August 20, 2022
Richmond, Virginia

Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.
Richmond’s Cultural Ambassador
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OFFICIAL PRESS KIT
Fact Sheet

WHEN  Saturday, August 20 • 4p - 11p, Free.

WHERE  Abner Clay Park, 200 E Clay St, Richmond, Virginia.

WHO  A Family Festival Open to the Public.

Presented by Elegba Folkslore Society, Inc.
Richmond's Cultural Ambassador
In Partnership With: City of Richmond, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo, CarMax, NBC12, State of the African Diaspora, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities and Kroger.
Additional Support: CultureWorks' Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium - Richmond, Henrico, Hanover


FEATURES  On the Zeke Allison Main Stage: Washington, DC Go-Go with, Big Tony & Trouble Funk, Music from the African Diaspora with, Africa Unplugged and the Pan Masters Steel Orchestra, Terry “Harmonica” Bean and blues from the Mississippi Delta, plus Richmond’s own Dance Candy and Teshia Lesane & the Live Experience.

In the Park: Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations, The Juanita Ragland Heritage Market, Delicious Down Home Food, Annie Tyler Children’s Place and the Waverly Crawley Community Row.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY PRESENTS
31st DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION,
A CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLK LIFE

RICHMOND, VA  •  The 31st Down Home Family Reunion explores a full spectrum of music, dance, stories, food, shopping and enrichment in this weekend Celebration of African American Folklife. Elegba Folklore Society, Richmond’s Cultural Ambassador, presents this cultural arts festival that takes attendees on a journey of heritage and folklore from West Africa into the Americas.

On Saturday, August 20, the 31st Down Home Family Reunion will happen, 4:00 - 11:00 p.m., downtown in Historic Jackson Ward’s Abner Clay Park, 200 W Clay Street. Elegba Folklore Society invites Virginians and visitors back to this event designed to link West African and African American cultural traditions and to demonstrate ways these practices have influenced the American South.

The 31st Down Home Family Reunion, A Celebration of African American Folklife is presented by the Elegba Folklore Society, Inc., Richmond's Cultural Ambassador in partnership with the City of Richmond, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities, CarMax, NBC12, internationally, The State of the African Diaspora and Kroger. Additional support is provided through the CultureWorks Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium - Richmond, Henrico, Hanover.

Attendees are invited to Bring It Back Home in this Celebration of African American Folklife — a celebration of culture, a celebration of heritage, a celebration of the soul. The influences of Africans and African Americans on the fabric of America interweaves endless —more—
impact that has shaped our world in the sciences, in design, in mathematics, in literature and all forms of the arts, in athletics, in foodways traditions, politics, social change, education and more. America would not recognize itself otherwise. Let's Bring It Back Home to see ourselves.

**Big Tony & Trouble Funk** headline this year’s event. Trouble Funk, a musical group born on the streets of Washington, D.C. , is synonymous with the emergence of the non-stop, percussion driven, best seen live, experience the party, audience participatory call and response, grassroots, homegrown music called Go-Go. As a world wide ambassador of this musical genre, Go-Go, a distant, but older cousin of Hip-Hop, Trouble Funk has taken its sound from the streets of D.C. around the nation stopping at the Apollo and Madison Square Garden and global locations across Europe, including Switzerland’s Montreux Jazz Festival and Japan. Trouble Funk was featured in the HBO series "Foo Fighters, Sonic Highways" where Dave Grohl revealed that Trouble Funk was a big influence on his musical career. Anthems over 30+ years include “Drop the Bomb,” “Pump Me Up,” “Let's Get Small,” “So Early in the Morning,” “Saturday Night Live From Washington, D.C., Parts 1 & 2,” “Say What?” and two R&B/ Hip-Hop Billboard charting tracks, “Still Smokin’” and “Good to Go.”

A lifelong resident of Pontotoc, MS, **Terry “Harmonica” Bean** heard his first blues from his father, Eddie Bean, who sang and played blues guitar on the road and at gambling gatherings at the family’s house on “Bean Hill” in west Pontotoc. He was a sharecropper, and Terry and his thirteen siblings picked cotton in the surrounding fields. In the heart of the Mississippi Delta, with a harmonica and a guitar in his hands, Terry “Harmonica” Bean found his on relationship with the blues. Since the mid-'80s he has maintained a busy performance schedule as both a solo artist and with the Terry Harmonica Bean Blues Band both nationally and internationally. He had released six albums filled up with the down home blues.

“People always say, 'Man, you think a lot of your grandparents, don’t you?' And I do. I live off a lot of the stuff that they told me. People want to call it old-fashioned or something and I say, 'Look, you can call it what you want, but I still use a lot of the mentality that they taught to me,'” he said. “That’s what works for me and it always has. We (people today) really don’t know how good we’ve got it and what all our parents had to go through to make sure we do have it good these days.”

