

IGBIN

(Nigeria)

(ee gh ben) ("gb" as in rugby -- "in" as in)

Obatalá was a Yoruba orisha (godling) connected with the history of the creation of the earth. He is regarded as age-old and of great importance. He is, in fact, the second to Olorun, the owner of heaven (God). He played trifle with his errand given to him by God to create the earth, so Oduduwa, the recognized ancestor of the Yorubs, carried out the errand.

Obatalá is worshipped annually and during this worship, all must appear in white.

Record: Phillips PF 383-350 Obatalá. 4/4 meter

Formation: Free. Single dancers may start anywhere, but follow in a group behind the priest (leader). Spectators by custom group according to ages, forming a circle, leaving the ctr free for the dancers. The general body posture is maintained, except when the priest passes the elders. Here he motions the dancers to dance low for a few steps, in curtsy to acknowledge and honor them. As he passes the young, he again motions to the dancers. This time they dance high for a few steps. The young spectators curtsy back by bowing. once to the dancers.

Steps: Step, together, step, hold pattern, progressing diag R and L. Variations are on the placement of each ft in the pattern. All patterns are easy and flowing. Arm and body movements change with each step. All patterns may be used simultaneously by any of the dancers, since this is an individual dance.

Body and arms: Walking stick, cane, or umbrella, held in starting pos, perpendicular to the floor with both hands close together at the lower end, either hand on top, forearm parallel to the floor. Push the bottom of the stick away on cts 1, 3, and pull it back on cts 2, 4, with a continuous easy, flowing motion. The whole body leans to R when moving diag L, and sways L when moving diag R.

General: Slight bend from waist, hips back, slight knee bend. Correct pos is if you were starting to sit down.

Young: A little more erect than general, but still not straight.

Elder: Lower body about 1" by bending more at knees and waist.

IBGIN (continued)

Basic: Diag fwd step R (ct 1), close L (ct 2), step R (ct 3), close L heel to R ankle, wt remains R (ct 4). Knees slightly bent for smooth flowing movement. Repeat to diag L reversing pattern. Direction changes easily as priest leads the group CCW around the spectators' circle. An individual dancer has the freedom to turn when he wishes CCW, CW, bkwd, or fwd, but he remains behind the priest. Because of this, his relative pos constantly changes within the group.

Note: Body and arm movement as above. Stick is directed twd R when travelling R; to L when moving L.

Variation 1 - Drag

Dtag fwd step R (ct 1), drag L to close (ct 2), step R (ct 3), drag L closing L heel to R ankle, wt remains R (ct 4). Reverse pattern to the diag L. Drag should be heavy, as if arms and ft are pulling something heavy into the body with resistance. The tension is apparent.

Note: The simultaneous pull-in of the stick to R side and drag of the R ft should emphasize the tension when moving L. Reverse to move R.

Variation 2 - Sprin

All steps on the ball of the ft. Diag R, step R (ct 1), close L (ct &), step R (ct 2), close L (ct &), step R (ct 3), close L (ct &), step R (ct 4), close L heel to R (ct &). Reverse pattern to diag L.

Special note: The same space of distance is travelled as in the basic to maintain rhythm.

Variation 3 - Cross

Diag R, step R (ct 1), cross L in front of R (ct 2), step R to the side (ct 3), close L heel to R ankle, wt remains R (ct 4). Reverse pattern to L.

Presented by Joseph Ayewusi