Mass Capoeira

masscapoeira.com · Webster, Massachusetts

A program of Agora Culture Center

Information sheet for partners, presenters, and funders

Frequently asked questions, program formats and rates, and the fiscal details needed for grant applications and contracts.

What is capoeira?

Capoeira is a rich cultural tradition that incorporates elements of martial arts, dance, music, and language. Initially developed as a form of resistance by enslaved peoples in colonial-era Brazil, today capoeira is one of the most widely recognized symbols of Brazilian heritage and identity, and is a main vehicle for the dissemination of Brazilian culture and Portuguese language around the world.

Mass Capoeira practices **Capoeira Regional Contemporânea**, a style derived from the movements and sequences developed by Mestre Bimba in the mid-20th century. It is an explosive, martial style with fast rhythms, rapid kicks, acrobatics, and dynamic clapping.

Why capoeira is relevant to Massachusetts communities

Massachusetts is home to the **second-largest Brazilian population of any U.S. state** — roughly 85,000 residents, behind only Florida. Brazilians are among the fastest-growing immigrant communities in the Commonwealth. Capoeira is an important vehicle to celebrate Brazilian heritage, culture, and language, and the many contributions of Brazilians to our Massachusetts communities.

Population figure based on American Community Survey estimates. Verify against the most recent ACS release before citing in a submitted application.

How capoeira contributes to local communities

- Capoeira showcases cultural diversity and provides multiple avenues for artistic expression. Mass Capoeira performances are designed to be interactive, engaging community members of all ages in music, movement, language, and culture.
- Capoeira is an inclusive martial art embedded within local communities by design. Traditional capoeira circles, or *rodas*, are held outdoors in public gathering places and town squares, and all members of the community are invited to join in or "play."

Benefits for participants

Capoeira serves as a healthy outlet for children and practitioners of all ages, providing opportunities for physical exercise, artistic expression, personal development, and cultural exploration and exchange. Through this holistic, mind-body-soul experience, practitioners develop confidence and discipline; physical strength, balance, and control; and skills in martial arts, music, and foreign language.

Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion

- As an Afro-Brazilian art with deep roots in African traditions, capoeira is an important symbol of the African diaspora and of the cultural contributions of people of African descent around the world.

- Performances and workshops support local DEI initiatives in coordination with multicultural events and programs, including Black History Month, Martin Luther King Day, and Latin-American Heritage Month.

Programs we offer

Mass Capoeira performances and workshops are tailored to any group or context, regardless of age or experience level. We design programs lasting from ten minutes to two hours that combine music, movement, language, and culture.

- Performances and demonstrations, with live music
- Interactive workshops
- Birthday parties and family programs
- Library programs and after-school programs
- Community fairs and multicultural events

A typical performance includes live music and singing, explanations of basic movements, acrobatic solos, and a capoeira roda demonstrating the complete experience of playing capoeira in a traditional circle. Performances may also include capoeira history, *maculelê* (a warrior dance with sticks), and other Afro-Brazilian arts and music styles.

Please tell us in advance if anyone in your group has sensory sensitivities or movement restrictions, and we will adjust accordingly.

Program rates

> Mass Capoeira programs typically range from **$300 to $1,000 per hour**, depending on the number of participants, the type of program, and the specific needs of the sponsoring organization. As an organization committed to accessibility, we will work with you to design a program that fits your budget — please ask.

Who leads Mass Capoeira

Contramestre Morcego

Alexandro Silveira, known as Contramestre Morcego, is a martial artist, musician, graphic designer, and tattoo artist who leads Mass Capoeira. Born in Salvador, Bahia — the cultural home of capoeira — he has more than 30 years of experience training and teaching capoeira throughout Brazil and the United States, including at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Clark University. He also directs Vertical Black, a custom screen printing shop.

Mestre Jelon Viera

Contramestre Morcego trains under Mestre Jelon Viera, founder of the Capoeira Luanda school. Mestre Jelon is an internationally recognized martial arts leader and choreographer, credited as one of the first masters to bring capoeira to the United States in 1975. In 2008 he received a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, one of the most prestigious awards for contributions to the arts in the U.S. He has taught capoeira to athletes and entertainers including Pelé, Wesley Snipes, and Eddie Murphy, and is the founder and artistic director of the touring company DanceBrazil.

Mass Capoeira is part of **Capoeira Luanda**, an international capoeira group founded in 2007 by Mestre Jelon Viera.

Classes at our studio

Mass Capoeira offers adult and kids capoeira classes at 131 East Main Street in Webster. Adult classes are open to ages 14 and up. Kids classes run in two age groups: **ages 3–5** and **ages 6–13**. Current days and times are listed at masscapoeira.com/schedule. A student's first class is always free.

Beyond capoeira, Agora Culture Center offers fitness, aerial, youth, senior, and arts programming in the same building — see agoraculturecenter.org.

Funding, fiscal details, and how to contract with us

Mass Capoeira is a program of Agora Culture Center, Inc., a Massachusetts 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Agora Culture Center is the receiving entity for grants and charitable contributions that support capoeira programming.

Legal applicant / grantee	Agora Culture Center, Inc.
Tax status	501(c)(3) nonprofit, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
EIN	41-5196992
Program line	Mass Capoeira (capoeira programming)
Payments payable to	Agora Culture Center, Inc.
Address	131 East Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

What this means for funders and presenters

- **Grants and gifts are tax-deductible** to the fullest extent allowed by law, and are received by Agora Culture Center, Inc.
- **Applications are submitted by Agora Culture Center, Inc.** with Mass Capoeira named as the program. Grant agreements are signed by an officer of Agora Culture Center.
- **Funds restricted to capoeira** are tracked to the Mass Capoeira program and reported accordingly.
- **W-9, IRS determination letter, board roster, and financial statements** are available on request for grant applications and vendor onboarding.
- **Fee-for-service bookings** — performances and workshops paid for by a school, library, or event sponsor — are contracted and invoiced separately from charitable grants. Contact us and we will issue the correct paperwork for your procurement process.

Contact

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Parent org	Agora Culture Center, Inc. · agoraculturecenter.org		