

SPECIAL EDITION 002

KULTURE

Kemet Kulture Konsciousness



MUSIC EDITION

Music ('mju:zɪk)(n)

Music is the art of creating sound to express emotion, tell stories, and create an atmosphere. It is created using instruments and voices, and can be enjoyed by almost anyone. Music has been around for hundreds of years, and come in many different styles and genres from classical to hip-hop and beyond.

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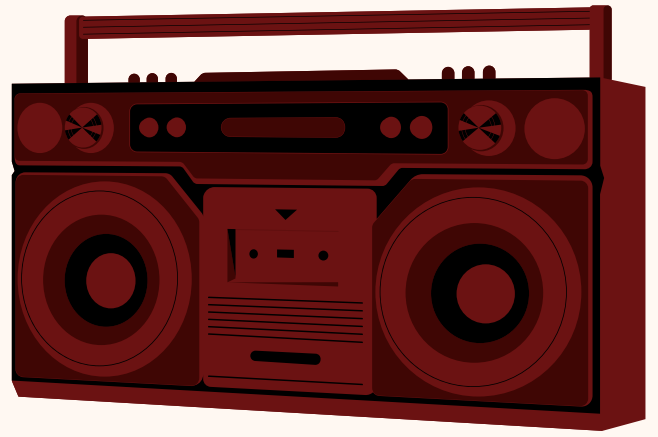


"THE CURIOUS BEAUTY OF AFRICAN MUSIC IS THAT IT UPLIFTS EVEN AS IT TELLS A SAD TALE. YOU MAY BE POOR, YOU MAY HAVE ONLY A RAMSHACKLE HOUSE, YOU MAY HAVE LOST YOUR JOB, BUT THAT SONG GIVES YOU HOPE."

-NELSON MANDELA-



EDITOR'S WORD



Well, well, well, look who's back for another edition. It's me, your favourite virtual magazine, Kulture! Can you believe it's been a year since we started this journey? I never thought I'd have such a fab team, but here we are, making magic happen!

Speaking of magic, this edition is all about music and science. Why music, you ask? Because it's like oxygen to Afrikans - we can't live without it! It's in our DNA, just like rhythm is in our veins. We respond to music as plants do to sunlight - it heals us, rejuvenates us, and calms us down. Music is our jam!

But let's not forget that music has been weaponized against us, especially in the diaspora. Hip-hop was meant to heal, but now it promotes gang culture and damaging sexual ideas that hurt our youth and families. It's time to take a stand and heal our communities.

On a brighter note, music is also a unifying force. LaMusicJunkie has a killer article on how music genres are influenced by the diaspora and the motherland. It's like a beautiful intersection of cultures that everyone can enjoy! Plus, we've got a playlist that will make you appreciate the musical magic that happens when we all come together.

So sit back, relax, and enjoy this special edition - it's going to be music to your ears!

Karibuni!

Kulture Queen
Editor



"IF YOU CANNOT
DANCE TO THE
MUSIC, AT LEAST
MOVE YOUR FEET TO
THE RHYTHM."

YORUBA PROVERB - WEST AFRICA.



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UNDER THE INFLUENCE

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This edition's review is on the Late Oliver Mtukudzi,. An Afrikan Music Master.



ABOUT KULTURE MAGAZINE

Kulture Magazine is a quarterly magazine written for the African demographic, the Afro-Diaspora and enthusiasts of Africa. This magazine is made to inspire Black Excellence, as well as encourage healthy living that promotes the future of our MIGHTY race.

“

African music has the power to heal, transform, and connect people across borders and cultures

Quote by Senegalese musician Youssou N'Dour

”




EPIGENETICS, HIP- HOP AND MUSICAL EXPRESSION

BY PETER NYAMATO




They say that coincidence is the language of the Ancestors. A series of events whose happenstance forces one to stop and think of the improbability of such a sequence happening by chance. This is true of everyday happenings in life, but what if those coincidences cover a vast array of artistic and musical expressions over a period of millennia? Well, perhaps a coincidence so solidified in time and space stops being so coincidental. Maybe we could term it an anomaly of serendipity. We are a product of our Ancestors, this goes without saying, and by extension, a product of our ancestral heritage. We see this in many instances in the way our Ancestors expressed themselves artistically and musically, and the way we do so today.

The study of epigenetics, once considered an outlier in mainstream scientific discourse, has played a big role in explaining the inheritance of behaviours, traumas and even cultural expressions, particularly in peoples of African descent. It is the study of how your surroundings, environment and behaviours can lead to long-term changes in your genetic expression and how your genes work. We see, for example, the fear that many people of African descent have of water and swimming and can link it in many instances to the traumas our Ancestors faced during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.



This is made all the more remarkable when you consider that Africans from that part of the world, Senegambia, were once considered the best swimmers in the world and were even used and paid by Portuguese sailors to reclaim sunken treasures from shipwrecks off the west coast of Africa. Now, the stereotype pervades that black people are bad swimmers and cannot swim!

In terms of musical expression, we have a fascinating case study in the genre of Hip-Hop. In his book, *Hip-Hop Decoded: From Its Ancient Origin to Its Modern Day Matrix*, the Hip-Hop artist and writer The Black Dot proffers an intriguing argument for the links to Hip-Hop culture and Ancient Kemetic traditions. He looks at Hip-Hop from a spiritual, occulted and metaphysical aspect and breaks down the five elements of Hip-Hop culture to illustrate their similarities and the synchronicity with Ancient Kemetic traditions: The B-Boy (break-dancer), the MC, the DJ, the graffiti artist and knowledge of self. The B-Boy is the sacred dancer of ancient times, the MC is the oracle, the griot or the storyteller, the DJ is the modern-day drummer and the graffiti artist is the Scribe, the practitioner of hieroglyphic art and expression. Knowledge of self, the fifth element, speaks for itself. A stand-out line from the Black Dot is, "when you lose something, you are forced to go within self, to recreate self". This is a profound statement on very many levels. It is self-evident in relation to the topic at hand but perhaps deserves further consideration. The similarities in artistic and literary expression can be seen visually or by the mind's eye between the coupling of the cultural practices as demarcated by Black Dot. But the purpose behind the practice of these five tenets will obviously be different and dictated by historical and societal context. The sacred dancer and the B-Boy are not gyrating for the same reasons, and not even in the same manner. They are a product of the environment in which they came about.



One is more spiritual, the other less so and because of this, there is an attenuation of the direct cultural link that can be made, but the similarities are nonetheless striking.

I remember watching a cultural dance online by a group of Burkinabe men on the grounds of a traditional African temple and the similarities with the gang-affiliated dance known as the Crip walk were incredible. A heavy emphasis on the rhythmic twisting of the legs and feet at right angles. One has to ask themselves, is this the flowering of Ancestral physical expression? As stated, the reasons for the dance will be totally different, but even if one is a facsimile and maybe even a simulacrum of the other, the parallels cannot be ignored. Perhaps this is part of the process of “re-membling” who we are and where we came from. Re-aligning with our ancestral heritage.


The author even goes on to link the four elements to Hip-Hop: The graffiti artist linked to the earth, putting his words up on concrete and even, of course, on trains; The B-Boy represents the water element as our bodies are composed of more than 70 per cent water; the DJ as the sonic representation of the air element, since sound, uses air to travel, and the MC represents fire- (How often is it heard that the MC is spitting fire?) words that engender or elicit an emotional response, and how often is fire linked to emotion? The heart chakra can even be linked to the drum, the throat chakra to the MC or the griot, the pineal gland to the graffiti writer, who takes unseen words and makes them seen and the lower chakras can be linked to the gyrating hips of the B-Boy and the sacred dancer.

Hip-hop became a universal language spoken all over the world, and DNA stores information, but that information can become dormant.

The slave master, for example, understood the power of the drums and the significance of the drum to the African native and later the slave, and so drums were banned. But The Black Dot argues that Hip-Hop helped to unlock our Ancestral DNA. All that was needed was for the conditions and the environment to be ripe in order to bring about this musical ancestral expression. We even must consider the costumes that many musicians choose to wear for

their album covers, concerts and even in their day-to-day sartorial expression. Look at Earth Wind and Fire and the cover of the rapper **Nas'** album **"I Am"**. One of his lyrics goes thusly: "I'm like a street sweeper, green leaf breather, like Greeks in Egypt, learning something deep from they teachers" We can go even further back and look at the work of the highly influential jazz musician Sun-Ra, who was one of the pioneers of Afro-futurism. His followers were dressed up as Kemetic Priests, kings and deities and he even made a motion picture called *Space is the Place* (1974) in which he is dressed in Kemetic attire. The movie puts forth the proposal of teleporting the black people of the earth to another planet through music because they are oppressed and underappreciated here on earth. It is even well known now in modern times of the links that the Dogon peoples have with the Sirius star. Remember, coincidence is the language of the Ancestors.





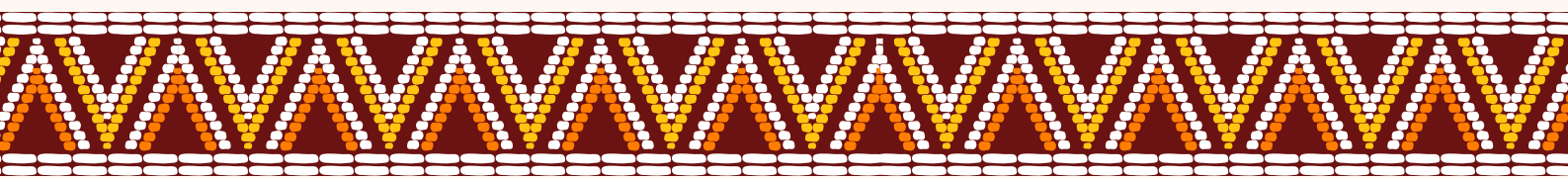
RIGHT
SOUND
HEARING
AND THE
REALM OF
THE SENSES

BY PABLO M. IMANI

The eye polarizes, differentiates, compares, analyses and ultimately makes mistakes in measurement, hence the term 'optical illusions'. We see only in three dimensions yet we hear in multi-dimensional layers of symphonies. Sounds and vibrations that visit us from distances known and unknown. The ear keeps us balanced and allows us to walk the straight line, the path. 'The aspirant is instructed to listen to the teachings, one is instructed to listen to what the Angel has to say' The ear is an area of sensitivity not



only because of its three distinct divisions: Inner, Middle and External ear but it is also an erogenous zone that excites even in the absence of visual stimulation both in sound of a sultry voice and touch. The ear is the receptive feminine quality of our senses not sending outward messages but receiving messages that are accurate to the T. The Eye is masculine utilizing powers of perception and persuasion, it hunts. No wonder in a Retina-occipital society governed by





patriarchy we are surrounded by the noise of aggression and the aggression of noise. In the city the decibels rise, each sound clambering over the other, to escape is almost futile, noise not sound surrounds immediately and vastly. In a Retina-occipital culture, we will find misconceptions and misperceptions of what is. White noise edges into our Black peace 24/7. Even in our sleep the refrigerator drones on.

Indigenous peoples have an Auditory-acoustic culture; it is porous, full of understanding, receptive, patient, more inclined to nurturing, and a willingness to serve (without domination) Hu-manity.

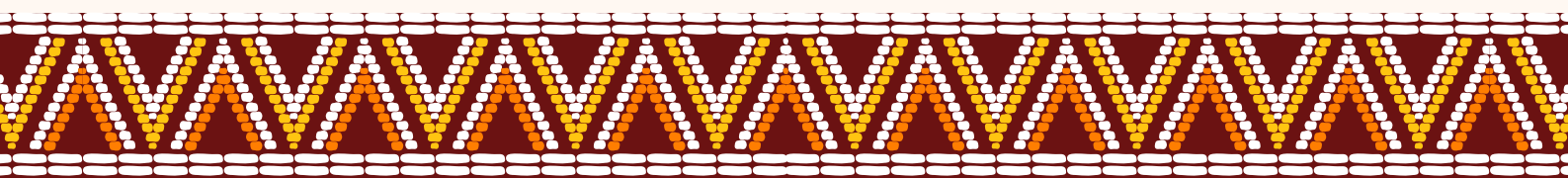
In the yogic system of Tama-re/ Tammerri Ancient Afrika, HU is acknowledged as the principle of sound and the creative force of thought vibrations; it is the essence of all things.

*HU the divine essence is activated in the movements of HUDU Afrikan Yoga (intention through breath and sound/vibration).

The Ancient Afrikan scientist silently received information about the stars and planets and patiently mapped them out in the blackness of space, this had to be in balance with the ear as well as the eyes.

This is why the first school of Pythagoras Greek philosopher of the 5th Century and a student of Afrikan Priests-scholars in Khem was a school dedicated to sound and its relationship to mathematics when he learnt that even the planets emit sound which is now known as the 'music of the spheres' which provides healing qualities. The ancient Afrikan gave us the Zodiac which has given birth to astrology and astronomy.

They understood the vibratory quality of HU in chromatics, harmonics and physics, through and with a reverence to the ear. The ear unites bringing waves of light in the form of sound to our awareness with mathematical accuracy. The sense of hearing is the last to disappear when a person goes into a state of unconsciousness, sleep or death and it is the first sense to be



activated when one returns from sleep or becomes conscious. Shhhhh.
LISTEN and listen deeply.

My favourite places growing up are libraries, the denizen temples of urban civilizations not only because of playing the game of finding truth mangled in the 'lies buried' within them but because of the insistence of silence.

I often ask talkative children 'Do you learn by talking or by listening?'

Practice silence for 1-2 hours a day and let the purest of sound come from within you and allow it to unite with sound outside of you. Embrace the purest of sound that emanates from the earth at 8 megahertz, tuning our being as all the planets in the Kosmos do. Practice the art of listening that

minimizes error in judgment primarily of yourself and secondarily of others. Listening provides a pause in noise. Silence is the enhanced potency of sound that enriches our existence. In silence, we hear our inner-being divine in nature and the hum of natural life around us. We hear HU within and out of us and meet HU connecting the HU in man, HU-man. Silence is a means of tapping into the deeper constructs of our being and affecting our atmosphere with power.

Listen. Silently love and see the world change right before your eyes.



