



THE HUMBOLDT ARTS COUNCIL
in the Morris Graves Museum of Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Second Saturday Family Arts Day” Celebrates Black History Month Saturday, February 10th , 2007 2-4pm

Join the Humboldt Arts Council and the Morris Graves Museum of Art as they celebrate **Black History Month** at **Second Saturday Family Arts Day!** Saturday, February 10th, 2007, from 2 to 4 p.m. Join Senegal Storyteller Ousseynou Kouyate in the Performance Rotunda from 2-2:40pm, Bara Dance and Drum in the Performance Rotunda from 2:40-3:30pm, the Arcata Interfaith Gospel Choir in the Performance Rotunda from 3:30-4pm, make wax-crayon resist artwork for the March Youth Art Month Family Arts Day Exhibition in the Youth Classroom from 2-4pm, and make *Art and Crafts* in the Atrium all afternoon. This is a FREE event.

Come listen to the storytelling of **Ousseynou Kouyate** from Senegal, West Africa. Ousseynou will tell the story of Sundjata, the King of the Mali Region. Sundjata was a young boy from Mali who was born unable to walk. His father was the king of the Malian region and upon his death the son would automatically become king. Except in Sundjata's case. Since he was considered handicap he could not be king. So the king's next son born to his second wife would take the reign. Many villagers were against the second king taking the reign because he was very mean and they knew that the people of the village would not be in good hands. The great Matabou (Spiritual Leader) of the village told Sundjata's father that one day his son will walk and he will become the king. The Matabou explained that when the father passes away his spirit will enter Sundjata's body and enable him to walk. The Matabou was correct. When Sundjata's father passed away his spirit entered Sundjata's body and, right before all the village people's eyes, Sundjata walked. He stood proud as he accepted the crown to become the king and the villagers lived happy.

Ousseynou along with his twin brother Assane come from a long line of "djalies" (jalis), historians, genealogists, storytellers, and keepers of cultural traditions from the Mendeng people of Mali. While the Kouyate twins were born in the country of Mali, they grew up in Senegal, so their style of music and dance exhibits cultural elements of Wolof dance and music as well. Ousseynou and Assane performed with the National Ballet of Senegal and other Africa-based companies until moving to the United States in 1997. Since then, they developed their own company, *Ballet Jali Diabate*, which has had members in Hawaii and California, and frequent guest performers from Africa. They recently renamed their group Djaly Kunda Kouyate, and now perform as a large musical ensemble doing concerts, as well dance performances and educational programs. **Ousseynou Kouyate** will also be performing later in the evening at the Jambalaya.

Bara Drum and Dance is a collective from Arcata dedicated to the study and sharing of traditional music and dance from West Africa. With respect given to their teachers they hope to enrich the community with this culture. They offer dance classes Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-7pm and a drum class Sundays from 4-5:30pm, both held at the Dance Center, 824 L Street, in Arcata. For more information contact Dulce at (707)832-9547.

The Arcata Interfaith Kids and Teen Gospel Choir will be singing Spirituals and Freedoms songs in recognition of Black History month. The Kids Choir, lead by Natasha Martin, will be accompanied on piano by Bob Eberstein and, and the Teen Choir, lead by both Natasha and Bristol Martin, will be accompanied by Elliot Clausen. The group will end the afternoon with the Black Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing". For more information contact Bristol at (707)498-8597.

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Lindsay Coats, Art Education Director for the Humboldt Arts Council will be leading a wax-crayon resist project for the **Youth Art Month Exhibition** coming in March. The artwork made at this Family Arts Day will be exhibited in the Youth Classroom the entire month of March in recognition of Youth Art Month. Lindsay Coats is a painter who received her MFA in Studio Art from the University of California, Davis, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Painting from Brandeis University and BA in Studio Art from Wheaton College in Norton Massachusetts. Lindsay was born and raised in Wenham, Massachusetts and currently paints from her studio in Eureka.

Family Arts Day is every second Saturday of the month. To be a presenter or for more information about Family Arts Day contact Rebecca Froehlich at 707.442.0278, ext. 201. The Morris Graves Museum of Art is located at 636 F St., Eureka, Ca.