

# GUILD HALL: OFFSITE

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**GUILD HALL'S KidFEST @CMEE RETURNS ON JULY 6 WITH CHARLOTTE BLAKE ALSTON'S "STORIES & SONGS IN THE ORAL TRADITION" FOLLOWED BY *MUSIC FROM THE SOLE* ON AUGUST 3**



*Charlotte Blake Alston. Photo: Annie Tiberio. Music From The Sole. Photo: Titus Ogilvie Liang*

**June 28, 2022—East Hampton, NY** — Guild Hall (158 Main Street, East Hampton) has announced the return of **KidFEST @CMEE**. The popular children & family series will begin on **Wednesday, July 6** with **Charlotte Blake Alston - Stories & Songs from the Oral Tradition** followed by **Music From The Sole: Afro-Brazilian Funk & Dance** on **Wednesday, August 3**. Each program will include a special workshop a half-hour before the performance. Designed specifically for young audiences and their families, **KidFEST** connects our Hamptons communities to new cultures, new artists, and new stories through playful, participatory, and tailor-made performances. KidFEST will take place at the Children's Museum of the East End (CMEE), 376 Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike, Bridgehampton.

Whether or not she accompanies a story with a thumb piano, djembe, or 21-string kora, **Charlotte Blake Alston's** most powerful instrument is her melodic and mesmerizing

voice. It is with that primary instrument that she breathes life into ancient and contemporary tales. In this electronic age, Charlotte does what stories have achieved for thousands of years—engage the imagination, underscore human commonalities, and reiterate life lessons gained from centuries of human experience. In her one-woman production, ***Stories & Songs in the Oral Tradition***, Charlotte weaves together stories from the West African countries of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Mali for our youngest audiences. Exploring the lessons learned from and relationships between humans, animals, and our natural environments, *Stories & Songs in the Oral Tradition* is filled with moments of audience participation. Come ready to clap, sing, and help tell the stories!

“As both an artist and a former educator, I am looking forward to working with Guild Hall and CMEE, and to have the opportunity to share traditional stories and songs with the children and families in your community,” shared Charlotte Blake Alston. “Come prepared to join in!”

A pre-show workshop designed and led by educators from both Guild Hall & CMEE will have participants creating hand puppets of the characters and symbols explored in Charlotte Blake Alston’s *Stories & Songs in the Oral Tradition*. Audience members will also receive a take-home kit with activities, reading recommendations, and an event-themed cookie from Citarella to continue and strengthen the lessons shared in Charlotte’s stories.

***Charlotte Blake Alston – Stories & Songs in the Oral Tradition*** takes place at CMEE on **Wednesday, July 6 with a 4:30PM workshop followed by a 75-minute performance at 5PM**. The program will be held outdoors, and a rain date is set for Thursday, July 7 at the same time.

***Music From The Sole*** is a tap dance and live music company that celebrates tap’s Afro-diasporic roots, particularly its connections to Afro-Brazilian dance and music, and its lineage to forms like house dance and passinho (Brazilian funk). Led by Brazilian choreographer Leonardo Sandoval and by composer Gregory Richardson, their work embraces tap’s unique nature as a blend of sound and movement, incorporating wide-ranging influences like samba, passinho, Afro-Cuban, jazz, and house.

Specially curated for Guild Hall’s KidFEST @CMEE series, *Music From The Sole* artist directors have created a show that introduces our youngest listeners to the rhythms of Brazilian music. Throughout the performance, *Music From The Sole* will have audience members dancing and responding to rhythmic prompts, embracing the fact that in the realm of percussive dance, like tap, flamenco, body percussion, and more, the dancer is not just a mover, but a musician. Guests should come ready to clap, shout, and move their bodies!

Leonardo Sandoval and Gregory Richardson shared that "We can't wait to connect with Guild Hall and CMEE audiences through this piece - and we're looking forward to the body percussion workshops to help kids and adults connect with the work!"

Pre-show workshops designed and led by educators from both Guild Hall & CMEE will have participants creating their own shakers and rhythm sticks to be used during the performances. Audience members will also receive a take-home kit with activities,

listening recommendations, and an event-themed cookie from Citarella to bring the dancing home with them.

***Music From The Sole: Afro-Brazilian Funk & Dance*** will take place on **Wednesday, August 3 with 12:30PM and 4:30PM workshops followed by 60-minute performances at 1PM and 5PM.** The programs will be held outdoors, and a rain date is set for Thursday, August 4 at the same times.

