



Bard College Conservatory of Music

20 Years of Music, Vision, and Excellence

Undergraduate Degree Recital

João Melo, *percussion*

This recital invites the audience into a musical space where rhythm is learned and created collectively. Incorporating Afro-Brazilian musical practices such as ijexá and samba reggae, the program will include both demonstration and participation, allowing listeners to engage in a dialogue with each other. Percussion thus becomes a catalyst for mutual action.

Sunday, April 19, 2026 at 7:00 pm
Bitó Conservatory Building, Performance Space

Ijexá

Afro-Brazilian rhythmic practice
Rooted in Candomblé traditions

Samba reggae

Contemporary Afro-Brazilian form
Developed in Salvador in the late 20th century by bloco Afro groups

ABOUT THE ARTIST

João Melo is a Brazilian percussionist and educator from Salvador, Bahia, graduating from Bard College in May 2026 with a double major in Percussion Performance and Philosophy. He studies with Eric Cha-Beach, Jason Haaheim, and Jason Treuting. João remains passionate about finding connections between performance, teaching, and community-based outreach. In addition to performing in orchestral and chamber settings at Bard, João co-founded Pathways of Art, a community-based initiative developed through the Trustee Leader Scholar Program. In 2026, the project received the Davis Projects for Peace Grant, a competitive \$10,000 award supporting percussion and visual arts workshops with families at ASPEC shelters in Salvador. He also teaches weekly workshops at the Center for Creative Education in Kingston, working with young students through participatory and rhythm-based learning.

His philosophy senior project connects Hannah Arendt and Paulo Freire with his history studying Brazilian percussion. By examining how rhythm is taught through listening, repetition, and group practice, we can create spaces for dialogue and collective action.

João began his musical training through NEOJIBA, where he performed in ensembles and toured nationally and internationally for eight years. This experience led him to share music with communities that lack access to arts education. His background in Afro-Brazilian traditions continues to inform both his performance and teaching, connecting oral and communal practices with classical training.