

Tatei Watu (Our Father): A Tribute to Venâncio Mbande

A Creative Project submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an MMus
in African Music Performance at the University of Cape Town.

Matchume Zango
ZNGMAT002



Supervisor: Theo Herbst

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Abstract:

TATEI WATU (Our Father): Tribute to Venâncio Mbande is a creative project that culminated in the production of a CD Album in which thirteen musicians participated in the recording of musical arrangements inspired by the music of Mozambican composer *Venâncio Mbande*, a master of the traditional Chopi *timbila* xylophone style known as *ngodo*, who passed away in 2015.

The CD album consists of eight musical tracks based on original material usually played in open outdoor spaces in the context of community celebrations and in an environment that is very different from the one in which we generally enjoy music today. The aim of my project was to bring this music to a modern audience that prefers listening to music on audio devices by means of new arrangements that rework the old *ngodo* pieces of Venâncio Mbande in a format and style that is within the reach of younger generations of listeners.

This musical end result of the project is presented along with a short documentary on its creation, a folder of pre-mastering phase audio-samples and a dissertation that provides background, both on the CD's production and on the music's historical context.

Through the prism of my own personal experience as a Chopi *timbila* performer, the creative project argues for a renewed relationship with older musical traditions of Africa and demonstrates by example that it is possible to engage with vanishing musics through the creation of musical works that are rooted in the traditional, yet contemporary in outlook.

Contents of the Creative Project:

1. Documentary
2. CD Album
3. Dissertation
4. Audio Samples

Table of Contents

Abstract.....;	1
Table of Contents.....;	2
List of figures, tables, and appendices.....	3
Introduction:	4
My personal background; “I am an urban Chopi musician.”.....	4
Venâncio Mbande’s background; “ <i>Timbila</i> , our culture.”.....	4
<i>Timbila</i> music’s background: <i>ngodo</i> vs. <i>ngalanga</i>	5
Purpose of this dissertation	9
Part 1: Historical background to contemporary <i>timbila</i> music	10
Chapter 1: Music corridor from Zavala to the Rand.....	10
1.1 <i>Timbila</i> in its place of origin, Zavala, Southern Mozambique.....	10
1.2 <i>Timbila</i> in Lourenço Marques, and beyond.....	11
1.3 The affirmation of cultural identity at the Rand, South Africa.....	13
1.4 Venâncio Mbande.....	16
Chapter 2: The dynamic music scene in Maputo, 1975 -1992.....	21
Chapter 3: From revolution to tradition, 1992 - 2015.....	24
3.1 A new generation on the edge of regime transformation.....	24
3.2 A quest for new techniques, 2000 - 2015.....	26
Part 2: The production of <i>Tribute</i>,	30
Chapter 4: The transformation of raw materials.....	30
4.1 Structure and sequence.....	31
4.2 Arrangements of the melodies.....	32
4.3 Transformation of the lyrics, language and vocals.....	33
Chapter 5: Production phases of <i>Tribute</i>	35
5.1 Research, and concept making and sharing.....	35
5.2 Capturing base sounds.....	37
5.3 Recording complementary instruments and vocals.....	38
5.4 Final editing and mixing.....	38
5.5 Communication and production of graphic package.....	39
Afterword	40
Appendices	40
References	101
Published materials.....,	101
Sound sources.....	101
Interviews.....	102

List of figures, tables, and appendices

Figure 1: Positioning for <i>ngodo</i> , 1943.....	6
Figure 2: The orchestra of Venâncio, 2004	6
Figure 3: Ngalanga by Matchume, Maputo, 2019	7
Figure 4: Timbila orchestra at Lourenço Marques, in 1907.....	12
Figure 5: Ngodo at Zavala, Inhambane.....	12
Figure 6: Ngodo style performance at the Rand, at Rose Deep mine.....	14
Figure 7: New dance arena at Consolidated Mine	14
Figure 8: Ngodo at Witwatersrand Mine Compound at Johannesburg	15
Figure 9: Ngodo in Mozambique.....	15
Figure 10: Venâncio and his orchestra at Guilundo, Zavala in 2004	19
Figure 11: “Vamos Marimbar (Let’s play marimba)”, 2003, Porto in Portugal.....	27
Figure 12: Use of sampler at Contemporary Afro-European Soundscapes, in Austria, 2010.....	28
Figure 13: Matchume performing together with Venâncio at UCT, 2014.....	28
Figure 14: Instruments for <i>ngodo</i>	36
Figure 15: Matchume playing with Venâncio’s last son Domingos, 2020.....	37
Figure 16: Front and backside of album jacket.....	39
Table 1: Structures and sequences in comparison.....	31
Table 2: Lyrics of <i>M’ngenisio</i>	33
Table 3: Lyrics of <i>Mtsitso Wahubindi</i>	34
Appendix 1: Core ideas of <i>M’ngenisio</i> by Venâncio Mbande.....	42
Appendix 2: Formal structure of <i>M’ngenisio</i> by Venâncio Mbande.....	43
Appendix 3: Score of <i>M’ngenisio</i> by Matchume Zango	46
Appendix 4: Score of <i>M’ngenisio</i> by Venâncio Mbande.....	60

Introduction

My personal background: “I am an urban Chopi musician.”

As Chopi composer and *timbila* player of a younger generation I have travelled a personal journey from the urban-contemporary to more traditional styles of *timbila* performance in the context of a performance career covering the whole range from world music collaborations to rural performances in traditional contexts. As the son of a *timbila* player growing up in an urban environment, my musical voyage of discovery was steeped in practical experiences and encounters that gradually led to a deepening admiration for the styles of the *timbila* masters of a previous generation; as a musician on the blended world music scene however, I have also been continually preoccupied with the question of how to make the older, vanishing styles of *timbila* music more accessible to urban audiences and on the international stage. My personal output, to a large extent, has been motivated, intuitively at least, by such questions.

Thus and amongst others, I had, over the last decade, the opportunity to work closely with one of the great *timbila* exponents of a bygone generation, the late Venâncio Mbande, as well as his son Domingos, a young musician who can be regarded as the true heir of his father’s technique and style. Mastering the old style under their tutelage inspired me to explore ways to fashion a new music inspired by the *timbila* playing modes of old in an idiom that is at the same time contemporary in flavor and outlook. After Venâncio Mbande’s death in 2015, I decided to synthesize these ideas in a studio-based album called *Tribute to Venâncio*, which, with original compositions of Venâncio at their basis, attempts to place Venâncio’s style and inspirations in a new sound environment that includes guitar, trumpet, drum-kit, electronic keyboard and various uncharacteristic amalgamations of vocal layers derived from Jazz and African neo-traditions.

The process of creation was cumulative, with various sound- and melodic layers recorded on top of the basic core of Venâncio’s inventions in what amounts to a re-invention of Venâncio’s music with all the tools and creative means available in the modern recording studio. Synergetic amalgamation and reinvention in the studio make it possible to combine musical components and ideas in ways inconceivable in the rural *timbila*-playing setting and allows for the transformation of the traditional *ngodo* style at the basis of Venâncio’s music. The in-studio process of creation and recording the *Tribute to Venâncio* album, which happened over a period of five months, was documented and a section of my dissertation will be an analysis of this process and its outcome. At the same time, I recognize the creation of *Tribute to Venâncio* as one small instance of a process with complex roots and my intention is to make these written reflections on the production of *Tribute to Venâncio* a springboard for exploration of and deliberation on the historical, social, technological and creative developments that have led to the transformation of *timbila* styles in contemporary settings - as seen from the point of view of a *timbila* performer who has, over the past twenty years, been in the thick of this musical adventure.

Venâncio Mbande’s background: “*Timbila, our culture*”

“Civil war in Mozambique did very bad things. Because the way they were fighting, they were not fighting soldier against soldier. They were fighting against us. Nobody was playing music by that time. I was playing because I was in South Africa. But here, nobody was playing music. When the war was end, I thought by myself that nobody was playing music, and a lot of people they were

killed, a lot of people were very old...could not play music anymore. I came here to start ... to reorganize our culture.”

Venâncio Mbande, 2012, at Zavala, Mozambique, interviewed by the author.

Venâncio Mbande (1933-2015) was one of the leading figures in a Chopi traditional xylophone *timbila* performance style known as *ngodo*. Supported by a leading researcher of African music in the 20th century, Hugh Tracey (1903 – 1977) and his son Andrew Tracey (1936 –) Venâncio played a fundamental role in the perpetuation and promotion of Chopi music. After the end of the Mozambican civil war in 1992, he returned from South Africa to Mozambique, where he had stayed for decades. Guerrilla warfare between fellow Mozambicans had devastated rural communities and the local performing arts. This was the reality he faced on his return home. His contributions as a performer and motivator strongly impacted the development of *timbila* performance after 1992 and contributed to the recognition of *timbila* as “Intangible Cultural Heritage” by the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) in 2005¹.

Since recording it in 2012, I have often reflected on this conversational interview with Venâncio. What did he mean by "reorganise our culture"? There are two points to note in the snippet quoted: in the span of this short extract, Venâncio repeats three times that "nobody was playing music". I think this reflects the depth of the shock he had suffered when he came back to Mozambique – the life he knew was gone. The other is that Venâncio insisted on speaking in English, rather than Venâncio's and my common Chopi mother tongue. In his mind he had taken on the role of public spokesman for what he considered to be a dying art form – the *ngodo timbila* culture of his youth was vanishing and he wished to preserve it and make sure it could still exist, somehow, in a semblance of its former glory.

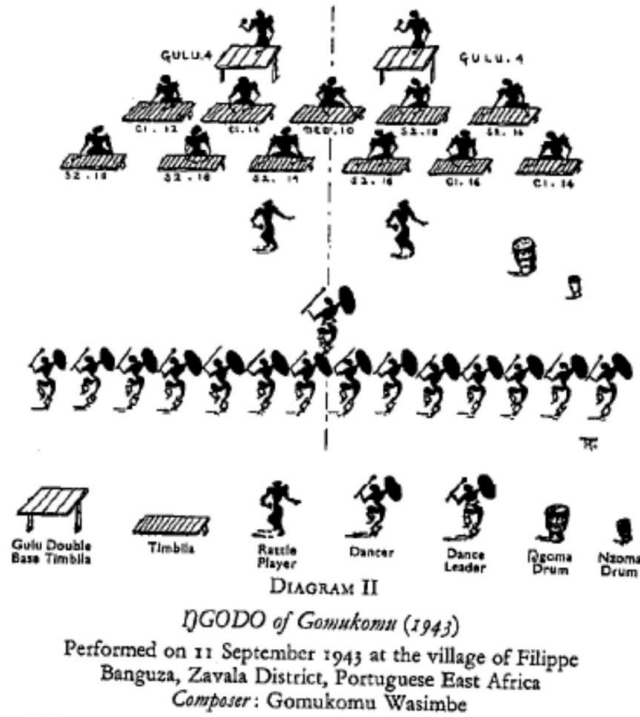
This is the perspective that inspired me to articulate this project as a tribute to his life. My hope has been twofold: to bring into existence an original creative work that does justice to the master's life-long dedication to *timbila* music and to use the opportunity to reflect on his musical life and the historical context in which he created and we as his successors continue to create.

Timbila* music's background: *ngodo* vs. *ngalanga

Traditional Chopi *timbila* performance comes in two forms: the first is the *ngodo*, a performance form using several *timbila* accompanied by a group of dancers and that includes introductory speeches and songs. The instruments used in the *ngodo* are *timbila* divided into four registers: alto, called *sanje*; tenor, called *dale* or *mbingwe*; bass, called *debiinda*; and double bass, called *gulu* or *kulu*. This arrangement of the *timbila* instruments and dancers in *ngodo*, illustrated by Hugh Tracey in 1943 as shown in Figure 1, is still reflected in more contemporary settings as shown in Figure 2:

¹ UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage “Chopi Timbila”.