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31st Down Home Family Reunion/555

And, good it is, for Bean and his audiences around the country and around the world. The blues, from its route in Mali, West Africa to the fields of the American South to the juke joints and then to church, Terry “Harmonica” Bean reminds us, “if you’re playing music and it ain’t got no blues in it, you’re really not playing no music.”

Making something out of nothing. In the African Diaspora as it is expressed in the Caribbean’s Trinidad and Tobago, the steel pan was created from oil barrels to pay homage to the West African drums forcibly left at home. Some of the founding members of Pan Masters Steel Orchestra had previously performed with the Trinidad and Tobago Steelband. From Calypso to Jazz, Soca to R&B, the Pan Masters Steel Orchestra’s repertoire and arrangements help recall the improvisational innovativeness of celebrating heritage, anyway, in restrictive post enslavement Caribbean environments — a tenacity and joy that is historic and contemporary — expressed at the 31st Down Home Family Reunion, A Celebration of African American Folklife.

Africa Unplugged is a dynamic group, led by djembe master, guitarist and songwriter, Atiba Rorie. The band uses traditional percussion instruments from West Africa in combination with guitars and bass to play traditional rhythms while drawing from influences across the world. Their creativity results in a funky, soulful blues and dance music that keeps you moving as they tell stories from the old world and the new!

Led by trumpeter Mark Ingraham and vocalist Sam Reed, the members of Dance Candy are among the leaders of the influential Richmond VA music scene. The band makes each song a signature sound. Dance Candy rocks out festival anthems, and their vibe onstage is a nonstop positive energy that brings home the funk. When people want to dance, Dance Candy delivers the good stuff.

The Zeke Allison Main Stage opens up with Richmond-based Teshia Lesane & the Live Experience.

People in the park will revisit and participate in a variety of cultural traditions. As a highlight of the 31st Down Home Family Reunion, attendees will have the chance to participate in two Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations. Attendees can visit Professor Pop Culture and get immersed in Black Musicology, or they can enter The JXN Project’s time machine to pay homage to The Vanguard, Luminaries of Historic Jackson Ward.

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30th Down Home Family Reunion/6

Events for children and teens are focused in the Annie Tyler Children’s Place, where the 31st Down Home Family Reunion welcomes Culture Queen, an award-winning performer and master teaching artist whose performances captivate young audiences and inspire cultural confidence in children everywhere. See her at 6:00p. Participants can also create a craft in recognition of the 31st Down Home Family Reunion’s theme, Bring It Back Home. Plus, there will be games, contests, the moon bounce and more.

A captivating Juanita Ragland Heritage Market will offer an assortment of art, handmades and imports for browsing and purchase. Community service providers will inform from the Waverly Crawley Community Row.

Food is a familiar way to continue the celebration of shared traditions, and it continues to be a centerpiece for the Down Home Family Reunion. This year’s selections will include Southern style chicken, corn-fried fish, an assortment of down home vegetables, frozen fruits and mouth-watering desserts that are African-inspired and Southern favorites.

Down Home Family Reunion will place signage to lead attendees to convenient parking and satellite parking. Attendees are encouraged to visit www.efsinc.org for parking updates and shuttle schedules. While the festival disallows attendees to bring coolers, animals and tents, there will be a drop off and pick up point in front of the park at 200 W Clay St, W Clay and Brook Road, for those who need it.

31ST DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION EVENT SCHEDULE

Zeke Allison Main Stage

4:00 Teshia Lesane & the Live Experience
R&B

5:00 Africa Unplugged
West African Rhythms & Melodies

6:00 Terry “Harmonica” Bean
Blues from the Mississippi Delta

7:00 Pan Masters Steel Orchestra
Music from the Caribbean

8:15 Dance Candy
R&B

9:30 Big Tony & Trouble Funk
Go-Go

11:00 Event Closes

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The Juanita Ragland Heritage Market, Waverly Crawley Community Row and Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations are ongoing from 4:00p - 11:00p. The Annie Tyler Children’s Place is open from 4:00p - 8:00p.

The Elegba Folklore Society is a widely recognized, not-for-profit organization that offers services in cultural arts programming and education. In addition to planning special events, services include organizing exhibitions of art and artifacts, presenting performance and teaching programs in dance theatre and music, and guiding cultural history tours. This group created the Down Home Family Reunion and has produced it annually (minus 2020) since its inception.

Elegba -- eh LEHG bah -- is the name given to the Orisa --ohr• REE• shah-- (an intercessor or aspect of nature) who, in the Yoruba --YOUR• ruh• bah tradition of West Africa, is the gatekeeper. He opens the roads to bring clarity out of confusion. Through its various services, the Elegba Folklore Society hopes to provide road-opening experiences for its audiences. Janine Yvette Bell is the society's founder and artistic director.

The Elegba Folklore Society is Richmond’s Cultural Ambassador
Embrace the spirit!

For more information, the public can call the Elegba Folklore Society at 804/644-3900, email story1@efsinc.org, log on to www.efsinc.org and find Elegba Folklore Society on Facebook or Instagram.

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