Innerview

Our

personality

for the

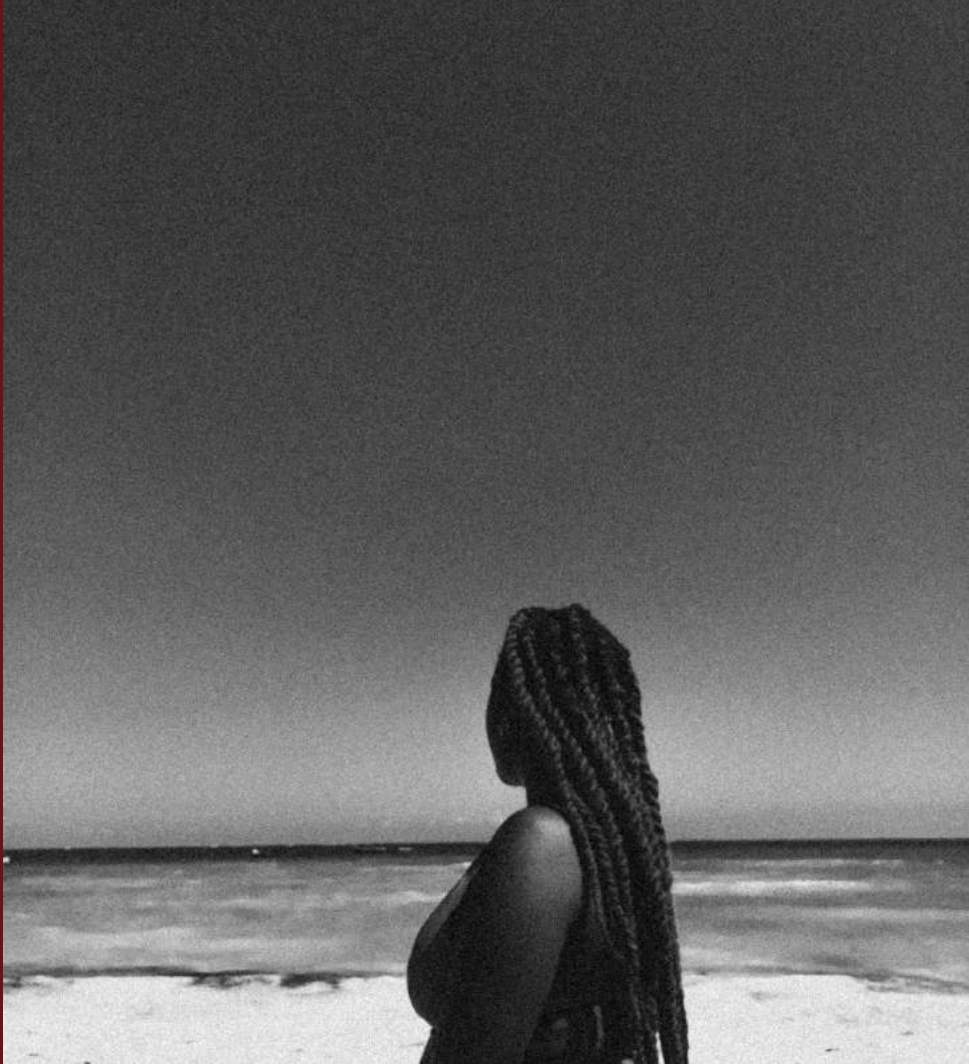
music

special is

Nabalayo a

creative

Empress.

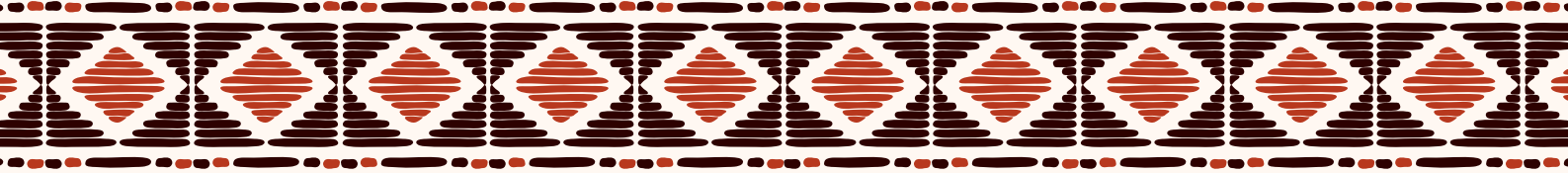


Nabalayo is a Nairobi-based producer, singer-songwriter and performer; channelling indigenous Kenyan ancestral energies to create electronic music and out-of-this-world sounds.

Her music blends ethereal soundscapes and rich local folk idioms with light airy vocals in order to transport her audience to other realms of existence.

Her artistic practice is driven by the values of storytelling, archiving and showcasing the beauty of diversity.





1. Who is Nabalayo? Tell the readers a bit about the art you create.

I am an archive of culture and my ancestor's wildest dreams. I am an artist who works on the principles of story-telling, archiving and cultural exchange.

2. Do you target a specific audience? Or who do you aim to communicate with through your art?

Art is for everyone. If I could transmit my work to every single person on the planet I would.

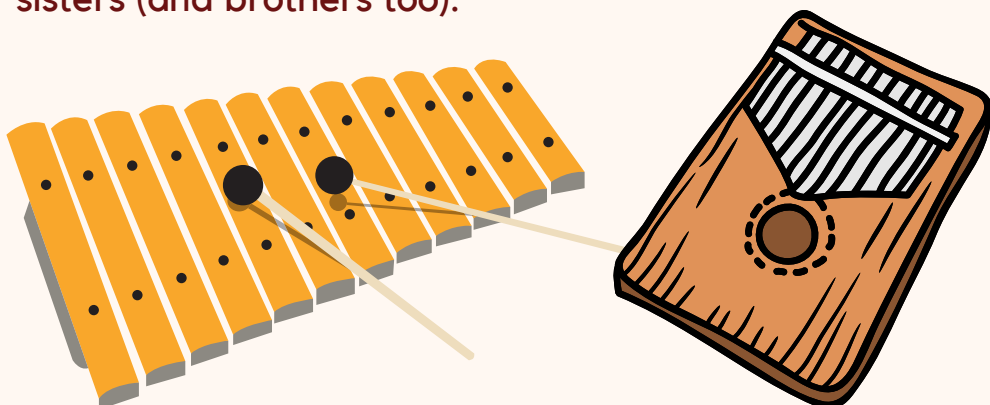
3. Who is your most inspired creative/artist of all time?

There are a number of music artists that I feel are timeless. My favourites are Nahawa Doumbia, Björk, Little dragon, Quarteto em cy, Nai Palm and Fela Kuti.

4. How has your experience been so far in the music industry? (What kind of support did you receive? Tell us of your lowest and highest moment on this journey. What do you appreciate most about your interactions in the industry?)

My journey has been interesting. Lots of learning which I appreciate. The process has been gradual, I feel. No real "high" or "low" moments. However, my favourite part is when music leads to the creation of community.

I also appreciated the communities of creative people and especially creative women that cushioned my entry into the music industry. I have a lot of industry big sisters (and brothers too).



5. Which of your works do you have a particular attachment to? For what reason?

I am attached to all my work. I love everything I put out and listen to my music often.

Whenever I create I enjoy it and I am proud of the work I have done.

6. Could you walk us through your creative process, please? What would you say is essential before, during, and after the creative process?

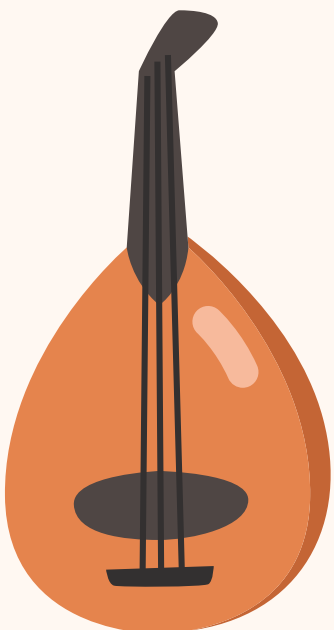
Telling a story is essential for my creative process. I always look inward or to the world around me for a prompt on what to express. An essential part of my process is the reduction process. This is when I have put down all my ideas and saturated a project with too many possibilities, then go in to carve out what I want and leave the unnecessary pieces.

8. How does music play an integral part in your life as an Afrikan?

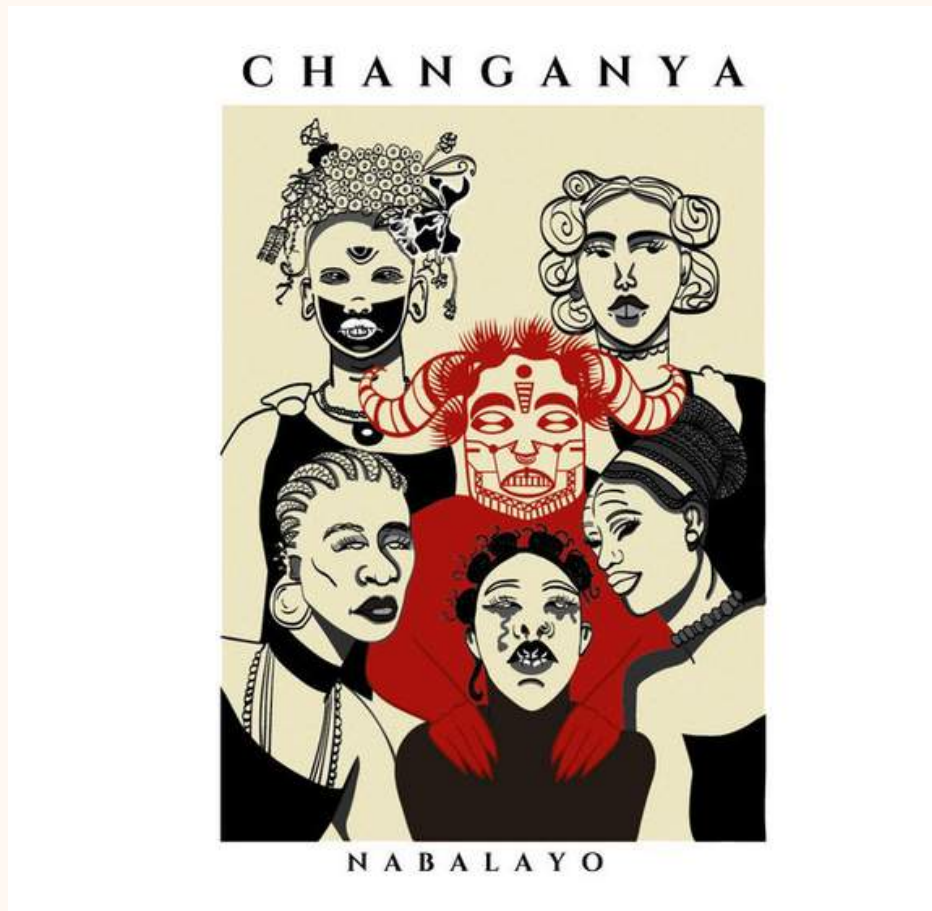
Music is a way to express things you can't speak out about immediately.

9. What advice do you have for multi-talented artists like yourself?

You don't have to pick one. Do them all. And stay true to the values that guide you.



Nabalayo's Work Sample



CONNECT WITH NABALAYO'S
CREATIVE WORKS



linktr.ee/Nabalayo



SOLFEGGIO FREQUENCIES FOR HEALING AND WELLNESS.

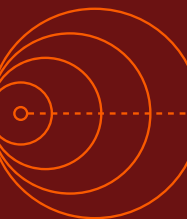
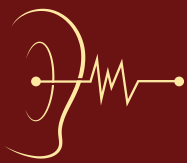
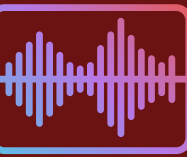
BY SAM WANGOME

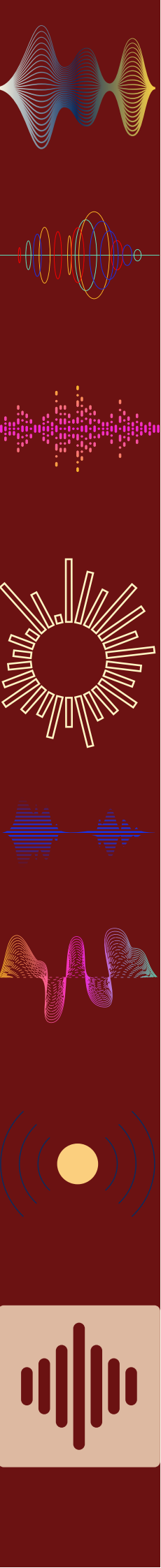
Curious one,

I ask you to look me in the eye. Do not turn your cheek away to hide the shame you feel, realizing that you forgot me and reduced me to a mere fact reserved for entertaining pseudo-intellectuals and budding conspiracy theorists. I can feel your deep gasp for air, wiping the thin film of sweat from your forehead when your child asks, "Mama! Papa! What are Solfeggio frequencies?" Time flashes in your mind as you remember knowledge passed through generations explaining that they are a set of ancient musical scales that have been used for centuries for their healing properties.

You hold back a tear from falling when you see the young one fold their palms around your sweaty fingers when they ask about the history of Solfeggio frequencies. It is fascinating as it reminds you music has always been part and parcel of your being.

The origins of Solfeggio frequencies can be traced back to the Gregorian chants of the medieval times. These chants were used by monks for their spiritual and healing qualities. The chants were based on a six-note scale, which later became identified as the Solfeggio frequencies. When you thought we would share an eternity, I disappeared!





Can I blame you for forgetting me? I feel guilty scolding you for suddenly loving and cheering me in the 1970s when I gained popularity in the mainstream. It was a brave gentleman Dr Joseph Puleo, a naturopathic physician and researcher who rediscovered that I, Solfeggio frequencies, had specific healing properties. He published his findings in his book, "The Healing Codes of Biological Apocalypse", which sparked a renewed interest in the use of Solfeggio frequencies for healing purposes.

The Solfeggio frequencies are a set of six tones that have been shown to have healing effects on the body and mind. These frequencies are:

396 Hz - Liberating Guilt and Fear

417 Hz - Undoing Situations and Facilitating Change

528 Hz - Transformation and Miracles (DNA Repair)

639 Hz - Connecting/Relationships

741 Hz - Expression/Solutions

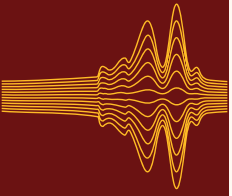
852 Hz - Returning to Spiritual Order

I know the entirety of your being and the tune to flow through. For example, I vibrate in the 528 Hz frequency, repairing your DNA, while I dance in the 417 Hz frequency to facilitate change and undo negative situations that torment you. The 396 Hz frequency is believed to help release feelings of guilt and fear, while the 852 Hz frequency is said to help us return to spiritual order.

