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16. Trading in Tradition

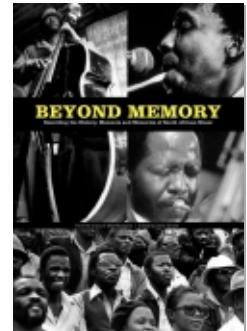
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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

TRADING IN TRADITION

Western music instruments like the guitar and the accordion found their way into South African black traditional music to produce what became known as commercial traditional music. This sound was dominated by isiZulu musicians with a brand dubbed “maskanda” music led by guitarists like Phuzushukela aka John Bhengu whose albums include *Sehlul'Umkomazi*, *Iqoma Kandabula*, *Uthando Selungehlule* and others. Later followed a younger generation of masters of the string: Mzikayifani Buthelezi, Mfaz'Omnyama, Inkunzi Emdaka, Mgqashiyi Ndlovu, Amatshitshi A Mhlophe, Wellington Ndwandwe Na Bafana Bengoma, Sukazi Mkhize NaMadube, Mfiliseni Magubane, Thwalofu namaNketshane, Bhekumuzi Luthuli, Ikhansela No JBC, Ihashi Elimhlophe, Phuzekhemisi, Imithente, Amadodakazi, Amageza Amahle, Shwi Nomtekhala, Izingane Zoma to mention but a few.

MZIKAYIFANI BUTHELEZI comes from Nkandla in KwaZulu-Natal. His band is made of family members – his wives, brother and cousins. The star guitarist who's said to have recorded more than 100 own compositions has many gold awards to his credit. His hits include *Nayintombi Ibaleka*, *Inyanga*, *Umuntu*, *Themba*, *Izinkomo Zombango*, *Udlame*, *Amasiko* and *Banamanga*.

The late **MFAZ'OMNYAMA** who was born Mphatheni Khumalo in rural Nongoma, KwaZulu-Natal passed away at the age of 42 after a long illness. This left-handed self-taught master of the string and stage released many top-selling albums in his time including *Sizoshay' Ingoma*, *Emakhumbini*, *Khula Tshitshi Lami*, *Ngiyashisa Bhe*, *Ngisebenzile Mama* and *Ngihlanze Ngedela*. He worked with various musicians including Busi Mhlongo with whom he recorded and toured. In 1996 he won the 2nd SAMA's Best Traditional Performance (Nguni Music) for *Emazweni Baba*. As Mfaz'Omnyama Nabasindisiwe he was nominated in the

3rd annual FNB SAMA's Best Traditional Performance (Zulu) for *Amagugu* pitted against Bergville Stories (The Cast) for *Bergville Stories* and the category winners Ladysmith Black Mambazo Nenzalabantu for *Ukuzala Ukuzelula*. Mphatheni's peace efforts were realised in the much-publicised Isixaxambiji working with his peers.

BHEKUMUZI LUTHULI grew up in Maphumulo village, Stanger, in KwaZulu-Natal as a herdboy who played a one-string tin guitar. In 1975 he came to Johannesburg with his father and worked as a cleaner in the city. It was after his father had bought him a six-stringed guitar that he focused on perfecting his skills on the instrument. In 1976 he went back to KwaZulu-Natal's Umlazi township in Durban and joined a mbaqanga group called Oshomi. After eight years he went solo releasing his debut album *Umthandazo* produced by Roxy Gina in 1984, which was followed by *Somandla*. Tom Mkhize of CTV Music Team invited him and Oshomi to Johannesburg for mbaqanga music recordings. Bhekumuzi switched to maskanda and released *Uzoyidel' Inkani*, followed by *Ubongikhonzel Enhлизиwени*, which went gold. The success of the album saw the release of other gold sellers like *Unembeza*, *Ngizokwala Uzokhala*, *Ubuyile*, *Ngidedele*, *Iphupho*, *Impatha*, *Umaliyavuza*, *Africa Hlangana*, *Incwadi*, *Phaphiyosi*, *Khokha*, *Igazi Lami*, *Udumo Lwakhe*, *Uyangikoloda*, *Inkinga Ngu R7* and others. He has won the OKTV Music Awards for two years in succession in the Best Nguni Performer category (1991 and 1992). After winning the 3rd FNB SAMA's Best Maskandi Performance category for his album *Impatha*, he never looked back. In that contest he was pitted against Ikhansela No JBC (*Ukubona Kanje Ukubona Kibili*) and Mgqashiyo Ndlovu (*Vala Uzipu*). He continued to prove himself a star in his own right in this genre. In recognition of his stardom in 2005 he was part of the "Jazz Meets Symphony Concert" accompanied by a 45-piece orchestra. The show was taken to the annual MACUFE in Bloemfontein on 28 September. His album *Inkinga Ngu R7* scooped the Best Mbaqanga Album of the SAMA 13.

