



2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival

FACT SHEET

- What** **2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival**
Attended by families from Baltimore, MD to Durham, NC (& Beyond)
- When** **Friday, December 30, 2022, 5p - 10p**
- Where** **Greater Richmond Convention Center • Exhibit Hall B**
5th & Marshall Streets • Richmond, VA 23219
- Who** **Presented by Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.**
Richmond, Virginia's Cultural Ambassador
A Richmond-based not-for-profit cultural arts and education organization.
- With City of Richmond, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo and CBS 6
along with the Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium • Richmond, Henrico and Hanover
- Features** The Candle Lighting, Performances, The African Market, The Nia Sessions,
Watoto Kwanzaa (for children), Kuzinduka Healing Collective.
Keynote: Dr. Maulana Karenga, the Creator of Kwanzaa
- Cost** \$6 Advance General Admission. \$7, Door.
\$5 Students (12-18) & Seniors (65+), Advance. \$6, Door.
\$5 Group Rates, 10 or More, Advance, Only.
Free for Children Under 12.
- Tickets** Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center
101 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219, 804/644-3900
<http://efsinc.org>
- Covid Protocols**
Detailed Below
- Media Contact**
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Please [click](#) for festival images.

Capital City Kwanzaa Festival

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Janine Bell
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Date: December 9, 2022

2022 CAPITAL CITY KWANZAA FESTIVAL • DECEMBER 30 GREATER RICHMOND CONVENTION CENTER

Richmond, VA • Elegba Folklore Society, *Richmond's Cultural Ambassador*, will present the **2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** on **Friday, December 30, 5:00pm - 10pm**. at the **Greater Richmond Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B** 5th & Marshall Streets, Richmond, Virginia

The **2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** presents a carefully planned series of events to please the palette of attendees and capture the spirit and the significance of the Kwanzaa holiday, created by Dr. Maulana Karenga, now in its 56th year.

The festival's **main stage** is alive with music, dance and message presented to strengthen families and galvanize the community. **The African Market** will be open with food and shopping. Children are invited to **Watoto Kwanzaa**, and the **Nia Sessions** engage holiday reflections in this nationally recognized observance of the Kwanzaa (quahn-zah) holiday. The **Capital City Kwanzaa Festival is one of the largest Kwanzaa celebrations on the east coast.** Because of it, Dr. Karenga has said, "Richmond is a major center for the celebration of Kwanzaa; it is an important site of African American history and culture, and it has been a very welcoming and enjoyable experience for my wife, Tiamoyo, and me."

The **2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival welcomes Dr. Maulana Karenga** (mah - OO - lah - nah kah-RING - gah), **the Creator of Kwanzaa, as the Keynote Speaker.** He will talk about Kwanzaa, culture and the practice of freedom.

Kwanzaa is a Pan-African holiday of unity, strength, clarity and solidarity based on reconnection with essential African value systems. The **festival's theme is "Celebrating Black Futures."** Cultural affinity offers a contextual rear view and forward thinking for creating the future.

The festival occurs on the fifth day of Kwanzaa, *Nia*, or Purpose, and it allows a particular focus on the restoration of these ideals. The **Ancestral Libation and Candle Lighting Ceremony** set the tone for the day. Attendees are invited to come and experience the Kwanzaa holiday right from the start.

The Nia Sessions are ongoing workshops that will offer perspectives toward personal and community triumph. *Nia*, the fifth of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, the *Nguzo Saba*, means purpose, which, according to Dr. Karenga is "to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness." Topics include *AfroEconomics, Positivism, African Affairs* and *Environmental Justice*.

The African Market of cultural merchandise and African-inspired cuisine is open all evening, and **Watoto Kwanzaa** will invite children to make art and participate in conversations that teach them about the holiday. The festival's **performers** are **Plunky and Oneness, Pan Masters Steel Orchestra**, song stylist, **Kaay Taurus** and, of course, **Elegba Folklore Society**.

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Festival events will occur as follows:

5:00pm **The African Market Opens**, filled with delicious foods plus books, unique handcrafted and imported items, art, home décor, natural body care, clothing, jewelry and more. Remains open throughout the event.