I am your truest friend! Have I not many a time reduced your stress and anxiety? Do I not help you sleep, increase focus and concentration, and promote a sense of calm and relaxation?



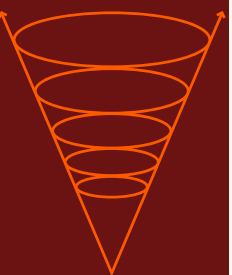
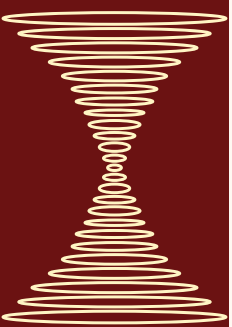
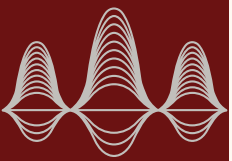
I ease turbulent souls tormented by depression, chronic pain, and even cancer. Help me rekindle the bond we once shared.



Rekindle our bond through meditation and sound healing. Meditation involves focusing on the sound of my frequencies, which can help to calm the storms of your mind and promote relaxation. Sound healing involves listening to my frequencies, either through a speaker or headphones, and allowing the vibrations to penetrate the body and promote healing.



So why not give me a try and see what I can do for you?
Yours truly,
Solfeggio Frequencies.



A woman on the left is wearing a black halter-neck crop top, a straw hat with a blue and white striped band, and a gold necklace. She is holding a wooden acoustic guitar. A man on the right is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored patterned shirt, tan pants, a straw hat with a dark band, and black sneakers with pink soles. They are standing against a light green wall. A yellow rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text 'GET TO KNOW SOME ARTISTS' in a bold, black, outlined font.

**GET TO
KNOW SOME
ARTISTS**

1

MISS DEVA'S

What does your name mean?

Deva means Divine so Miss Deva can be translated to Daughter of the Divine.

How did you get into making music?

My earliest memory is of me leading songs in nursery school during our little assemblies.

In form 1, high school, I'd sing to myself quietly during preps and the girl seated in front of me started complimenting me on how beautiful a voice I had. I think that's when I got the confidence to sing in front of people.

I then joined the journalism club and my talent blossomed there.

What does music mean to you?

Wow, what a question. I'm not sure.

I have this tattoo under my clavicle of a G-clef connected to a heartbeat symbol

Let's go with that and say that music is my heartbeat.

I love how music influences the energy around and within me. Wherever you want to go, it'll take you.



Do you have any pre-performance rituals?

I think it's absolutely mandatory for me to have them ☺ I used to get a lot of anxiety before a performance which would lead me to forget all the lyrics and have a really shaky voice as I sang

Tough times. I slowly realized that I can do some things to help me relax and not overthink things.

One, I make sure that I'm well prepared - I'm good with the lyrics, flow and key of the song.

Two, I do vocal exercises and take some lemon water beforehand

Three, Affirmations in front of the mirror. " You are beautiful, you are talented, you are a healer, heal with your voice...heal with your truth" Hehe.

Sounds intense but music is that serious to me

Lastly, I have to dress well. I need to be comfortable if I'm gonna be the focus of attention for however short a period.

How can music unite Afrika and eventually make us the great continent we are spiritually, politically and economically?

Gosh, I don't know.

One thing I can say is that Afrikan music is really healing.

My Spotify is full of Benga and Champeta music by the likes of Winyo and Oliver Mtukudzi.

Not only are the lyrics uplifting but the chants and instruments used speak to us on a different level. Let's embrace authenticity in our creations and the rest will follow.

Why do you think music plays such an integral role in African life?

Music is an expression of who we are. It's a nakedness that others can't help but relate to. Given our history of colonization, I think music is really important to us because it gives us an out-of-the-cage of mental slavery. We are able to express the truth of who we are through music and I believe this helps to heal the trauma inherited and ingrained deep within us.

What is the best advice another musician/band gave you?

Don't try to be pretty as you sing 🙄

In other words, don't try to control things so much as you are performing. Just let go and become one with the song.

CONNECT WITH MISS DEVA



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2

MUSYOKI MUTUA POET

What does your name mean?

My name is Musyoki Mutua meaning the one who came back.

How did you get into making music?

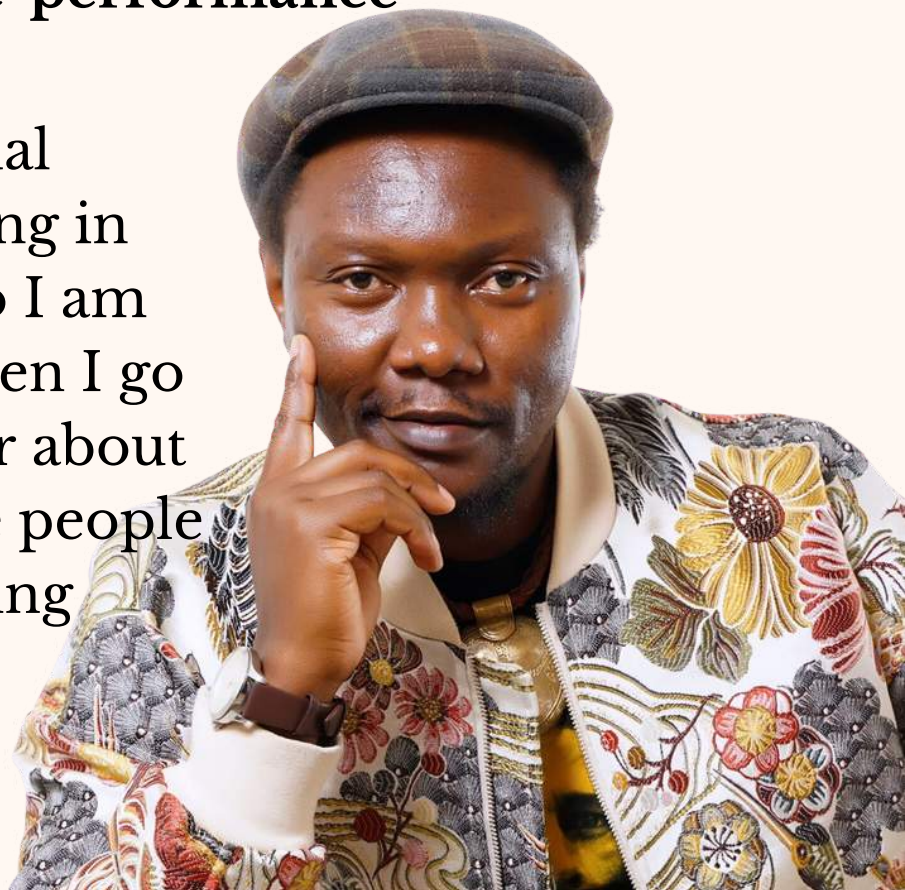
I got into music through poetry, because I am the poet who sings. My poetry spoke to me in a musical way and eventually, the poems turned into music

What does music mean to you?

Music to me means freedom, enlightenment, bliss and a weapon for mass instruction

Do you have any pre-performance rituals?

My performance ritual usually is me breathing in the awareness of who I am and knowing that when I go on stage it's no longer about me but it is about the people and the message I bring forth.



How can music unite Afrika and eventually make us the great continent we are spiritually, politically and economically?

Music can unite us when made intentionally with the purpose of uniting and when the musicians themselves are aware of their power to unite and that goes to the audience too, everybody in this time must be aware.

Why do you think music plays such an integral role in African life?

Music brings us together by talking about issues concerning us and laughing about ourselves.

What is the best advice another musician/band gave you?

The best advice I was ever given was to go back to my culture and go local in order to go international.

CONNECT WITH MUSYOKI

MUTUA POET



[@musyoki mutua poet](#)

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HUGH TRACEY AND THE KIBUGANDET

BY PHILLIP CHERUIYOT

In 1950, Hugh Tracey, a British-born ethnomusicologist studying African music since 1921, travelled to Kapkatet, Kenya, to record the native songs of the Kipsigis, a pastoral tribe based in the western highlands of the Rift Valley. This had a profound effect on my grandfather years later.

Tracey subsequently spent the next several decades crisscrossing the continent with a portable recording machine, making disks of native African folk music; many of his recordings were seminal and plainly beautiful

Tracey, though having received a Carnegie Fellowship for fieldwork in 1931 produced a report which included indictments of missionary churches and the ways in which they sometimes suppressed or erased traditional cultures. This was too controversial to publish.

“At that time the public showed little interest in African music and did not understand why I constantly stressed the social and artistic value of the music for future generations of Africans,” he wrote in the catalogue notes to his “The Music of Africa” LPs. (He made two hundred and ten full-length records from his field recordings, some of which were released commercially, in the 1970s.)





Listen to CHEMIROCHA [here](#)

“In addition, recordings of tribal music, however good, were not considered to have commercial value, as they would appeal only to a limited audience which was familiar with the dialect in question, few, if any, of whom would have the necessary apparatus on which to play them.” In 1950, on his trip through the Rift Valley, Tracey collected three vernacular songs about a creature called Chemirocha, a mystical half-man, half-antelope figure, beloved by the Kipsigis for his lunatic singing and dancing. The most transfixing of the three sides, “Chemirocha III” is credited to “Chemutoi Ketienya with Kipsigis girls,” and was described by Tracey as “humorous” in his notes.

[notice the similarity with the word CHIMERA, which means

1. (in Greek mythology) a fire-breathing female monster with a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail.

2 a thing which is hoped for but is illusory or impossible to achieve.

3. "the economic sovereignty you claim to defend is a chimera"]]

The girls performing are accompanied by a lone *kibugandet*, a four-stringed lyre, and they sing in Kipsigis, the Nilo-Saharan language native to the region. The track is a minute and a half long. A female voice sings the melody alone, while at least one other young woman provides backing vocals. The lead singer's voice is high, soft, and mossy. Every once in a while, for a note or two, she and her backer fall into perfect harmony, and when this happens it feels as if some new chamber of your heart has just been pried open.

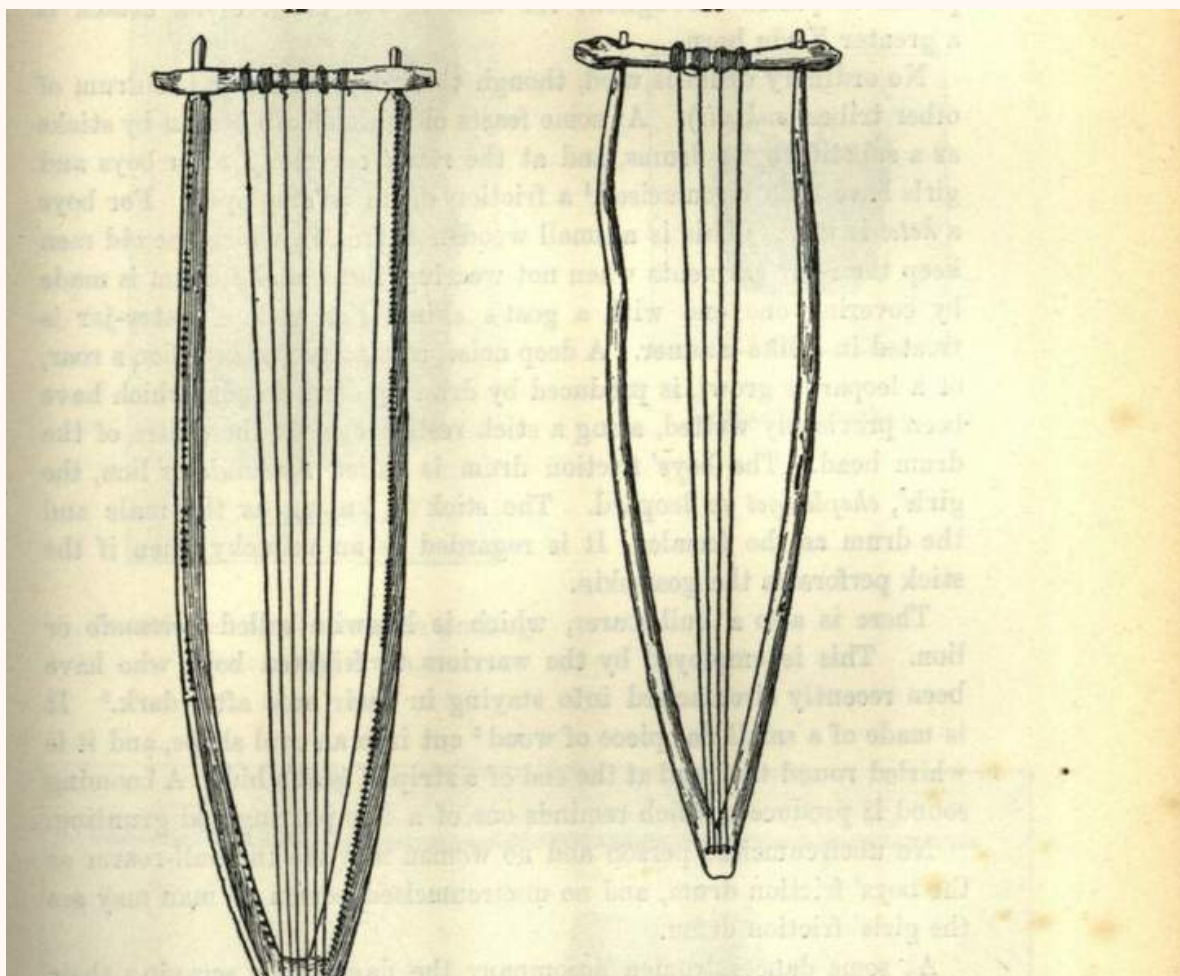
Tracey believed that the indigenous music of Africa was being slowly eradicated and that this was a grave tragedy, and he was right. But while the impulse toward preservation is laudable—Tracey wanted to protect something he respected, and was acting in service of a population he loved—very few creative expressions, no matter how remote, are ever actually free of foreign winds.

"The Kipsigis," an academic monograph written by the anthropologist Ian Orchardson, in 1961, suggests that when Kipsigis children sing, they also move. "The singing is always accompanied by dancing, or rather body movements of all kinds: head, neck, hands, arms, waist, hips, knees, and least of all, the feet." Unlike Kipsigis adults, who usually sing in a low, humming voice. This my grandfather Jacob Kiptum araap Togom imitated everywhere he went and when performing his daily chores,



so much so that his friends and neighbours nicknamed him 'Chepchoni' after a line in this very song.

In 1954, Tracey founded the International Library of African Music, or ilam, at Rhodes University, in South Africa; it remains the largest archive of African music in sub-Saharan Africa.

