IAM

INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN
MUSIC

Umagungqel'indawo
for
uHadi and Voice

Transcribed from the performance
of
Nofinishi Dywili

U.S. AMBASSADORS FUND
for CULTURAL PRESERVATION

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uHadi

uHadi is a traditional Xhosa unbraced musical bow instrument. The wooden bow is strung with gut or wire and attached to *iSelwa* (calabash) which resonates and amplifies the sound. The bow is played with *uMqungu* (a beater) made from a "thin stalk of grass often plucked from the roof-thatch which is beaten against the string" (Dargie, 1986).

"*Players compose their own songs, often of a very personal nature. Bow players also include vocal communal songs in their repertoire like the beer songs, wedding songs, and dance songs amongst others". Uhadi songs can vary between performances, with the exception of traditional ritual songs, which are not changed out of respect for their ritual significance*" (Mandela, 2005).

"The bow stave is held in the right hand (or left if the player is left-handed), near the lower end of the stave, so that the opening in the gourd resonator faces the player's breast" (Mandela, 2005).

Variations in pitch are produced by pinching the string, and variations in tone are made by shifting the gourd's position on the chest.

References:

Dargie, D., 1986. Musical Bows in Southern Africa. Africa Insight, Vol 16 no 1, 1 - 11.

Mandela, T., 2005. *The Revival and Revitalization of Musical Bow practice in South Africa*. Degree of Masters. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Song meaning

uMagungqel'indawo is regarded as a Beer song **(ingoma yotywala).** "*In traditional Xhosa culture there are two types of beer songs, there are songs that are sung by married men and unattached women at special beer drinking events like* **itimiti** *(tea meeting). Other beer songs are sung by married couples at* **etywaleni** *(place of beer). Some of the special beer songs are performed at work parties that are held after the people have completed a job that they were doing*" (D Hansen, 1981).

In this song as *"Umagungqel'indawo"* (The social climber), a woman who is tired of her current social position aims to transcend it. An important dance accompanies this song to elevate the lyrical content and its gender connotations. The song has many different versions that are sung in different regions in the Eastern Cape, the text as well as the rhythm of the song often varies according to the region.

Text

Nkqo Nkqo Nkqo!
Ulilela ntoni ngomzi wam!
Watsh'umagungqel'indawo!
Yhini kushush'endlini! Mhh! x2
Yhini kubuhlungu kulendawo! x2
Magungqel'indawo engasiyoyakho Mama! x4
Hho Mha! We magungqel'indawo!
Ihhi ihhi! Magungqel'indawo! (repeats till end

About Nofinishi Dywili

Mrs Nofinishi Dywili was born in Ngqoko village near Lady Frere where she led a normal life as a resident of a remote Xhosa village. She married at the age of 23 and had six daughters and a son with her husband Qongqothwane Dywili. Her name Nofinishi was given to her by her father-in-law after paying her *lobola* (bride price). Nofinishi's husband was the last-born son at his home, his father having paid *lobola* for the last time and was relieved that at last he was 'finished' paying bride price for his sons.

Culturally it is the right of the father-in-law to give a new name to the bride and as such, he named her Nofinishi. Like many wives in the rural Eastern Cape, Nofinishi worked on maize and sorghum fields in order to take care of her family while her husband worked in the mines in Johannesburg. He later left the mines to join his wife to work in the fields.

Nofinishi learnt to play *uHadi* from an early age by observing and imitating other bow players. Her musical skill and knowledge of traditional lore, especially regarding the traditional education of young women, gave her leadership roles in the village. She was recognised for her comprehensive knowledge of traditions and customs and she played an important role in the training of girls and young women as they prepare for marriage.

Nofinishi's musical ingenuity is eminent in her mastery of rhythm, as well as her practical knowledge of all the highly sophisticated style elements of traditional Thembu[1] music. Her songs proved her to be a music leader in her community and a transmitter of Xhosa lore and culture – as depicted in her unique song writing.