Figure 1: Positioning for *ngodo*, 1943



Source: Tracey (1970 (2018), 97)

Figure 2: The orchestra of Venâncio, 2004



Source: The photograph was taken by A.Aminaka at a performance by Venâncio's orchestra at Guilundi, Zavala, Inhambane, Mozambique, June 26, 2004. Note: Figure 2 shows that in this performance Venâncio used at least seven *timbila*, including alto-*sanje*, tenor-*mbingwe*, bass-*debinda*, and three double bass-*gulu*.

The other form of playing is called *ngalanga*; the *timbila* used in *ngalanga* is a single alto *sanje*, accompanied by high and low-pitched drums, as shown in Figure 3. *Ngalanga* sometimes accompanies dance performances, but its main purpose is for the audience to dance.

Figure 3: *Ngalanga* by Matchume, Maputo, 2019



Source: *Music Time in Africa*, 13 September 2019.

There are both differences and similarities between *ngodo* and *ngalanga*. The differences are that in *ngodo* there is a clear distinction between performers and audience, and the form of presentation is more performative, whereas *ngalanga* has almost no barriers between dancer and audience, and the mode is more participatory. In *ngodo*, the dancers dance mostly as a group, whereas in *ngalanga* the dancers take turns to dance solo or in duets. The similarities are in the order in which the pieces are performed. *Ngodo* and *ngalanga* are comprised of several pieces with sequences, each consisting of five movements: prelude, entrance of the dancers, dance, exit of the dancers and postlude. Although *ngodo* and *ngalanga* have different names for their respective pieces, they share similarities in the composition of the 'suite'. In addition to the basic structure described above, *ngodo* has a more melodic middle section and a longer performance time.

The differences in the instrumental configuration between *ngodo* and *ngalanga* also have practical implications. The size of the performance space and the different group practice time required for each style affect the feasibility of each form of performance and ultimately the geographical distribution of the forms. Throughout the 20th century and up to the present day in the 21st century, there have been several *ngalanga* groups in Maputo, but only one well-known *ngodo* orchestra. Most of the *ngodo* orchestras were active in the rural areas.

However, as Venâncio reminds us, the rural areas where the *ngodo* performances once thrived were devastated by the 16-years conflict in Mozambique, and the lineage of many of the orchestras were lost. That this art form continued in the context of the Chopi diaspora to South Africa during the conflict is paradoxically fortunate.

As the older generations pass, this rural *ngodo* tradition is disappearing. In my *tribute* I attempt to evoke this vanishing art in a new form by combining the traditional *ngodo* of which Venâncio Mbande was a supreme master with modern instrumentations, musical practices and techniques more allied to the *ngalanga* style.

Purpose of this dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to clarify in greater detail the context in which this creative project's CD product, fully titled *TATEI WATU (Our Father) Tribute to Venâncio Mbande*, emerged. It is a reflection on the CD as a musical production that requires historical background to make sense. Chopi music, especially in urban context, has changed markedly in recent decades and is in many ways no longer exclusively Chopi. To understand my and Venâncio's 'Mozambique', where 16 years of guerrilla warfare have devastated rural areas, it is essential to understand the social transformation of the region, for these events have deeply influenced our musical horizons and aspirations.

In providing background to the CD as creative project I am also mulling over my own personal growth as a musician. I wish to describe what urged me to delve deeper and deeper into the music of bygone Chopi masters. Sometimes, with great regret, I have discovered that I plunged into this journey of discovery almost too late. I have had to spend countless hours trying to understand, and musically and technically 'get' Venâncio's style from the evidence of old audio recordings, rather than from a continuing tradition of apprenticeship. I have had to loop segments of Venâncio's compositions and patiently try to figure out how to play them, and to then decide how to build on them.

The original music at the basis of this project is grounded in a form of playing that has been handed down in various practices for decades. This material consists of acoustic pieces played in open outdoor spaces in the context of community celebrations and in an acoustic environment that is very different from the one in which we generally enjoy music today. The aim of the CD, *Tribute to Venâncio*, is to bring this music to an audience familiar with contemporary audio devices in arrangements that rework these classical pieces in a format and style within the reach of younger generations.

The first part of the dissertation therefore describes how knowledge of *ngodo* has been passed on across specific territories during the course of the 20th and early 21st century. This history has been intensively researched and reported on by many authors and here I do no more than summarize (with due acknowledgement) their many findings. Into this presentation I weave a personal narration of my own development as a musician. The second part is an analysis of Venâncio Mbande's *ngodo* compositions as they have been transformed and reinterpreted in my CD project. As I reflect on creation-, recording- and CD production processes, this analysis focuses on the relationship between the compositions of Venâncio that I drew on for inspiration and the new arrangements made.

Part 1: Knowledge circulation, acquisition, and accumulation

During the 20th Century there were three main areas where *timbila* were played: the first was the area inhabited by the Chopi ethnic group, mainly in Zavala on the coast of Inhambane in Mozambique, the second was the colonial capital Lourenço Marques (today's Maputo), where many Chopi settled during the colonial period, and finally, there was the South African mining region of Witwatersrand (hereafter, the Rand), where many Mozambican men, including Chopi, were repeatedly contracted to work as migrant labourers. These three sites were linked by migration. When one becomes a minority through migration, the sense of belonging of the migrant changes. For Chopi of my parents' and earlier generations, therefore, *timbila* was at the heart of their cultural identity.

In Part 1, Chapter 1 traces the formation of Chopi cultural enclaves in these three places and locates Venâncio's personal history within them, and Chapter 2 looks at the cultural transformation of Maputo after independence. Then, in Chapter 3, the paper presents the development of the contemporary music scene in Mozambique as the product of an interchange between indigenous ethnic cultures and the increasingly cosmopolitan culture of our modern world.

Chapter 1: Music corridor from Zavala to the Rand

1.1 *Timbila* in its place of origin, Zavala, Southern Mozambique

The remaining written records show that performances of Chopi's *timbila* orchestras had historically drawn attention of European missionaries and colonial officials from the outset. 16th-century Jesuit missionary André Fernandes, who visited Chopi communities in 1560, was profoundly impressed by Chopi *timbila* dance performances. He praised those performances, describing Chopi as "blessed people (*gentes afortunadas*)" literally "fortunate people" (Rocha 1962, 7; Ministério da Educação e Cultura 1980, 39). Most likely, what he saw at the time was an *ngodo* orchestra, which consisted of several xylophones, ranging from a large *timbila* in the bass to multiple *timbila* in the treble - for in *ngodo* style, solo performances seem to have been a rarity, although xylophone performances on a single xylophone have been noted in Livingstone's time (i.e. during the 1840s-50s).

Between 1889 and 1920, Swiss missionary and ethnographer Henri-Alexandre Junod (1863-1934) described not only the instrument, but also the social circumstances and performing style according to his direct observation. His son also supplemented a detailed report (Junod 1996b, 234-235).

As for specific accounts of Mozambican music, other than *Tonga Folklore Studies (Estudo do Folclore Tonga*, published in 1943 by Belo Marques, *Chopi Musicians: Their Music, Poetry and Instruments* by Hugh Tracey, there are no other comparable sources (Tracey 1970).

The main Chopi communities locate in the coastal area of Inhambane Province in southern Mozambique, about 350 kilometres northeast of the today's capital city Maputo. In this region, Chopi society has a relatively high population density and makes a kind of linguistic enclave. The name Chopi is an alias and said to be derived from the Zulu word *kuchopa*, which means to defeat an opponent with a bow and arrow. Chopi warriors were said to have fiercely resisted invasions, using bow and arrow, in the historical context of the warring states period known as the *Mfecane* (1815-1840) and during invasions by Soshangane (or Manikuse: c.1780-c.1858) and his successor, Gungunhana (or Ngungunhana: c.1850-1906).

From this background of warring states, comes one of the important dimensions of *ngodo* – it is a vehicle for communication about the problems shared by communities. A composer was equally a tune-maker, a poet and a political and social commentator and the quality of his words are as important as the quality of his music. The composer of tunes also invented the phrases for narration, and the messages conveyed through *ngodo* songs varied according to the context of place and occasion, as well as the immediate conflicts of the day.

1.2 *Timbila* in Lourenço Marques, and beyond

In colonial Mozambique, there were factors that led Chopi men to leave their places of origin for Lourenço Marques and the mining areas of South Africa. The recruitment of forced labour, called *chibalo/shibalo* under Portuguese colonial rule, targeted rural minority groups like the Chopi (Penvenne 1994: 27). In this context, migrant labour may have been an effective way for Chopi men to strategically escape mobilized enforced labour under Portuguese colonial rule. Thus, there were two destinations for such migrations - the Mozambican capital of Lourenço Marques and the mining area of the Rand in South Africa, where migrant workers from all over Southern Africa came to work.

In the first cases of domestic migrations to Lourenço Marques, Chopi were mobilized as cleaning workers in the capital city (Penvenne 1995: 51-54). In the beginning the city was lagging in all infrastructure for its growing population and Portuguese colonial administrators recruited Chopi as part of an unpopular forced labour drive, particularly for the city sanitation service. At least by 1910, Chopi people from Zavala became the preferred workers for sanitation services. Then, gradually, Chopi sanitation workers strategically gained access to marketable trash to add to their income and opportunities for moonlighting.

Chopi's *timbila* aroused the high interest of the colonial administration. As a result, since the early urban colonial period, the Maputo municipality acknowledged at least one *ngodo* group, and there were also numerous *ngalanga* groups in the city.

Figure 4: *Timbila* orchestra at Lourenço Marques, in 1907



Source: Sopa (2014)

On the visit of the Crown Prince of Portugal to Lourenço Marques in 1907, thirty *timbila* players were organised to perform with 25,000 dancers, and they played, amongst other music, the Portuguese national anthem (Figure 4: Sopa 2014: 256-260). The *timbila* performance was also introduced to Portugal at the first colonial exposition in Porto in 1932. When the Portuguese president visited Mozambique in 1939, about 100 *timbila* players and 200 dancers were mobilised to welcome him (Harries 1994: 214; Mungwambe 2000: 46-47). The following year, in 1940, some members of the same orchestra performed in Lisbon for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of Portugal's re-independence from Spain and the World Exhibition that accompanied it (Tracey 1970: 37-39). From the 1950s until the time of Mozambican independence, in the rural areas where the Chopi lived, *timbila* players were mobilized every Sunday for the raising of the Portuguese flag and the singing of the Portuguese national anthem (Tracey 1970).

Figure 5: *Ngodo* at Zavala, Inhambane



Source: Instituto de Investigação Científica de Moçambique (1962)

1.3 The affirmation of cultural identity at the Rand, South Africa

In his study entitled *Work, Culture, and Identity: Migrant Labourers in Mozambique and South Africa, c.1860-1910*, Patrick Harries (1994) devotes much attention to the Chopi *timbila* in a chapter about “Mine culture” in the context of gold mining areas at the turn of the 20th century. This subsection will examine the development of *timbila* in this social setting.

In a society with a racial ruling system, belonging to a particular ethnic group and inheriting a particular ‘folk art’ naturally held special meaning. Hundreds of thousands of strong, single African men were recruited from all over southern Africa and they spent the duration of their contracts at their workplaces and quarters in the mining areas, called compounds. The earliest compound was active from 1895, and was meant to house a maximum of 3,000 African male labourers. By 1916, more than 60 compounds had been set up in the Rand, housing an average of 4,000 workers each (Crush et al. 1991: 196). Mining companies feared that the hundreds of thousands of strong African male labourers would unite against them.

