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# Drum And Dance Festival In Miami Celebrates Descendents Of The African Diaspora

By [HOLLY PRETSKY \(/PEOPLE/HOLLY-PRETSKY\)](#) • AUG 3, 2017

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*Dancers rehearse for Saturday night's performance.*

HOLLY PRETSKY / WLRN

Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Haiti, Cuba and the Bahamas will all be among countries represented at the eighth annual African Diaspora Dance and Drum Festival of Florida (<http://addff.delouafrica.org/>) this weekend at the Little Haiti Cultural Complex.



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1:19



"We have all different types [of dances]. And that's the mission. That's why we are here, to bridge the cultural gaps," said Njeri Plato, artistic director and founder of Delou Africa Dance Ensemble, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. "One thing we do know: that music and dance are universal."

The event will feature workshops in drumming and dance, a fashion show, a children's village and a global marketplace.

This year, the main performance will include an homage to Chuck Davis, the founder of DanceAfrica, who electrified and energized the African dance and drum community in Miami. He passed away last spring.



The goal of the festival is partly to emphasize the history of the African diaspora in Miami.

"There is so much about the culture of the African Diaspora that is not known here in Miami," said Michelle Grant-Murray, the event's production director. "Dance carries the history and culture of an entire group of people. So through... dances of the African diaspora, you're actually teaching people about their history and about their future."

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Festival organizers, from left, Njeri Prato, Michelle Grant-Murray and Mohamed Dacosta

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Tickets to the main show Saturday night at 8 p.m. are \$35 for adults, and \$20 for students and seniors. Organizers recommend arriving early to the Little Haiti Cultural Complex, 212 NE 59th Terr., in order to get a seat.

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