

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE

OU to host symposium on royal music traditions of East and West Africa

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From 7-9 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 4, Oakland University's School of Music, Theatre and Dance will present Royal Court Music from East and West Africa: Ethnomusicology Symposium with James Isabirye and Kwasi Ampene in Room 134 in Varner Hall on the OU campus.

In this intriguing presentation moderated by Dr. Jessica Payette, Ampene and Isabirye



James Isabirye (pictured) will join Dr. Kwasi Ampene on Oct. 4 for a symposium on royal music traditions.

will present their work with the royal music traditions of their respective countries.



Kwasi Ampene

“I’ll be discussing the royal court music of the Asante Kingdom in Ghana,” said Ampene, an associate professor of African studies and ethnomusicology at the University of Michigan who specializes in the rich musical traditions of the Akan people of West Africa.

Within the Asante royal court in Kumase-Ghana, Ampene is currently documenting esoteric songs and instrumental texts.

“Since antiquity, Manhyia Palace, the Asante royal court, has been the focal point of the highest artistic expressions,” he said. “I’ll present an overview of esoteric songs and instrumental texts, as well as the historicized poetry of the bards and referential poetry of the constabulary.”

Isabirye, a lecturer at Uganda’s Kyambogo University and a Ph.D. student in music education at Oakland University, has led revivals of several Ugandan music traditions from the Buganda and Busoga kingdoms.

“I will discuss royal music of the Buganda and the Busoga Kingdoms in Uganda; focusing on interpretations and reinterpretations of those expressions before, during, and after colonialism, and the recent reinterpretations referring to the revitalization projects I led,” Isabirye said.

The event is free and open to the public; however, seating is limited and attendees are encouraged to arrive early.

For more information, contact the School of Music, Theatre and Dance at 248-370-2030, or email smtm@oakland.edu.