Nofinishi's songs have been brought back to life by the International Library of African Music (ILAM) by many bow players including the Bow Project in 2002, which aimed to encourage South African composers to engage with traditional music as a compositional resource. Bow players like Madosini, Dizu Plaatjies, Sazi Dlamini and many others have also reinterpreted and reimagined *uHadi* songs of Nofinishi. Her contribution to this music pioneered a trend in ethnomusicological research in Bow music. Many academics study her music to discover indigenous bow instruments' virtuosity.

Nofinishi's *Inxembula* performed by Mthwakazi band can be found on Youtube.

Reference:

Dywili. Nofinishi. [ONLINE] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nofinishi_Dywili.

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[1] AbaThembu is nation of people found in the Eastern Cape. In the 19th century, the Thembu had an independent kingdom. The clan name of their kings is Madiba. One of the most famous persons from the Thembu clan was Nelson Mandela.

Transcriber: Jiwe Publishers

For many years, African knowledge has always been associated with the aural traditions that have, in recent times, slowly lost its relevance in a world that is dominated by media and technology. Many social events that provided a conducive environment for the practice of aural traditions (mainly music, storytelling) have since been abolished. The shift towards a tech-based society has, in turn, meant that some African cultures and knowledge shared through aural traditions risk being lost entirely. CDs and in some rare cases videos are used as a form of preserving and cultivating the music tradition. Over and above the use of CDs and DVDs, music notation is one significant aspect that needs to be developed and utilized in a more aggressive way to preserve and make African music knowledge more accessible to the younger generation. Notating African music will allow it to exists in platforms that were initially not favourable to its existence but agreeable to the forms of acquiring knowledge today. JIWE Publishers aims to create an online platform (Online African Music Library) in which broader African music (all genres, from historical up to modern genres) can be archived in written format. The online African music library will make it possible to access the music beyond local and regional existing archives.
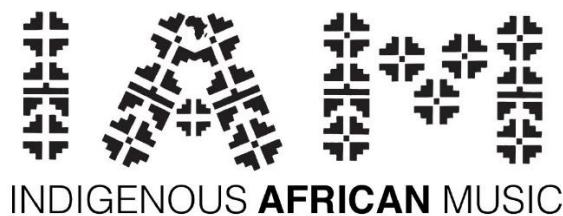
ABOUT THE IAM PROJECT

The Indigenous African Music (IAM) Project was initiated by The SAMRO Foundation to assist in the preservation of the beautiful but neglected musical riches of Africa. In 2017 the United States Ambassadors' Fund for Cultural Preservation helped the Foundation with seed funding to initiate the process of transcribing and documenting the scores for historical and cultural preservation.

As the project proceeded it became more and more apparent that, not only was transcribing the music helping to preserve it, but that it provided new and intimate appreciation of the cultures, their art forms and their inherent value to humanity. The IAM team has worked with many incredible people and developed partnerships with amazing institutions like JIWE Publishers, the International Library of African Music (ILAM), the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation, Music in Africa and many other organisations striving for the same end goal.

The project acknowledges that many transcription forms exist, but the use of Western Art notation was justified by the fact that, around the world, practicing musicians would be able to interpret and reproduce the works (much like reading from the western alphabet). To help the user interpret the works as accurately as possible, the IAM project has endeavoured to provide audio and video examples where possible, as well as contextual details of each work.

The vision of the IAM project is to create a portal for all African music students, performers and consumers to be able to appreciate, access, perform and promote the continent's amazing works and the cultures that generated them.

The IAM project sourced its information from available archives and practitioners, but understands that a great deal of variation and possible misrepresentation has existed in the IAM arena. As such, the IAM project does not claim to know everything and believes that indigenous African music should be a matter of broad consultation. As such, the project is open to comments and suggestions regarding the scores. If you wish to offer your point of view, please feel free to visit www.iamtranscriptions.org to add your input.

