IAM

INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN
MUSIC

Ubuhle bendoda zinkomo

for
Choir and Voice

Transcribed from the embodied knowledge
of
Dr Andile Khumalo

U.S. AMBASSADORS FUND
for CULTURAL PRESERVATION

SAMRO
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Song meaning

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This is a Nguni community song sung by the bridal party accompanying the bride to her groom's home. The song can be found mainly in both Zulu and Xhosa cultures. The direct translation of the songs means 'The charm of a Man is his cattle'. In many African cultures owning cattle was representative of wealth and livestock were often used as a negotiating asset for a young man to secure a wife from her family in a form of *Lobola* **(bride-price)** negotiations.

Many traditional Zulu and Xhosa wedding songs are imbued with lessons, advice, warnings and messages of encouragement for newlyweds to guide them in their future married life. **Ubuhle bendoda zinkomo zayo** is sung by the bridal party to remind the bride that she must not forget that the man's attractiveness or handsomeness is measured by the cattle that he offered as her lobola; the song continues to warn her that '*Uzuziphathe kakuhle emzini wakho ntombazana'* meaning she must behave well in her new home.

In this particular arrangement, a choral choir with piano accompaniment sings the song and it is usually sung in choral competitions as *Isitibili*. In the new arrangements of traditional songs, any instrumentation can accompany the song as long it does not take away the authenticity and meaning of song.

Here is an arrangement by the Mzansi Ensemble choir:

Text

Leth'imali yam' leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here
Leth'imali yam' leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here
Leth'imali yam leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here
Leth'imali yam leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here
Ubuhle bendoda zinkomo zayo	The attractiveness of a man is his cows
Uzungalibali Ntombazana	Don't you forget that young lady
Uzuziphathe kakuhle	You must behave well
Emzini wakho Ntombazana	At your new home young lady
Leth'imali yam leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here
Leth'imali yam leth'imali yam	Bring my money here' bring my money here

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.

INDIGENOUS AFRICAN MUSIC
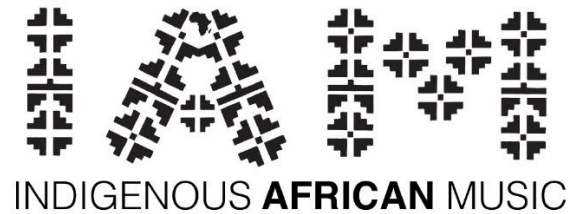
ABOUT THE IAM PROJECT

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.

Ubuhle Bendoda 'zinkomo Zayo

Xhosa Wedding Song
Arr. Andile Khumalo

S. A.

5

thi 'ma - li yam'   Le -   thi 'ma - li yam'   Le -

T. B.

Pno.

7

S. A.

mp

- thi 'ma - li yam'   Leth'   U - bu - hle_____ be - ndo

T. B.

mp

Le - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le -

Pno.

Measure 10:

S.A.: - da __ 'zi - nko - mo __ za - - - yo __ u -

T.B.: - thi 'ma - li yam' Le - thi 'ma - li yam' Le - thi 'ma - li yam' Le-

Measure 13:

S.A.: - zu - nga - li - ba - li __ nto - mba - za - na (thi 'ma - li yam')

T.B.: - thi 'ma - li yam' Le - thi 'ma - li yam' Le - thi 'ma - li yam' Le-

S. A.: - thi 'ma u - bu - hle   be - ndo
T. B.: - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le -

S. A.: - da 'zi - nko - mo za - - - yo u-
T. B.: - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le - thi 'ma - li yam'   Le-

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© - do people undervalue it?

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