

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8716

SONGS FROM KENYA



DAVID NZOMO TRIO

M
1838
K418
N999
1965

MUSIC LP

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8716

Nzembelukye (Party Song)
Syimbithi (Secrets)
Kana Ngwenda (A Girl I Love)
Nyie (Me)
Ngwatanio (Unity)
Niki (Why)
Mathina (Problems)
Ling'a (Pleasure)

©1965 FOLKWAYS RECORDS & SERVICE CORP., 701 Seventh Ave., NYC, USA

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

SONGS FROM KENYA DAVID NZOMO TRIO

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8716

SONGS FROM KENYA

david nzomo trio

I find this tittle most convenient for my songs because they are not only Rhythmic - as nearly all African Music is undisputably Rhythmic, AFRICA IS THE LAND OF RHYTHM, but are also very much influenced by Jazz melodies; this is mainly why I find it so necessary to say the following, endeavouring to give as full an explanation as I know of their Origin.

In the years 1957 and 1958, I happened to preside over a High School Students' Organization that staged concert displays around my country - Kenya in East Africa. So as to hold the attention

of our audience when the stage was being set for the succeeding scene or play, it occurred to me that a song may conveniently be entertaining. I knew how to hold a few key scales on the guitar and had already struck some simple tunes that I was using for entertainment at wedding parties, get-together parties and local dances. I thought of trying some on the stage and they proved very entertaining to the audiences. As time went and I became a little better acquainted with the guitar, I tried them on different keys, giving them a twist here and there until they came to their present form.

(Original words and manuscripts)

NZEMBELUKIE

1 MUEI WA MWANA KAIA KA NYA LA NWA TIE MWA NA NZE MBE LU KYE MUEI WA MWANA NA
 2 TWANA TWAKWITU TA NA I I TWA NA TWA KWI TU TA NA I TWANA TWAKWITU
 3 TANAI MUKIYAMUKI THA MBHA A TA NAI MUKI THA MU KI THA MSA TANAI MUKIYAMUKI

KAIA KA NYA LA NWA TIE MWA NA NZE MBE LU KYE
 TA NA I I TANAI MU KI YA MU KI THA MSA
 TWA MSA A A NU NDU THE NYA NI WU KI TE

4 NUNDU THIENYA NIWUKITE NUNDU THIENYA NIWUKITE NUNDU THIENYA
 5 YILA TU TWANA TUKENU KA YILA TU TWANA TUKENU KA
 6 NIWO MUTHENYA NIWUKITE NIWO MUTHENYA NIWUKITE NIWO MUTHENYA

NIWUKITE YILA TU TWANA TUKENU KA
 YILA TU TWANA TUKENU KA NIWO MUTHENYA NIWUKITE
 NIWUKITE MAUNDU MANENE MASENTE ANDU

NZEMBELUKIE:

This is one of my very earliest compositions solely for entertainment at wedding parties, get-together parties and local dances. Mooted at a time when the guitar was becoming very popular and when any kind of dancing was being strongly suppressed, the context gives vent to a more or less rebellious attitude. The Words - fitting so well to a rhythmic beat that is more or less traditional - express a then prevailing thought of the youth, to the effect that the rhythmic melodies of the guitar are so sweet that Baby-sitters can no longer contain themselves but must run to listen to the guitarists).

P.T.O.

SIDE A, BAND 1

SYIMBITHI

SYIMBITHI: (Secrets)
 This is a comparatively large composition whose context is
 a basic philosophy to the effect that the Secrets of the mind
 can not be read - let alone being predicted. Therefore simply
 be frank and that will be just that!

SIDE A, BAND 2

KAANA NGWENDA

1. NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA
 2. NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA

NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA
 NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA

NI KE NDA NDI NDA E NA KO TU KI NA RU MEA
 NI KE NDA TUE NDA NIE NA KO KA TWI KE KA KWA

NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA
 NI TA KA NA KA MWE KA KWA NGWE NDA

NI KE NDA NDI NDA E NA KO TU KI NA RU MEA
 NI KE NDA TUE NDA NIE NA KO KA TWI KE KA KWA

MWA WE E NDE WO
 NA NU U NDU KWI I E NDI I LI KE NE RU MBA
 TU MWA KUTI I NWA THI THINA

MWA WE NDE
 NA NU NDU KO TO IE NDI I LI KE NE RU MBA
 KWI I TU MWA KUTI NWA THI NA

KANA NGWENDA: (A girl I love)

This is an early composition for entertainment purposes. It is a Love Song by which a young man (myself) is proposing by calling the girl that he loves so that they may spend their lives together singing. Paradoxically enough, he goes as far as telling her how his love has been taken up by singing, dancing, etc., etc.

