remembering the Powerful indigeneity of Gris-gris/ Mojo bags

All Levels

Mojo bag, also known as a gris-gris or conjure bag are used in African American folk magic practices, in the form of resistance, protection, healing and liberation. It serves as a portable amulet or charm. The items inside are carefully chosen and charged with the intention that you place upon them.

Purpose: Gris gris, Mojo bags are used to hold and manifest intentions. They are essentially a “prayer in a bag”! Common ingredients include herbs, roots, crystals, small personal items, and written intentions.

Some craft materials will be provided. If you have crafts to share, please bring them. What to bring: Items that we can bring to share for making Gris-gris / Mojo (talisman) bags.

Oftentimes we have some of these items just lying around the house and don't know what to do with them. We'll bring them and we will make beautiful powerful medicine with them! Also, when we do this collectively as a community we pull our energy together and utilize the resources we have by recycling amongst ourselves!

Please bring: twine | ribbon | yarn of all colors | crystals | dried herbs that you would like to share | seeds of all kinds | dry bird seed would be great | pieces of leather that we can make strips from | fabrics of all kinds | buttons | burlap | shells that we can string | bells that we can string | pieces of copper wire | and lastly something that you would like to put on or in your bag that is special to you.

And if you want to bring something that you think would be nice to share that's not on this list, please feel free to do so thank you so much! We're going to have a great time! And there is no experience necessary, no age limit, just bring an open mind and an open heart!

Blessings Queen

Crown Making & Grandmothers Circle (Sunday)

All Levels

Grandmother Wisdom Circle is a place where we share wisdom and combined strategies set a frequency that brings a transformation to generational trauma. We hold a bold vision for a new future.

In this workshop, we will crown ourselves with Flowers and claim our Sacred position as wise grandmothers. It is a recognition of the position that we hold in our families, our communities and ultimately on the globe. This circle will be a self-initiation.

Blessings Queen

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Class Descriptions

Queen Hollins continued

Crown ceremony with flowers and ribbons and sacred herbs ! We create crowns which is an ancient tradition of many indigenous practices. These crowns announce not only are we opening our crown chakra and moving to higher ground above our trauma but we are also stepping into a frequency that calls for self-care, self-love and one stepping into that frequency we are better able to give from a place of wholeness rather than a place of scarcity. It also honors the journey that we've been on up to this point and looking at the journey in its entirety and saying we're even the challenging parts are now able to be composted and turn into viable energy to step fully in our purpose. No experiences necessary if this resonates with you please join us with an open heart and open mind!

Please bring paper pencil or something to write with, long strips of colorful ribbon to share and bring an open imagination as well as an expectation for change.

Rebecca Rodriguez

Salsa Rhythms

All Levels

Rebecca offers a percussion workshop based around Afro-Cuban percussion. This class will teach how to play basic salsa rhythms. We will explore the clave, conga, bongó, chekere, maraca, güiro, and timbales and layer each pattern into a few salsa grooves. Students will be able to learn and play each instrument and incorporate rhythmic independence through each pattern. Once we learn each pattern and layer together the Cuban rhythm sections, students will be able to sing and dance to the music and explore our creativity!

Bullerengue Dance/Song/Percussion

All Levels

Bullerengue Dance/Song/Percussion with Rebecca Rodriguez and Amy Vitro. The Bullerengue is a charismatic and beloved, low impact, dance form that comes from the Caribbean region of Colombia. The Bullerengue has its own songs and rhythms. Rebecca will be teaching the dance with the beautiful skirts (polleras) to dance in, as well teaching some songs.

*Amy Vitro will be leading the percussion section-**You!** Bring your djembes and maracas and/or an alegre, which is the Colombian drum used in this rhythm.*

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Class Descriptions

Susu Pampanin

Fun With The Drum

All Levels

Join me for a lively class, focusing on Middle Eastern rhythms! Bring any type of drum, and everyone is welcome, regardless of skill level. We'll kick things off with a warm-up, dive into techniques for producing amazing sounds, practice some drills, explore various rhythms, and enjoy a jam session. Plus, Amina will be there to help out and share some movements for anyone interested in dancing along.

Sheree Seretse

Welcome to the World of Zimbabwean Marimba Music

All Levels

The ensemble of instruments is comprised of sopranos, tenors, baritones and bass marimbas. The class will include an introduction and cultural perspective. The workshop will not use written notation. It will draw upon your listening and visual skills. The music is made of short repetitive melodies and rhythms which interact to create polyphonic and polyrhythmic sounds and melodies. If you can hone into those skills and use your hands you can play the marimba. Come make a joyful sound with this infectious music. Each session will focus on a different song.

Sue Kaye (Suki)

Conga Class

All Levels

We will be exploring Afro-Cuban and Congolese styles in this class. We will learn rhythms that can be played in an ensemble of drummers and also as accompaniment with other instrumentation. We'll also focus a bit on technique to work on a good sound. Along with congas feel free to bring other drums, and hand percussion to this class.

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Class Descriptions

Tannee Osborne

West African Drumming

All Levels

A very beginner friendly exploration into West African Drumming. With the use of Djembes and Dunduns I will introduce the “ABC’s” of an ancestral language of love we can all learn to hear and use to bring joy and unity. This workshop will touch on history, technique basics, and deepen the understanding of the conversation happening between the drums as well as a moment to be free and release.

Zero experience is required and all levels welcomed.

Trinity Watkins

Kundalini Yoga

All Levels

A typical Kundalini yoga class can be comprised of 3-6 parts: an opening chant (known as “tuning in”) followed by a brief warm-up for your spine, a kriya (which is a sequence of postures paired with breathing techniques), and a closing meditation or song.”