

Luther Gray

You know, all of our traditions really have come out of Congo Square as far as the drumming, the dancing Indians, the second line, the food, the marketplace - everything - clothing. You know, we are a very African and Caribbean city because of Congo Square. So we really - I think - this sort of thing has really come around. I think a collaborate, you know, an MOU with Ashé and Congo Square really can be powerful because we really trying to like - we're not just trying to go to Congo Square and be drumming and dancing outside city hall. We're going to try to launch a whole industry based on our culture. I mean, you know, Nashville has a music industry. New York has the entertainment industry. L.A. has a film industry. New Orleans has the root of all the culture, but we really, we have a tourist industry. So all of our culture artists, all of our culture bearers, are underpaid. They're working class people and are playing for tourists and all the money is in the hotels and restaurants and everything downtown. We don't get the economic impact of that. But people come here because of the food. The most famous food is a gumbo. Gumbo is an African dish, you know? You know, all the spices. I mean, our food is a blend of African food, Caribbean food and French food. So that's kind of how things are evolving. So I thought, that's why I thought this was a good time for me to make a transition. And it seems it's really been playing out, so we hope we can kind of...with Congo Square, we kind of have a situation where we don't want to be used by the city to say we endorse in the project. You know, so. Well, what we are working on is that we got to really concentrate on organizing the whole, the whole culture community of Congo Square. All the culture bearers like all the traditions and have that be a powerful, powerful force.