

The Original Gullah Festival of South Carolina Inc.



Workshop Descriptions

Sweetgrass Basket Weaving

Sweetgrass basket weaving is a craft that originated in Sierra Leone, West Africa and was brought to the Lowcountry of South Carolina by enslaved African people. Basketry was first used for the harvesting of rice, fruits, and vegetables on the plantations of the Lowcountry, and later used for decorative purposes.

Workshop participants will learn the techniques of Gullah sweetgrass basket weaving. Additionally, each participant will have the opportunity for a hands-on experience of creating their very own keepsake sweetgrass project.

Percussion (Drum) Making

Locally obtained gourds, bamboo and other available materials will be used to make percussive musical instruments. All of the materials used during this workshop help participants to learn and tap into their innate ability to make something valuable out of what exists around us. Workshop participants will experience making different drum sounds as well as learn about the significance of various drumming patterns.

Gullah Art Embellishment

Participants will have the choice of selecting from an assortment of hand pulled prints for embellishing. The prints are on an 11X14 sheet of art board. The art board is a standard size for framing and supports multiple art mediums. Paints and a selection of other media will be provided for an artistic experience. The workshop presenter will assist and guide participants through this creative and fun event.

African American Quilting

African American quilting is almost as old as the history of America. African enslaved women were needed for spinning, weaving, sewing and quilting on plantations and in other wealthy households.

For enslaved people, quilts were made for everyday use out of necessity. Scraps, discarded clothing and feed sacks were the materials used to fashion quilts. In making "string quilts," strips of various fabrics were sewn together. The sections were then cut into blocks and made into bed size quilts.

Attend this unique Gullah-Geechee Quilting Workshop and experience the art of basic quilt-making. Partakers will use hand quilting needles to create straight stitches for their projects. Participants will learn basic quilt-making skills, and depart with the beginning of their personal Gullah-Geechee Quilt. Hopefully, it will later be completed at home and proudly displayed as a keepsake.

Gullah She`ke`re Musical Instrument

The She`ke`re (from Yoruba Se`Ke`Re') is a West African percussion instrument consisting of a dried gourd with beads or cowries woven into a net covering the gourd. The She`ke`re originated in a tribe in Nigeria called Yoruba. The She`ke`re instrument is shaken and/or hit against the hands to make its unique percussion sound.

Participants will learn the art of crafting their very own She`ke`re instrument, which is theirs to keep and show off throughout the festival and for years to come. Participants will be exposed to unique, one of a kind gourd items, jewelry, dolls and glass work. The presenter is an extraordinary self-taught artist who uses knowledge and talent to create beautiful She`Ke`Res.