

For Immediate Release
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ODUNDE IS BACK ON SOUTH STREET !!
48th Annual ODUNDE Festival
ODUNDE Week of live events starting on Monday, June 5 leads
to the Sunday, June 11 celebration

Philadelphia, PA—June 5, 2023. The ODUNDE Festival, the nation’s largest African American street festival, will return to South Street on Sunday, June 11, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. It is a rain-or-shine event on June 11.

The ODUNDE Festival is more than 15 blocks of vendors, displays, international cuisine, drumming and entertainment starting at 21st & South st. and ending at Bainbridge st & Grays Ferry.’

“We are so thrilled to be able to invite ODUNDE attendees back on South Street year after year, to hear the drumming, to watch families of different generations join us for fun and entertainment and to offer all the tastes of Africa, the Caribbean and African American culture through our diverse food offerings”, said Oshunbumi Fernandez-West, CEO of ODUNDE. “The Festival continues to grow every year and we will have a week of celebrations starting on June 5 culminating in the actual festival on June 11. The festival has a \$30 million economic impact on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a \$28 million economic impact on the Philadelphia region every year. ODUNDE means Happy New Year and we can’t wait to have our procession at noon in June where we bring our offerings to the goddess Oshun and ask her for a blessed ODUNDE and a happy new year.”

This year, Odunde Festival week starts on Monday, June 5 as ODUNDE 365 presents:

Monday, June 5—I.AM.BUMI 25th anniversary celebration at the Sky Lounge, 1500 Locust Street, in Center City Philadelphia. The event runs from 5-9 p.m. To RSVP, the public must call 267-324-9932 or 267-320-4364.

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The I AM B.U.M.I is an innovative hands-on program which teaches children from the ages of 5-18 how to love themselves first. BUMI stands for Beautiful Unique Magnificent Individual. The mission is to teach youth that etiquette, hygiene, self-love and self-motivation are the keys to being a successful adult in life. For additional information on the program, go to www.iambumi.org.

Tuesday, June 6—Keekee and Me Yoga Class at LOVE Park, 15th and JFK Boulevard, in Center City Philadelphia. The class starts at 12 noon. It is free and open to the public. Anyone participating must bring their own yoga mat. Odunde 365 will give free yoga mats to the first 25 people that attend. The yoga instructor for the event is Steven Williams, a nationally trained Yoga Alliance instructor and National Strength and Conditioning Association certified strength coach based in Philadelphia. Mr. Williams is a leading Black wellness educator with a background in Neuroscience, Cognitive Psychology and Biochemistry.

Wednesday, June 7 – Pop Up Odunde T-Shirt giveaway in a surprise location in Philadelphia. Odunde 365 will be giving out hundreds of I Am Odunde! t-shirts (while supplies last) to people walking along the street to build up additional excitement about Odunde Festival Week. Media can contact Spud Jones at 267-339-8432 on Tuesday, June 6 after 4 P.M. to receive the t-shirt giveaway location.

The t-shirt giveaway location will also be posted on Odunde's Instagram account (@odundefestival) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/odundefestival) by 5 a.m. on Wednesday, June 7. We ask that no media outlet publish or broadcast the pop-up t-shirt giveaway location before 5 a.m. on June 7.

Thursday, June 8-African Fashion Capsule at the Sky Lounge, 1500 Locust Street, in Center City Philadelphia. The event runs from 5-9 p.m. To RSVP, the public must call 267-324-9932. The event will be a fusion of African fashion, head wrapping and cuisine featuring Fernandez-West, CEO of ODUNDE; Youma Ba, owner of Youma African Cuisine in Philadelphia; and Renee Hall. Owner of Harx4, a women's and men's fashion collection based in Philadelphia.

Friday, June 9 – African Business Roundtable at Temple University's Charles Blockson Library, Sullivan Hall, 1330 Polett Walk (near North Broad St. and Polett Walk) in North Philadelphia. The event will be held from 3-5 p.m.

The event will be hosted by Pennsylvania State Senator Sharif Street and participating will be Her Excellency Dr. Elsie S. Kanza, Ambassador of Tanzania to the United States; His Excellency Henri Etoundi Essomba, Ambassador of the Republic of Cameroon to the United States; and Ambassador dr. Robin Renee Sanders, Chair of The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) Africa Committee. .

Saturday, June 10 –No events

Sunday, June 11-- ODUNDE Festival (centered at 23rd and South Streets)

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On Sunday, June 11, ODUNDE—meaning “Happy New Year” in Yoruba—begins at noon with the historic procession to the Schuylkill River at South Street bridge in keeping with the West African based origins of the festival, rooted in the Yoruba spiritual tradition. For this ceremony, gifts of fruit and flowers are brought to honor the Goddess Oshun—the diety of culture, civilization, art and love. An historic look at the river ceremony, in honor of the late ODUNDE founder Lois Fernandez, can be seen on the ODUNDE website at <https://www.odundefestival.org/about.html>

The festival transforms South Street into the largest African American street festival in the United States. Displays of African art and artifacts, including masks, sculpture and clothing define the festival’s distinct international flavor. As always, one of the highlights of the celebration is the endless variety of food offerings from throughout the African diaspora. The festival also features two stages of entertainment and activities for attendees—The Queen Lois stage at 23rd and South Street and the Queen Bumi stage at Grays Ferry. The entertainment on both stages will start at 1:30 p.m.

The featured entertainer this year will be Grammy Award winning singer, songwriter and actress Chrisette Michele. She will perform on the Queen Lois stage starting at approximately 7 p.m.

Michele has made a groove in the music industry that spans from 2007 to the present. Her passion to help others and philanthropic efforts include support and volunteerism with organizations such as UNICEF, Girls Inc., VH1’s Save the Music, Amnesty, and many other charity organizations. Michele has visited Iraq, Kuwait, and many other countries to support American Troops in an effort to uplift, motivate and encourage them while they are away from their families protecting the U.S.

She has a heart for encouraging the broken, the hard-working, and those in great service positions. She has a passion for cultivating safe spaces within her community and provides a cross-cultural understanding of self-worth and self-care. In 2020, Michele created her own safe space called “The Inner Peace Academy.” The Academy is a space where men and women can gather to explore purpose.

MEDIA NOTE, NOT FOR PUBLICATION: Media interested in covering Odunde on Sunday, June 11 and securing a press credential can contact Spud Jones, 267-257-9651, Dominique Johnson, 267-257-9651 or Bumi, 267-320-4364.

About ODUNDE

The festival takes place on the Second Sunday in June along South Street from 20th to 24th Streets and in the surrounding area. The free, outdoor festival, whose central ceremonies are rooted in the traditions of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, features a wide variety of vendors, craftspeople, artists and performers. Each year, the ODUNDE Festival draws hundreds of thousands of people from throughout the Philadelphia area, the Mid-Atlantic region, and across the world. With a \$30 million economic impact on State of Pennsylvania and a \$28 million economic impact on the City of Philadelphia, the ODUNDE Festival has been designated an official City event.

Created in 1975 by the late Lois Fernandez, the ODUNDE Festival is the largest African American street festival in America. The institution continues as Bumi Fernandez-West carries on her mother's legacy through ODUNDE 365, the non-profit that produces the festival. The organization has also spawned ODUNDE365 which provides year-round cultural programs to Philadelphia schools, businesses and organizations. Further information on ODUNDE365's programs, the I AM BUMI children's book and calendar of events may be obtained by contacting us via the ODUNDE office at (267) 320-4364 or via the web at www.odundefestival.org

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