

Fanga

WAP-pages / Paul Nas / Last updated on 30 April 2004

Fanga is rhythm, from Liberia that has been thought by Babatunde Olatunji, a West African Percussion teacher who, with his lessons and personality, inspired many Djembé players in the United States. The transcriptions are from various email exchanges through the Djembé-L mailing-list. Fanga was used by travelling tribes upon entering new villages. When a visiting tribe was approaching a village they would sing Fanga-Alafiya to indicate that they come in peace. If the villagers welcome them, they reply: Ashe-Ashe. Then, the travellers and villagers reverse the lines. The fanga song was often the common denominator between tribes that otherwise spoke different languages. Music is a true universal language. The song he used to sing to accompany the rhythm is in the Yoruba language. The song is a fun chant that captures the essence of peace, friendship, conviviality and hospitality. In singing the fanga there needs to be a Caller and a Responder. The lyrics are simple but fun. (Ashe = so be it)

Fanga Alafayia, ashé ashé (4x) Ashé, Ashé, ashé, ashé.

Asé, Asé, Asé, Asé

Ikabo A Lafiya Ashé Ashé (4x) Ashé, Ashé, ashé, ashé.

Asé, Asé, Asé, Asé

Eluga A Lafiya Ashé, Ashé, ashé, ashé.

Asé, Asé, Asé, Asé

Break	S:S	S S	T T	S S			
3x	r:l	l r	r l	r l			

	S:S	S S	T T	B B	S S		
1x	r:l	l r	r l	r l	r l		

Break 2	S	S:S	S:S	B	B	B	b
	r:	r:l	l r	r	r	r	r

Sangban	●	○	●	●	○		
	x:x	x:x	x:x	x:x			

Djembé 1	B	b:B	B:T	T B	b B	T T	
	r:	r:l	l r	r l	r l	r l	

Djembé 2	T	S	S S	T	T	S S	
	r:	l	l r	r	r	r l	

Djembé 3		S:S	S S	S S	t t	S S	
		r:l	l r	r l	r l	r l	

Djembé 4	B	T	T T	B	B	T T	
	r:	l	l r	r	r	r l	

Djembé 5	B	T T	B	B	B:T	T B	B
	r:	r:l	r	l	l:r	r	r

Djembé 6	B	T T	B	B T	T B	B	
	r:	r:l	r	r l	r l		

Djembé 7	S:S	S:S	S S	S S			
	r:l	r:l	r l	r l			

Sources

Various mail exchanges through the Djembe-L mailinglist. Artdrum for the cultural context.