

Power Percussion Troupe from Brazil to perform at UCSD October 16

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POWER PERCUSSION TROUPE FROM BRAZIL TO PERFORM AT UCSD

Olodum, a 20-member power percussion troupe from Brazil, will perform at 8 p.m. Oct. 16 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego.

The carnival-style band from Bahia, Brazil, was first introduced to U.S. audiences on Paul Simon's Rhythm of the Saints album. The group is also featured on Michael Jackson's video They Don't Care About Us. The members have worked with such artists as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Tracy Chapman, Jimmy Cliff, and David Byrne.

The troupe's Oct. 16 San Diego performance, sponsored by the UCSD University Events Office, will include a display of drumming and samba reggae assisted by the modern instrumentation of guitar, bass, synthesizers and horns.

Olodum is considered the innovator of samba reggae, a cross between Brazilian samba and other African and Caribbean rhythms. The group incorporates modern pop instruments into a percussion base to create their own sound. All of its varied rhythms, according to Olodum's Billy Arquimimo, have their origin in African musicality and are totally based on percussion.

A New York Times reviewer recently reported that Olodum "had the audience going wild, throwing their arms in the air and dancing," so lively and tumultuous was the drumming and strumming.

But there is more to the Olodum story than a frenzy of musical performances. The touring Olodum performers represent but a fraction -- the world outreach arm, so to speak -- of the members of a core Brazilian Bahian community and music group, collectively called Olodum. Olodum is an abbreviation of the African word, Olodumare, meaning "god of all gods." The community group formed in 1979 as a Carnival bloco or percussion group as a way for all interested members of the Bahian community of Maciel/Pelourinho to celebrate Carnival.

The community-conscious Olodum sponsors theater and dance groups, ongoing workshops on history, religion, culture, racism, AIDS, as well as programs for street children and on neighborhood cleanup. Today, a cleaned up Pelourinho is a lively community and tourist area, reports The Beat magazine, and the annual Carnival in Bahia, with its thundering procession of percussionists -Olodum community amateur and professional musicians alike -- is gaining international attention.

A taste of this thunderous percussion during Carnival in Brazil is offered by the touring 20-member Olodum at the Oct. 16 concert at Mandeville Auditorium. Tickets are \$18, general admission; \$16 for UCSD faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$14 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-6467, and at Ticketmaster outlets. For further information, call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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