

Dòwòti Désir, Manbo Asogwe



Manbo Dòwòti Désir is the Founder and President of the DDPA Watch Group & Associates, Inc. The DDPA Watch Group is an international human rights coalition, associated with the OGUN Taskforce, an interfaith group of the AfroAtlantic Religions. Manbo Désir is also the Interim Chairperson of the UN Subcommittee for the Elimination of Racism of the NGO Committee on Human Rights, and the Co-Chair of The Ubuntu Council (a MIAT of the US Human Rights Network). She recently launched the UN International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024 with Benediction Services at Union Theological Seminary. A writer and journalist, she has focused on the contemporary arts and culture of the African Diaspora; and the religions and sacred arts of the Afro-Atlantic region. A past Advisor to UNESCO on projects related to the global African community, she is a guest producer of AfrobeatRadio, WBAI 99.5 FM in the United States and the former Associate Publisher of The AFRIcan Magazine. The author of a book on monuments and historic sites of the Transatlantic Slave Trade entitled, *Goud kase goud: Conjuring Memory in Spaces of the AfroAtlantic*, www.conjuringmemory.com, she is a Manbo Asogwe (High Priest) in Haitian Vodou.

Manbo Désir is both a priest and a scholar who is an officer of the Konfederasyon Nasyonal Vodouyizan Ayisyen in Haïti. Manbo Désir has officiated various rites at the request of the U.S. Federal Government General Services Administration for the New York African Burial Ground interior memorials; unveiling of Lorenzo Pace's, "The Triumph of the Human Spirit/The Five Points Memorial"; the inauguration of Museum of Natural History for the exhibition the *Sacred Art of Haitian Vodou*; and the ground breaking of Cornell University Africana Studies Department.

Ms. Désir lectures extensively on Haitian Vodou and the spiritual traditions of the Afro-Atlantic at a variety of institutions internationally and throughout the United States including Harvard University School of Divination; Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University; New York University; colleges of the City University of New York (CUNY); the Institute for the Advancement of Puerto Rican Studies in Carolina, Puerto Rico; and National University of Benin, Port Novo; the Museum of the African Diaspora; and the Figge Museum. At those museums and the (NY) Caribbean Cultural Center, she was commissioned to create altars to the Haitian Lwa or spirits. She has been featured in numerous articles including the New York Times and Reuters, and served as a consultant to a number of films and television shows such as CBS's Blue Bloods and the Discovery Channel and in the realm of theater, *Little Children Dream of God* (Jeff Augustin, Roundabout Theater 2015) as an expert of the AfroAtlantic traditions. Manbo Dòwòti Désir is a graduate of Barnard College, Columbia University and has a Masters' degree from the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College.

