

**Orisha Consciousness...**

The Orisha Consciousness Movement (OCM) was founded by Baba Raul Canizares (see dedication page) in New York City March of 1995. OCM is a spiritual community founded along traditional Yoruban lines—a hierarchical structure headed by divinely inspired leader called an “Oba.” OCM blends traditional Cuban Santeria with Hindu devotionalism. Their basic crede is represented in “The Eight Points of Faith” reprinted later in this issue.

Canizares was deeply committed to building a spiritual community based on ethics and integrity. His vision was to create a professional organization that would allow Santeria to takes its place among the world’s bona fide religions. In the Americas there are millions of followers of Santeria and the other New World descendents of African religions, Brazilian Candomblé, Haitian Voudon, etc.

With, I suspect, no small connection to Western xenophobia and subtle racism, academics and religious scholars have spent little time studying and writing of Santeria. Canizares’ own book *Cuban Santeria: Walking With the Night* is one of the few full-length academic studies and is used in several religious studies courses, including UCLA. The bulk of the religious corpus (in English at least) of Santeria consists primarily of the small “recipe” books that are ubiquitous to Americanized Voodoo.

In Baba’s own words: “OCM is committed to address the social and religious needs of its adherents as well as to contribute, where appropriate, to the easing of pain and giving of solace to any among the larger community (humankind) who come seeking our comfort.”

OCM’s website: [orisharelgion.com](http://orisharelgion.com)



“Oggun” Baba Raul Canizares  
mixed media 18” x 24”

