

# Study Guide for Teachers

## Ginga Brasileira

*Dances of Brazil*  
Grades 3-12



Young  
Audiences  
Arts for  
Learning

Connecticut

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

This professional ensemble performs a colorful, crowd-pleasing repertoire of Afro-Brazilian dances that fuse rhythmic music with high-energy gymnastics and martial arts. They perform Capoeira, a martial art dance form developed in Brazil by 16<sup>th</sup> century slaves; it is punctuated by fast footwork, daring leaps, and split second timing. Also featured are Maculele, a stick dance created by African slaves. Length: 45 minutes



### OBJECTIVES

- 1) Students will learn key facts about Afro-Brazilian culture
- 2) Students will learn Afro-Brazilian vocabulary related to the history and culture of Brazil.
- 3) Students will relate to Afro-Brazilian culture through participation in its music.
- 4) Students will be able to share aspects of Latin American culture with their classmates

### AFTER THE PROGRAM

#### Discussion:

After the program, using your study guide, the library and online research, collect some facts on Brazil. Include images to accompany your discussion - a map of the country, a drawing of the country's flag.

Where is the capital city? Discuss the geographic area, population, name of currency, languages, climate, type of government, animals and major industries.

What cultures make up the people of Brazil? How did each culture contribute to the traditions of capoeira and Maculele?

### BEFORE THE PROGRAM - study these terms

**roda** - the circle of people within which capoeira is played

**ginga** - (literally: rocking back and forth; to swing) the fundamental movement in capoeira

**bateria** - group that plays the music for capoeira

**berimbau** - instruments that look like an archer's bow using a steel string and a gourd for resonance; played by striking the string with a stick

**caxixi** - type of rattle that accompanies the berimbau

**jogo** - capoeira "game"

**esquivas** - series of ducks done to escape an opponent's strike

**rolê** - a rolling move that combines a duck and a low movement; allows the defensive player to quickly evade an attack

**au** - cartwheel

**bananeira** - handstands

**pião de cabeça** - headspins



Here is an example of Capoeira, a combination of martial arts and dance form.

## BRAZIL AND CAPOEIRA

### Background information about Brazil

[http://www.learningenrichment.org/brazil\\_stud.html](http://www.learningenrichment.org/brazil_stud.html)

A Virtual Tour of Brazil focuses on economic/geographic, social, cultural, political, and historic elements of South America. It develops proficiency in using the Internet as a research tool. Students produce and share written and oral reports; participate in group meetings; and use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.

<http://teachersnetwork.org/teachnetnyc/chornik/brazil.htm>

Contemporary Latin America: Culture and Civilization

[http://www.chatham.edu/PTI/Contemp\\_Latin/abstract\\_page.htm](http://www.chatham.edu/PTI/Contemp_Latin/abstract_page.htm)

There is a good **history of Capoeira** here:

[http://www.capoeira.htmlplanet.com/capoeira\\_hist.htm](http://www.capoeira.htmlplanet.com/capoeira_hist.htm)



Here, Ginga Brasileira demonstrates Maculele, a Brazilian Stick Dance performed in grass skirts

## ABOUT THE DANCES

**Capoeira** is an afro-Brazilian martial art originated by the slaves that were shipped over to Brazil from the Western coast of Africa in the 1500's by the Portuguese. Slaves were distributed as labor forces to three main city ports in Brazil: Bahia, Recife and Rio de Janeiro. Many of the Africans banded together and revolted against the slave owners. Capoeira was derived and secretly practiced as a method to fight against the Portuguese army. They disguised the deadliness of Capoeira by practicing it to music.

In 1892, slavery was abolished in Brazil. The Africans moved into cities in search of work but were denied employment. As a means, they formed criminal street gangs that practiced the deadlier aspects of Capoeira and openly opposed the government. They were known as Malandros.

Capoeira was henceforth abolished and outlawed in Brazil for fear that the Africans would now try and revolt against the government. Capoeira was deemed a threat, and those that practiced it were punished severely.

**Maculele** (ma-cu-lay-lay) is not a style of Capoeira but a folkloric dance which is included in the teachings of many Capoeira academies. Maculele is a traditional indigenous folk dance/fight which is done with wooden sticks. The rhythm is controlled by the atabaque, and on the 4th beat the player has to hit sticks with the opponent.

## CURRICULAR LINKS

### *Connecticut State Department of Education*

#### Source: The CT Framework – Physical Education

- ✚ Content Standard 1: Physical Activity  
*Students will adapt and combine skills to meet the demands of increasingly complex situations (e.g., creating sequences and patterns of movement for gymnastics or dance)*

#### Source: The CT Framework – Dance

- ✚ Standard 1: Elements and Skills  
*Students will demonstrate the following movement skills and explain the underlying principles: alignment, balance, initiation of movement, articulation of isolated body parts, weight shift, elevation and landing.*
- ✚ Standard 3: Meaning  
*Students will observe and explain how different accompaniment (such as sound, music, spoken text) can affect the meaning of a dance.*

## ABOUT GINGA BRASILEIRA

Efraim Silva, President and Artistic Director of Ginga Brasileira, was born in Guarujá, São Paulo, Brazil. He was awarded state and federal certification as a professional musician and rhythmist, and he opened his own Capoeira academy in Bragança Paulista, São Paulo, in 1985. He became Brazilian national champion of Capoeira in 1988. Efraim now teaches Capoeira for children and adults in the New Haven area, and has his own performing group, Ginga Brasileira, Inc., with which he performs in schools, universities and festivals all over the United States, Canada and Brazil.

Portrait by Craig Norton; Candida by Mick Marsden

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