5:30pm **The Pouring of Ancestral Libation and Kwanzaa Candle Lighting Ceremony**, Affirmation of the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles and the ancestors upon whose shoulders we stand. The lighting of candles and the ceremony will feature a call-and-response affirmation. The **Elegba Folklore Society's artistic director, Janine Yvette Bell**, will lead the ceremony. Richmond fave, Nickey McMullen, will MC.

6:15pm **The Nia Sessions and Watoto Kwanzaa Begin**. Included are health maintenance alternatives in the **Kuzinduka Healing Collective**, conversations about **African Affairs**, perspectives on **Environmental Justice**, growing in savvy through **AfroEconomics** and **Black Futures and Positivism**. **Watoto Kwanzaa** activities for children include art making and cultural lessons. **The Nia Sessions** will be ongoing from 6:15p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

6:15pm **Pan Masters Steel Drum Orchestra**. 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 founded in history and reclaimed for today and the future.

7:10pm **Dr. Maulana Karenga**. Dr. Maulana Karenga is the creator of the pan-African cultural holiday *Kwanzaa* and the *Nguzo Saba* (The Seven Principles) and author of the authoritative text on *Kwanzaa* titled, *Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture*. He is a professor and chair of the Department of Africana Studies at California State University, Long Beach. He holds two Ph.D.'s, one in political science (United States International University) and another in social ethics (University of Southern California). Dr. Karenga is also the author of numerous scholarly articles and books including: *Maat, The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* | *Selections from the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt* | *The Book of Coming Forth By Day: The Ethics of the Declarations of Innocence* | *Odu Ifa: The Ethical Teachings* | and *Introduction to Black Studies*, 4th Edition. His newest book is entitled, *The Liberation Ethics of Malcolm X: Critical Consciousness, Moral Grounding and 2020 Transformative Struggle*. (www.OfficialKwanzaaWebsite.org; www.MaulanaKarenga.org)

8:00pm **Kaay Taurus**. Singer, songwriter, producer and engineer, this talented rising star is blessing the scene with her love of jazz, soul, hip hop fusion. Her healing music infuses smooth R&B vocals, sweet harmonies and raspy tones to create a unique brand of feel good music that uplifts and inspires. Her platform focuses on mental health awareness, healing, body positivity, single mothers making moves, while also emphasizing the importance of female creatives and entrepreneurs. Her intention values empowering little black girls and boys because they are the future.

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9:00pm Plunky & Oneness with Elegba Folklore Society. The Society's performers will offer *African Dance, Music and the Oral Tradition* in a "mash-up" with **Plunky & Oneness** that invites attendees to listen, tap their feet and dance to the rhythms of West Africa and their influence on jazz in America. The Society's dancers, percussive and melodic musicians, singers and masquerade share the performance traditions of the Manding cosmology of West Africa to spur an evolving understanding of the cultural and historical underpinnings of the dance and its music while showing its relationship to the United States. **Nigerian Afrobeat artist, Rhythm**, joins. **Plunky & Oneness** always share in the folklore by musically telling our stories which, as leader, Plunky Branch, says, "produce instantaneous pleasure and a profound vision of future possibilities." **Elegba Folklore Society's** Artistic Director, Janine Y. Bell agrees, "The mechanics of jazz and its improvisations are rooted in the rhythm and the magic of Motherland. It is this root that births our future."

In acknowledging the natural tendencies of African people and all that the festival imparts, the **2022 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** shines a light on "**Celebrating Black Futures,**" as a prophecy of tomorrow.

10:00pm Festival Closes.

Elegba Folklore Society is adopting measures aimed at keeping attendees safe and thwart the spread of **Covid-19**. The festival asks that if those who wish to attend are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please take a Covid test in advance. If the test is positive, please stay at home and get well. The symptoms include:

- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches and pains
- Altered sense of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

The festival asks attendees to mindfully socially distance and wash their hands frequently. Hand sanitizers will be readily available and stationed throughout the event. Masks will also be available, and high touch surfaces will be wiped frequently. The venue's ventilation system affords a constant circulation of fresh air.