Umagungqel' indawo

** The original recording of Nofinishi was sung actave lower.
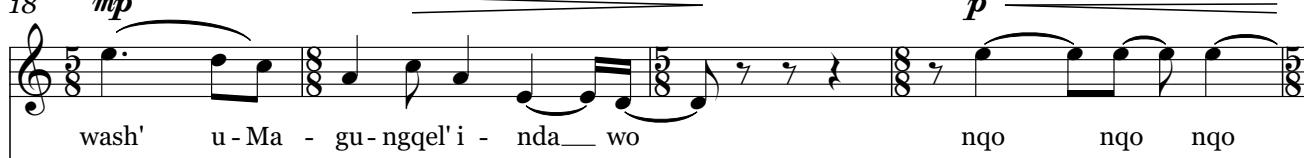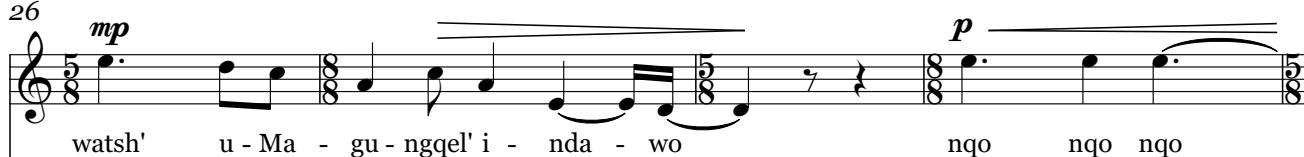
Lyrics by system:

wash' u-Ma - gu-ngqel' i - nda__ wo nqo nqo nqo

nqo u - li - le - la nto - ni__ ng-mzi wam'

watsh' u-Ma - gu-ngqel' i - nda - wo nqo nqo nqo

u - li - le - la nto - ni__ ngo-mzi wam'

watsh' u-Ma - gu-ngqwl' i - nda - wo yi-ni ku-shu-sh'e - ndli-ni

58 V. / uhadi

watsh' u-Ma - gu- ngqel' i- ndaw'_ nga - si-y'e - ya-kho ma-ma   Ma

63 V. / uhadi

gu - ngqe-li 'nda - wo   hho - mha   hho - mha   ma -

67 V. / uhadi

gu - ngqe - li 'nda - wo   hho - mha   hho - mha   we-ma-

71 V. / uhadi

gu-ngqe-li   'nda - wo   i - hhi   i - hhi Ma - gu

75 V. / uhadi

ngqe-l'i - nda - wo   le   le   le   we-Ma - gu -
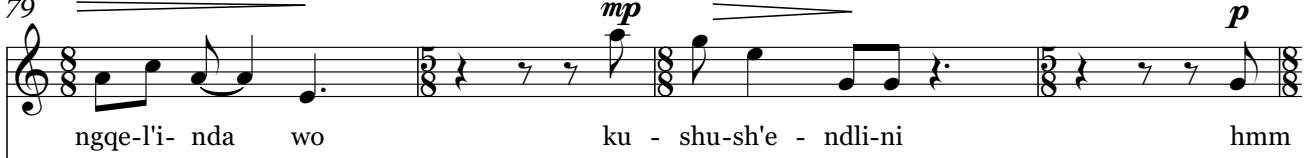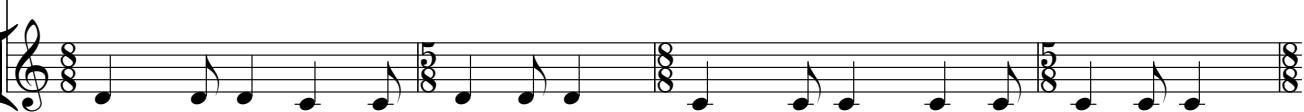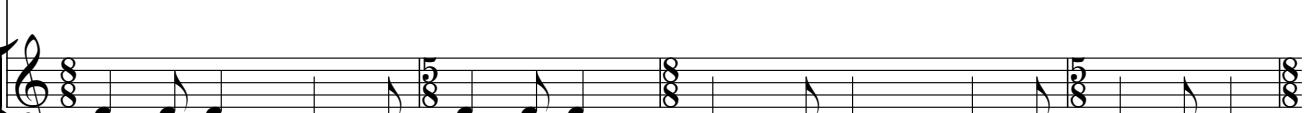
hmm - yi - ni ku - shu - sh' k'le - nda - wo

dim.

