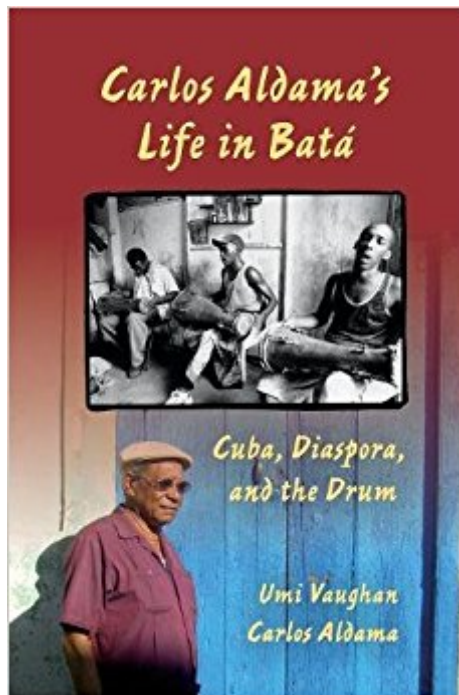




The book was found

Carlos Aldama's Life In Bat  i: Cuba, Diaspora, And The Drum



Synopsis

Batá identifies both the two-headed, hourglass-shaped drum of the Yoruba people and the culture and style of drumming, singing, and dancing associated with it. This book recounts the life story of Carlos Aldama, one of the masters of the batá drum, and through that story traces the history of batá culture as it traveled from Africa to Cuba and then to the United States. For the enslaved Yoruba, batá rhythms helped sustain the religious and cultural practices of a people that had been torn from its roots. Aldama, as guardian of Afro-Cuban music and as a Santería priest, maintains the link with this tradition forged through his mentor Jesus Pérez (Oba Ilu), who was himself the connection to the preserved oral heritage of the older generation. By sharing his stories, Aldama and his student Umi Vaughan bring to light the techniques and principles of batá in all its aspects and document the tensions of maintaining a tradition between generations and worlds, old and new. The book includes rare photographs and access to downloadable audio tracks.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A solid ethnography, grounded in a rich and dramatic biography, reveals the creative power of the Yoruba drum to communicate sounds and words that are invested with rich secular and religious meanings about people and culture, identity and history, life and after-life. Only a scholar-performer with an uncommon imaginative talent could have written this extraordinary book." — Toyin Falola, Distinguished Teaching Professor, The University of Texas at Austin, and editor of *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* "Everything you need to know about batá and batá-playing is in this text, expertly taught and philosophically interpreted by Carlos Aldama and his star yamboki (apprentice), Umi Vaughan....I am proud to have read this Afro-Cuban classic." — Robert Farris

Thompson, Trumbull Professor of the History of Art, Yale, and author of *Aesthetic of the Cool: Afro-Atlantic Art and Music* "What a beautiful duet and deep dialogue between anthropologist Umi Vaughan and his batá teacher Carlos Aldama we find in these pages. We are so fortunate their paths crossed and that we now have the gift of their interwoven story, which makes the meaning of the drum in Cuban history, religion, and culture come alive. This is anthropology carried out with dedication, passion, and trust, and most of all with illuminating grace." — Ruth Behar, Professor of Anthropology, University of Michigan, and author of *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*

Carlos Aldama is omo Añá (sworn to the drum) and a priest of Changá in the Santería—a religion. He is a founding member of Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba, studying under its original musical director Jesús Pérez (Obatala), and eventually serving as musical director himself. He has worked with the National Symphony of Cuba, playwright Roberto Blanco, Karl Marx Theatre director Alex Valdez, and has played with Adalberto Álvarez y su Son, Lázaro Ros and Olorun, and Gonzalo Rubalcaba. Aldama was born in Havana and now lives in San Leandro, California. Umi Vaughan is also omo Añá, and is a priest of Ochun in the Santería—a religion. He is an artist and anthropologist who explores dance, creates photographs and performances, and publishes about African Diaspora culture. Vaughan is Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at California State University, Monterey Bay and author of *Rebel Dance, Renegade Stance: Timba Music and Black Identity in Cuba*. Vaughan lives in Oakland.

The one I received was good

I would recommend this book to all those looking for understanding and spiritual connection with the mother land through the medium of praise music.

Every student of Bata drumming should have a copy of this book. Carlos tells the history as he lived it. His student, Umi, adds perspective in a most enlightened way.

Besides been a friend and Elder in Mr. Carlos Aldama's life, reading his memoirs fills in the details of the product of his life.

:-)

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