Elegba Folklore Society thanks its program partners including the City of Richmond, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo and CBS 6. The Arts and Cultural Funding Consortium: Richmond, Henrico and Hanover grants partial support **Elegba Folklore Society**.

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A HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL

Janine Yvette Bell, the founder and artistic director of the Elegba Folklore Society, Inc. and the festival's coordinator, has produced annual Kwanzaa programs in Richmond since 1986. **The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival was first presented in 1990. Because of this programming, observance of the Kwanzaa holiday has consistently increased in Richmond and surrounding areas.** The festival provides a particular contemporary significance against the backdrop of Richmond's history. Richmond, a center of the trade of enslaved Africans, is known as the Capital of the Confederacy *and* the Birthplace of Black Entrepreneurship.

The recognition of Kwanzaa as a cultural mediator of this history and the embracing of its concepts is evident not only in the festival's attendance, but also in the volume of requests for information and assistance from schools, churches and community groups.

The event has **featured such notables** as Kwanzaa's national creator, professor, author and lecturer, Dr. Maulana Karenga, activist Dick Gregory, TV journalist/entrepreneur, Tony Brown, Melba Moore, television star, the late Helen Martin, The Last Poets, Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Professor James Small, Bilal, Ms. Iyanla Vanzant, Mr. Anthony T. Browder, Professor Griff, Runoko Rashidi, Phil Valentine, the late Ruby Dee and former Governor L. Douglas Wilder, among others. **Nationally**, the Capital City Kwanzaa **Festival has received attention** on the Food Network, in Chicago's Black Gold magazine, Bandele's Guide to African American Festivals and Events (Washington), American Visions, the magazine of Afro-American Culture (Washington), Upscale, The Magazine for the Success-Oriented (Atlanta), Black Enterprise (New York), which recommended this event with Kwanzaa festivities in Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia and Essence magazine.

The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival helps to make Richmond and Virginia tourist destinations. It is the largest event of its kind in Virginia and one of the largest on the East Coast.

ABOUT ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Elegba Folklore Society, *Richmond's Cultural Ambassador*, presents the **Capital City Kwanzaa Festival**. The Society is a not-for-profit tax-exempt organization that offers services in cultural arts programming and communications. These include planning and managing special events and programs, organizing exhibitions of art and artifacts, presenting programs in dance theatre and music and guiding cultural history tours. Elegba is an *Orisa* (ohr-REE-shah) or deity from the Yoruba tradition of West Africa who opens the roads. The Elegba Folklore Society hopes this event and each of its programs are road-opening experiences for its audiences.

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ABOUT KWANZAA

The **Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** embodies the principles of the Kwanzaa holiday. Kwanzaa, a seven-day holiday, is a family and community strengthening observance based on traditional African harvest festivals. The word Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase “matunda ya kwanzaa” (mah-TOON-dah ya KWAHN-zah) which means “first fruits of the harvest.” Celebrated by an estimated 28 million people December 26 - January 1, Kwanzaa is a time of thanksgiving for the accomplishments (or the fruits of our labor) of the year ending while projecting new growth into the year ahead. For African Americans, it is a time for reaffirming the holistic value system of African heritage, for paying homage to ancestors and elders. It is also a time for enjoying the blessings of the children while preparing them for the future.

The Nguzo Saba (n-GOO-soh SAH-bah), or seven principles, derived from Dr. Karenga’s Kawaïda philosophy, provides the foundation for the Kwanzaa holiday. They are: 12/26 - Umoja (Unity); 12/27 - Kujichagulia (Self-Determination); 12/28 - Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility); 12/29 - Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics); 12/30 - Nia (Purpose); 12/31 - Kuumba (Creativity); 1/1 - Imani (Faith).

According to Dr. Maulana Karenga (mah - OO - lah - nah kah-RING - gah), the creator of Kwanzaa, Kawaïda philosophy is built around:

- 1) An ingathering of the people,
- 2) A reverence for the creator and creation as it applies to nature and humanity,
- 3) A commemoration of the past — history, heroes and heritage,
- 4) A commitment to our highest ideals, and
- 5) A celebration of the good.

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