



IAM
INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN
MUSIC

SPHELELE

For
Guitar

Transcribed from the performance of
BABA MOKOENA

Transcribed by Billy Monama & Andy Innes
for the SAMRO Foundation's Indigenous African Music (IAM) Project

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Context of *SPHELELE*

Contemporary South African Jazz compositions based in the key of D. I IV V advanced harmony using I b7 (Major) 6/9 | VI IV | V sus |

BABA MOKOENA



Bandleader, guitarist and composer **Baba Simon Serokeng Mokoena** was born on 25 April 1944 in uMkhumbane, KwaZulu-Natal. **Serokeng** was the first name of his father, a businessman who owned general dealer shops with the popular logo MK, i.e. Mokoena General Dealer. Around 1957, **Mokoena** moved to KwaMashu due to riots in uMkhumbane, which is where he schooled and learned to play guitar at around the age of twelve. Like so many others detailed in this book, he started off with a home-made guitar made from a five-litre oil container. He then later learned from his older brother, *Albert Mokoena*, who was playing in local bands like Young Lions. Although Baba is often thought to be related to Themba, they are related ancestrally but cannot be traced directly. However, they did meet in Johannesburg at the Pelican Club in Soweto.

During the 1994 Outernational Meltdown recordings with M.E.L.T. 2000 in Johannesburg, Baba met and recorded with Airto Moreira and Jose Neto. In 1999, Baba teamed up with Madala Kunene to record a collaborative album for M.E.L.T. The pair finished the production at Brownhill Studios, along with Bernard Sibusiso Mndaweni on bass, and the album was released in 2002, just months before Baba played his last chords. The album features tracks like '*Sphelele*', a song dedicated and named after his son **Sphelele**. On 18 April 2003, **Baba** was found lying on a hotel couch at the Royal Hotel in Durban after he collapsed during a rehearsal with Joyous Celebration. He died on that day from diabetes.

References:

Monama Billy. 2020. Interview with Baba's wife, Fikile Patricia Serokeng Mokoena, 1 July. Introduction To South African Guitar Styles Vol.1

About Billy Monama and Andy Innes



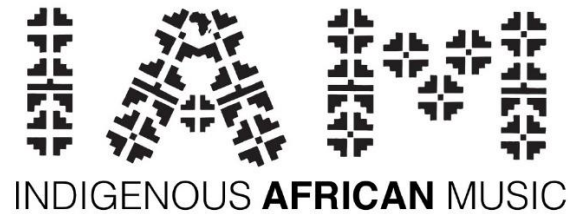
In 1997, **Billy Monama** began his journey with the guitar in his hometown of Mokopane, Mahwelereng in South Africa's Northern Province. Inspired by the music of his childhood, which combined traditional ethnic sounds, African gospel and jazz, Monama studied music theory, harmony and ensemble work at Central Johannesburg College. He also researched and transcribed guitar masters such as Wes Montgomery, Tal Farlow, Marks Mankwane, Jimmy Dlodlu and many other South African musical greats. Monama now is a recording artist, celebrated virtuoso guitarist, researcher, producer, bandleader, composer and arranger.

A sought-after guitarist, Monama has worked with artists including Themba Mkhize, Abdullah Ibrahim, Andile Yenana, Sibongile Khumalo, Victor Ntoni, Sipho 'Hotstix' Mabuse, Mbongeni Ngema, Dorothy Masuku, Abigail Kubeka, collaborative performance with

Dave Koz, Denise Jannah and many others. His skills in musical arrangement have spilled over into the dance and movement industry where he has repeatedly worked as musical director on productions by the internationally acclaimed Vuyani Dance Company. Monama sees himself as part of the new generation of South African musicians who want to take the music of the African continent to greater heights.

Billy Monama is founder and director of the Grazroots Project, a collaboration of musicians, teachers and composers to revive classic South African songs. In 2016, Billy and Andy Innes released their album *Brothers*, a collection of original pieces written and arranged for the acoustic guitar in traditional styles. In October 2017, he released his debut album *Rebound*. In 2020, he released tutorial videos about South African guitar styles. 2021 –he became the first African to be endorsed by the prestigious guitar – The Gibson Guitars through Marshall music. For more read: www.billymonama.co.za

Andy Innes was born as a London-born South African musician who focused mainly on playing the mandolin, guitar, and viola, but lived and studied in South Africa from the age of six. During his University studies (Bachelors in Philosophy and Literature) Now he holds MBA degree. Andy he became actively both in theatre and touring bands. After working with several bands in capacity of guitarist, composer and musical director, he joined Jonny Clegg and Savuka in 1992 , and the likes of Concord Nkabinde, Philip Moolman, Pj Powers, Jeff Maluleke , U2 . He is currently a musical director of Johnny Clegg band. Read more: www.andyinnes.com



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 the transcribing of the music helping to preserve it, but that it provided a 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 music 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 alike to be able to appreciate, access, perform and promote the Continent's amazing works and the cultures that generated them.

The IAM project sources its information from available archives and practitioners, but understands that a great deal of variation and possible other interpretations have 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 and dynamic growth. 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.



SPHELELE

BABA MOKOENA

TRANSCRIPTION: BILLY MONAMA / ANDY INNES

ELECTRIC GUITAR

5

9

13

17

21

25

Rit.



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© - do people undervalue it?

Today we take it for granted that music will be a part of our environment. Music is playing all the time in shops, taxi's, on telephone answering systems, on the radio. There is music wherever you go. It is like the air we breathe and rain from clouds. But our air and the rain don't require time, labour and years of training to create. Music does. But many people want it for free and undervalue it.

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