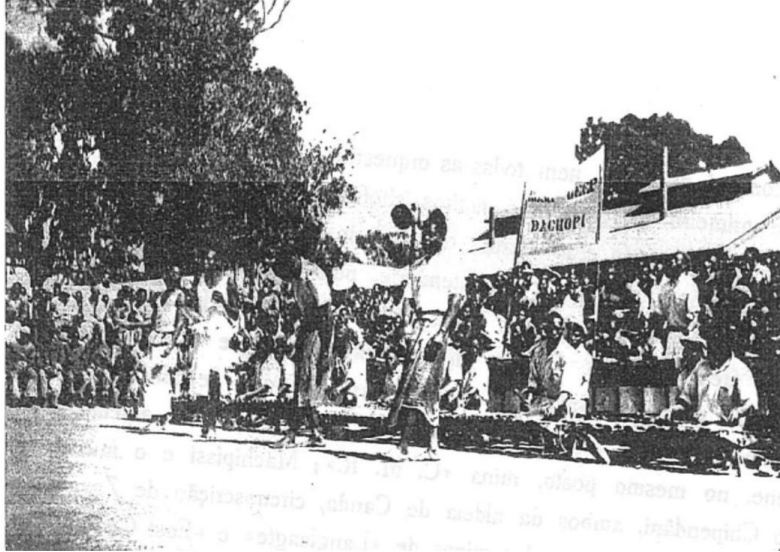
In order to manage so many labourers, the compound was assigned a superintendent—the compound manager—and the African workers who lived in the compound were placed under the manager’s supervision. The mining companies assigned workers to compounds by arbitrarily dividing them by ethnicity, selected some to be a police force and designated the others as officials, called *induna*, who acted as headmen to maintain public order within the compound. The representative of each of the rooms of the compounds was the *shibonda*. The Zulu word *shibonda* means “patriclan” and designates a territory ruled by a clan. Those concepts were used with the intent to reproduce the patriarchal hierarchy of native societies - based on the limited understanding of it by mining officials (Crush et al. 1991; Callinicos 1998).

One important aspect of the native society that was thus reconstructed was the practice of Chopi *timbila* and other ethnic dance performances. In the compounds, from the perspective of the compound managers, performance art was regarded both as a leisure activity and as a way to control workers in the peculiar environment of the mining compounds.

According to Venâncio, every Sunday afternoon, public *timbila* performances by Chopi musicians and dancers were held in the compounds. The mining companies themselves planned these performances as leisure activities for the workers (Mbande 2005; Tracey 1970: 186; Harries 1994: 74). At the end of each performance, the British or Portuguese national anthems were sung (Tracey 1970: 194).

These performing arts were not only performed for the miners, but also for the enjoyment of outside audiences. When part of the British national rugby team visited the Rand in 1896, over 3,000 Shangaan, Chopi, and Zulu dancers were gathered to welcome them (Harries 1994: 124-125).

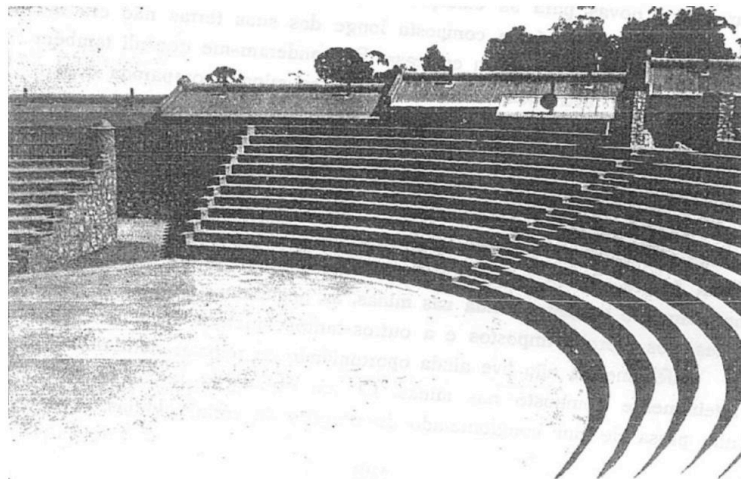
Figure 6: *Ngodo* style performance at the Rand, at *Rose Deep Mine*.



Source: Tracey (1949: 189)

Notes: 1. On the banner at the back of the orchestra the word “BACHOPI” appears. 2. The resonators of the bass *gula timbila*, located in the back row, is made from a re-used metal can.

Figure 7: New dance arena at *Consolidated Mines*.



Source: Tracey (1949: 189)

Note: The two photographs above are not included in the English version, but only in the Portuguese version published in 1949.

Tracey points out that although the dances performed by the Chopi workers in the Rand were as dynamic as if they were back home, but differed from those of the home villages. The players and dancers villages of origin were often different, and in homeland regions, the music and dances traditionally differed from one village to another. In the mining areas an amalgamation had to be forged. Harries explains that when players from different villages with different repertoires came together in the Rand to form an orchestra, they would often simplify the arrangements to make them easier to play together (Harries 1994: 213).

According to the records provided to Tracey by WNLA, at the Rand, in 1944, there were 47 *timbila* orchestras, and even those numbers were limited to the mines belonging to the *Chamber of Mines*. These mines had about 6,000 Chopi, of which 780 were *timbila* players. Among those orchestras, the smallest one was composed of 7 players and the biggest one was composed of 40 *timbila* musicians (Tracey 1949: 255-256). The number of migrant workers of Mozambican origin in the Rand in the same year was about 84,000 (Crush et al. 1991: 234-235). Those numbers roughly show that about 7.1% of Mozambican miners were Chopi, and among them, 0.92% were *timbila* players. Limited to Chopi only, 13% were *timbila* players.

Figure 8: *Ngodo* at Witwatersrand Mine Compound at Johannesburg



Source: Tracey (1970: 66)

Note: Dancers towards the orchestra are lining up to sing *mzeno* at the climax of a series of performance of *ngodo* (the photograph is contained in the first edition published in 1948).

Figure 9: *Ngodo* in Mozambique



Source: Tracey (1970: 34)

Note: *Ngodo* musicians and dancers at Mavila village in what is today the district of Zavala in Inhambane Province, Mozambique. The photograph is contained in the first edition published in 1948.

1.4 Venâncio Mbande

Venâncio was born in the early 1930s in Guilundi, today's Zavala District, Inhambane Province in Mozambique². Venâncio began playing the *timbila* at the age of six and spent his teenage years repairing instruments for other *timbila* players in the area. At that time, one of the best *timbila* players in his neighbourhood was Tchambeni, who lived in Mavila, and Venâncio remembered the beauty of the melodies in his compositions. Hugh Tracey travelled to Mavila many times to record the performances of a *timbila* player from the area, Gomukomu. At that time, Venâncio accompanied Tracey on his research, but the relationship between Venâncio and Tracey was not as close as in later years. Later, Venâncio introduced Tracey to Tchambeni and Tracey visited him to record Tchambeni's playing, but, alas, this coincided with the funeral of Tchambeni. Venâncio spoke of this event to me with regret on many occasions.

Venâncio's youth was spent in Mozambique at a time when the colonial government was more consolidated than ever before, with the cultivation of cotton and other cash crops being enforced, and forced labour being the order of the day. Amid these conditions, he decided to go to the mines of neighbouring South Africa, as most men did, in order to earn money for bride-price to be a 'full-fledged man' with a family, and to earn cash to pay 'hat taxes' to the colonial government. Both his father and his grandfather had experienced migrant labour in South African mines (Venâncio 2005).

Venâncio worked in the gold mines in the Rand and the platinum mines in Rustenburg since 1950 and joined a mine-based Chopi *timbila* band. As mentioned, Venâncio already played *timbila* in Zavala, his home village, but since he signed an immigration contract with the WNLA as soon as he was old enough to do so, it is hard to believe that Venâncio, who was young at the time, had already entirely established his *timbila* playing skills in his hometown. There is a pecking order of the players in *timbila* orchestra - the player who has the most outstanding playing skills and who composes the music is placed in the middle of the front line, while the rest of the arrangement is determined by skill level. In his hometown orchestra the young Venâncio was not a front-line player.

According to Andrew Tracey (2020), the players at the forefront of performances in the goldfields were often second or third line players in their home villages. Firstly, since front-line players in home villages were composers with already established personal styles, they were often unable to respond to the unusual format and demands of *timbila* orchestras at the Rand, which were comprised of Chopi players from different villages. In these conditions the 'second-string players' were the ones able to create a new style, because they were flexible in the sense that they did not fully fit into the style of their home villages.

² Given that Venâncio was first contracted for mining work in the Rand in 1950 and that the youngest age possible for contracting with the WNLA was 18 years old, he was most likely born around 1933.

Secondly, in terms of their established creativity, those who were front-line players in their home villages had less motivation to adapt to the environment of the compound and to respond to the demands of the new space. The players below the second line in their home villages, by contrast, took an active role in leading the orchestras of the compound, simply because they had something to prove.

Thus, contrary to the circumstance in the home village, there was a space for players of Venâncio's generation, in that they were able to acquire a style of playing that met the needs of the new performance dynamics. Furthermore, among South African mines, the platinum mines of *Impala Platinum* at Rustenburg in the North West Province, was relatively new, as mining in the region had only begun in 1929, which is later than the development of gold mines in the Rand which had existed since the 1890s. This new environment must have provided additionally favourable conditions for young Venâncio to establish himself as a *timbila* performer. Venâncio continued to migrate out of his home country from 1950, working under repeated contracts with mining companies for more than 40 years.

During the period of migrant labour, Venâncio was given preferential treatment for his *timbila* playing skills. In the original contract, he too experienced dangerous underground work, but the mining company later reassigned *timbila* players, including Venâncio, from underground work to the safe kitchen work, so that he was spared the dangerous underground work of the mine (Mbande 2005). As is clear from the case of Venâncio, it is not an exaggeration to say that establishing oneself as a leading player of *timbila* in the Rand was a survival strategy. At the beginning of his career as a migrant worker, Venâncio bought *timbila* made by others and played them, but in 1953 he bought the materials to make *timbila* for the first time and began to build his own, using the *timbila* he had bought before that as a model (Mbande 2005). He gradually developed his talent as a *timbila* player and became a leading player in his own orchestra and, over time, his orchestra came to be so highly regarded that they performed not only in their own compound, but also in other compounds. In effect, Venâncio's band came to represent this mining company! One of the songs that mark the beginning of Venâncio's *ngodo* is sung as follows, calling out to the audience.

Hingaeni zwee minapha makala (Be quiet and you will listen something amazing)
Timbila taMpala tangena! (The *timbila* of Impala is coming in!)

Source: *M'ngenso* in *Timbila ta Venâncio Mbande, Mozambique*³

The mining company occasionally invited tourists from outside the compounds to join them on sightseeing tours for white and foreign visitors to South Africa to see their performances (Mbande 2005). It was probably around this time that Venâncio met ethnomusicologist Andrew Tracey.

³ The pieces and lyrics were composed and created by Venâncio around 1988. The sound source was recorded in 1992.

They developed a good rapport, exchanging knowledge of each other's areas of expertise: as Tracey made frequent research trips to Zavala, he supplied Venâncio in South Africa with materials for *timbila* brought from Mozambique (Wane 2020).

After Mozambique's independence in 1975, Venâncio did not return to Mozambique, but chose to work in the mines and play *timbila*. The sixteen-year conflict in Mozambique was the direct reason why Venâncio chose to work in apartheid South Africa rather than in post-independence Mozambique. *Mzeno wa Mamina*, one of the songs used on *Tribute*, was probably written in the 1980s, during the guerrilla war in Mozambique and describes the situation and his feelings at the time. The song talks about the misery that affects people in the country

Malalani Mitchigapha Mawungu Mitchingapha Mzeno wamakono wakutsamba hinga sika, mzeno wamakono wakuhemba hukwalakanha ngundi tsiko ndavananou.