SIDE A, BAND 3

NYI

1. WA MI NA KU SYA
 2. WA MU NA KWI A

YI KU THAUSYA MO SE
 WI SA LU KYA TU ME

NA MO TA NU MA MYU
 NA MO TA NU MA MYU

NI NDI ME THWA ME
 NI NDI ME THWA ME

YI MBI KA NA I N

NI NE ME TE NYIE

YI NSO MANIA MO THU U

3. KIBIBI LILYA KWISUVA
 KYATHI KYAKU KYA KW
 WIMITA MBUKA DUNIA
 WULWE NI MWSYI KH

4. NIKANATA NA NTHI
 ONA TATA NOMAU N
 OTIWA WA TATA N
 TI MALI NUTAO W

E (ME)

NA A NTHI UU NI WA THE. LA
NA A NSA NA KU TA MBU KA

E O WA MBÉ KWI A NA
E THO WI NA WI KWA THO

U NTHI WE LE KE LE KWI A NA
U NTHI WE LE KE LE KWI A NA

HAI NSI? NYIE
HAI NSI?

THI I NO YI MA NYI SHA MAWA A THE

MWAI TU YI MBI KA NA I NTHI I NO

KU NDII NDII NSETHWA NO TA NU

WIOLWA NIKI
DONGA KYU NIKYATHELA
NEIKUKOMANIA MAWA THE
JEEN YU.

INO NIMIKOMANIE
INA MAKULILYE
WIKWATIE MAUNDUNI
AA KE

P.T.O

SIDE A, BAND 4

NGWATANIO (UNITY)

1 AA MBAL TU TU MA NTHI TWI NTHWENA NGWA TANIO AA MBAL TU TU MA NTHI
2 AA MBAL TU MWI A SHA TU KUNWA NI KI AA MBAL TU MWI A SHA

TWE THWA NA NGWA TA NIO THA A YU U NI NO WO TU
TWA LE A U MA NTHA MA A LI I TU KA A U

NGWA A TA A NI O TI U TO NYI U TO

TWE THWA NA NGWA TA NIO THA A YU U NI NO WO TU

NGWATANIO: (Unity)
A comparatively recent composition, mooted at a time
organizations in Kenya were illegal, it very effecti
"UNITY IS STRENGTH". A simple translation of the se
be that 'for purposes of political and economic adv
salvation lay in Unity'.

SIDE B, BAND 1

NIKI (WHY)

D.C.

1. KWI ANDU A THU I NA KWA NTIENI NYA NA MWI AI NO U MWE

NA KWI INO NIKI U NYA MA STA NIKI U MBI NYI A NIKI U NYA MA STA

NIKI U MBI NYI OU

After third Verse → KWA SI STA

NYU U MBA NZE O MI U NJA MINGI I I UDO NO U STA NTIENI NYA ANDU A NGI

2. UMAU AMBIE NITHINO UKWONA
YI MATHINA MAINGI

3. NYIE NDYAAKWATA ISU NAI MUNINI VYU
KAI NONGESA KWIANA

6. NIKI (WHY).

A top highlight for the 1958 concert displays, the is open for both social and political interpretations. The nearest & translation of the sense is a series of questions as to: Why this world is vexing me: Why some people are rich and others poor - mentally as well as materially - while we have a common Providence: Why could I never understand when Grandfather was telling me of the hardships I might encounter: and Why when I look around and see the good houses, large firms and healthy herds of cattle - symbolic of material possessions - they always belong to someone else (never to me!

SIDE B, BAND 2

MATHINA PROBLEMS

1. ANDU AI NGI ME THI NA NI NU NDU WA KU NA KWI KWE TE
KWA SI SYA WO NE THI NA NGOS NI SYA A NDU
KWA SI SYA WO NE WO NE MA THI NA KWA SI SYA WO NE WONE
MA THI NA KWA SI SYA WO NE WO NE MA THI NA KWA SI SYA WONE
WO NE NA THI NA ME NGOS NI SYA A NDU

2. TAKE TAWA MUSTI USU NIWA MAMA NORWUMYA
MUOTHI NGAMINA THINA WA ANDU
3. THAYU WAKU NI MUUKU NIMA THINA ME NGOSNI
KWA SYA WONE THINA NGOSNI SYA ANDU

7. MATHINA: (PROBLEMS)

This is a late composition whose context can be interpreted either politically or socially. From a political point of view - the original thought, the commoners are telling the politician - any one of them - that they are looking upon him (he should subsequently look at them and see their problems) to lead the way: so that their political and social problems may be eliminated.

SIDE B, BAND 3

LINGA PLEASURE

1 WE MWAI TU
WE MWAI NDWA MWAI NDWA EE NA KA NA
KA NA KA NA

2 WEE MWAI TU
WEE MAAI TU D.C. EE NA KA NA
KA NA KA NA KA NA I NGWENPAU
KA NA I NGWENPAU
KOO NA
KOO NA EE NA KA NA LI
NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI
LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI NGA LI

8. LING'A (PLEASURE)

Hitherto titled WE MWAITU. This was a smashing hit for the 1957 concert displays. The word Ling'a came into use in my country in the late fifties, mainly among the elite to mean all that includes pleasure, enjoyment, luxury, etc., etc. The composition is woven into a rhythmic beat that is traditional and the melody is for group singing. In my country, we consider Child-bearing as the excellency of womanhood. The context is to the effect that My Mother has a Child: My Darling has a Child: A Child that I would relly like to see.

SIDE B, BAND 4