12 Pieces

for

String Ensemble

dedicated to the first generation of

MUZUKIDZ players:

Alizwa, Aluluto, Inam, Indi,
Kuhle, Likho, Mbali, Miyoli,
Ogechi, Onam, Onika, Phumzile,
Sesethu, Siphesande,
Tshegofatso, Unam, Zukhanye

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Cape Town

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voice / Vn 5, 6, 7

Table of Contents

Santema

I am grateful to Manan Adjimah, who taught me this very short but most appealing traditional Ghanaian song in the Dagbani dialect: *Santema katuma manje dindé njala santema katuma manje la la la la la la.*
Most probably there is a rich subtext to this proverbial sentence that only native speakers will understand. A concise translation might be: *Don't insult me.* However, this misses the more elaborate meaning of: *Don't give me something, if you don't mean it. Don't pretend to be friendly or generous, if you then go on to talk bad behind my back.* The insistently repeated 'la la la la…' with which the song ends, adamantly reiterates the point: *Don't do this to me. I really don't want it, don't want it, don't want it!*

Manan Ajimah
trad. Ghanaian

Uthando

This arrangement is based on an intsomi (song-story) by Latozi Mpahleni, better known as Madosini. Although the lyrics of these kinds of songs usually consist of only a very short sentence, a much broader metaphorical meaning or even life-lesson is implied and reflected upon by means of extended improvisational performances.

Madosini's song is a wonderful example of idiomatic amaMpondo music. Based on only two different chords a whole tone apart, it consists of only a single short melodic phrase, which is then repeated indefinitely. However, as a way to 'pepper' the music somewhat, the chord changes occur asymmetrically, preventing any monotony to set in. Moreover, as the calling phrase is meant to evoke spontaneous responses, a remarkably interesting texture of multiple and ever-changing strands can be woven even with these relatively simple means.

Accordingly, the current arrangement makes use of the cycle of repetitions to introduce ever-new fitting patterns to complement the main tune. As all parts consist of repeated patterns that players should be able to memorize and master fairly easily, here is a good opportunity to pay attention to what everybody else in the ensemble is doing and how all the interlocking motifs eventually give rise to the overall texture.

Madosini's original *uhadi* accompaniment is imitated here by the cello. Instead of being bowed a stick of sorts should be used to hit the strings. (In my experience the back of a rubbery toothbrush lends itself well to the purpose.)

Uthando lunda hlule noz'mama.
Uthando luphelile noz'mama.
Ulile ukuhamba nozimama.
Uthando lunda hlule ntakmama.

Love has fooled me, my dear.
My love for you has passed.
You're crying to come with me,
but I'm now in love with someone else.

Ibambeni

This song was brought to my attention by Tshegofatso Matlou, one of the *Muzukidz* members, who picked it up on the internet and one day came to sing it to me. This arrangement was specifically made to include Tshego's rendition of the song, which is subsequently taken up by the ensemble.

I - bam - be - ni i - bam be - ni we - ba - fa - na I - bam - be - ni i - bam be - ni we - zin -

siz - wa. O i - si - bha - mu__ sa - la - ba - fa - na O sing' khum - buz' u - O - li - ver Tham - bo.
Nel-son Man - de - la.
Ro - li - hla - hla.

Ibambeni webafana, ibambeni wezinsizwa.
O isibhamu sala bafana o sing' khumbuz'
uOliver Thambo / Nelson Mandela / Rolihlahla.

Be brave boys, be brave young men.
Oh! These boys' tenacity reminds me
of Oliver Tambo / Nelson Mandela / Rolihlahla.

Siyahamba

The isiZulu chorus *Siyahamba* probably originated in a Methodist or Pentecostal congregation in KZN and was first transcribed in 1952 by Andries van Tonder in Dundee in the current uMzinyathi district. Through a 4-part arrangement by the Swedish-South African composer and choral conductor Anders Nyberg (contained in his songbook *Freedom is Coming: Songs of Protest and Praise from South Africa* published in 1984) the piece was introduced to an international audience. It has become especially popular in North America where it has been included in several hymnals. Although originally a religious song of praise *Siyahamba* has accumulated the political subtext of a liberation song, probably because it was often used in the context of anti-apartheid campaigns organised by Christian churches in the West. Nowadays it is sung in both sacred and secular contexts, sometimes with modified lyrics to suit specific occasions.

The arrangement offered here takes its cue from the lighthearted catchiness of the tune and is arguably the most buoyant in the current collection. It can also double as straightforward accompaniment to the song.

Siyahamba 'kukhanyeni kwenkos.   We are walking in the light of the Lord.

Voice

Bele Mama

Song

Be - le ma-ma, be - le ma-ma   eh.   Be - le ma-ma, be - le ma-ma   eh.

Be - le ma-ma, be - le ma-ma,   be - le ma-ma, be - le ma-ma,   be - le ma-ma, be - le ma-ma   eh.

Jikele Maweni

Jikele maweni, also known as the *Retreat Song*, is one of Miriam Makeba's most popular songs and was first released in 1960. On the foreground it's about Xhosa warriors partaking in the art of stick fighting. However, through the subsequent image of men 'dancing' like miners and thus a reference to the hardships of migrant labourers, the song assumed the role of an undercover protest song.

Miriam Makeba

Refrain

O Ji - ke - l' e ma - we - ni ndi - ya - ham - ba, Ji - ke - l' e ma - we - ni ndi - ya - ham - ba.