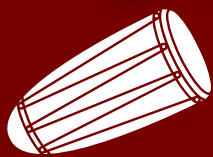


THE KIBUGANDET

TRADITIONAL MUSIC IS STILL GIVING



OLIVER MTUKUDZI



LEGENDARY ZIMBABWEAN MUSIC ICON

Oliver Mtukudzi, also known as Tuku, was a renowned Zimbabwean musician who had an impressive career spanning several decades. He transitioned in 2019 at 66 years of age, after having a musical career that lasted 4 decades. He was able to bless the world with a total of 67 albums of rich, mellifluous African music. His music was a fusion of traditional African rhythms, modern music, and social commentary that resonated with many listeners. As an artist, Tuku was a master of his craft, and his music will continue to inspire generations to come.

MUSICIAN'S REVIEW

Tuku's discography is extensive, and he has released numerous albums throughout his career. Some of his best-selling albums include:

- **Tuku Music**: This album, released in 1999, is one of Tuku's most popular records. It features a mix of traditional Zimbabwean rhythms, Afro-jazz, and other contemporary genres.
- **Neria**: Released in 1995, Neria is the soundtrack to a Zimbabwean movie of the same name. The album is a moving tribute to women and explores themes of love, loss, and resilience.
- **Bvuma (Spirit)**: Released in 2000, this album features Tuku's signature sound with a focus on spiritual and cultural themes.
- **Tsivo**: This album, released in 2002, is a collaborative effort with South African musician Ringo Madlingozi. It features a mix of Zimbabwean and South African rhythms.
- **Tsimba Itsoka**: Released in 1998, this album features a mix of traditional and modern music and explores themes of love, family, and identity.

Oliver Mtukudzi's music is a testament to his talent and his deep love for his country and its people. His legacy lives on through his music, which continues to inspire and move listeners worldwide.

I have asked several artists in this edition what music means to them, how music can unite Afrika and eventually make us the great continent we are spiritually, politically and economically as well as why music plays an integral role in the life of an Afrikan. Well, Tuku was one of the first Afrikan musicians I listened to. He happened to enter my world at the same time Chimamanda did. The idea of my Afrikan identity slowly crept into my world, and soon, thoughts of Afrikan spirituality sprouted.

I would say, Tuku's music helped me embrace my reality of being an Afrikan, especially in this time.

MUSICIAN'S REVIEW

Tuku spoke of social issues from an Afrikan perspective, reminding me that we can weave our own social fabric without external influences and based on our own Afrikan values. I find that refreshing. I'd advise that when we listen to his music, we also read the translations so that we get his rich messages on contemporary social issues. He comforted widows in songs like his famous 'Nerea', and the much loved 'Todi'i' was about the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. Something I find common in most songs is the rich faith in a supreme power that he expressed ever so comfortably. Faith is truly integral. We don't just exist, we have a Spiritual origin that we must give back to, have reverence for, and seek guidance from.

Tuku's music is rich. The rhythms and the vibes. He incorporated lots of saxophone melodies, percussions and heavy African sounds. Tuku really owned his Shona culture and you could feel it in his music. He unified Afrikans through his music and uplifting words. Tuku's music made it easier for me to embrace myself and want to know more about my culture, and also to want to take my stand as an Afrikan as I could sense how proud Tuku was of his identity, so I thought, yes, I want a piece of that.

In his song Mutserendende which is one of my favourites especially since I discovered what it means, it talks about despite the difficulty of life, it's better to be free and not to complain. Complaining is bad. So be strong. And be free.





**"AFRICAN MUSIC IS A FORM OF
SOCIAL COMMENTARY, AND
THROUGH IT, WE CAN EXPRESS OUR
STRUGGLES, TRIUMPHS, AND HOPES
FOR THE FUTURE."**

**= LEGENDARY ZIMBABWEAN
MUSICIAN @LIVER MTUKUDZI=**



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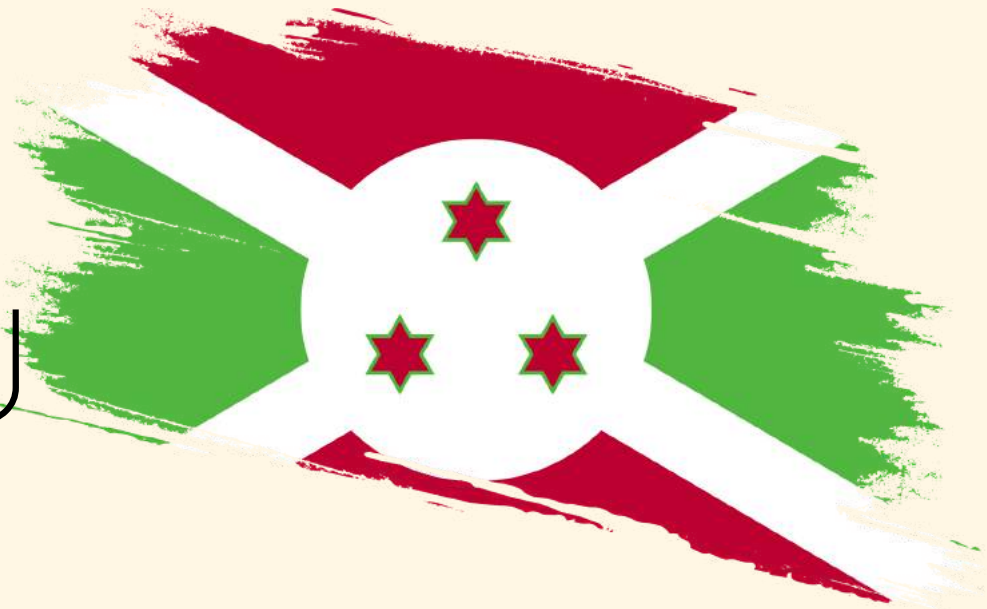
Audio Mastery

- Podcast Production
- Voice Over
- ADR (Automatic Dialogue Recording)
- Overdubbing
- Radio Spots
- Mixing
- Mastering

Video Production

- Music Videos
- Digital Assets
- News Spots
- Video Podcasting
- Editing
- Publishing
- Scripting
- Documentaries





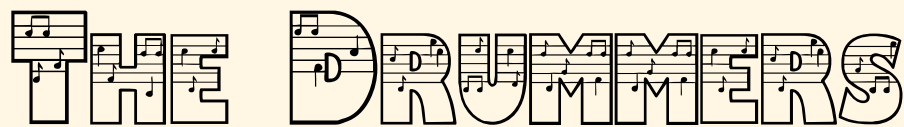
DID YOU
KNOW?



THE IMPERIAL DRUMMERS OF BURUNDI

CONTRIBUTED BY H.I.M ADAM G. MKUBWA,
MKUBWA WA BAKUBWA (LORD OF LORDS)
HEIR OF BURUNDI EMPIRE





THE DRUMMERS



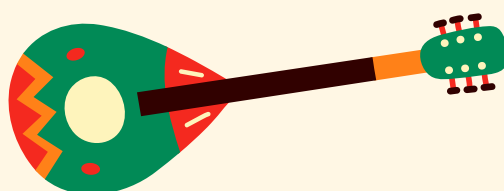
OF BURUNDI

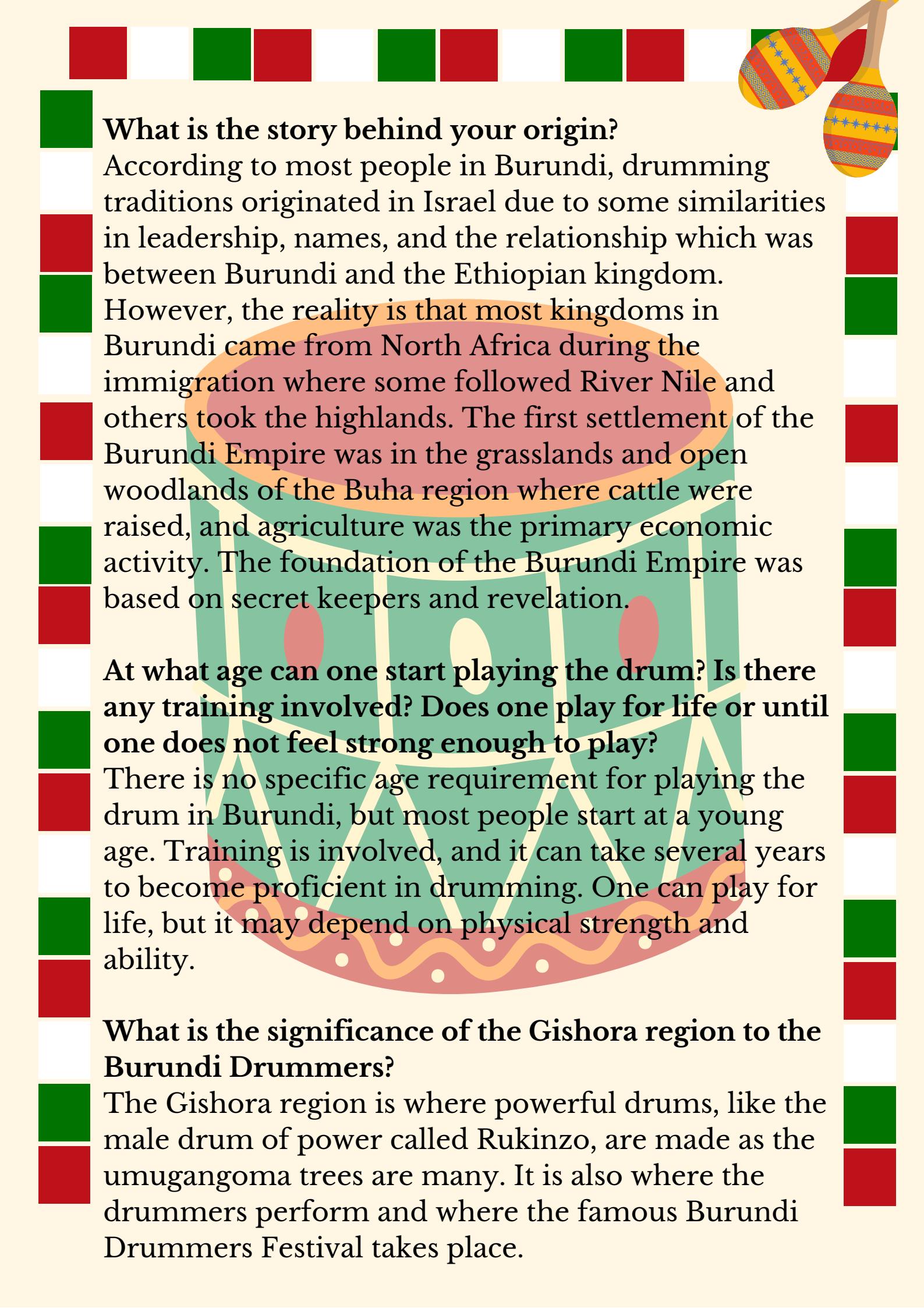
The Imperial Drummers of Burundi, commonly known as The Drummers of Burundi are a traditional percussion ensemble from the African nation of Burundi in East Africa that consists of a group of highly skilled individuals who play a wide variety of traditional Burundi instruments, including drums, xylophones, and bells. They play music characterized by complex poly rhythms captivating melodies, and intense energy. The drummers are renowned for their skillful and intricate drumming which is often performed in a large circle. The drums are made of wood and are covered with animal skins.

Enjoy this short conversation I had with Mkubwa who has helped me understand Burundi culture from the Imperall drummers' side of the story.

When was the first group of drummers formed?

The exact date of the formation of the first group of drummers in Burundi is not specified, but it is known that the drumming tradition dates back around 1000 years ago dating back to the time of the formation of the Burundi Empire.





What is the story behind your origin?

According to most people in Burundi, drumming traditions originated in Israel due to some similarities in leadership, names, and the relationship which was between Burundi and the Ethiopian kingdom.

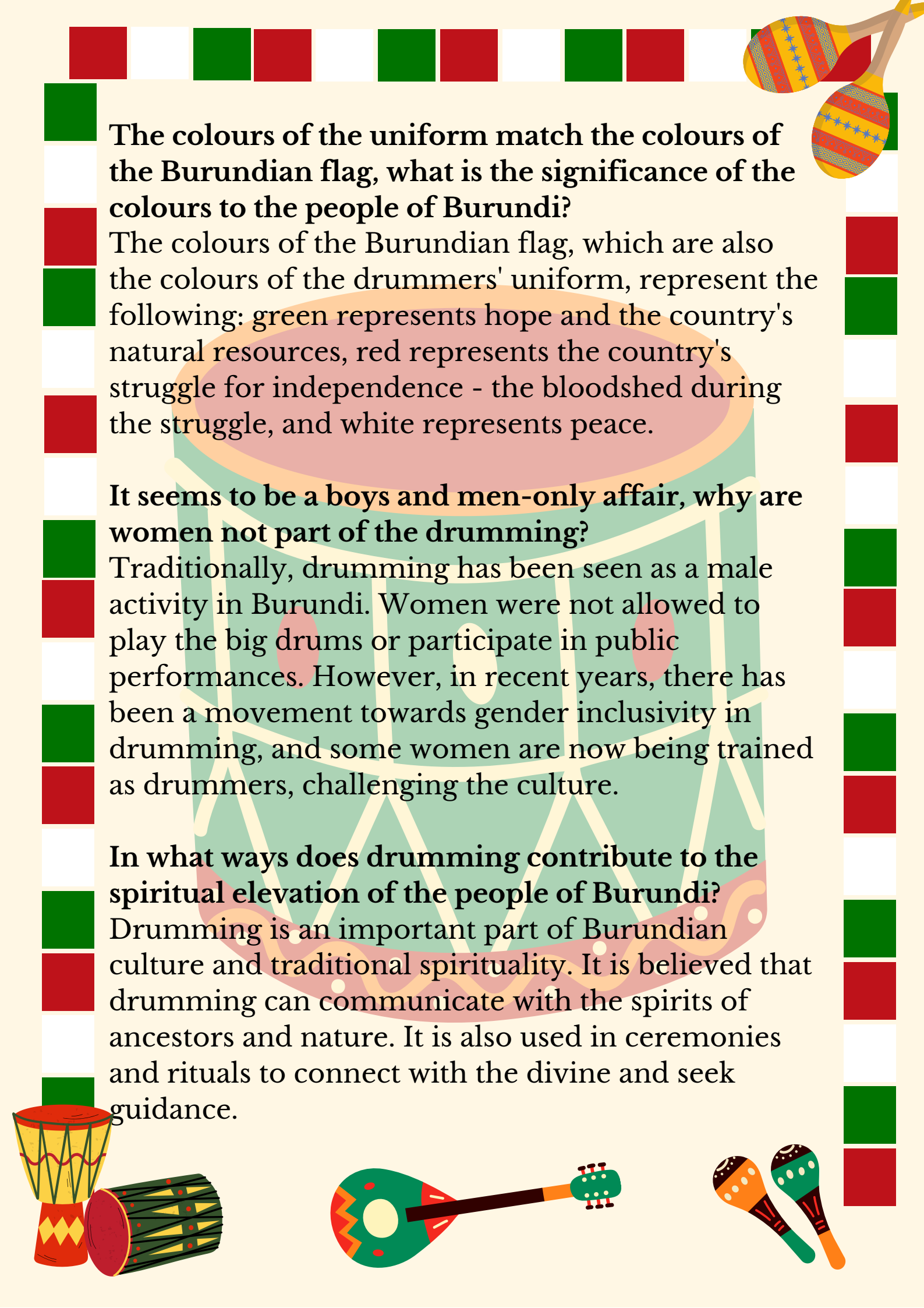
However, the reality is that most kingdoms in Burundi came from North Africa during the immigration where some followed River Nile and others took the highlands. The first settlement of the Burundi Empire was in the grasslands and open woodlands of the Buha region where cattle were raised, and agriculture was the primary economic activity. The foundation of the Burundi Empire was based on secret keepers and revelation.