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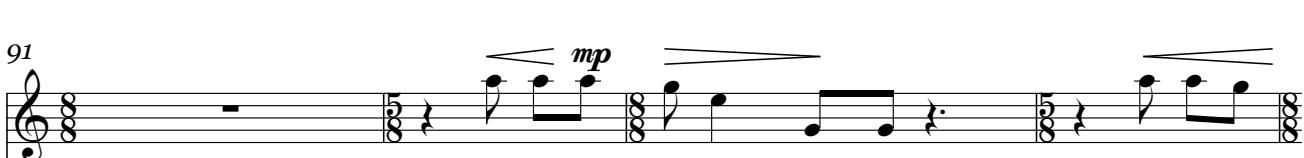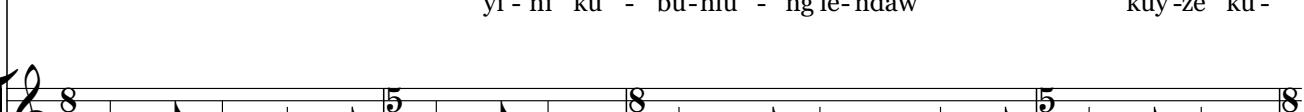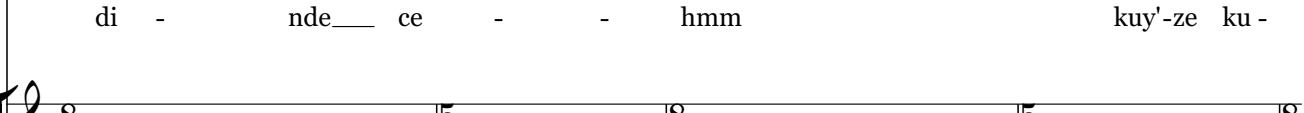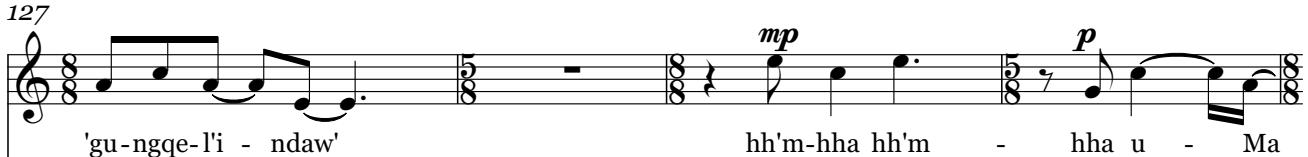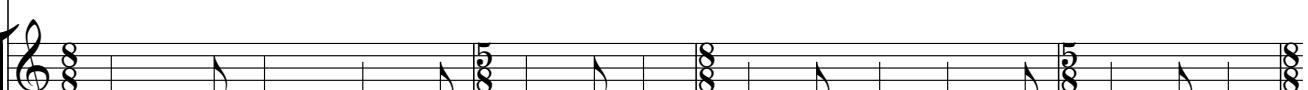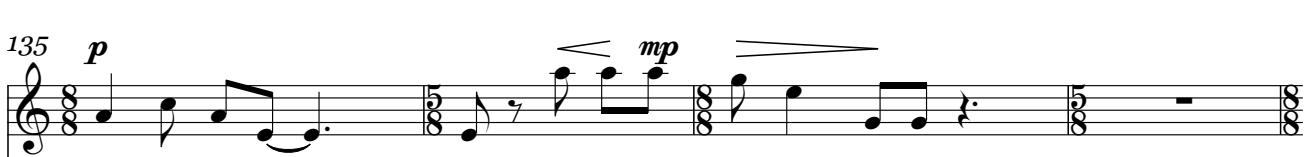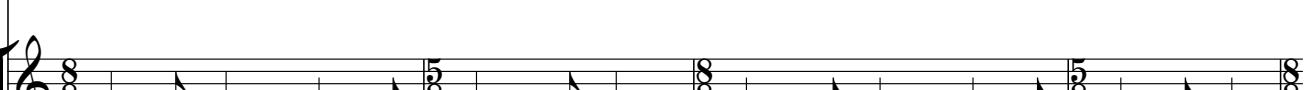
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