Gagá Pa’l Pueblo Celebrates Spring at the new Bronx Music Hall

Gagá Pa’l Pueblo is a folkloric group that celebrates Dominican Gagá traditions in New York City. Dominican Gagá is an African Diaspora drum, song and dance tradition from the colonos, the sugar plantation communities, on the coastal plains of the Dominican Republic.

African Diaspora drum, song and dance traditions are only partly about drumming, singing and dancing. They are really about bringing the community together in communal expressions of family, friends, and community. That’s what Gagá does.
Gagá Spring Celebration 2021

Gagá Pa’l Pueblo celebrates spring in the outdoor plaza at the Bronx Music Hall in the Bronx Commons at 438 East 163rd St in Crotona Park East, The Bronx on Saturday, May 22, 2021 at 3pm. The performance will also be livestreamed on the BHMC Facebook page at facebook.com/bxmusic/

It’s free, but space is limited by COVID safety protocols. To attend, please call (917) 557-2354 to reserve a spot.

Bronx Rising!

The Gagá spring celebration is part of the Bronx Rising! cultural campaign and part of the National Endowment for the Arts funded series “Masking the Seasons in the Bronx.”

The performance is hosted by the Bronx Music Heritage Center a development of The Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco), a community development organization. “We’re thrilled to be hosting in-person performances again,” said Elena Martínez, co-artistic director of the BMHC. “Music, in particular music by Latino artists, is essential to the heart and soul of the Bronx. We look forward to bringing the community together again, through the power of live music, as we build momentum to begin programming in the Bronx Music Hall later this year.”

Check out The Bronx Commons. It’s still under construction, but is probably going to become the living heart of The Bronx.

Cultural events take a long time to put together. Maybe it’s a coincidence that this spring celebration is happening on the week New York City opens, then again, maybe not. Culture has a way of appearing just when we need it, almost as if culture had a mind of its own. The coincidence is perfect.

#NYCReAwakens #ILoveTheBronx

Gagá Pa’l Pueblo

Gagá celebrates the spring opening of the natural world and seeks to balance all the forces of nature for the benefit of the people, “the pueblo.” The group’s name, Gagá Pa’l Pueblo, means “Gagá for the people” in Spanish, spoken with a Caribbean accent.
The group seeks to recover African Diaspora community traditions that were suppressed and even banned during the Colonial Period. We used to be forced to hide our Blackness, but now we can celebrate it, and everyone is welcome, regardless of your heritage.

These are oral traditions so they vary slightly in every little town, and even among individual families. In La Republica, gagá is often performed with bullhorns. Gagá Pa’l Pueblo often uses whistles. We learn as children to drum, sing and dance the same way our parents do. It’s all good, todo bien.

You can follow the group at facebook.com/groups/Gagapalpueblo

Anne Loftus Playground and Dyckman St

Gagá Pa’l Pueblo performs at Anne Loftus playground on Sundays from 3-7pm in Fort Tryon Park in Fort George. It’s sort of Gagá lite with dance, music and drawing workshops.

The group goes deeper into the traditions on Saturdays in the basement at 502 West 173rd St during the cold months. Before you go, try the playground first.

The playground is not up on the hill with the Met Cloisters. It’s down near the intersection of Broadway and Dyckman. It is popular with NYC’s Dominican community. Kids play and bodybuilders work out there. [From the Editor: We used to eat lunch there.]

After your gagá, you can enjoy the rest of the evening on Dyckman.

Dyckman is one of Manhattan’s main Dominican streets. It is filled with popular Dominican restaurants and bars. Mamajuana Cafe and 809 are long-time community anchors. Bocaditos Bistro a couple of blocks up Broadway is a nice place to take your parents or in-laws. On the west end of Dyckman, the Hudson American restaurant offers incredible views of the Hudson River and the George Washington Bridge (GWB). You won’t believe you are in New York City.

Check out the neighborhood before it gets gentrified. Inwood is the northern tip of Manhattan and so far has changed less than much of the rest of the island. It’s another world.

Link: https://www.newyorklatiniculture.com/gaga-pal-pueblo-brings-dominican-gaga-to-nyc/