(Everyone listen up and listen to this beautiful melodious song and listen to this so good melodious music that reminds us of children's day.)

Nditiconi ka Mocambique hikululekile vanana vato va nguma nguku dawa ngumamina habihano mobatihona hukwalakanha vanana vathu vagumou.

(In our country in Mozambique, we are at peace, but the children are dying with mines, don't you think the leaders understand that?)

Madzanana ya ti npondo kusakanisela vachava Nguwona mitchini yomba mamina, mali hichavaco sibamo yadigana kuyaka nguyona sicolua yadigana kuyaka nguyona sibhedjela.

(Millions of moneys are spent on buying the machines to manufacture weapons and mines, this money could be used to build schools and hospitals.)

Hakobela mitchigahina chamulo vanana vathu vaguma hugudawa ngumamina hachaniseka vaku tala hadila mirongo vanana vatthu vagumou.

(We are asking for an answer for our children who have been killed by the mines, we are suffering in great numbers, we are crying out our children.)

Source: *Mzeno wa Mamina* in *Tribute*

The changing political landscape at the end of apartheid and democratization in South Africa brought unexpected changes to his performing life. During the early 1990s, Venâncio's orchestra was based at the compound and toured the United States and Europe. Tracey was involved in setting up Venâncio's orchestra's tour outside Africa. Since Tracey moved in academic circles, Venâncio performed not only in places of entertainment, but also in institutions such as universities with specialised courses in ethnomusicology, and in spaces that straddled both the fields of practice and research. Venâncio released two albums in 1994 and 2001. These albums are available in the international marketplace through major online stores such as Amazon, with descriptions of their existence as a symbol of post-conflict peace. A documentary film, "Keep the Timbila Playing" (The Netherlands; 2001), was also produced. Then, when the civil war peace agreement in Mozambique had been reached, Venâncio and his *timbila* went back to his home village in Zavala.

When Venâncio finally returned to his homeland, he taught his youngest son Domingos, born after his return, the whole of his repertoire. Domingos imbued this repertoire from an early age. During the period of his migrant labour contracts, when Venâncio was often separated from his family back home, and was unable to be with his older children, who were born during that time, to show them how to play.

Figure 10: Venâncio and his orchestra at Guilundo, Zavala in 2004



Source: Photograph taken by A.Aminaka at a performance by the orchestra of Venâncio, at Guilundi, Zavala, Inhambane, Mozambique, June 26, 2004.
Note: Venâncio's youngest son, Domingos plays next to his father in the front row.

When he was 68 years old, Venâncio recorded his last album in Maputo, *Timbila ta Venâncio - Ao Vivo no Cine África* (*Timbila of Venâncio – Live at Cinema Africa*). It was released in 2000 with Helsinki based producer Eero Koivistoinen⁴;

For the last fifteen years leading to his death in 2015, Venâncio Mbande was now fully resident in Mozambique. This is the period in which I, Matchume Zango, met Venâncio and fell under the spell of his artistry.

⁴ Among 43 discs [Koivistoinen](#) (1946-) had released, he produced four recordings of African music for the Naxos World label in Mozambique and South Africa, including three discs focusing on Mozambique, namely *Timbila ta Venâncio* and *Mozambique Relief* (produced as a fund-raising effort when floods hit southern Mozambique) in 2000 as well as *Timbila of the Eduardo Durão Ensemble* in 2002.

Chapter 2: The dynamic music scene in Maputo, 1975 -1992

I will now attempt to place my personal story in context, by tracing the development of the Maputo music scene during the period of conflict, when Venâncio was absent from Mozambique. This chapter presents the development of the cultural scene in post-independent Maputo, at a time when the cultural activities in the rural area had almost become extinct, due to the disruptions of civil war (1976-1992).

In rural areas communities lived based on traditional social structures, and the performing arts were passed on along with the rituals and entertainment of those communities. When African populations were mobilized as plantation labour forces, managers, who feared that workers might unite, tended to reinforce the cultural identities of individual ethnic groups to keep them separate (Koja 2014: 19-20). This is often seen as one of the reasons why ethnic diversity continued to prevail in the new circumstances.

On the eve of Mozambique's independence, when Frelimo⁵ was waging their liberation struggle, Frelimo actively mobilized African performing arts to convey their political message to the people. Frelimo's *Education and Culture Department* modified the lyrics of the songs used in the rituals, created new dances, and restructured indigenous cultures (Israel 2009). With no infrastructure in place to transmit information to a population with a low literacy rate, the performing arts, including theatre, music, and poetry, continued to be emphasized by the Frelimo government as an essential tool for political propaganda and civic education for the new nation.

The political and social role of the performing arts in the post-independence period in Mozambique, in addition to the inward role of communicating messages to the people, has been supplemented by the diplomatic aspect of introducing Mozambique's performing arts to other countries (Koja 2014: 22). A group of performers accompanied the first president Samora Moisés Machel (1933-1986) on his outings to present Mozambique's performing arts. The group that accompanied him on his foreign trips was organized on a case-by-case basis, but gradually the need for a permanent organization was recognized. In 1977, just two years after independence, the Centre for Cultural Studies (*Centro de Estudos Culturais*) was established to train personnel. In 1978, the center was subdivided into the National School of Music (*Escola Nacional de Música*), the National School of Dance (*Escola Nacional de Dança*) and the National School of Visual Arts (*Escola Nacional de Artes Visuais*).

In 1979, the Frelimo government incorporated the best its national dance and music school graduates, to create the National Song and Dance Group. In 1983 the group was renamed the *National Song and Dance Company* (NSDC), a name that has remained unchanged to this day. It was

⁵ Frelimo, currently the dominant political party in Mozambique, founded in 1962 to combat Portuguese colonialism, also fought a protracted post-independence civil war against rival political organization, Renamo, from 1976 to 1982.

founded by David Abilio and Gabriel Simbine, who studied in socialist East Germany in 1980 and later both became the Minister of Education and Science (Koja 2014: 22-23). Throughout the 1980s, NDSC performed in more than twenty countries.

It is not difficult to imagine that Frelimo, which advocated Marxism-Leninism, was influenced by Socialist Realism in its cultural policy. Socialist realism had its origins in the avant-garde, and in the case of the performing arts and music movements of Mozambique, this led to an emphasis on contemporary dance and experimental music. As a result, even after the policy influences of socialist realism had disappeared, these currents had a strong influence on the Mozambican cultural and artistic scene.

Under these circumstances, the cultural space in Maputo became vibrant. Just one year after independence, in 1976, the future music director of NSDC, Eduardo Durão (1952-) and his younger brother, founded a group named *Ngalanga da Unidade 7* (Ngalanga of Unit 7) (Koja 2018). The area known as Unidade 7 was a catchment area for Chopi inhabitants. Prior to independence, the capital city was not open to residence for any Africans, except for assimilated people and those who were employed as urban workers. In the immediate post-independence period, however, the urban areas saw an influx of African populations from the countryside, both due to the removal of racial restrictions and later, as a way of escaping the whirlwind of civil war.

My father, Salomão Zango (1944-2018) moved into Unidade 7 in Maputo. from Zanguine, Canda District in Inhambane Province, a few years before independence, around 1970. He was accompanied by my mother and elder sisters and brothers. This was a time of independence for Mozambique, but also a time when Apartheid was being reinforced in South Africa. During these years, from around 1976 or 1977 onwards, my father started working in mines in South Africa. He was employed at the platinum mine at Rustenburg in North West Province, about 130 km west from Pretoria, in the area where Venâncio also worked, though they worked in different mines. During the long contract periods away from his family in the home country, living only between the tunnels in the mines and the compound's quarters, music was a valuable pastime for my father, as it was for many workers. My father used to play a drum called *xchinzomane*, one of the components in *ngalanga*, which was a combination of simple *timbila* and several drums.

In this musical atmosphere I was born in 1980 at *Unidade*. Together with elder sisters and brothers, I played instruments or danced as a part of kids' daily life in the community whenever there was a rhythm. In 1986, I joined the group *Ngalanga da Unidade 7* at the age of 6 as a dancer. However, I had already started playing *timbila* as well, learning by imitation of the elders who were always around in the community.

This period coincided with the time when Durão developed a new approach to the *timbila* performance form. Durão, as the music director of NSDC, accompanied the dance company on its

overseas tours. At a performance in Reunion in 1987, Durão eventually invented a contemporary style of performing *timbila*, with his own modern music pieces at the centre, in response to the necessity to perform on small stages and within the limitations of set and planned programs. Later, this experience developed into the foundation of his own band, the *Orquestra de Durão* (Koja 2018).

In 1990 I joined the youth group *Novos Raios* (also founded by Durão) as one of its dancers of about twenty children. *Novos Raios* introduced various dances from other parts of country, including those of the centre and the north of the country. These were all new in the *Unidade 7* location in Maputo at the southern end of the country. The setup functioned as an experimental field for the incorporation of the variety of dances from all over the country (which has more than forty ethnic groups). Through Durão, a director of the NSDC, *Novos Raios* recruits had the opportunity to receive instruction from several teachers of the national dance company. These experiences with *Ngalanga da Unidade 7* and *Novos Raios* were my musical foundation. As will be explained, these performance experiences led to ever-widening musical explorations and opportunities to perform at festivals, and, ultimately, overseas engagements.

Chapter 3: From revolution to tradition, 1992 - 2015

My journey from this point onwards is really two journeys that eventually converged. On the one hand I became a contemporary musician embracing all that was 'cool and with it' in the urban melting pot of Maputo. More and more I got to recognize the popular appeal of blending traditional acoustic and electronic instruments, especially in the context of ever-popular competitions, urban music festivals and organized events. On the other side there were encounters with tradition, the music of the rural-based older generation and above all, as far as *timbila* goes, encounters with the supreme master of the traditional, Venâncio Mbande, who lead performances that overwhelmed audiences with the raw acoustic sound of *timbila*. I fell under the spell of his *ngodo* at first hearing. The following two sections describe these discoveries along the way to mature musicianship.

3.1 A new generation on the edge of regime transformation

As part of activities in *Novos Raios*, I always had opportunities to observe the process of music-making and dance performance by professionals from both within and outside Mozambique. When I was twelve years old (1992), I witnessed sessions by Durão's *Orquestra de Durão* and the *Family of Percussion* founded in Germany by Swiss Jazz percussionist Peter Giger (Giger 1979)⁶. This opened the eyes of us youngsters in *Novos Raios*, to the possibilities of combining traditional African instruments with wind instruments of Western origin, as well as electronic instruments such as modern electric guitars and bass.

I was also a member of a group named *Continuadores* (which means "Continuators" in Portuguese) that was so named to convey the idea that the cultural values proposed by the first president of Mozambique were still alive. In 1993, aiming for a tour to Austria, eight members of the group of *Continuadores* were selected and reorganised into a subgroup, *Grupo Tuanano* (meaning "United Group" in Shangaan), composed of sections for music, dance, and theatre. For everybody in this group, which, at 13 years included me, it was a first trip abroad. These experiences strongly influenced my worldview.

In 1996, I left *Continuadores*, then in the following year, my music mates and I founded our own group, *Timbila Muzimba*, a name that combines the word name for the key traditional instrument of the Chopi (*timbila*) with the Shangaan word for body movement (*muzimba*). Four of us were from Unidade 7, three of us had been members of *Novos Raios*, and two of us had been members of *Continuadores*. In that sense we were all 'products' of a previous generation's training and of the decade of political and social affiliations and outlooks that had just preceded our own.

