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2026-27 EVENTS



College of Music
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West African Highlife Ensemble

Maputo Mensah, director
Saturday, Oct. 24, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Grusin Music Hall

Program

Kpanlogo

Traditional Dance

The Kpanlogo dance was invented by Otoo Lincoln. He was told the following Ansee folk story by his grandfather: Kpanlogo, Mma Mma and Algodzan were the names of three triplet girls. Their father was the chief and said whoever could guess their names could marry them. A man went to their home pretending to be a mad-man asking for water, met the girls, and learned their names as they called to each other. To remember them he kept singing to himself. “Kp. Mma. Al,” and of course he married the girls. Soon after Ghana became an independent nation in 1957, Kpanlogo came to symbolize the youth independence of a young nation and was played at funerals and state occasions, and became an anthem for the ruling party at the time. It remains popular today.

Amoulanga

Magic System

Amoulanga is an uplifting Highlife song from the Ivory Coast. The lyrics sing of the virtues of upholding tradition.

Fale Fale- Ayite

“I’m drowning and I need someone to help me get out, so who can I find to help me because I’m drowning? When I got into trouble, I had nobody to help me out, but then I realized I got to know who loves me and who hates me in times of trouble. I’m not going to be the same until the day I die. One day I’m going to be somebody that everyone can be proud of.”

Akpeteshie

Dela Yaw Botri

This song is a good example of pure highlife style. You can hear the up-beat bell pattern drive the ensemble. The lyrics are a sort of public service announcement: “Drinking and driving is not good. If you are drinking, don’t drive, because safety is important.” This song provides an excellent opportunity to get up and dance.

Oblayoko

Kojo Antwi

I was sleeping when a friend came and invited me to Tema for dance, food and drinks. She is beautiful, outgoing, and she was in a haring to go to Tema. I asked her why she was in a haring. She says she is in a haring because friends are waiting for her and she wants to go have fun.

West African Highlife Ensemble

Skylar Armstrong
Lila Brodsky
Carlos Castaneda
Max Gollub
Joshua Gortva
Jonathan Leites
Kieran Osborn
Cesar Palacio Narciso
Cory Shishik
Lena Thometz
Santiago Vejar
Nick Wehmeyer



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