PHUZEKHEMISI was born Zibokwakhe Johnston Mnyandu on 25 March 1963 in Umkhomazi, on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast. The youngest son of Maciliza and Majazana Mnyandu, he grew up a herdboy. Together with brother Khethani they started playing guitar in 1976 under tutelage of their father. In 1979 they went to Johannesburg where in the early 1980s they joined Special 5, a mbaqanga outfit. The two recorded their first album *We Malume* in 1988, but it was only in 1992 that the industry took note of them when they released *Imbizo* as Phuzekhemisi No Khethani. The album sold more than 100 000 units in a short space of time. Their other album together was *Emapalamende*. The duo's success was derailed by the tragic death of Khethani in a car accident in 1993. After mourning the death of his brother, Phuzekhemisi released the West Nkosi-produced *Impimpi* (RPM, 1995), which included a Steve Cook re-mix of *Imbizo*, dedicated to his late brother. He has worked with

various artists including Nothembni Mkhwebane and M'Du Masilela. His first recognition by the industry was when he won the 1st Annual SAMA's Best Traditional Performance category in Nguni Music as Phuzekhemisi No Khethani for *Emapalamende*. By 2005 the then 42-year-old star had already collected the fifth of these deserved awards. The man who performed at the opening ceremony of the 2002 Soccer World Cup in Japan has since released many more hot albums including *Inkunzi Kabhejane*, *Izwe Alithuthuki*, *Uyisipoki*, *We Baba*, *Sthandwa*, *Ngo'94*, *Phans'Imikhonto*, *Nginenkinga* as well as his controversial *Amakhansela*. In 2000 he collaborated with isiNdebele traditional music queen Nothembni Mkhwebane on *Sihlanganis'Izizwe*. His other collaboration was with Ihash'elimhlophe and the late Mfaz'Omnyama in a project dubbed *Isixaxambiji*. To show that he is master of the game, his CD titled *Sthandwa* won SAMA 12's Best Maskandi Album category. The Jacob Zuma saga also added controversy to his lyrics as he included the track *Msholozi* on his album *Sesihlangene* (2007). The album was nominated for MTN SAMA 14's Best Maskandi Album category. The category, which was also contested by Imithente for *Bambezakho*, Ikhansela noJBC for *Ingadlangadla* and Ingane Zoma for *Amazwi kaShaka* was won by GRC's Umgquumeni for *I Juke Box*.

IHASH' ELIMHLOPHE who was born Bheki Ngcobo in Evander is a former Soul Brothers family member who rose to fame through his creative compositions, skillful guitar playing, dancing and praise singing. Bheki's wife and children are established musicians. Together with his fellow maskandi musicians they launched the peace campaign, *Isixaxambiji* during the dark violent days in KwaZulu-Natal. His top-selling albums include *Intandane* (1986), *Uqanduqandu* (1989), *Impendulo* (1994), *Inyakanyaka* (1995), *Isiphalaphala* (1997) and *Ithemba* (1998), which contested the 5th SAMA's Best Maskandi category with, among others, Sxaxa Mbij' No. 2 for *Izingqungqulu Zomhlaba*, Mfiliseni Magubane for *Yashimizi* as well as the winner Phuzekhemisi with *Phans'Imikhonto*. Ihashi's talents were also recognised by the first South African Traditional Music Achievement Awards (SATMA) when he won the Best Maskandi Music category. In this section he was pitted against Izingane Zoma, Imithente, Mfiliseni Magubane and Phuzekhemisi. In 2006 he released another hot album titled *100% Ihashi*. Together with his wife Lena in 2007 they were honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award in Embalenhle, Mpumalanga Province for their contribution to African traditional music.

IKHANSELA NO JBC leadman, the late Mfihleni Rolland Mkhize started his career in 1984 and released the debut album *Ithemba Lami* (Priority Records) which sold 18 000 units. The follow-up, *Inkumbulo* (1985) sold 10 000 units. His real breakthrough came with the release of *Izwi* (2000), which sold 475 000 units. By 2007 the platinum seller had released the albums *Majazi Volume 1, 2, 3* as a solo artist using the name Ikhansela. His last album *Ingadlangadla* was released in October 2007 and nominated for SAMA 14's Best Maskanda Music

Album category. Sadly, Mfihleni died at Helen Joseph Hospital after a long illness and was buried on Saturday 5 January 2008 in KwaZulu-Natal.

Sipho Khoza aka **THWALOFU** is leader of the group Thwalofu namaKhetshane. Though he's established himself as a musician in Gauteng, his home is in Obuka, Empangeni in KwaZulu-Natal. His career took off in 1974 and from there with his group, he never looked back. They became a household name as they sold many platinum albums. Some of their well-known albums of the eighties include *Eyami Lenduku*, *Uyabhala Uyacisha*, *Ngicela Impendulo* and others. The maskandi superstar that had recorded about 30 albums at the time of writing this book, released a follow-up titled *Umthetho*.