In the beginning, *Timbila Muzimba* used to practice in my uncle's garage at the Museu area in the central part of Maputo city, then we moved to Unidade 7, where my elder brother had a

⁶ The work resulted in an album; Peter Giger, 1979. *Family of Percussion*, Aural Explore.

space. For performance, there were several musical venues, such as *Goroane* and *Afro Urbano* in the centre of Maputo. *Timbila Muzimba* had an inspirational model in a popular band called *KapaDech*, that had started the year before us in 1996. We had experienced this band's spectacular success, and followed their winning progress in various competitions, with a count of more than ten prizes both in national and international contests in the seven years until the suspension of their activities (Nhacota Jr. 2013).

We also rode a wave of new social and economic circumstances: there was a rising need for local music, especially music with a traditional sound, at public and semi-public occasions such as exhibitions and opening or closing ceremonies of conferences, along with the influx of development aid funds from abroad for socio-economic reconstruction after conflict and democratization. Because many of the public events were organized with outside funding, local organizers were always keen to present something typically Mozambican to foreign organizers, and as a performing group we came to be highly regarded for incorporating such cultural elements in our performances. For those occasions, too, I began to build a career working as a solo musician with the flexible option of either being able to perform alone as *timbila* player or percussionist, or along other individual artists or small groups. In the late 1990s, I had the opportunity to perform and record with other bands as a soloist, gaining knowledge of musical trends and gaining technical knowledge over a wide field.

In 1999, *Timbila Muzimba* performed at a music festival sponsored by the Arts Council of Switzerland, titled the *Music Crossroad*, and were awarded the first prize among about thirty groups of participants from all countries in the southern African region. At the time, we, as *Timbila Muzimba*, seemed to follow in the footsteps of *KapaDech*, as *KapaDech* had won the same prize in 1997. But in fact, *Timbila Muzimba* had an advantage that *KapaDech* did not have - that element was the tradition of 'folk arts' rooted in the local culture and symbolized by *timbila*.

As a side prize for winning the competition of the *Music Crossroad*, *Timbila Muzimba* realized a European tour to Norway, Switzerland, and Germany in 2000, together with recording opportunity. Personally I was not satisfied with the quality of this recording because the recording technique was not an over dubbing - it was recorded all at once - which was not suitable for recording a band with a mixture of acoustic and electronic instruments. My experience on the earlier European tour had made me aware of the new challenges we faced for, while in Europe I had been invited to several musicians' home studios and knew what was possible. It was at that time that I made myself the promise that I would one day build my own recording studio - an ambition that I realized later and that, among other things, made it possible for me to record this current project, *Tribute to Venâncio*.

3.2 A quest for new techniques

The year 2000 was another turning point for me when *Timbila Muzimba* performed at the *timbila* festival called *Msaho* at Zavala, the place of origin of *timbila*. For the first time I came to appreciate the art of Venâncio and his orchestra of 25 *timbila* players and 25 dancers. The beauty and tone of the *timbila* totally overwhelmed me with its powerful sound and volume, and with the clouds of dust in its wake. I really wanted to approach Venâncio, but felt that he was an unreachable figure. He had such great authority over his orchestra - I could only watch him from a distance. I now understood why Venâncio enjoyed the respect of academic authorities like Andrew Tracey.

It took more than one year before I finally plucked up the courage to visit Venâncio in 2002, at his house in Zavala. I wanted to ask him to make me a *timbila*. Until that time, I had used a *timbila* made by Durão. While a *timbila* made by Durão took two weeks to manufacture, that of Venâncio took three months. Venâncio's *timbila* was certainly a long time in the making, but that was the price to pay for his attention to detail and finish. This first personal contact with Venâncio was still business-like and distant. Later on however, there arose an opportunity to bring us much closer together.

I have always been willing to venture into new worlds and it is this willingness that in a roundabout way brought me this opportunity. In 2000 I took part in a cultural exchange programme, with a Belgian contemporary dance group organised by the Franco-Mozambican Cultural Centre (*Centro Cultural Franco Mocambicano: CCFM*)⁷. During my stay in Brussels, I met Portugal-based percussionist Miquel Bernat, a member of the *Ictus Ensemble*, who, in 1999, had formed an active percussion ensemble group called *Drumming – Grupo de Percussão* (Percussion Group). Bernat was a pioneer in adding percussion to the degree of higher music education in Portugal. He invited me to participate in this program.

When I joined the *Grupo de Percussão*, Bernat asked me to recreate the *timbila* orchestra of ancient days as part of the project. I had no hesitation in commissioning Venâncio to build eight *timbila*, from treble to bass. The cost of the *timbila* set by me at that time was sufficiently high in Mozambique to surprise Venâncio. I got teaching experience in the academic field in Europe, and at the same time, this proved to be the turning point in my communications with Venâncio. In younger days, Venâncio had also worked with ethnomusicologists and performed at universities - we were finding common ground.

⁷ The CCFM is a cultural centre dedicated to the dissemination of cultural diversity and is one of five French cultural centres in Africa. It has supported emerging Mozambican artists since its opening in Maputo in 1995. The CCFM is actively involved in the cosmopolitan cultural scene of Maputo and acts as a hotspot for promotion and support.

Figure 11: “Vamos Marimbar (Let’s play marimba)”, 2003, Porto, Portugal.



Source: Drumming - Grupo de Percussão, s.d. *DRUMMING*, p.14.

My relationship with Venâncio rapidly developed from this point onwards. When in 2008 I found out that Venâncio was suffering from health problems, I organised a concert by *Timbila Muzimba* to raise money for his treatment. To coincide with this concert, Venâncio travelled from Zavala to Maputo and lodged at my parents’ house during his stay in Maputo. A conversation between Venâncio and my parents revealed that my mother was originally from the Mbanze clan, which is also Venâncio’s clan, as he holds the family name Mbande. From this point onwards, Venâncio regarded me as a relative.

I have continued to work with international artists from all parts of the world and in collaborations across genres and styles. The music of my roots have always been at the forefront of these projects, even as I continue to actively explore and adopt digital playing techniques. Although I have been exposed to many recording and multiplexing techniques in my work in Maputo since the 1990s, I have more recently developed performances and recordings making use of samplers in order to broaden the scope of my solo career. The sampler was my solution for the frustration of being a percussionist who can only play one instrument at a time, despite having the skills to play various instruments.

I am particularly fond of the Roland sampler (now SP-404SX) released in 1999, which is often used for sound effects in plays and musicals due to its high responsiveness. I gained knowledge of this effects sampler and how to use it through participation in the *Kubilai Khan Investigation*, a dance company under the guidance of French choreographer Frank Micheletti, in whose projects I participated from 2005 to 2007. Since then I have actively used samplers in the field of fusion and contemporary dance as a sound capture source for *timbila*, *mbila*, *xitende* and lamellophone music.

In late 2012, I demonstrated the use of samplers to play African instruments at the University of Cape Town as part of co-work with the *Kubilai Khan Investigation*. This led me to being invited as an artist-in-residence at the University of Cape Town in 2013, and to further work on large-scale performance productions at the South African College of Music in 2014 and 2015.

Figure 12: Use of sampler at Contemporary Afro-European Soundscapes, in Austria, 2010



Source: [Werner Puntigam & Matchume Zango live at Linzfest 2010](#)

In 2014, I invited 81 years old Venâncio to perform at the South African Music College of Music, UCT with me. This proved to be his final performance outside Mozambique. At that point, Venâncio no longer had the strength and speed that made the performances of his hay-day so spectacular, but he was still the refined and dignified old master of the *ngodo* style. Venâncio played a high *timbila* in the form of a solo and sometime in duo with me, while a UCT student held a third part. “You too are going to be old one day!” he said to me. I will remember this performance as the day that I discovered *ngodo* in a new way. Reduced to three players, this minimalistic *timbila* ensemble enhanced the beauty of the solo melodies composed by Venâncio. Yes, even at 80 he was the lion of *timbila*.



Figure 13: Matchume performing together with Venâncio at UCT, 2014

Source: [Matchume Zango & the UCT Ibuyambo Orchestra, Rambanani, UC](#)

The performance revealed different sets of possibilities for *ngodo* pieces, and led me to hope that we could collaborate on an album of Venâncio's solo works on our return to Mozambique. Alas, in May of the following year, Venâncio passed away, making it impossible for me to realize this dream.

I have lived in two musical spaces: the traditional and the contemporary. The bearers of traditional African music and contemporary music are often reluctant to cross the boundaries of their parallel worlds. For me, on the other hand, this has been the life-blood and heart of my explorations. In *Tribute*, I attempt to weave these two strands into one - in fond memory of a *timbila* master who has deeply impacted my musical life.

Part 2: The Production of *Tribute*

After the loss of Venâncio, my idea to bring Venâncio's repertoire to a wider audience was no longer just an idea, but a mission. Now I had in mind, not only the face-to-face audience of local live performance, but also the infinite number of listeners who could be put in touch with this graceful music through the medium of contemporary sound devices. I wanted to create something that would bring Venâncio's musical magic to the modern listener.

From the outset it was not a matter of reproducing or preserving an old and perhaps vanishing musical style, but of creating a new music in which *ngodo timbila* music is both default line and springboard for inspiration. In the previous chapters I attempted to outline the complex background against which the art of *ngodo* has had, and continues to have its existence. *Tribute to Venâncio* was conceived as an homage to an old master's art, yes, but also as a response to this artistry from a contemporary urban perspective.

Part 2 reflects on the production of the CD album (*Tribute to Venâncio*) with reference to the historical background as outlined in Part 1. Chapter 4 describes the points inherited from the original source materials and the how they were transformed and arranged, while Chapter 5 describes the stages of sound production.

These chapters do not serve as a methodical description of the CD album (the album itself suffices for that), but to point to important features of it, in terms of its relationship to its source materials and the composition and production phases that culminated in the final product and its music.

Chapter 4: The transformation of raw materials

Tribute is a reworking of traditional materials. After the act of production it is difficult to trace the sequence in which the transformations of such original material happened. Some of the creative work consisted of reshaping musical structures and forms inherited from the *ngodo* tradition itself, others constituted in new treatments of Venâncio's original compositions. It is these aspects of the creation of *Tribute* I will discuss first.

There are three main areas of inheritance in *Tribute*: firstly there is the overall structure of the *ngodo* suite as a form, secondly the central melody of each piece and thirdly the central lyrics used for each piece. All went through transformation as the project developed.

4.1 Structure and sequence

The structural form of the *ngodo* performance is generally described as a suite, consisting of several set pieces in a sequence, accompanied by the movements and songs of a group of dancers as shown in Table 1. Using the terminology of Western classical music, the suite of *ngodo* can be divided into a prelude, a dance, and a postlude. The number of preludes varies from one to two. Accordingly, the compositions of *Tribute* are divided as follows: *Mtsitso wokata* is the first prelude and *Mtsitso wambidi* is the second prelude. This is followed by the third piece, *M'ngenisio*, which invites the dancers to enter and the audience to join them, and the fourth piece, *Chibhudhu*, in which the dancers usually improvise. *Tribute* contains two *Mzeno* pieces – in the classical form, as with the preludes, there may be one or more *Mzeno* pieces in a suite. The final part of the *ngodo* consists of *Mabandla*, which signals the exit of the group of dancers, and the final postlude *Mtsitso wogwita*. The eight pieces of music contained in the album were selected from amongst Venâncio's repertoires of *ngodo*. The choices were made on the basis of the suitability of the melody for arrangement without changing the composition and sequence of the original format. The changes made to the individual parts of the *ngodo*, while retaining the overall structure, include the replacement of the long *mtsitso* of Venancio (Duration 2:42) with two shorter ones.