At what age can one start playing the drum? Is there any training involved? Does one play for life or until one does not feel strong enough to play?

There is no specific age requirement for playing the drum in Burundi, but most people start at a young age. Training is involved, and it can take several years to become proficient in drumming. One can play for life, but it may depend on physical strength and ability.

What is the significance of the Gishora region to the Burundi Drummers?

The Gishora region is where powerful drums, like the male drum of power called Rukinzo, are made as the umugangoma trees are many. It is also where the drummers perform and where the famous Burundi Drummers Festival takes place.



The colours of the uniform match the colours of the Burundian flag, what is the significance of the colours to the people of Burundi?

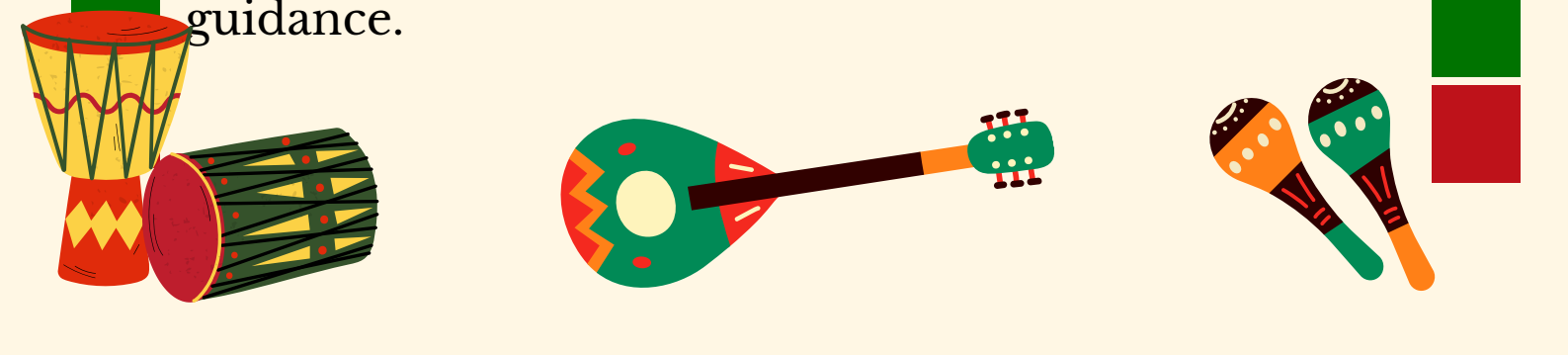
The colours of the Burundian flag, which are also the colours of the drummers' uniform, represent the following: green represents hope and the country's natural resources, red represents the country's struggle for independence - the bloodshed during the struggle, and white represents peace.

It seems to be a boys and men-only affair, why are women not part of the drumming?

Traditionally, drumming has been seen as a male activity in Burundi. Women were not allowed to play the big drums or participate in public performances. However, in recent years, there has been a movement towards gender inclusivity in drumming, and some women are now being trained as drummers, challenging the culture.

In what ways does drumming contribute to the spiritual elevation of the people of Burundi?

Drumming is an important part of Burundian culture and traditional spirituality. It is believed that drumming can communicate with the spirits of ancestors and nature. It is also used in ceremonies and rituals to connect with the divine and seek guidance.

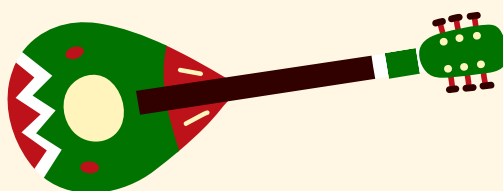


How has nationalism in Burundi been promoted by the drummers?

The Burundi drummers have played an important role in promoting nationalism in Burundi. The drumming tradition is seen as a symbol of Burundian identity, and the drummers often perform at national events and ceremonies, such as independence day celebrations.

What does the drum symbolize in Burundian culture and traditional Burundian spirituality?

The drum is a symbol of power, strength, and unity in Burundian culture and traditional spirituality. It is believed that the drumming can communicate with the spirits of ancestors and nature, and it is used in ceremonies and rituals to connect with the divine and seek guidance. The male drum of power, Rukinzo, and the female drum of power, Karyenda, are particularly significant and have a sacred status.



Other facts

The drumming tradition in Burundi has been passed down from generation to generation through training and apprenticeships.

In Burundian culture, the drum is a symbol of power and is often associated with royalty and spirituality.

Gishora is a region in Burundi that is significant to the Burundi Drummers because it is the birthplace of the big drums and is considered a sacred site.

Women are not traditionally part of the drumming because of cultural beliefs that view drumming as a masculine activity. However, there are now some female drumming groups in Burundi challenging this norm.

Drumming is believed to contribute to the spiritual elevation of the people of Burundi by invoking ancestral spirits and connecting people to their cultural heritage.

The karyenda is a small sacred drum associated with female power and is kept by a female secret keeper, while the Rukinzo is a male drum associated with male power and is kept by a male secret keeper.

Both drums are made from the umugangoma tree, which is believed to speak all languages.

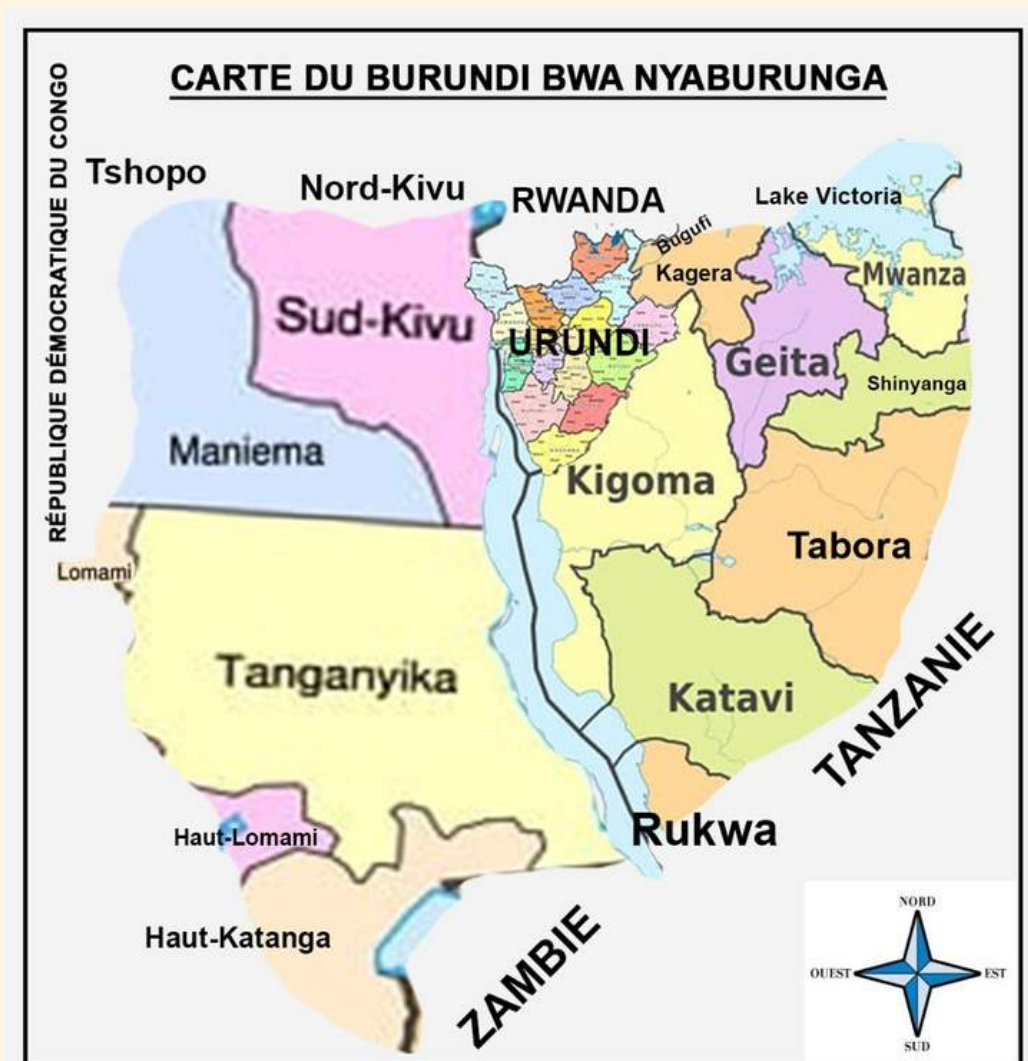
The big drums are made in different sizes, which produce a deep and powerful sound that is considered to be harmonizing and spiritual. The sound of the drums is believed to come from heaven, and their language is understood by everyone.



The sanctuary has two ritual drums that were never beaten, namely; Ruciteme (the one for whom we clear the forest) and Murimirwa (the one for whom we cultivate).

Other things to note,

The Burundi Kingdom extended to parts of Tanzania, DRC and Rwanda, the drummers serve the Burundi Kingdom, which is larger than Burundi country. Talk about the negative impact of the Berlin Conference, separating a people by placing them within borders.



ROYAL DRUMMERS OF BURUNDI... A SHORT GALLERY



IN THIS PHOTO, I SEE THE RHYTHM, I SEE
MOVEMENT AND I SEE HOW THEY HAVE A
SENSE OF CULTURAL PRIDE. WHAT DO YOU
SEE?





HERE WE HAVE RUKINZO, A MALE DRUM,
AND THE MALE DANCERS JUST ACCENTUATE
THE MASCULINITY. ITS A SMALL DRUM,
BUT OF A GREAT SIGNIFICANCE.





HERE WE HAVE KARYENDA FEMALE OF POWER. IT WAS NEVER SEEN IN PUBLIC SO IT DOESN'T EVEN MAKE SENSE TO POST IT'S PICTURE, BUT WE WANT TO LEARN, DON'T WE? I ASKED FOR PERMISSION TO HIGHLIGHT IT HERE.

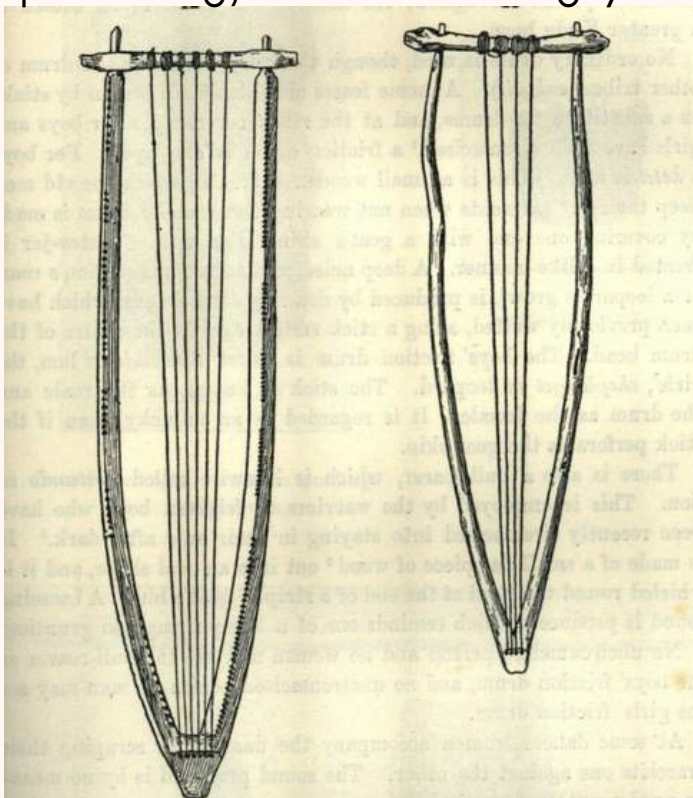


MUSIC FOR PERSONAL USE AND ENJOYMENT

BY KULTURE QUEEN FEATURING SHEGE EBALE

In an age where anything and everything can be commercialized, music was commercialized and in some instances weaponized a long time ago. This debases music into a money-making, celebrating vehicle that attenuates culture and human society. Music loses its intended value in our lives. Don't get me wrong, Rihanna and Beyonce have TREMENDOUS TALENT and trap music is fun to listen to, but this commercialization of music closes our eyes to a totally different perspective.

A long time ago, in the Nandi, men had a certain lyre they would play for an audience of one. Themselves. The instrument was called 'kibugandet'. A 5 string lyre for the Nandi community (with a spare string) and a four-string lyre for the Kipsigis community.



It is also known as the Kipokandet or the Chepkesem

Check out the earlier article on HUGH TRACEY AND THE KIBUGANDET by Philip Cheruiyot, for a link of how it sounds .

