

TAVIS SMILEY PRESENTS



The African American Imprint

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America I Am

October 2009- March 2010

America I AM: The African American Imprint in partnership with the California African American Science Museum has planned associated programming opportunities throughout the run of the exhibition. These programs give visitors a chance to continue the dialogue about the African American experience in America beyond the exhibit.

Workshops & Lectures:

Marvelous Mermaids

November 8, 2009, 2 PM

Water in African American tradition is symbolic of freedom, separation and purity; it's symbolic of spirituality, birth and death. Water spirits, among them Mami and Papi Wata, are revered in West and Central Africa and the Americas, where so many Africans were forcibly relocated. Since the 18th century, Mami and Papi Wata's following has grown in West, Central, and Southern Africa, as well as in the Caribbean and parts of South America. Mami Wata is a beautiful maiden with long hair; her lustrous eyes gaze enticingly, which only enhances her ethereal beauty. She is often described as a mermaid with a woman's upper body and the hindquarters of a fish. Her extraordinary appearance includes marvelous clothing and jewelry that blinds those who view it. She also carries combs, mirrors, and watches, and a large snake, a symbol of divinity in many African cultures. Participants create a merperson doll with cotton fabrics, paper and natural fibers, and use small organic decorative elements to enhance them.

Soul Food Resilience & Reinvention

December 13, 2009, 1 PM

Despite their political, economic, and racial struggles, African Americans have retained a strong sense of their culture, which is reflected in their food. Celebrating a tradition of survival and resilience, this lecture and food demonstration by Dr. Desmonette Hazly makes evident how African Americans took food stuffs often discarded by the "Big House's" kitchen and reinterpreted them, creating a culturally specific cuisine. Recipes will have a holiday focus and recipe cards supplied.

Dance Your Way to Health

Soul Line Dancing: an exercise alternative

January, 24, 2010, 2 PM

Join us and do something fun and healthy at the same time. Learn some of the most popular soul line dances with J&J Soulful Steps as you groove to soulful sounds. The class is great for beginners and those who are experienced steppers. Come do something good for your body and tap into your soul!



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African American Religion and Spirituality- Why We Praise the Way We Do

February, 28, 2010, 2 PM

Come join us for a lively discussion about the journey from Africa, to America as we explore the religious and spiritual history of African Americans as it relates to traditions, superstitions, national movements and local influence. Discover some of the answers related to “Why African Americans Praise the Way They Do”.

Panel Discussion:

Where Am I?

Dialoguing: Multi-Cultural Representation in the Film and Television Industry

February 21, 2010, 2 PM

As the cultural landscape of the United States changes and a majority becomes harder and harder to find, why does it seem that this is not reflected in the entertainment industry? What needs to change so that what is represented on the screen reflects more diversity? Is this important? Is there no real public interest in seeing multi-cultural reflections, stories and talent? Come learn about strategies for changing the reflection of what we see in film and television and dialogue about solutions that include us all.

All dates and speakers are subject to change