



krannert center

# YOUTH SERIES

## 2019-20

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCES  
FOR PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND HOME  
SCHOOLS, GRADES PreK-12

# BIZHIKI CULTURE & DANCE COMPANY



**I ILLINOIS**  
College of Fine & Applied Arts



## ABOUT BIZHIKI CULTURE & DANCE COMPANY

The Bizhiki Culture & Dance Company was founded in 2016 on the pillars of public engagement and education with the goal of furthering people's understanding of Indigenous cultures through interactive workshops, presentations, and exhibitions. The dedicated professionals of Bizhiki engage audiences of all ages through intricate stories, traditional and contemporary dance and song, and demonstrations of traditional ecological knowledge, guiding participants to a better understanding of cultural resiliency and revitalization. The company has performed and presented powwow dance exhibitions throughout the United States and Canada.

Head to [Bizhikiculture.com](http://Bizhikiculture.com) for more information.

Connects to Illinois Learning Standards in Fine Arts, Social/Emotional Learning, and Social Sciences.



There are over 567 tribes recognized by the United States government today. Many members of Bizhiki are members of Ojibwe nations near Lake Superior. Ojibwe communities are considered woodland people. Woodland communities located throughout the Midwest maintain a wide array of beautiful and intricate languages, dances, and regalia.

Oftentimes, woodland communities live cyclical lifestyles, which follow the seasons. Many of the dances are symbolic of or relate directly to animals, harvesting practices, and cultural teachings. Many elders relay that these dances not only tell a story, but also teach others how to live a healthy life.



## ABOUT THE SHOW

Krannert Center is joined by the University of Illinois Native American House for this powerful powwow dance exhibit. The performance will feature men's and women's traditional dances, woodlands dancing, and jingle dances along with songs, stories, and cultural practices of multiple Indigenous nations.



## WHAT IS A POWWOW?

A powwow is an Indigenous way to gather to dance, sing, and visit. Powwows are a celebration, taking place in large arenas, and can last for several days. The performance you will see at Krannert Center will bring some parts of a powwow to the stage.

The drum group consists of both the drum and its singers and is treated with great respect. The drum is constructed of natural materials and animal hides which resonate an earthy tone. Some say the sound mimics the heartbeat of mother earth. The individual who receives the honor of Head Singer is chosen for his experience. Songs are started with a lead part sung by the Head Singer. After the lead begins, the other singers will join in with him. At this point, the dancers begin to dance. The songs serve different purposes from religious to healing to social. In the past, as various Tribal Nations gathered together they would share their songs, often changing the songs so that singers of different Nations could join in. With these changes came the use of "vocables" (non-word vocalizations) to replace the words of the old songs. Thus, some songs today are sung in vocables with no words. Many newly composed or revivals songs are still sung in Native languages; some songs also incorporate English words or phrases.

Dance has always been a very important part of life for American Indians, ranging from social to ceremonial. Most dances seen at powwows today are social dances. Although dance styles and content have changed, their meaning and importance has not. The regalia worn by the dancers, like other styles of clothing today, have evolved over time. Some powwows incorporate dance competitions while others may include exhibition dances for educational purposes. Powwow is not a stagnant piece of this culture, but a vibrant and changing way of life.

[YOUTH.KRANNERTCENTER.COM](http://YOUTH.KRANNERTCENTER.COM)

## POWWOW DANCES

### MEN'S WOODLAND DANCE

This dance in the Great Lakes woodlands tradition incorporates elements of victory dances associated with warfare as well as *baga'adowewin* (the game of Lacrosse). The regalia features feathered turbans, floral motifs in the embroidery and beading, and war clubs or *baga'adowaan* (Lacrosse sticks).

### MEN'S NORTHERN TRADITIONAL DANCE

In this style of dance from the Northern Plains, the dancer re-enacts the movements of a hunter or a warrior searching for the enemy. The regalia usually includes a breastplate, beaded knee bands with long fringe, and a u-shaped feather bustle.

### WOMEN'S JINGLE DRESS DANCE

This dance has its origins in northern Minnesota and was introduced by the Ojibwe people as a healing dance. The jingle dress is made of a cloth, velvet, or leather base adorned with jingles made out of a shiny metal. Traditionally and still common today, the jingles are made from the lids of snuff tobacco cans. These are bent and molded into triangular bell shapes and attached to the dress with ribbon or fabric in a pattern designed by the dancer.

Content adapted from [powwows.com](http://powwows.com).



Bizhiki dancers Ogidiikaamig (Mike DeMain) in men's woodland regalia, Sheena Cain wearing jingle dance regalia, and Josh Atcheynum in men's traditional regalia. Note that it's proper to refer to powwow attire or clothing as *regalia* and can even be offensive to use the word "costume."

# MANDOMIN (WILD RICE)

One important tradition in Ojibwe communities is *manoominikewin* (wild ricing): harvesting wild rice by gently knocking it into the bottom of a canoe using cedar rice knockers, followed by many steps to prepare the rice for storage.



Harvesting



Parching



Rice in a birch bark winnowing tray.

Want to learn more? Watch a short video on wild ricing at [www.theways.org](http://www.theways.org).

## Bizhiki Culture & Dance Company

### Youth Series Performances

Wednesday-Thursday, September 18-19, 2019  
at 10am

Tryon Festival Theatre

Approximately 60 minutes

Recommended for grades 1-5

### Public Marquee Performance

Friday, September 20, 2019 at 7:30pm

### Patron Co-sponsors

Susan & Michael Haney

Carol & Ed Scharlau

Anonymous

### Campaign for Young Audiences

Lead Sponsors—Kyle & Phyllis Robeson & Family  
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### Youth Series Programming

Bernard and Prudence Spodek Endowed Fund  
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The Susan Sargeant McDonald Endowed Fund  
for Youth Programming (Suzi was the founder/  
developer of the Krannert Center Youth Series)  
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ADVANCING  
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## KRANNERT CENTER | 50

500 S. Goodwin Ave.  
Urbana, IL 61801  
KrannertCenter.com  
217.333.6700 (main number)  
217.244.3009 (Youth Series office)  
youth@krannertcenter.com

## LIBRARY CONNECTIONS

Krannert Center has partnered with Champaign Public Library and The Urbana Free Library to help expand your students' Youth Series experience. Our local libraries have placed materials that relate to Bizhiki Culture & Dance Company on display, and librarians are prepared to help your students immerse themselves in the wide-ranging subject areas that are covered by the production. These resources will be available approximately two weeks before through two weeks following the performance.

We hope that you are able to take advantage of these exciting partnerships with our local libraries!

[www.champaign.org](http://www.champaign.org) | [www.urbanafreelibrary.org](http://www.urbanafreelibrary.org)

## OPEN HOUSE AT THE SPURLOCK MUSEUM OF WORLD CULTURES: SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2019 11AM-12:30PM

Drop in for a self-guided, interactive visit on the day of your Youth Series performance. Museum guides will offer hands-on object studies and gallery-based challenges for students tied to the themes of Bizhiki Culture & Dance Company. The Spurlock Museum also has a variety of resources for classroom use. Contact Kim Sheahan at [ksheahan@illinois.edu](mailto:ksheahan@illinois.edu) or 217.244.3355 for information on available artifacts and lesson plans.

