



CENTER FOR WORLD MUSIC

AND RELATED ARTS



Komla Amoaku (right)

Dr. William Komla Amoaku (1940-2012) taught and performed Ewe drumming for the Center for World Music from 1994 to 1995. Considered one of the stalwarts of Ghana's creative industry in contemporary times, "Prof," as his friends and students called him, was a scholar, administrator, and an artist par excellence. He studied under German composer and music educator Carl Orff at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria (1967), earned a Master of Music degree in musicology from the University of Illinois, and completed a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at the University of Pittsburgh, with Professor Fela Sowande as his dissertation advisor (1975).

Komla virtually erupted on the Ghanaian national artistic scene with his well-researched study on the strategic direction of the newly established Ghana National Theatre (1994). The focus of that policy document was on developing a theater-going culture among Ghanaians. Komla left his teaching and leadership positions in San Diego—at San Diego State University, California State University San Marcos, and the Center for World Music—to accept a prestigious appointment as the first Executive Director of the National Theatre of Ghana (2004). There he introduced a culture of distinguished leadership by giving his total devotion to the theatre and by overseeing the aesthetics of the main building as well as the maintenance of the full complex. He spearheaded the development of the first-ever Corporate Plan for the National Theatre in 1995 and subsequently developed and promoted several innovative performing arts programs: Concert Party, Fun World, Kiddafest, Toy Competition, Arts Institute for Teachers, and Theatre Programs for Schools.

Let your minds enter into the psychic corridors of traditional Africa and rediscover the true beauty of its art forms. Only then will your perceptions about African music be holistic and meaningful. —William Komla Amoaku.