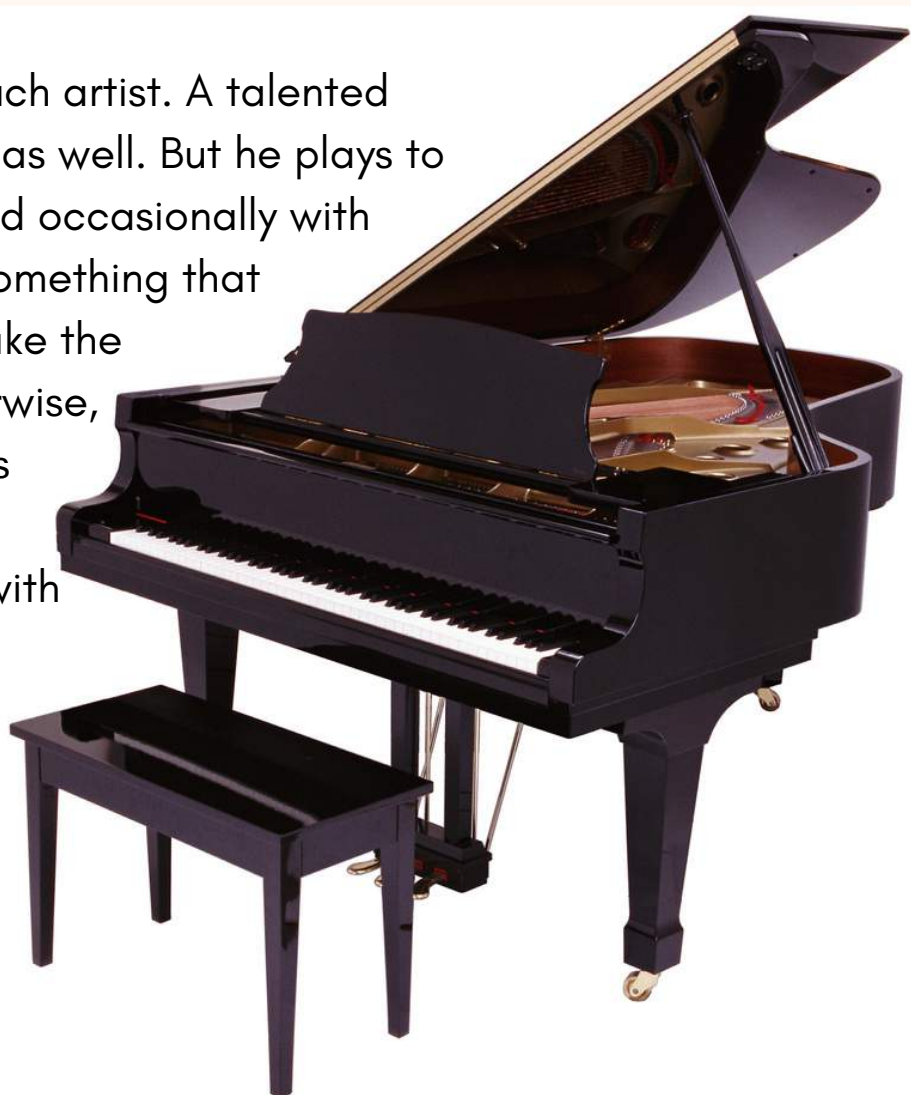


This instrument was played by men as a means to self-soothe the despondency of a mid-life crisis

Today, several people sing in the shower, or while doing chores, and then there are some who sit by themselves and play the piano, guitar, violin and any instrument for hours. Drums are good too, especially for spiritual healing. There is a certain joy that comes with performing for the audience of the self. It is healing because it offers one not only the chance to reflect, introspect and reassure oneself but also creates an environment where one gets to meet themselves and be comfortable with themselves.

Music is a great way for an artist to stay connected to their inner self and explore different parts of themselves. It has been a great companion and friend during difficult times, and it can be used to help the artist to process emotions and also express them, so they can better innerstand and overstand the situation at hand.

Shege Ébalé is one such artist. A talented vocalist and a pianist as well. But he plays to himself, for himself and occasionally with his brother. Music is something that he believes should make the musician happy, otherwise, you're selling out. Let's learn more from the following inner-view with him, and explore his relationship with music.






INNER-VIEW WITH SHEGE




EBALE



How did you start making music?




After being part of my high school's choir, I felt that my life had been left with a huge gap after completing school, a gap that could only be filled with music. So I looked at several options I could try my hand at. I'd jam with my brother, as he'd play the guitar and I'd sing along. Later I joined the Redfourth chorus for a few months. The first time I was requested to exercise my creative potential for a



project was when I was part of a play and the main character had to sweep his love interest in song. The director asked me to come up with a few bars. And I had quite a bit of fun doing it.



Why did you decide to enjoy your music solo?

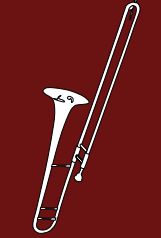


It was an effort to evade perception. Which I realise now, is futile. But I found much greater joy in my personal appreciation. Right now, if asked to play for a friend or a small group of close friends I don't really mind. However, I much prefer to just be alone.




How often do you play?



As often as I can. I don't really have a routine. Sometimes my piano will smile at me and I'd be beguiled. Sometimes it's every day, sometimes it's once a month.




How has this practice of solo audience performance improved the quality of your life?




Doing the music for the sake of the music has instilled discipline in me. The music needs to be good for its own sake, not for anyone's satisfaction. That brings an integrity that has been reinforced in other aspects of my life, including my study and other work. Since I can't come from making what I believe is good music, to living a below-average life just because I am not accountable to someone. I often see the difference in that integrity when I go without the music for a while.




Are there any particular musicians or artists that you admire?



When it comes to vibes, it's hard to beat the generation in Kenya. But if I look at who I'd like to see myself in, it's the kind of Chris Kaiga and Kinoti in Kenya, and Geoffrey Oryema, and Richard Bona in the rest of Africa. It's less the style of their music, than the honesty and feeling in it.



How would you describe your style of music, and what are some of the influences that have shaped your sound?



I'd say I just try things out and polish them. Although I feel the most satisfaction playing a jumpy love tune. Influences, I'd say I may be trying to mould myself into a Bruno Mars or a Kamauu, but I wouldn't even nearly put myself in the same conversation just yet hehe.

Have you ever encountered any unexpected or memorable experiences during one of your performances?

The first time I did. I played for one of my friends. She just burst into laughter, asking why she never knew I could do anything musical. I didn't look the least bit musical, according to her, and then I come out with this, she called me a con man. Needless to say, I had really been practising before I felt I could perform to her, or anyone for that matter.

Although there are many artists who don't play music for a live audience, there is still great beauty in their art. These artists are passionate about music and take great pride in creating and expressing themselves through their craft. Their music is often imbued with a deep personal meaning, and it can be a great source of comfort and solace. The music created by these artists may not be heard by a live audience. Although some people may find it strange, there is nothing wrong with playing music solely for personal pleasure. It can be a great way to express yourself and explore different parts of yourself without the fear of being judged or criticized.

There are many artists who choose to not play music for any audience. For these artists, music is an expression of their inner selves and a way to explore and discover different parts of themselves. Music can provide solace, comfort and joy, and it can be a great source of strength and support. Whether an artist chooses to play music for an audience or not, music can be a powerful tool for self-expression and personal growth.



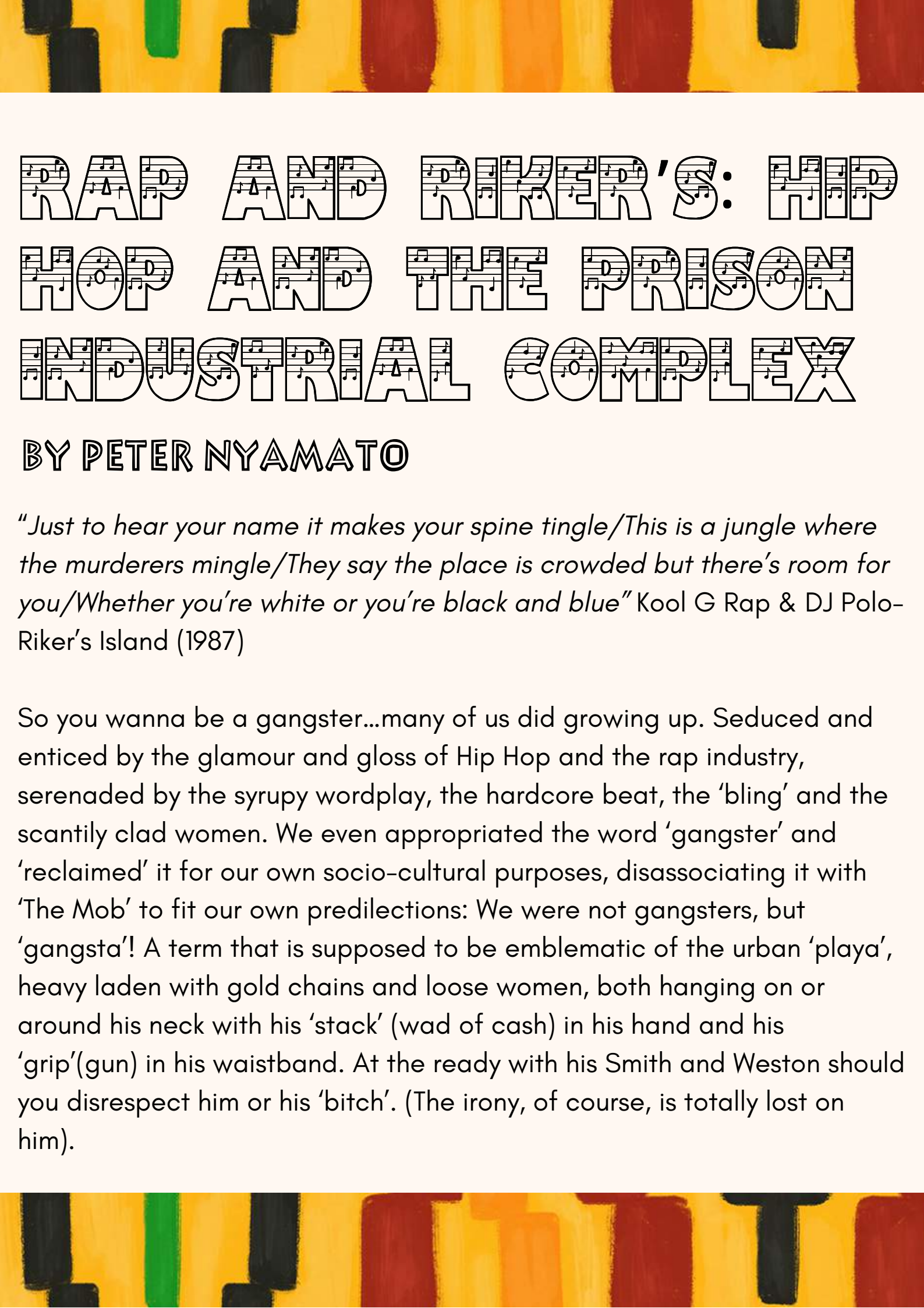


"AFRICAN MUSIC IS NOT JUST ANOTHER FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT, BUT A MEANS OF UPLIFTING THE SPIRIT, COMMUNICATING EMOTIONS, AND INSPIRING PEOPLE."

= NIGERIAN MUSICIAN

FELA KUTI =





RAP AND RIKER'S: HIP HOP AND THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

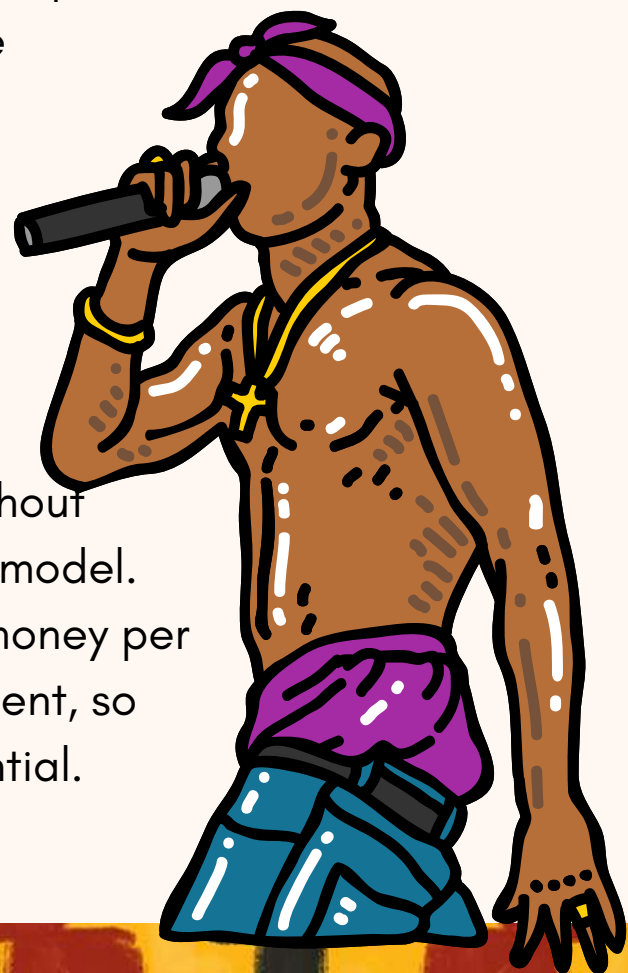
BY PETER NYAMATO

"Just to hear your name it makes your spine tingle/This is a jungle where the murderers mingle/They say the place is crowded but there's room for you/Whether you're white or you're black and blue" Kool G Rap & DJ Polo-Riker's Island (1987)

So you wanna be a gangster...many of us did growing up. Seduced and enticed by the glamour and gloss of Hip Hop and the rap industry, serenaded by the syrupy wordplay, the hardcore beat, the 'bling' and the scantily clad women. We even appropriated the word 'gangster' and 'reclaimed' it for our own socio-cultural purposes, disassociating it with 'The Mob' to fit our own predilections: We were not gangsters, but 'gangsta'! A term that is supposed to be emblematic of the urban 'playa', heavy laden with gold chains and loose women, both hanging on or around his neck with his 'stack' (wad of cash) in his hand and his 'grip'(gun) in his waistband. At the ready with his Smith and Weston should you disrespect him or his 'bitch'. (The irony, of course, is totally lost on him).

This, in our urbanized, culturally infantilized minds, was OUR culture that we benevolently lent to the world to sample its mellifluous genius. It enabled the white boy from Beverly Hills to imagine himself to be a bad boy, a playa from Compton, even if only in his sartorial choice; sagging, baggy pants.

But the sagging pants (trousers for those of you not familiar with American parlance) was the first red flag that should have set the alarm bells ringing. The sagging of trousers in the prison system was the indicator that an inmate was amenable to homosexual relations with other inmates. That this became the pre-eminent choice of dress for the hip-hop community was no coincidence. Apart from the obvious connotations related to the emasculation of the young, urban black male, the popularity and proliferation of rap went hand in hand with the exponential growth of the prison industrial complex, particularly in the early 90s and beyond. The prison industrial complex became the new iteration of the convict leasing system, where prisoners, after the abolition of slavery in 1865, were leased out to various businesses for a fee by the government. With the privatization of the prison system by the US government, ready-made prisons were constructed in ever-increasing numbers- and they needed to be filled! A private prison without prisoners to occupy it is not a good business model. These prisons received a certain amount of money per person per day from the US Federal government, so the marketing of these prisons became essential.