**KidFEST is recommended for ages 4 and up and tickets are \$35 for adults and \$25 for children (\$32/\$22 for Guild Hall members). Tickets can be purchased at [guildhall.org/events](https://guildhall.org/events). The programs will take place outdoors in the amphitheater at the Children's Museum of the East End (CMEE), 376 Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike, Bridgehampton.**

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### **ABOUT CHARLOTTE BLAKE ALSTON**

Charlotte Blake Alston is a nationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, instrumentalist, librettist, and singer who has performed in venues throughout North America and abroad for over 30 years. She is committed to the preservation of African and African American oral storytelling traditions. Her stories include folktales, historical stories, and songs that highlight the richness of those traditions. Her presentation style is engaging and often participatory. She sometimes incorporates traditional instruments such as *thumb piano*, *djembe*, or the 21-string *kora*. Her wide range of talents includes collaborations with other arts institutions. This year marks her 31st consecutive season serving as host and narrator on family concerts for The Philadelphia Orchestra; her 28th as Host of Sound All Around, the orchestra's preschool concert series. She has hosted family and school concerts at Carnegie Hall for 20 years and has performed for Lincoln Center Institute, and the Juilliard School digital learning platform. She has appeared in such venues as the Smithsonian Institution, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the National Storytelling Festival, and the National Festival of Black Storytelling. <https://www.charlotteblakealston.com/>

TEDx Talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDa1giUw9EA&t=20s>

News Story on Longwood Gardens Installation: <https://6abc.com/timely-nature-black-history-month-america/10286645/>

Narrations at: <https://globalhealthmedia.org/>

### **ABOUT MUSIC FROM THE SOLE**

*Music From The Sole* is a tap dance and live music company that celebrates tap's Afro-diasporic roots, particularly its connections to Afro-Brazilian dance and music, and its lineage to forms like house dance and passinho (Brazilian funk). Led by Brazilian dancer/ choreographer [Leonardo Sandoval](#) (2022 Vilcek Foundation Prize for Creative Promise) and by bassist/ composer [Gregory Richardson](#), their work embraces tap's unique nature as a blend of sound and movement, incorporating wide-ranging influences like samba, passinho, Afro-Cuban, jazz, and house.

Since their first performances in 2015 at Baltimore's Creative Alliance, *Music From The Sole* has grown to a group of 15 dancers and musicians, touring and engaging with communities across the US and abroad. They have received support from the New

England Foundation for the Arts (2021 National Dance Project grantees), New York State Council on the Arts, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the Jerome Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation, and Dance/ NYC, and were recently commissioned new works by Works & Process at the Guggenheim.

As part of its mission to bring tap dance, America's original vernacular dance form, to new audiences, they appear as both a dance company and a percussive-led band at dance and music venues. Recent credits include appearances at Lincoln Center, Jacob's Pillow, The Yard, Kaatsbaan, Portland Ovations, Caramoor Jazz Festival, Bryant Park, the 92Y, and Tap in Rio; they are 2022 resident artists at Chelsea Factory.

Highlighting a commitment to community-centered artistic practice, the company partners frequently with organizations like the National Dance Institute and Lincoln Center Education, engaging through dance and music with communities across NYC and beyond.

<http://www.musicfromthesole.com/> @MUSICFROMTHESOLE

### **ABOUT CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF THE EAST END**

CMEE's mission is to spark imagination and foster learning for children of all backgrounds and abilities and to build strong connections within the East End community by providing playful experiences.

<https://www.cmee.org/> @CMEEGRAM

### **ABOUT GUILD HALL**

Guild Hall is the cultural heart of the East End: a museum, performing arts, and education center, founded in 1931. We invite everyone to experience the endless possibilities of the arts: to open minds to what art can be; inspire creativity and conversation; and have fun.

For more information about this and other programs, visit [www.guildhall.org](http://www.guildhall.org).

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### **SPONSORS**

*KidFEST is supported, in part, by Dime Community Bank and Citarella.*

*This engagement of Charlotte Blake Alston is funded through the Mid Atlantic Tours program of Mid Atlantic Arts with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

*Music from the Sole comes to Guild Hall through an ongoing collaboration with Works & Process at the Guggenheim, and the company's ongoing project, I Didn't Come to Stay. Commissioned by Works & Process at the Guggenheim, I Didn't Come to Stay was created with the support of a summer 2020 Works & Process bubble residency at*

*Kaatsbaan Cultural Park. This culminated in preview performances that were among the first outdoor performances permitted by New York State. I Didn't Come to Stay was featured in a Works & Process at Lincoln Center video performance and will receive a Works & Process LaunchPAD "Process as Destination" residency at Catskill Mountain Foundation, with additional residency support by The Yard, Jacob's Pillow, and Chelsea Factory. I Didn't Come to Stay is a National Dance Project Production Grantee and has received support from The O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation.*

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