Table 1: Structures and sequences in comparison

Album	Tatei Watu: Tributo to Venâncio Mbande Recorded in 2017, by Matchume		Timbila ta Venâncio Mbande Recorded in 1992, by Venâncio		
Structural category					
Track					
Prelude					
1	M'tsitso wokata	3:24	1	M'tsitso	12:42
2	M'tsitso wahumbidi	2:46			Part 1: 0:55 Part 2: 2:44 Part 3: 2:54 Part 4: 2:33 Part 5: 3:34
Call for dancers and audiences					
3	M'ngenisio	3:37	2	M'ngenisio	4:45
Dance pieces					
4	Chibhudhu	3:46	3	Mwemiso	6:04
5	Mzeno wa Africa	4:12	4	Mchumyo	4:06
6	Mzeno wa Mamina	4:47	5	Chibhudhu	7:07
7	Mabandla	4:05	6	Mzeno	9:29
Leave of dancers					
8	Mabandla	4:05	7	Mabandla	6:51
Postlude					
8	M'tsitso wogwita	3:30	8	M'tsitso wogwita	2:42
Total duration		30:30			54:04

Source: *Tribute* and *Timbila ta Venâncio Mbande*.

4.2 Arrangement of the melody

While, throughout, *Tribute* retained the original melodies of the source material, radical changes were made. The original contains beautiful melodies, but I felt that, for modern listeners, these would be difficult to digest for two reasons. Firstly, the layers of the of the old *ngodo* renditions are complex, with the result that the melodies tend to be obscured by the many overlapping sounds of the *timbila*, and secondly I concluded that, due the extremely fast tempi of the original performances, the listener who encounters this music for the first time would probably be overwhelmed and not able to fully appreciate the not-so-obvious simple clarity of the melodic material.

Therefore, an attempt was made to reduce amount of overlapping in the original *timbila* arrangements, and to rather emphasize the beauty of the original melodies. In *Tribute*, the number of *timbila* were therefore limited to only two high *timbila*, while the bass guitar and drum set were used to cover the low notes of the *dibinda* part in the original (Appendix 1, 2). This instrumentation meant that different sound qualities could be applied to different areas of sound, which made the *timbila*'s sound even clearer.

My challenge was to find a way to reduce the fast tempi of the originals without loss of the essential qualities of the music. As shown in Table 1, each of the original pieces is not necessarily short. Moreover, the tempo of the middle part of many of the pieces is extremely fast. In other words, even if we discount the large number of *timbila* used in the performance, there is a considerable density of sound going on. The idea was to take the most melodious parts of a piece and stretch them out, to slow down the tempo of the performance. In attempting this, I found that, while many of the repetitions in the original material made perfect sense at fast speed, many became redundant at a slower tempo. In such cases, I compacted and abbreviated segments to keep the piece to an appropriate length.

For example, my *Tribute*'s third piece, *M'ngenisio*, does not entirely coincide with that of Venâncio's version, but takes the densest part out of the original and loosens up the structure considerably. The result is that my *M'ngenisio* loosely follows the melody of the original version composed by Venâncio, but with the repetitions shortened. A clarification of this procedure can be followed in the sets of scores and tablatures of the appendices to this dissertation. Here the signal to change the tune called "*kuvelusa*", in the bars 129 to 130 in Appendix 1 and 3 of my version, are equivalent to the bars 45 to 47 in Appendix 2 and 4 of the original versions by Venâncio. In both versions, at the "*kuvelusa*" call by the leading *timbila*, all the other players go into a rest. In Venâncio's original piece, after the rest in the bar 48, there is a *timbila* solo, followed by a return of the other instruments. In my arrangement the "*kuvelusa*" rest is the final climax of this piece.

4.3 Transformation of the lyrics, language and vocals

My approach was to retain the spirit of the original lyrics, but not to follow them exactly. This means that while the lyrics of the songs are arranged and sometimes new, or derived from another source, they remain true to the role and intent they had in the structure of the traditional *ngodo*. *M'ngenisiso*, which is the central example here, is a piece in the *ngodo* sequence that follows the prelude and serves to welcome the dancer and the audience. Recall the words of Venâncio's orchestral *M'ngenisiso* presented in Chapter 1, Section 1.4. It was the call “[b]e quiet and you will listen to something amazing”. Similarly, in the *M'ngenisiso* in *Tribute*, there is an invitation to the audience, like the dancers, to ‘leap’ into the space reserved in front of the orchestra (as shown in the lyrics in Table 2).

The point of my arrangement can be seen by contrasting how spoken words and lyrics are used in the two *M'ngenisiso* versions. The words spoken in a song in traditional *ngodo* perform the same function as the lyrics in my version, in the sense that they send a message in conjunction with the song. In the original *ngodo* the spoken words are functional (i.e. inviting the dancers to action); in my arrangement, the lyrics cast in the form of a song are musical (i.e. inviting the listener to engage emotionally).

I have drawn on various sources for lyric inspiration. The lyrics of *M'ngenisiso*, which follow here in Table 2, are an example:

Table 2: Lyrics of “M’ngenisiso”

Track 03: M’ngenisiso		
L01	Sokwenza njani na he hee	What are we going to do
L02	Waqal’umngenisiso	M’ngenisiso will start
L03	Mamelani mamelani	Listen, listen
L04	Sondelani qaphelani	Come close and beware
L05	Mamelani mamelani	Listen, listen
L06	Sondelani qaphelani	Come close and beware
L07	Waqal’umngenisiso	M’ngenisiso will start
L08	Abany’abantu bayakuthand’ukuxabanisa	Other people like to create problems
L09	Bekhulum’izindaba	by gossiping

Source: “M’ngenisiso” in *Tribute*. English translation by the vocalist Noxolo Zenzi

Although they follow the spirit of the *M'ngenisiso* tradition, the lyrics have been completely rewritten. Because it was my intention to reach to a wider audience, I incorporated lyrics in languages other than ChiChopi – in this case (South African) IsiXhosa. With a wider Chopi and non-Chopi audience in mind, the actual language of the lyrics is no longer a concern and, when I invited a Xhosa vocalist, Noxolo Zenzi, to participate in *M'ngenisiso*, I decided to rework some of them accordingly.

Another example of the arrangement of lyrics can be heard in the second piece *Mtsitso Wahubindi* and is shown below in Table 3. The first lines of the lyrics composed by Venâncio's for the original song correspond to lines 1 to 3 of *Mtsitso Wahubindi* in *Tribute*. The lyrics in lines 4 to 6, on the other hand, are my own. I added them in sympathy for Venâncio's nostalgia during his time away from home – for I feel a similar nostalgia when I remember Venâncio's music and how my homeland has changed.

Table 3: Lyrics of “Mtsitso Wahubindi”

Track 02: Mtsitso Wahubindi		
L01	Chicolocoto mama nanga tsula muani Uchopi.	I embrace deep nostalgic feeling to go back to my homeland.
L02	Hatia Timbila Tamakono tiniteka niya Muanei	This timbila, this time, take me straitly to my homeland.
L03	Chicolokoto mama nanga tsula muani Mutinei	I embrace deep nostalgic feeling to go back to my homeland.
L04	Ndandu hi ya Mzeno Timbila ta Mtsitso, Nichihalakanya Venâncio uchopi heiii heiii.	This melodious song and this introduction made me remember Venâncio at my homeland.
L05	Mi ngodo hi ya timbilou, mi ngodo hi ya timbila ya tsambou hawu hotchaya ngumulotei Hayu hutchaya ngumilou tei	This orchestra of timbila, this orchestra of timbila is so marvellous that you can't help whistling it.
L06	Tmbila Ta tcheka ha timbila ta tcheka wiya muani tantei... wiya muani tantei...	Timbila is suffering, go back to home, our father longs for his homeland.

Source: Created in Chopi by Venâncio Mbande and Matchume Zango and translated into English.

Traditionally, too, *ngodo* songs are sung by a dozen male dancers, but *Tribute* features both male and female vocalists. Since, as explained earlier, in *Tribute*, the overlapping *timbila* were reduced to emphasize the melody - with certain parts stretched out and the tempo slowed down - sometimes, as in *Tribute's M'ngenisio*, the solo vocal sound was naturally less dense than found in the original *ngodo* version. Here, I compensated for this by multi-layering the solo voice and, by generously using the reverb to create an echo, thickening the sound in order to give the impression of a distant outdoor echo – inviting the entire audience to join the *ngodo* in the vastness of an imaginary space.

Chapter 5: Production phases of *Tribute* as a project

This chapter summarizes the technical and practical aspects of the production of the album *Tatei Watu: Tribute (Our Father: Tribute to Vemancio)*. It was realized with financial assistance provided by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development, in conjunction with CCFM.

The implementation of this project took place over six phases (corresponding to each section in this chapter):

1. The first phase was comprised of research and, along with the participating artists, a refining of the creative concept.
2. The second phase consisted of recording the basic *timbila* outline of the music.
3. The third phase was taken up by recording complementary instruments and vocal sounds.
4. The fourth phase consisted of 'brushing up' through mixing and mastering.
5. The fifth phase entailed the creation of the graphic package for the disc.
6. The sixth and the final phase consisted of disc production and printing.

This project was realized through the participation of thirteen musicians, Mozambican and non-Mozambican, a video coverage and photographing team, a sound technician, a graphic designer and a project manager. During the production phase, from 22 May to 30 September 2017, I played multiple tasks as project planner, project manager, art director, musician, and caretaker of all participants at *Nzango Artist Residency*. I wanted to provide the best atmosphere for the production, for it was a project that really mattered to me.

5.1 Research, and concept making and sharing

Date: 22 May – 2 June 2017 (12 days)

At the beginning of the production procedure, I shared the following concept with the participating members: to enhance the melodies of the music pieces of *ngodo* as a default line, yet to give the music a listenability that will appeal to modern audiences and listeners. I was adamant that I did not want the record to be dominated by *timbila*, but instead, wanted the *timbila* to be more like the 'mother voice' that could make other instruments, such as piano, trumpet and vocals, shine. It had to be a work that crosses boundaries between genres and that would open this music to people who do not speak ChiChopi or understand its music. We would be looking for a universal sound that would be understood on the world music platform.

My friends grasped the concept. They had their own share of rural-urban exposure and understood that the original compositions we were going to draw on have a spirit of their own. They are acoustic pieces that belong to open-air spaces and are meant for community audiences who have very different expectations and listening references. As shown in figure 16, in original performance settings of *ngodo*, there are only trees around to absorb the sound, and no structures to reverberate them. The *timbila*, therefore, is an instrument that is designed to resonate.

The traditional *ngodo* performance consists of several to a dozen *timbila* with a wide range of resonators, which sound best when used in outdoor performance. We decided that, if anything, we needed to capture the fullness of that sound and ‘vibe’.

Figure 14: Instruments and the outdoor context of *ngodo*



Source: Photograph taken at a performance by the *Orchestra of Venâncio*, at Guilundi, Zavala, Inhambane, Mozambique, June 26, 2004.

In contrast, the environment in which we generally enjoy music today is often a closed or semi-enclosed structure made of hard materials. Sometimes we enjoy the acoustic sound as it is, sometimes we hear it through speakers, or even more directly through earphones and with the music echoing inside the skull. Our challenge would be to process and rework the formidable sound of the *timbila* orchestra of old, in order to make it suitable for modern playback equipment.

Our first task was to study the repertoires of Venâncio with the aim to select adaptable music for our creation. During this phase, the instrumentalists and I listened to selected repertoires at length as we discussed the creation process. The idea was to aim at keeping the spirit of the *ngodo* style, while introducing new styles such as Jazz and Afro-beat, while playing traditional and conventional instruments such as: *timbila* and traditional drums, as well as electric guitar, bass guitar, piano, trumpet, modern percussion and drum set. I had been painstakingly reconstructing Venâncio’s music for a while, creating loops of solo sections and making note-for-note reconstructions on a *timbila* on my own, but now I decided that it was time to invite Venâncio’s youngest son, Domingos Mbande (Figure 15) who was based in Zavala, to come to Maputo for the project.

