



City of Seattle
Mayor GREGORY J. NICKELS

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Media Information

Discover African Heritage at Safeco Insurance Festál: Festival Sundiata, African- American Festival

Traditional drumming and dance set the rhythmic tone for a weekend filled with continuous live entertainment as Festival Sundiata celebrates African-American heritage, Feb. 14 – 16, 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in Fisher Pavilion and Center House, with an art opening on Feb. 13, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Safeco Insurance Festál: Festival Sundiata presents a compelling picture of the African and African-American journeys. African heritage is brought to life through dance, gospel, jazz, neo-soul, hip-hop and an African “Ujamaa” marketplace. Special activities in 2009 include: an interactive African Children’s Village, Gospel Showcase, Smokin’ Black Chefs of the Northwest and the Black Palette Art Exhibit in Northwest Gallery, 3rd Floor of Center House.

The festival is named for King Sundiata, the legendary 13th century West African Mansa “king of kings” of the Mali Empire. The courageous king rescued his people’s storyteller and keeper of oral history. Safeco Insurance Festál: Festival Sundiata carries on the storytelling tradition with musical and dramatic tales of historic and contemporary African and African-American life.

Did you know? The Reverend Dr. Samuel B. McKinney, Pastor Emeritus of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Seattle, is a legendary leader of the civil rights movement, classmate and friend to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and co-author of the classic, “Church Administration in the Black Perspective.” Cited by *Ebony* magazine as one of America’s top black preachers, he founded Liberty Bank, the first black-owned bank in the Pacific Northwest, along with a day care center, kindergarten and scholarship fund that annually awards \$20,000 in academic scholarships. Dr. McKinney is a recipient of multiple honorary degrees and remains active in the Seattle community today.

Join us at Safeco Insurance Festál 2009 and become a “culture carrier” (someone who contributes to cultural understanding through the sharing of stories, songs, music, food and family traditions). This festival is presented by Seattle Center in partnership with the Sundiata African-American Cultural Association, www.festivalsundiata.org. For more information on Safeco Insurance Festál and other Seattle Center programming, click on www.seattlecenter.com.

About Safeco Insurance Festál

Safeco Insurance Festál, presented by Seattle Center in partnership with community organizations, is a year-long series of FREE events that honors the cultural richness and diversity of the Pacific Northwest. Safeco Insurance Festál plays a vital part in Seattle Center efforts to connect our dynamic and varied communities.

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This collection of 22 events is presented with the generous support of Safeco Insurance, Wells Fargo, Verizon Wireless and KUOW 94.9 Public Radio. Additional support is provided by The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, The Boeing Company, Seattle Center Fund and the City of Seattle.

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