

## Tarantella Rhythms and Steps:

### Hands-On Tambourine & Frame Drum Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce general audiences to a very rich tambourine and folk dance culture with an active current performance practice in Southern Italy and also to bring women back in touch with their lost tradition of drumming. This workshop will focus on the tarantella fast 6/8 rhythms and its many variations. Alessandra will also teach chants and songs, sung as devotion to the Black Madonna, Montevergine near Naples the Sun (Jesse Sole), Pugliese, Calabrese and Sicilian chants.



During these workshops, participants will learn:

#### Drumming Technique:

- The basic technique of holding the drum, with emphasis on arm movement, wrist and elbow technique, which requires a lot of strength, to create the bouncing sound of the triplets.
- Hand technique with the palm and the fingertips in both a basic and accented fast 6/8 rhythm.
- Tammorriata a 4/4 rhythm played on the large drum called the Tammorra, originally from Naples with a strong African influence in the rhythm.

The Tammorriata is an improvisation of drumming and singing, and it is danced during the rituals held in the summer in honor of the Black Madonna (originally ancient rites for the Earth Goddess Cybele)

- Neapolitan, Sicilian, Calabrese and Pugliese style tarantellas, which involve different variations of hand technique including finger trills on the tambourine skin.

## Folk Dances:

*Alessandra presents these unique dance movements that trace their roots from Southern Italy back to ancient Greece, with connections to Iran, Egypt and Andalusia, as well as to the traditions of the Gypsies who traveled from Rajasthan through North Africa, Morocco and Spain to Sicily and Calabria.*

Representing an unbroken chain of inspiration from pre-Christian times to the present these dance movements embody and culminate the different dance traditions that we know today as Flamenco, Belly Dance and Tribal Dance.

- Dance and Rhythm of San Rocco, a healing trance 6/8 rhythm from Calabria done in honor of San Rocco to send away fear of death by the plague from the Medieval Times.
- Tarantella alla Montemaranesa, a carnival dance from Montemarano (Naples) played on the smaller tambourines with a very unusual syncopation on the 6/8. This rite of Carnival dates back to the Roman celebrations in honor Bacchus, the god of wine.
- Pizzica Tarantata, a very fast 6/8 rhythm from Puglia, with different accents - which originated as music therapy to cure the mythical bite of the tarantula. This wild rhythm, played mainly by women on medium size tambourines with a double row of jingles and the dance were performed as a musical exorcism to cure a mental disease called tarantismo, which afflicted mainly women (tarantate), who fell into a hypnotic state of mind, and in a trance they frantically danced for days during the Summer Solstice. Originally these were the ancient Greek rites for the God Dionysus as Puglia was part of Greece and was called Magna Graecia.



## Online

[Alessandra speaking about history and myth of the Tarantella and Black Madonna](#)

[Video Playlist of Alessandra Teaching](#)

["The Tarantella Trance," film trailer about Alessandra's healing work, series \*Living Shamanism\*](#)

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[IgniVox Featured Performer Website](#)

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For booking & further information:

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