Figure 15: Matchume playing with Venâncio's son Domingos, 2020



Source: [Minor Recital 1, Timbila Tracks](#)

Note: Since the production of *Tribute*, we continue to work together to preserve the repertoires of Venâncio

During the first weeks after his arrival, Domingos and I worked together to practice eight compositions. Although I had access to all extant sound files of Venâncio's repertoires, sometimes it is difficult to grasp Venâncio's fast-paced playing techniques just by listening. This time with Domingos was an essential element of the preliminary research phase. I had selected a certain number of songs earlier on, but now I was able to explore the inner workings of the *ngodo* repertoire with someone who had actually been in Venâncio's orchestra. How the patterns of *ngodo* sequences were maintained within the process of performance became much clearer.

These explorations familiarized me with *ngodo* style and repertoire subtleties that would make it much easier to incorporate 'non-traditional' instruments in the *ngodo* mix during subsequent phases. We were ready to start group practice. I invited the drum set, bass guitar and electronic piano musicians to start working with me - to learn the notes and rhythms of the *timbila* pieces and to explore ways to transform this rich soil of musical ideas into instrument-specific forms.

5.2 Capturing base sounds

Date: 5 June – 14 July 2017 (37 days)

Recording of the music started during the second phase of the project. In this phase, as the recordings were made in multiplex format, we firstly captured a preliminary 'base sound' with the technician. During this creative process, we tested new arrangements, rhythms and instrumental combinations.

Starting from this preliminary concept, we practiced, recorded, listened, and repeated all these processes numerous times. With each reprise we made changes in our arrangements. One of

principal challenges was that Venâncio's compositions have very long cyclic counts, for example with a basic beat of eleven counts per cycle. This proved difficult for some of the musicians who were more accustomed to the common time of urban repertoires.

We also had some moments of debate over the compositions, adaptations and arrangement we had made, as we grappled with the idea of how to mould the music to new expectations, and yet remain close to the source materials. Once defined, the process advanced to the basic recording. Firstly, we recorded five core instruments at the same time: *timbila*, drum set, electric guitar, bass guitar and electronic piano. Secondly, individually, we re-recorded each instrument separately once more. This process permitted us to make necessary corrections and to incorporate alternate possibilities when we felt dissatisfied with the end-result of the original recording.

5.3 Recording complementary instruments and vocal

Date: 19 July – 11 August 2017 (24days)

In this phase, it was necessary to transcribe, read and check the lyrics created by Venâncio. I adapted and created new lyrics in collaboration with vocalists Jorge Cesar, Onezia Cristina Muholove, Nomapostile Nyiki and Noxolo Zenzi. Here again, the challenge was to reduce the tempo of the original songs. I resolved these difficulties by adapting lyrics to the new rhythms created in our first base recording of the music. Examples of these arrangements of the lyrics were detailed in 4.3 in Chapter 4.

At the time of this phase of the project, I had an opportunity to work with a group of students from *University of Cape Town*, who had come to Maputo for fieldwork and workshops at the *Nzango Residency*. When the students listened to the work in progress in the studio, they asked to participate, and contributed new suggestion and ideas. From this student body, Xhosa vocalists Nomapostile Nyiki and Noxolo Zenzi, as well as Nigerian trumpeter Kolawole Cornelius Gbalahan participated as soloists on the album.

5.4 Final editing and mixing

Date: 14 August – 25 August 2017 (11days)

With the creative process and recording completed, the project forwarded to the editing and mixing phases. Blessing Sipiwe Jula, a sound technician from Durban, South Africa and I, realized this process. We worked intensively in the studio as we refined each track to create a blueprint ready for final mastering. Sipiwe and I had already shared the experience of working together on the production of my solo album, *Wata M'cande*, which was recorded in Durban and released in 2017.

I knew that Sipiwe's original area of musical expertise was *House Music*, and recruited him with the idea of ambitiously reworking the traditional acoustic instrumental sources. His task was to lend an ear to the music from the perspective of his experience with the popular market. Together we picked up the music tune by tune. For some of the songs we found it even necessary to re-record and adjust segments of the *timbila*, because we decided that some notes of the original did

not let the composition ‘relax’ for easy listening. The work was one of blending.

In the end, after making modifications of several instrumental layers within the music, I left all other production decisions at the sound engineer's discretion, for it was exactly my intention to include in the process an able person not specialized in the kind of *timbila* music we were working with, yet with thousands of hours experience with CD production. I knew that he would have another ear when listening to this music. During the mixing process, we sought out the sound qualities that would especially clarify the melodic elements of each song.

Something that we found interesting was that, although at the time of recording we had a solid structure, here, with the mixing sensation – and I can only explain it as a sensation – we decided to change the form of some songs and moved certain segments around in order to make the structure itself more attractive, according to our understanding that “this music piece wants to sound like this!” Each composition had its own treatment in the mixture.

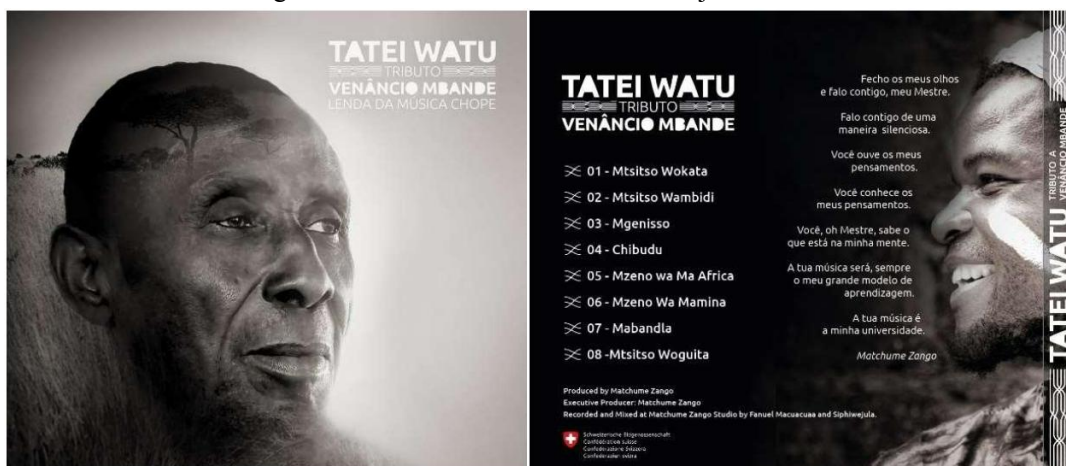
5.5 Communication and production of graphic package

Date: 14 August – 25 August 2017 (11 days)

A French designer, Vincent Caudry, who lives in Maputo, realized the visual identity of the disc. He was a creator and a designer of communication at the *Festival Bush Fire* in Swaziland (today Eswatini). The graphic design attempted to place Venâncio in his original environment of Zavala and evoke his legend: his contribution to Mozambican music, his deep knowledge of traditional Chopi culture and his stature as a traditional musician. The visual identity and design was inspired by those ideas and used the technique of double exposure as a way to suggests a sense of vastness.

To realize the disc package it was necessary to write some texts, collect suitable photographic images (from my own archive) and to select those images and visual representations that would convey a professional quality commensurate with Venâncio’s status as an artist.

Figure 16: Front and backside of album jacket



Source: *Tribute*.

The disc is composed of the following parts:

- Cover with inside the cover and back cover
- Pamphlet with a biography of Venâncio, photographs, description of music, acknowledgement, technical record and logos of the donors and partners.
- Compact Disc

5.6 Disc production

Date: 1 November – 23 December 2017 (23 days)

The last phase of this project materialized with the production and printing of the discs. After market research I decided to finalize the work in South Africa, where the unit cost of production was more attractive than in Mozambique. The number of discs to be produced could increase from 500 to 750, thanks to the relationship I created with South African suppliers. The capacity and competency of suppliers transmitted more confidence and quality. I considered the professional level that we were trying to attain with this project.

Afterword:

Thirteen musicians and cultural professionals participated in the project. During the project, we had the opportunity to work with an audio-visual team that did coverage capturing of the moments shared between the musicians and participants.

Arrangement of Venâncio's repertoire required the collaborative engagement of the many musicians involved, creating from the beginning a synergy amongst us as we freely expressed and explored ideas and opinions. The UCT students who participated in the project during their residency in Maputo had the opportunity to study, learn and get to know the uniqueness of the compositions of Venâncio's musical repertoire. This project allowed the students to be in contact with the traditional roots of Chopi music in Mozambique. In turn, these musical and educational linkages offered me new avenues and opportunities to gain insights into my own traditions and origins, as I started to view their responses and reactions as non-Mozambicans, to what we were busy building and creating.

The post-recording production phase held its own surprises as I learnt to 'hear' and imagine the product from a sound producer's point of view and realized how the world of *ngodo* I learnt to value and understand over so many years of playing, is foreign and new to those who have not lived with its intricacies. That too, influenced the final product in many ways.

How we managed to complete the project in the allotted time and that, despite the increase in human resources, we maintained the costs foreseen in the initial budget, is a mystery to me. I reflect on how intense this journey was, how we were sometimes working throughout the night and after a two-hour sleep break, would be back at it in the early morning – these are the experiences that made this project come to life and enriched all of us who were involved.

For me, *TATEI WATU (Our Father) Tribute to Venâncio Mbande* is the first fruit of a new way of creating and articulates an approach that I wish to extend in the years to come. This approach to working with and presenting *timbila* repertoire is completely opposite to the direction followed by early ethnomusicologists and recorders of *timbila* music, who, as 'outsiders' discovered the value of *timbila* compositions in the 1930s and presented them to the world as 'what we have heard'. It is also different to the world music wave of the 1970s, that specialized in the evocation of the 'traditional spirit' as something exotic to be marketed on stage, film and disc.

As an urban African musician with rural roots I have deep connections with older musical traditions, but want to draw on these inspirations in my own way, by creating works rooted in the traditional, but new in every other respect. This, I believe, is how we can creatively engage with our fast-vanishing heritage in new times.

Appendix 1: Core ideas of *M'ngeniso* by Venâncio Mbande.

Timbila: solo (1-4)



Timbila: kusumeta(5-6)



Timbila: a b (Repeated)



Timbila: a' b' (Prepeated)



Base: AB



Base: A'B'



Base: A''B''



Timbila: kuvelusa(129-130)



Source: Unpublished Transcription: Mayako Koja

Note: This notation is not a complete rendition, but a summary based on the music source.

Appendix 2: Formal structure of *M'ngenso* by Venâncio Mbande

Bar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Time																														
Singer																														
Timbila1	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Timbila2					a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Dibinda					A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Rattles									x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Drum																														
Bar	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
Time	0:59																													
Singer																														
Timbila1	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b					a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Timbila2	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b																
Dibinda	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B																
Rattles	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																
Drum																														
Bar	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Time	1:22																													
Singer	Song																													
Timbila1	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b														
Timbila2	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b																
Dibinda	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B																
Rattles	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																
Drum	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*																
Bar	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
Time	2:12																													
Singer	Ta thu																													
Whistle																														
Timbila1																														
Timbila2																														
Dibinda																														
Rattles																														
Drum																														
Bar	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
Time	2:43																													
Singer	step up the tempo																													
Whistle																														
Timbila1	a*	b*	a*	b*	a*	b*																								
Timbila2																														
Dibinda																														
Rattles																														
Drum	*	*	*																											
Bar	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
Time	3:09																													
Singer																														
Whistle																														
Timbila1	c	d	c																											
Timbila2	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Dibinda	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'
Rattles	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Drum																														
Bar	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
Time	3:55																													
Singer	Song																													
Whistle																														
Timbila1	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Timbila2	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Dibinda	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'	A'	B'
Rattles	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Drum	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Timbila: Kuvelusa



Timbila: a b



example2



Timbila: c d



Timbila: kusumeta(93-94)



Dibinda AB (base line only)

example1



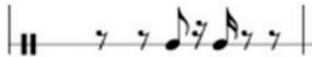
example2



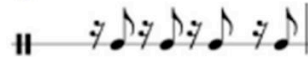
Dhibinda A'B'



Rattle (x)



Rattle (y)



Source: Unpublished Transcription: Mayako Koja

Note: This tablature presents the music in outline only. The bass notes of the *xikulo* are not notated, as they were not audible enough to transcribe from the sound source.