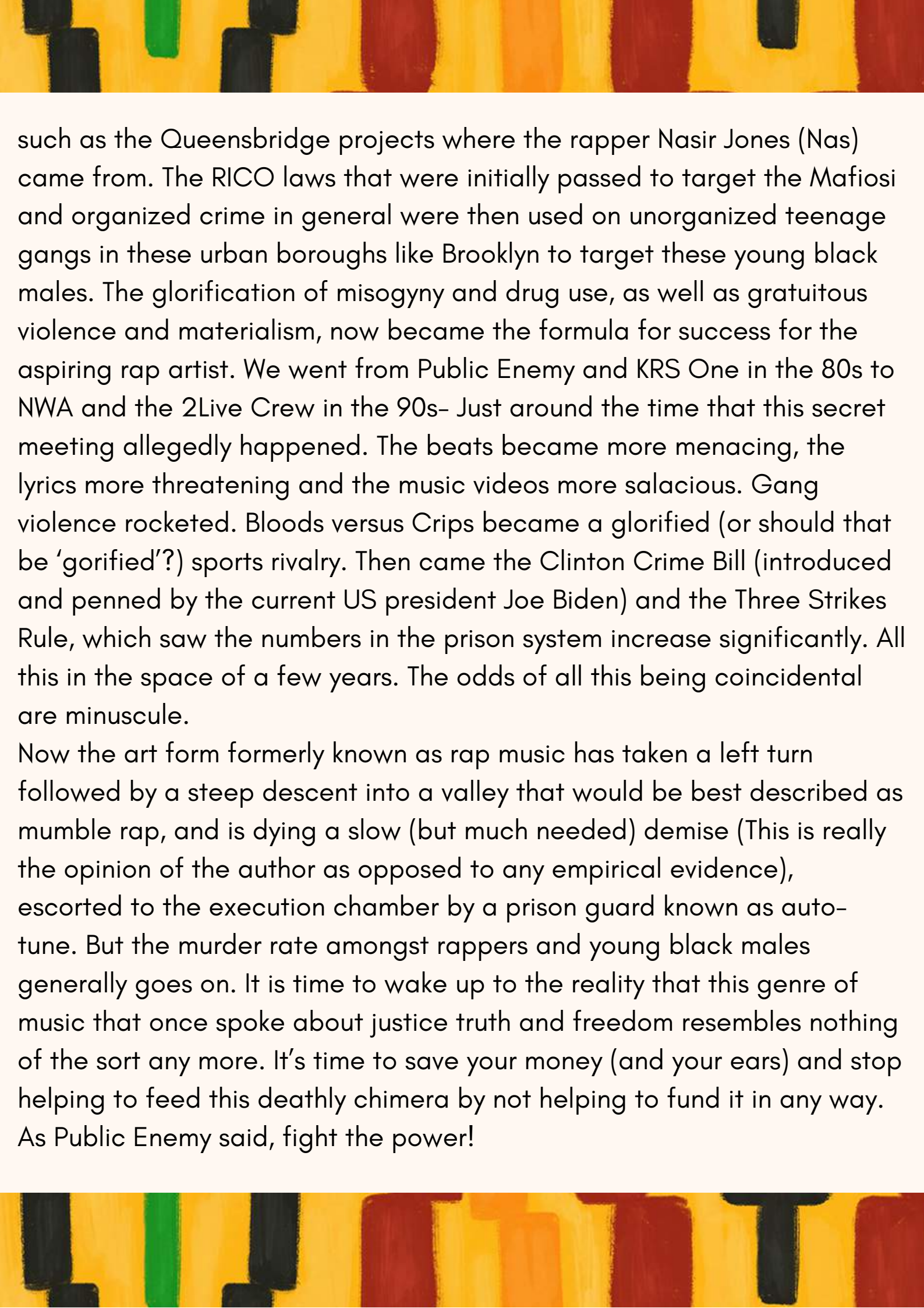


But it had to be done in a more covert way. Jail is not a place that too many people want to go to. Even if you are receiving three square meals a day; but you still needed a market to target: The same black people that were once enslaved by the government. Enter 'Gangsta Rap' and the now infamous 'Secret Meeting', the authenticity of which many have doubted.

About a decade ago, an anonymous letter was widely disseminated claiming to be from a music industry insider stating that a secret meeting was held by a clandestine group of music 'people' discussing how the music industry could help facilitate the packing of prisons and how both industries (outside of the US, it is incredible to even describe prison as an industry!) could benefit financially from the enterprise. The companies involved in running the prisons would receive funding from the government based on the number of inmates they housed. People would subsequently be able to buy shares as the prisons were privately owned. It followed therefore that music had to be marketed which glamourized criminality and recidivism. The carceral state had a new pillar that could help feed the AmeriKKKan economic juggernaut.

Many in the black entertainment industry recognized this early on, and articles were written, such as "Hip-Hop Behind Bars" (March 2004, Source Magazine). The link was then made between the prison system and the public housing projects (started by the Housing Act of 1937),





such as the Queensbridge projects where the rapper Nasir Jones (Nas) came from. The RICO laws that were initially passed to target the Mafiosi and organized crime in general were then used on unorganized teenage gangs in these urban boroughs like Brooklyn to target these young black males. The glorification of misogyny and drug use, as well as gratuitous violence and materialism, now became the formula for success for the aspiring rap artist. We went from Public Enemy and KRS One in the 80s to NWA and the 2Live Crew in the 90s- Just around the time that this secret meeting allegedly happened. The beats became more menacing, the lyrics more threatening and the music videos more salacious. Gang violence rocketed. Bloods versus Crips became a glorified (or should that be 'gorified'?) sports rivalry. Then came the Clinton Crime Bill (introduced and penned by the current US president Joe Biden) and the Three Strikes Rule, which saw the numbers in the prison system increase significantly. All this in the space of a few years. The odds of all this being coincidental are minuscule.

Now the art form formerly known as rap music has taken a left turn followed by a steep descent into a valley that would be best described as mumble rap, and is dying a slow (but much needed) demise (This is really the opinion of the author as opposed to any empirical evidence), escorted to the execution chamber by a prison guard known as auto-tune. But the murder rate amongst rappers and young black males generally goes on. It is time to wake up to the reality that this genre of music that once spoke about justice truth and freedom resembles nothing of the sort any more. It's time to save your money (and your ears) and stop helping to feed this deathly chimera by not helping to fund it in any way. As Public Enemy said, fight the power!

DIASPORA
EXPLORA





NEGRO SPIRITUALS AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

BY KULTURE QUEEN

Negro spirituals, also known as African American spirituals, are a unique form of music that have had a significant impact on American cultural history. These religious songs were created by enslaved African Americans during the 18th and 19th centuries as a way to express their faith and find comfort in times of great suffering during their years in slave plantations and most especially for those who were involved in the Underground Railroad.






The Underground Railroad was an intricate path to freedom followed by the slaves who decided enough is enough, and they just had to escape the life of slavery. It was neither a railroad nor was it underground, but was instead a loose and mysterious web of people and places serving the common goal of helping those bound by slavery to escape. They passed through forests and rivers and found refuge in places where they could hide from the white man hunting for them. Those fleeing slavery often moved northward from hiding place to hiding place under cover of darkness and in disguise. The songs helped the slaves to know where to stop for replenishment and when they arrived at their destination.

The origins of Negro spirituals can be traced back to the African traditions that enslaved people brought with them to the United States. These traditions, which included music, dance, and storytelling, were a way for African people to connect with one another and express themselves in a culture where they were often silenced.

As enslaved Africans were brought to America and forced to work on plantations, they were stripped of their culture and their freedom. In this context, spirituals emerged as a way for enslaved people to express their faith and connect with one another through music. Spirituals were often sung in secret, as slave owners sought to suppress any expression of African culture.



Despite the efforts of slave owners to suppress spirituals, these songs continued to be passed down through generations of African Americans. They were an important part of the underground railroad. This was such a tough experience as those caught escaping or helping slaves escape would be ruthlessly punished. Negro Spirituals came through for motivation and drive. Spirituals such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Wade in the Water" were used as coded messages to guide enslaved people on their journey to freedom.

Today we recognize Harriet Tubman as one of the chief conductors of the Underground Railroad.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot is said to be her favourite spiritual.

Check out how the song could have been interpreted by the slaves going through the Underground Railway.





LYRICS

LITERAL MEANING

"CODED," SECRET MEANING

Refrain

Swing low,

Come down from above,

Come into the slaveholding states,

Sweet chariot,

Heavenly vehicle

the "Underground Railroad",

Comin' forth to carry me home...

Coming to take me to heaven...

Come to take me to freedom in the North or in Canada...

Verse One

I looked over Jordan, and what did I see?

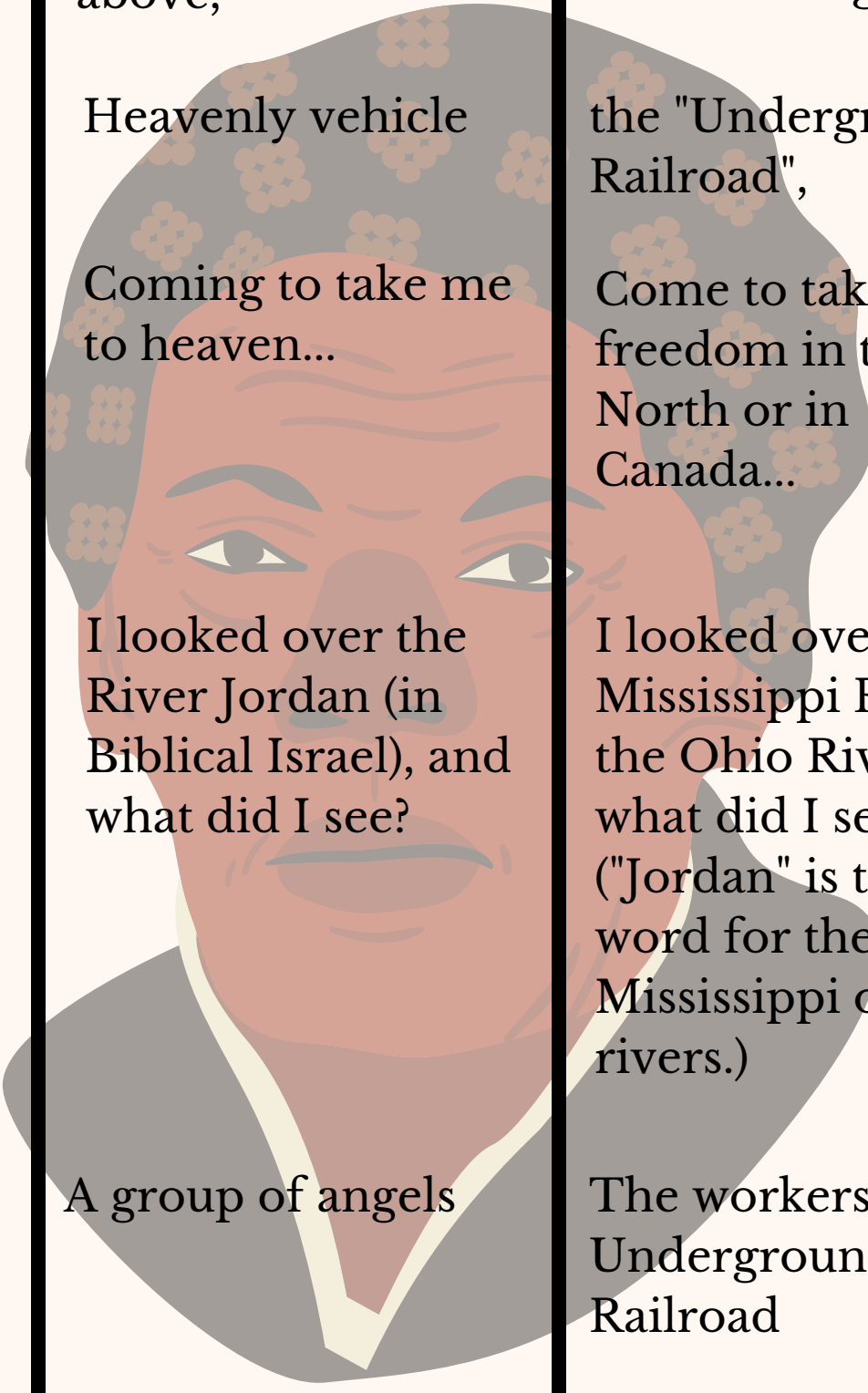
I looked over the River Jordan (in Biblical Israel), and what did I see?

I looked over the Mississippi River (or the Ohio River), and what did I see? ("Jordan" is the code word for the Mississippi or Ohio rivers.)

A band of angels

A group of angels

The workers of the Underground Railroad





LYRICS

LITERAL MEANING

"CODED," SECRET MEANING

comin after
me...

coming to take me
to heaven...

helping me to reach
the North...

In another example, the spiritual "Follow the Drinking Gourd" contained instructions on how to follow the North Star to freedom. "Wade in the Water" was believed to be a message to escapees to travel in water to avoid being tracked by dogs.

The lyrics of spirituals often referenced biblical stories and characters, which provided enslaved people with a way to connect with God and find solace in their suffering. Many spirituals also contained messages of hope and resilience, which were important for enslaved people as they endured the hardships of slavery.

Spirituals continued to be an important part of African American culture after slavery was abolished. They were often performed in churches and at community gatherings, and many African American musicians, such as Mahalia Jackson and Paul Robeson, became famous for their performances of spirituals.

Today, Negro spirituals are still performed and studied around the world.



They are an important part of African-American cultural history and continue to inspire people with their messages of faith, hope, and resilience in the face of adversity. The connection between Negro spirituals and the Underground Railroad continues to be celebrated and studied today. The music of the spirituals remains an important part of American cultural history, and the story of the Underground Railroad serves as a powerful symbol of resistance and hope in the face of oppression. Together, they represent the courage and resilience of enslaved African Americans and their fight for freedom and equality.



THE UNBREAKABLE BOND BETWEEN THE BLACK DIASPORA AND AFRICAN MUSIC

BY LAMUSICJUNKIE

The transatlantic slave trade changed the whole course of African history. Starting around the 16th century, our brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, were brutally taken away from the Garden of Eden and shipped off to Babylon. We became disconnected from each other physically and spiritually. But one key connection remained. Music.

