



CAPOEIRA ANGOLA CENTER NEWSLETTER

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2010: A HISTORICAL YEAR for
CAPOEIRA ANGOLA

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2010 will be remembered as the year in which Capoeira Angola history was changed as Mestre João Grande celebrates sixty years of practice and twenty years in New York City.

It was 1943 when Mestre João Grande initiated his journey in Capoeira. In seeing one move (corta capim),⁽¹⁾ a seed was planted. He was inspired, and from there he sought to learn the art form that changed his life forever. João Oliveira dos Santos left his home at the young age of ten in the search of the “dance of the Nagos” and this search took him to Salvador, Bahia.⁽²⁾ In this city he witnessed a Capoeira Roda for the first time. He decided immediately that he wanted to learn about this discipline, and that is how he met Mestre Pastinha. In 1950 he formally began his Capoeira instruction. Since then he continued to train hard, and was a loyal student. Over the years, as Mestre Pastinha lost his eyesight, it was João Grande and João Pequeno who carried on the traditions of Mestre Pastinha’s Capoeira Angola.

Forty years later and already as a renowned capoeirista, Mestre João Grande traveled for the second time to the United States and stayed in New York City. He began teaching in a small studio in the neighborhood of Harlem. After less than two years, Mestre opened his own Academy at the corner of 14th street and Sixth Avenue to finally find its home at its current location. The Capoeira Angola Center of Mestre João Grande holds decades of history and centuries of tradition. Mestre João Grande is a firm keeper of the “tradições dos antigos” in his constant effort to maintain the integrity of the Capoeira Angola as he learned it when he was a young disciple.

It is within this tradition that - after twenty years of forming his own students- Mestre João Grande has for the first time offered recognition to two of his disciples, and has named them Contra-Mestres of Capoeira Angola.

footnotes:
(1) corta capim is a movement performed by crouching down, extending one leg in front and swinging it around in a circle, hopping over it with the other leg.
(1)(2) excerpts from www.joaogrande.org/capoeira_angola.htm. To learn more about Mestre João Grande’s story, please click on the link to the left.



Contra-Mestre Cabello, Mestre João Grande, and Contra-Mestre Jurandir

PHOTO: Silvia Orna

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also find us on facebook,myspace, and youtube!

All photos are from public archives unless otherwise indicated.

All content is reviewed and approved by Mestre João Grande.

Contra-Mestre Jurandir

(April 18, 2010)

JURANDIR WAS born in Salvador, Bahia-Brazil. In 1979 he began learning Capoeira from his father Mestre João Grande in the backyard of their home when he was only ten years old. Most Sundays Jurandir went to Mestre Pastinha's rodas and when roda was over he used to accompany his father to Mestre Pastinha's home. During those visits Jurandir learned about the philosophy of Capoeira Angola from Mestre Pastinha as much as he was learning the movements of Capoeira Angola from his father. Years later and after Mestre Pastinha's academy closed, Jurandir began to train at the Fort of Santo Antonio, under Mestre João Pequeno's guidance. Over the years, Jurandir went to assist Mestre João Pequeno at his academy—as well as other experienced students of Mestre João Pequeno did. Jurandir travels to the United States to visit and to continue to learn from Mestre João Grande. Jurandir currently resides in Salvador where he intends to continue to teach as he has learned from these three great Mestres.

Contra-Mestre Cabello

(April 25, 2010)

CABELLO WAS born in Piracicaba, São Paulo-Brazil. He began Capoeira in 1981 in his home town. The first time Cabello saw Capoeira Angola was in 1988 and soon after (1990) he had the opportunity to come to the United States to work with Capoeira. In 1991 he met Mestre João Grande and decided to stay and re-start his Capoeira learning under Mestre João Grande's guidance. In 1994 during his time with Mestre, Cabello met Tisza Coelho, another disciple of Mestre, and in 2004 Cabello and Tisza decided to return to Brasil together. Back in their homeland they felt the need to teach so that they could continue the work they had began with Mestre João Grande, and so they started their own Capoeira Angola group in Serra Grande, Bahia. Since then, Cabello and Tisza come back several times each year to the Capoeira Angola Center in New York, and have brought Mestre João Grande twice to visit their group in Brazil. Cabello and Tisza continue to learn from Mestre João Grande and maintain his teachings as they continue their own work with their students in Brazil and around the world where they are invited to teach and participate in many events.



Contra-Mestre Jurandir and Contra-Mestre Cabello

PHOTO: Silvia Orna

THE CAPOEIRA Angola Center of Mestre João Grande holds decades of history and centuries of tradition.

2010 HAS been a particularly exciting year for the Capoeira Angola Center of Mestre João Grande. In addition to the newly named Contra-Mestres, Mestre has also formally conferred **Risadinha**, as **Chief of Administration (COA) of the Capoeira Angola Center**. Risadinha is another long-time loyal student at the academy and has been instrumental in many of the organizational and operational responsibilities of the Capoeira Angola Center for many years.

As students of Mestre João Grande we feel especially honored to have witnessed these events and to have shared the amazing energy generated by these special recognitions; we also feel privileged to have the opportunity to learn every day from this great Master. We have always felt proud of the capoeira history that precedes us and now we are witnesses of more history being created. As Mestre João Grande points out: *"Amanhã tem mais!"* Train hard...there is more to come!



Mestre João Grande, Contra-Mestre Jurandir and Contra-Mestre Cabello, vadiando.

PHOTO: Silvia Orna

VISIT THE Capoeira Angola Center channel on youtube!

You may catch highlights of these historical rodas of 04/18/10 and 04/25/10 by visiting <http://www.youtube.com/user/CACMJG>. Enjoy!

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