Verse 1

A - xhen - sa ma khwen-kwe, a - xhen-sa kwa-ba-man - di, A - xhen - sa ma khwen-kwe, a - xhen-se - le-mgo-di - ni.

Verse 2

A - ji - ka' ma-do - da a - ji - ka kwa-ba-man - di, a - ji - ka' ma-do - da a - ji - ke - le mgon-di - ni.

Jikele maweni ndiyahamba.	Turn back when we reach the cliffs. I am going down.
Ajika amadoda	The men danced.
Ajika kwabamandi	They danced bringing joy
Ajika amadoda	The men danced.
Ajikelemgodini.	They danced like miners.
Axhensa amakhwenkwe	The boys performed a stick fight.
Axhensa kwabamandi	They performed bringing joy and entertainment.
Axhensa amakhwenkwe	The boys performed.
Axhenselemgodini.	They acted like miners.

Voice

Nkosi Sikelele
National Anthem of South Africa

South Africa's National anthem is most unusual in that it is a hybrid construction of two different songs and involves five different languages. It opens with a section of *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*, written by Enoch Mankayi Sontonga in 1897 and leads into an excerpt of the Afrikaans song *Die Stem van Suid-Afrika* (text by Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven, 1918; music by Marthinus Lourens de Villiers, 1921) which served as the country's anthem from 1957-1994. From 1994-1997 both songs were part of an interim dual anthem, which meant that on ceremonious occasions both had to be sung – a rather cumbersome and lengthy procedure lasting more than 5 minutes. In 1995 the ministry of Arts & Culture set up an Anthem Committee that was to come up with a new version, following international standards, with a duration of less than two minutes.

The result is the anthem as we know it today: an abbreviation of both songs merged into one. To accommodate both in comfortable singing ranges the anthem modulates from G to D major, thus beginning and ending in different keys. Even though the collage of elements from greatly differing historical, musical and linguistic origins does result in a somewhat disjointed whole, the very diversity and inclusivity of the anthem is, of course, symbolic of the culturally diverse nation it represents. Moreover, its hybrid form was an explicit wish of Nelson Mandela, who oversaw the merger of the interim anthems in his capacity as first democratically elected president. In spite of the Afrikaans verse's connotation to South Africa's apartheid era, Mandela especially insisted on its inclusion as a reconciliatory gesture, promoting a future outlook of overcoming past issues.

There exists a government-gazetted accompaniment to the anthem, which – apart from being most conventional and formulaic – sports some rather cringe-worthy moments and even outright harmonic mistakes. Given that *Muzukidz* will invariably receive requests to perform the anthem, a new version is offered here. Acknowledging the canonical nature of this piece, the melody remains unchanged and this version might equally well serve as accompaniment when the hymn is being sung.

Enoch Sontonga / Marthinus de Villiers
Anthem Committee, Oct 1997

Suo Gân

Suo Gân is a Welsh lullaby of unknown origin made widely popular by featuring in Spielberg's 1987 film *Empire of the Sun*. The title simply translates to 'calming song', i.e. 'lullaby' (*suo:* to lull, soothe or calm; *cân:* song). The Welsh folklorist Robert Bryan (1858–1920) first recorded the song's lyrics. While many poetic adaptions exist, including a Christmas version, a literal English translation is offered here. (This is not intended to be sung, but only serves to elucidate the original Welsh text.)

trad. Irish

Hu - na blen-tyn ar fy myn-wes, Clyd a chyn-nes y-dyw hon; Brei - chiau mam sy'n dynn am-da-nat, Ca - riad mam sy dan fy mron; Ni chaiff dim am - ha-ru'th gyn-tun, Ni wna un-dyn â thi gam; Hu - na'n da - wel, an - nwyl blen-tyn, Hu - na'n fwyn ar fron dy fam.

Welsh	English
Huna blentyn ar fy mynwes, Clyd a chynnes ydyw hon; Breichiau mam sy'n dynn amdanat, Cariad mam sy dan fy mron; Ni chaiff dim amharu'th gyntun, Ni wna undyn â thi gam; Huna'n dawel, annwyl blentyn, Huna'n fwyn ar fron dy fam.	Sleep child upon my bosom, It is cosy and warm; Mother's arms are tight around you, A mother's love is in my breast; Nothing shall disturb your slumber, Nobody will do you harm; Sleep in peace, dear child, Sleep quietly on your mother's breast.
Huna'n dawel, heno, huna, Huna'n fwyn, y tlws ei lun; Pam yr wyt yn awr yn gwenu, Gwenu'n dirion yn dy hun? Ai angylion fry sy'n gwenu, Arnat ti yn gwenu'n llon, Tithau'n gwenu'n ôl dan huno, Huno'n dawel ar fy mron?	Sleep peacefully tonight, sleep; Gently sleep, my lovely; Why are you now smiling, Smiling gently in your sleep? Are angels above smiling on you, As you smile cheerfully, Smiling back and sleeping, Sleeping quietly on my breast?
Paid ag ofni, dim ond deilen Gura, gura ar y ddôr; Paid ag ofni, ton fach unig Sua, sua ar lan y môr; Huna blentyn, nid oes yma Ddim i roddi iti fraw; Gwena'n dawel yn fy mynwes. Ar yr engyl gwynion draw.	Do not fear, it is nothing but a leaf Beating, beating on the door; Do not fear, only a small wave Murmurs, murmurs on the seashore; Sleep child, there's nothing here Nothing to give you fright; Smile quietly in my bosom, On the blessed angels yonder.

vn 1
vn 5

Fun-Faronade

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