Appendix 3: Score of *M'ngeniso* by Matchume Zango

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is labeled 'Voice' and contains three measures of whole rests. The middle staff is labeled 'Timbila Solo' and contains three measures of a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes and rests. The bottom staff is labeled 'Base' and contains three measures of whole rests.

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff contains four measures of whole rests, with a measure number '4' written above the first staff. The middle staff contains four measures of the same complex rhythmic pattern as the first system. The bottom staff contains four measures of whole rests, with a final measure containing a half note and a quarter note.

8

8

11

11

Sok wen za nja ni na he hee Sok wen za nja ni na

14

14

he hee he hee sok wen zanja ni na

17

Musical score for measures 17-20. The system includes a vocal line (top staff) with a whole rest, a piano accompaniment (middle staff) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line (bottom staff) with a simple harmonic accompaniment.

21

Musical score for measures 21-23. The system includes a vocal line (top staff) with lyrics "sok wen za nja ni na" under the second measure, a piano accompaniment (middle staff) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line (bottom staff) with a simple harmonic accompaniment.

24

Musical score for measures 24-27. The system includes a vocal line (top staff) with lyrics "he hee sok wen za nja ni na he hee he hee" under the first four measures, a piano accompaniment (middle staff) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line (bottom staff) with a simple harmonic accompaniment.

28

sok wen za nja ni na

31

Son de la ni ma me la ni Son de la ni qa phe

34

la ni he he he Son de la ni qa phe la ni

37

Wa qa l'u mn ge ni so Son de la ni ma me

40

la ni Son de la ne qa phe la ni he he he Son de la ne ma me

44

la ni Wa qa l'u mn ge ni so

47

A ba ny'a ba ntu ba ya ku than d' ku xa ba ni sa Be

50

khu lu m'i zin da ba Be khu lu m'i zin da ba

53

Be khu lu m'i zin da ba A ba ny'a ban

56

ntu ba ya ku than d'u ku xa ba ni sa Be

This system contains measures 56 and 57. It features a vocal line in the upper staff with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in the middle staff, and a bass line in the lower staff. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 56 contains the lyrics 'ntu ba ya ku than d'u ku xa ba ni sa' and ends with a fermata. Measure 57 begins with the word 'Be' and continues the melodic and harmonic progression.

58

khu lu m'i zin da ba Be khu lu m'i zin da ba

This system contains measures 58, 59, and 60. It features a vocal line in the upper staff with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in the middle staff, and a bass line in the lower staff. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 58 contains the lyrics 'khu lu m'i zin da ba' and ends with a fermata. Measure 59 begins with the word 'Be' and continues the melodic and harmonic progression. Measure 60 concludes the system with the lyrics 'khu lu m'i zin da ba'.

61

This system contains measures 61, 62, and 63. It features a vocal line in the upper staff, a piano accompaniment in the middle staff, and a bass line in the lower staff. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 61 is a whole rest. Measure 62 contains the piano accompaniment and bass line. Measure 63 concludes the system with the piano accompaniment and bass line.

65

Musical score for measures 65-68. The system consists of three staves: a vocal line with whole rests, a piano accompaniment with eighth-note chords and sixteenth-note patterns, and a bass line with quarter notes.

69

Musical score for measures 69-73. The system consists of three staves. The vocal line has a whole rest followed by the lyrics "Bu ta na". The piano accompaniment has "obscure" markings above it. The bass line continues with quarter notes.

74

Musical score for measures 74-77. The system consists of three staves. The vocal line has the lyrics "nim tse no ma ga na ka na" and "Mi Ta pa mn ge ni so". The piano accompaniment and bass line continue with their respective patterns.

77

Bu ta na ni m tse no ma ga na ka na Mi

80

Ta pa mn ge ni so Bu ta na ni m tse no ma ga na ka

83

na Mi Ta pa mn ge ni so Bu ta na

86

nim tse no ma ga na ka na Mi Tapa mn ge ni so

This system contains three staves of music. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. It contains three measures of music with lyrics underneath. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in the right hand, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment in the left hand. The music is in a 4/4 time signature.

89

he he he

This system contains three staves of music. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures of music, with the lyrics 'he he he' under the second measure. The middle staff is the piano accompaniment in the right hand, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment in the left hand. The music is in a 4/4 time signature.

93

he he he ye ye ye

This system contains three staves of music. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures of music, with the lyrics 'he he he' under the first measure and 'ye ye ye' under the third measure. The middle staff is the piano accompaniment in the right hand, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment in the left hand. The music is in a 4/4 time signature.

96

ye ye ye ai ye ye

100

ai ye ye ai ye ye

104

ai ye ye ai ye ye ye ye ye

108

Musical score for measures 108-111. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a bass line in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line contains the lyrics "ye ye ye" in two phrases. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes.

112

Musical score for measures 112-115. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a bass line in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line contains the lyrics "ye ye ye" and "ai ye ye". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The bass line continues with the same accompaniment.

116

ai ye ye ai ye ye ai ye ye ai ye ye_____

120

124

Ye le le ye le le ye le le le

128

Kuvelusa

Source: Unpublished Transcription: Mayako Koja.

Appendix 4: Score of *M'ngenisio* by Venâncio Mbande

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The second system, starting at measure 5, includes staves for Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The score is in 6/8 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The Voice part is silent in both systems. Timbila1 has a 'Solo' section in the first system and a melodic line in the second system, with a note that only the high note melody is written. Timbila2 and the Base line of Dhibinda provide accompaniment. The Ndjele part is represented by a vertical bar line with a 6/8 time signature.

5

9

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

15

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

17

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

21

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

25

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

29

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Musical score for page 33, featuring five staves:

- Voice:** Bass clef, B-flat key signature, four measures of whole rests.
- Timbila1:** Treble clef, B-flat key signature, four measures of eighth-note patterns.
- Timbila2:** Treble clef, B-flat key signature, four measures of eighth-note patterns.
- Base line of Dhibinda:** Bass clef, B-flat key signature, four measures of eighth-note patterns.
- Ndjele:** Percussion clef, B-flat key signature, four measures of eighth-note patterns.

37

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

41

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

45

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Kuvelusa

50

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

54

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

58

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

62

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

65

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

68

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

71

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

75

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Kuvelusa

79

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Solo

*Only base line is written here.

84

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

89

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

93

Voice

Kusumeta

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

96

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

107

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Solo

111

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

114

Musical score for measures 114-117. The score is written for five parts: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Voice part is silent. Timbila1 plays a rhythmic melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. Timbila2 and the Base line of Dhibinda are silent. Ndjele provides a steady drum accompaniment with a double bar line at the start and vertical strokes for each beat.

118

Musical score for measures 118-121. The score is written for five parts: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Voice part is silent. Timbila1 plays a rhythmic melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. Timbila2 and the Base line of Dhibinda are silent. Ndjele provides a steady drum accompaniment with a double bar line at the start and vertical strokes for each beat.

121

Musical score for measures 121-123. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The Voice staff contains rests. Timbila1 has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. Timbila2 and Base line of Dhibinda contain rests. Ndjele has a simple rhythmic pattern with vertical strokes.

124

Musical score for measures 124-126. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The Voice staff contains rests. Timbila1 has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. Timbila2 and Base line of Dhibinda contain rests. Ndjele has a simple rhythmic pattern with vertical strokes.

127

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Kuvelusa

131

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

135

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

139

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

143

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

147

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

150

Musical score for measures 150-152. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice staff is empty. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play a rhythmic melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Base line of Dhibinda provides a steady bass line. The Ndjele part consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern.

153

Musical score for measures 153-155. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice staff is empty. In measure 153, the word "Kusumeta" is written above the Timbila1 staff. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play a rhythmic melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Base line of Dhibinda provides a steady bass line. The Ndjele part consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern.

157

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

161

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

165

Musical score for measures 165-168. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice staff is empty. Timbila1 and Ndjele play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. Timbila2 and the Base line of Dhibinda play a more complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes.

169

Musical score for measures 169-172. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice staff is empty. Timbila1 and Ndjele play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. Timbila2 and the Base line of Dhibinda play a more complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes.

173

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

177

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

181

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

185

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

189

Score for measures 189-192, featuring Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele.

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

193

Score for measures 193-196, featuring Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele.

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

197

Musical score for measures 197-200. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice part is mostly silent, with a short melodic phrase in the final measure. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Base line of Dhibinda provides a steady bass line with eighth notes. The Ndjele part consists of a continuous eighth-note rhythmic pattern.

201

Musical score for measures 201-204. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice part has a melodic line in the first two measures, followed by a rest. Timbila1 and Timbila2 continue their rhythmic patterns. The Base line of Dhibinda and Ndjele parts remain consistent with the previous section.

205

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

209

Voice

Kuvelusa

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

213

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

217

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

221

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

225

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Kusumeta

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

237

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

241

Voice

Kuvelusa

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

245

Score for measures 245-247. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The Voice part is silent. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play rhythmic patterns. The Base line of Dhibinda and Ndjele provide a steady bass line.

248

Score for measures 248-250. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The Voice part has a melodic line. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play rhythmic patterns. The Base line of Dhibinda and Ndjele provide a steady bass line.

251

Musical score for measures 251-253. The score is written in 5/8 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice part begins with a whole note G2, followed by two eighth notes G2 and A2, then a quarter note Bb2, and ends with a quarter rest. Timbila1 and Timbila2 play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Base line of Dhibinda plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The Ndjele part consists of a continuous eighth-note rhythmic pattern.

254

Musical score for measures 254-256. The score is written in 5/8 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The Voice part is silent (rests) for all three measures. Timbila1 and Timbila2 continue with their rhythmic patterns. The Base line of Dhibinda and Ndjele parts remain consistent with the previous section.

265

Voice

Timbila1 *Kuvelusa*

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

269

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

273

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

277

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

281

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

285

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

289

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

293

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

297

Voice

Timbila1 *Kusumeta*

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

301

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

305

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

309

Voice

Kuvelusa

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

313

Music score for measures 313-315. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The Voice part is silent. The Timbila1 and Timbila2 parts play a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. The Base line of Dhibinda part plays a bass line with eighth notes. The Ndjele part plays a rhythmic pattern with eighth notes.



316

Music score for measures 316-318. The score includes five staves: Voice, Timbila1, Timbila2, Base line of Dhibinda, and Ndjele. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The Voice part has a melodic line starting in measure 316. The Timbila1 and Timbila2 parts play a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. The Base line of Dhibinda part plays a bass line with eighth notes. The Ndjele part plays a rhythmic pattern with eighth notes.



319

Voice

Timbila1

Timbila2

Base line of Dhibinda

Ndjele

Source: Unpublished transcription: Mayako Koja

Note: This transcription is only an outline based on the music source. The bass notes of the *xikulo* are not notated, as they were not audible enough to transcribe from the sound source.

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