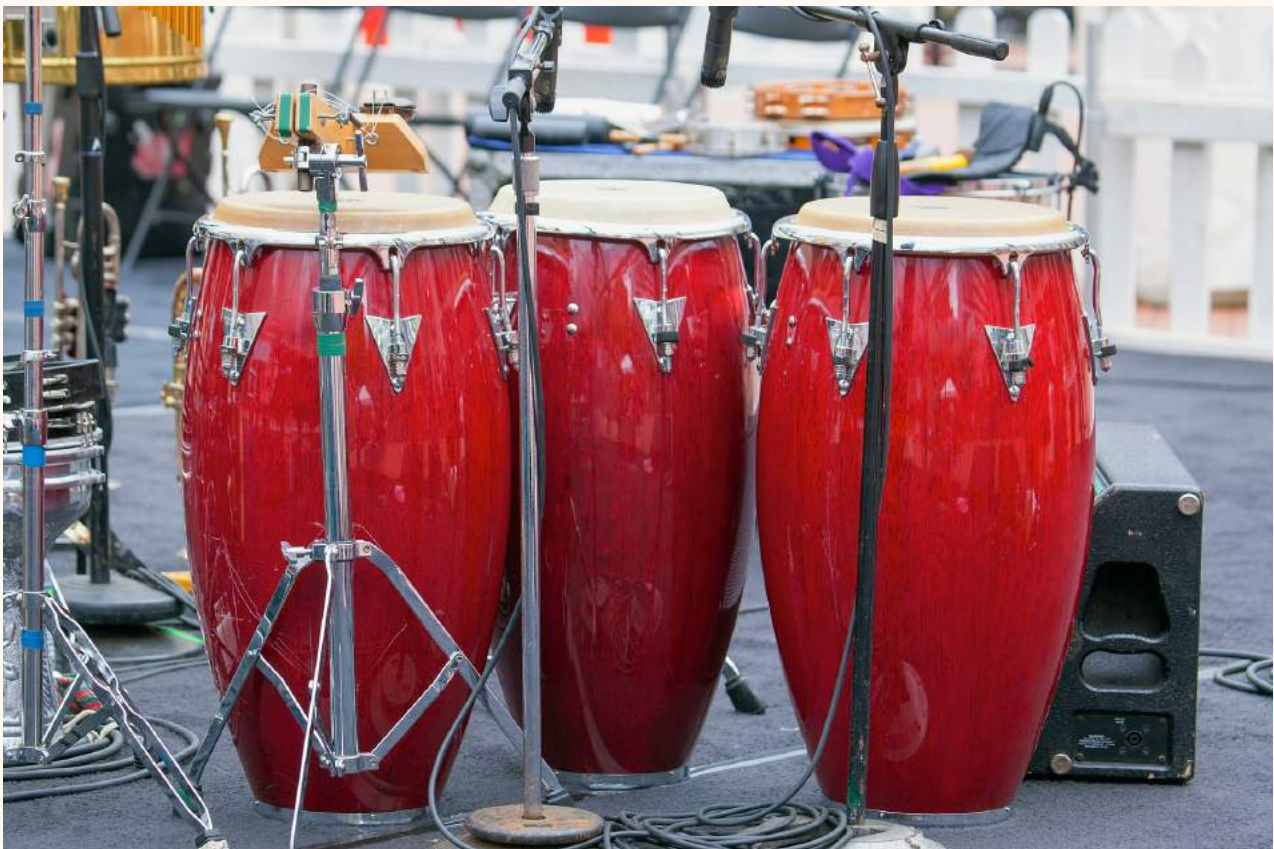
Over 400 years later, this bond is still strong. Look at the similarities between the black diaspora and African music. The call and response in American spirituals. The polyrhythms in Afro-Latin music. Our ancestors carried the beat of African music in their hearts to the Western world and weaved it into the colonisers' music. And then brought it back to the motherland.





Let's begin with the mid-1800s. African slaves in Cuba formed a music style called Son Cubano, blending Spanish guitar melodies with the call and response and percussions of Bantu traditions. In the 1930s, Afro-Cuban son groups such as Septeto Habanero, Trio Matamoros, and Los Guaracheros de Oriente reached Kinshasa radios. Charmed by the sound, Congolese bands started doing Cuban covers with Spanish lyrics. Later they composed their original songs with French and Lingala lyrics. Thus Congolese rumba was born.

Big bands such as Franco's TPOK Jazz and Joseph Kabasele's Grand Kalle et l'African Jazz performed with multiple guitars, conga drums, shakers, flutes, clarinets, saxophones and trumpets. This big bad African sound is still prevalent today in modern clubs. And has birthed another hip sound - rumba trap.





In North America, more music genres were brewing. American jazz singer Louis Armstrong performed in Kenya in 1960, his second African visit after performing in 1956 in Ghana before their independence celebrations. Touched by the warm reception, he wished to mentor musicians he met in the motherland. He felt so connected to his cousins that he sent a South African boy Hugh Masekela called a trumpet. – The rest, as they say, is African jazz history.

The African diaspora musical influences didn't stop there. James Brown, the godfather of soul-funk, played in Congo in 1974 during the famous fight between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman. The Rumble in the Jungle introduced funk to African souls. Congo's Tabu Ley fused this funk with rumba music by introducing the drum kit and stage shows. Nigeria's Fela Kuti started his own funk called Afrobeat. And Kenyan bands such as AirFiesta, The Mighty Cavaliers and Hodi Boys rose to funky fame.

In the 1970s, Jamaican reggae music also became a global phenomenon. The emancipation message resonated with African brothers and sisters all around the world, whether in the diaspora or the motherland. In 1980, Jamaican reggae superstar Bob Marley performed in Harare, Zimbabwe during their independence celebrations. In the same year, Jimmy Cliff played at Orlando Stadium in Soweto whereas Peter Tosh visited Swaziland in 1983.

These conscious concerts marked the beginning of reggae in Africa.

The first generation of African reggae artists included South Africa's Lucky Dube, Nigeria's Majek Fashek and Ghanaian Rocky Dawuni. Askia Madibso fused reggae with Malian music whereas Tiken Jah Fakoly fused reggae with traditional Ivorian music. And let's not forget Alpha Blondy, also known as The Bob Marley of Africa.

Till today, Jamaican reggae artists continue to tour the continent. And Tarrus Riley, Etana and Chronixx have collaborated with several Kenyan artists on their music projects. Nobody can stop reggae.






Now let's talk about hip hop. The black culture started in the 1970s in the Bronx block parties of New York City. DJs who played popular funk and soul music began isolating the percussive breaks where all drums drop out. And rappers would spit on the beats. They borrowed this Jamaican dub style from their Caribbean counterparts, such as 18-year-old immigrant and hip-hop pioneer DJ Kool Herc.

By the 1990s, hip-hop had spread across the world with gangsta rap. American rappers such as Tupac Shakur and The Notorious B.I.G. influenced the first African hip-hop stars, through singing in indigenous languages such as Swahili, Pidgin, Wolof, Luganda and Hausa. Thanks to them, hip-hop is now one of the biggest genres in Africa with artists such as K'Naan, Emmanuel Jal and Khaligraph Jones.

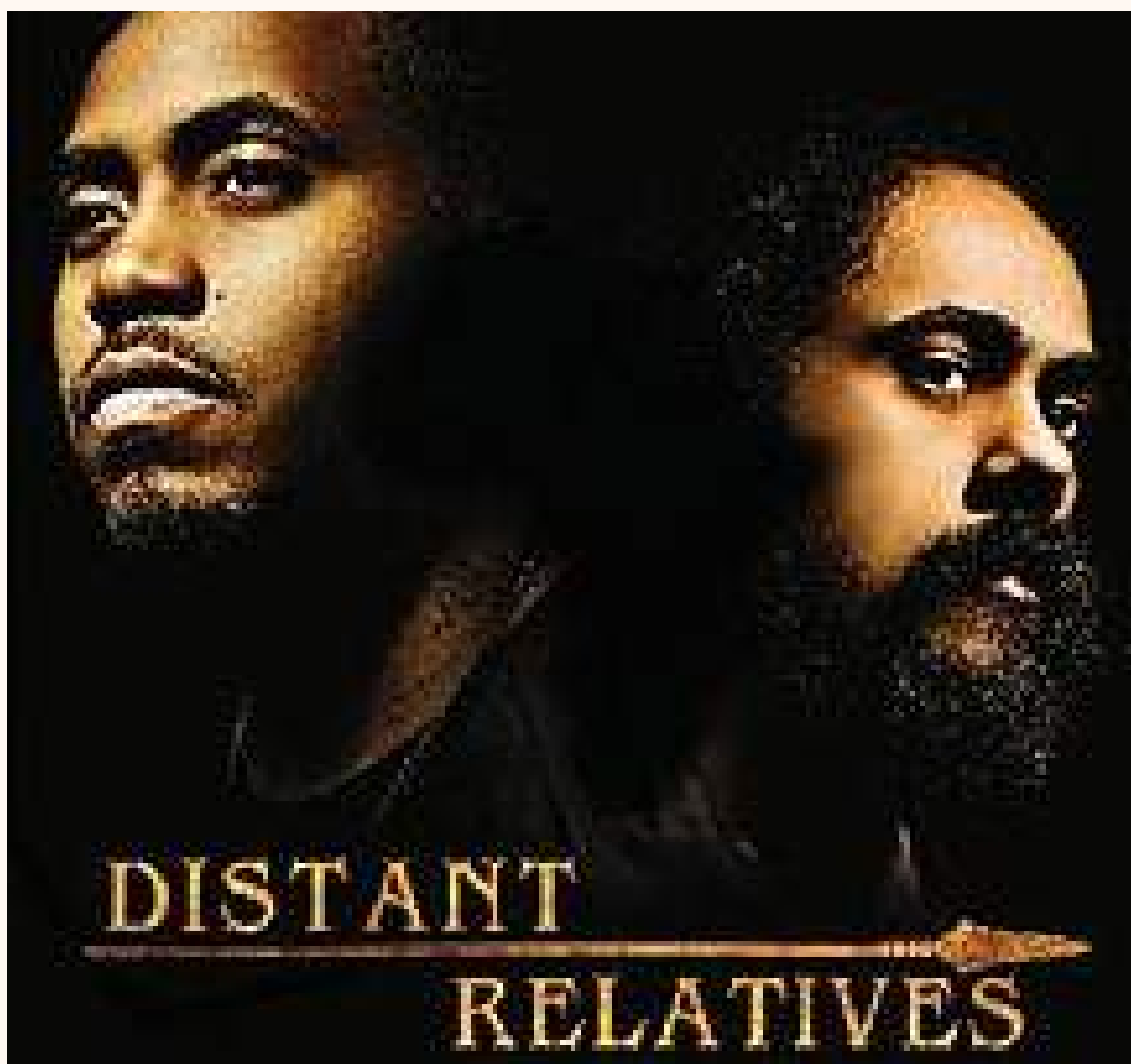
Beyond borrowing sounds from each other, black diaspora and African music has a long history of sampling. Take for example Kothbiro by Black Savage, a band formed by the legendary Kenyan musician Ayub Ogada. The king of sampling Kanye West, sampled Kothbiro in his 2018 song Yikes. And American rapper Royce 5"9" sampled the heavenly hook in his 2019 release aptly named Black Savage.

Remember the 2010 FIFA World Cup song Waka Waka? Well, Shakira also sampled an African song. Zangalewa, which means pot-bellied soldier, is a satirical song by Cameroonian military band Golden Sounds. Their song was so big in the 80s that the band, led by Jean Paul ze Bella, later renamed themselves to Zangalewa. Check out this [article](#) on Paul ze Bella.



Manu Dibango was another Cameroonian musician that inspired the black diaspora. His 1972 Afro-funk hit Soul Makossa (I will dance) has been sampled in countless ways, from the drums to the horns to the lyrics. Michael Jackson borrowed the refrain “ma-ma-se ma-ma-sa ma-ma-mako-ssa” in Wanna Be Startin Somethin from his 1982 album Thriller. Later Rihanna borrowed it (without permission) in Don’t Stop the Music and Kanye West in Lost in the World.

Making Soul Makossa probably the most sampled African song in history. In 2010, we received the iconic hip-hop-reggae album Distant Relatives. The dynamic duo of Nas and Damian Marley also sampled.





KULTURE: BLACK DIASPORA AND AFRICAN MUSIC CONNECTION

Created by @LaMusicJunkie

1. Soul Makosa - Manu Dibango
2. Rihanna - Don't Stop the Music
3. Black Savage - Kothbiro (1976)
4. Royce 5'9 - Black Savage ft Sy Ari Da Kid, White Gold,
5. Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five - The Message
6. Muthoni Drummer Queen - Kenyan Message
7. Original Zangalewa - Wakawaka
8. Shakira - Wakawaka(Time for Africa)
9. Amadou & Mariam - Sabali
10. Nas & Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley - Patience ft Amadou and Marriam

https://youtube.com/playlistlist=PLeAa1Fxu0jMsdb-NtIW_ErS2YCNDwRCKe



@LaMusicJunkie





African classics all the way from Ethiopia, Angola, and Nigeria to Mali. A perfect example is *Sabali* by Amadou and Mariam who also feature in *Patience*.

Another collaboration *Can't Get Enough* by J Cole and Trey Songz rides on a classic 1980 African track. The song is *Paulette* by Balla et ses Balladins, a Guinean dance music orchestra. You simply can't get enough of sampling.

No matter which corner of the world we are in, African people are connected through music. It's like the hot blood pulsing in our veins. With Africa now exporting Afrobeats and Amapiano to the Americas, the music influences will only continue.

To feel how connected we are, listen to this Top 10 playlist of the best black diaspora and African music samples.

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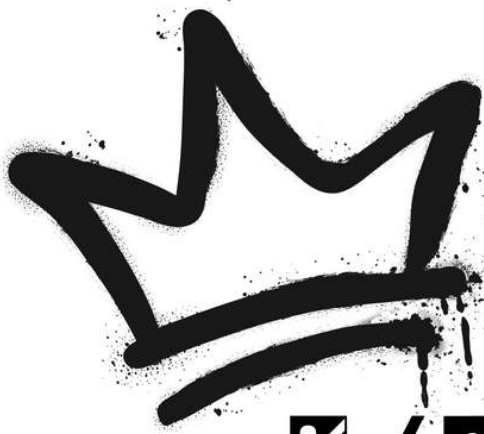
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SPECIAL THANKS

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