SHWI NOMTEKHALA is a hot maskandi group whose *Wangisiza Baba* (2004) sold in excess of 150 000 copies in 12 months. The album scooped SAMA 12's Best Selling Album of The Year category as well as the first SATMA's Best Selling CD category. It was followed by *Angimazi Ubaba* in 2006, with a DVD recorded at Buyafuthi Hostel in Katlehong, Germiston, Ekurhuleni. The CD won SAMA 13's Best Maskandi Album, as well as Best Selling Album of the Year. Their follow-up was *Kukhulu Engakubona* (2007).

The trio known as **IMITHENTE** is made of Buselaphi Gxowa, Nokwazi Ntuli and Dumisile Manana. The group was put together by Simosakhe Mthalane. Their 1993 debut album was titled *Wafa Washonaphi?* Their other CDs include *Nomkhomba Ngeyithupha*, *Isidikiselo*, *Awusayi Ebhodweni*, *Ngiyakushiya Mawulele* and *Umnyango Ongenasikhya*. The platinum-selling maskandi group was nominated for the third time in the SAMAs for their 2006 CD *Ake Niyek' Ukukhuluma*.

BHOJA BHOJA was inspired by mgqashiyo group Mahlathini and Mahotella Queens way back in 1975. The lady from KwaZulu-Natal whose real name is Hazel Xaba arrived in Johannesburg and joined the mbaqanga groups of the 1970s like Izinkonjane, John Moriri and the Manzini Girls and Indoda Engaziwa. Between 1989 and 1991 she was a member of Ikhansela noJBC. She later went solo as Hazel and released her own album, *Amabhunu Abalekelani?* It was followed by others like *Bhoja Bhoja* and *Uhulumeni*.

Like maskanda music, xiTsonga traditional music is dominated by the lead guitar. Some of the well-known stars of the genre are Obed Ngobeni, General MD Shirinda, Patrick Nkuna, Samuel Nkuna, George Maluleke and Norman Mabaso. But the champion of the genre remains Thomas Hasani Chauke, a man affectionately called "Shinyori". This music is distinguishable as a family affair wherein the main male musician is backed by female singers/dancers, mostly his wives. This is observed in groups like Obed Ngobeni And The Kurhula Sisters, Patrick Mabasa na Shingange Sisters, Nkuku and Jopie Sisters, Samuel Nkuna and The Bankuna Sisters, Richard Maceke na Makhasa Sisters, Lemmy Chauke na Xahumba Sisters, Elias Mathebula and The Chivani Sisters, George Maluleke nava N'wanati Sisters, Thomas Chauke na Shinyori Sisters as well as General MD Shirinda and Gaza Sisters.

OBED NGOBENI is one of the musicians who placed xiTsonga traditional music on the international arena with his massive cross-cultural appeal hit, *Kuhluvukile Ka Zete*. Inspired by civilisation in deep rural Limpopo villages, the track caught the attention of Harry Belafonte and inspired his album *Paradise In Gazankulu*. The success of the 1983 hit prompted Obed to include *Kazete No.2* on his other album, *Tshiketa*. His chain of albums include *Gazankulu* (Heads, 1984), *Mchoza* (Jive Wire, 1985), *Tshiketa* (Teal Sound, 1986), *Xikwembu* (Teal Sound, 1989) and many more.

Traditional healer from Giyani, Limpopo Province, **DANIEL "MD" SHIRINDA**'s creativity saw some of his compositions covered, adapted or re-arranged by great musicians who are established master composers themselves. His 1984 composition *Nkata Mina* was included on Paul Simon's 1985 hit album *Graceland* as *I Know What I Know*. Sello Chicco Twala also did Shirinda's great composition, *Modjadji*. The musician who is affectionately known as General MD Shirinda has a streamline of albums that include *Music Is The Food Of Love* and SAMA 13's Best Tsonga Music Album, *Gama Ra Nsele*. In 2008 when I was involved in the filming of a television music show to be named *Moribo*, 72-year-old Shirinda was managed by Dr Hlathikhulu.

The "King From Salema" **HASANI THOMAS CHAUKE**'s "Shimatsatsa" series has recently reached the Volume 27 mark with every album selling beyond gold status even before its official media launch. The humble hit machine of Saselamani village in Limpopo Province won SAMA's Best Tsonga Music category from day one with Shimatsatsa No. 14 – *Suka Davulose* and owned the crown for longer than I care to count, his championship crossing over into the first SATMA.

I first met the singing guitarist, composer, arranger, producer and band leader in Johannesburg in the eighties at the offices of WEA. He released most of his albums with the company that later traded as Tusk Music: *Shimatsatsa Shamina*, *Don't Be Afraid*, *Bomba Mhlengwe*, *Xinyeletana*, *Ndzichava Swicelle*, *Xibamu Xa Movha*, *Sukalovha Current*, *Ma-Jumble Sale*, *Humelela MK No. 2*, *Hi Hanya Ku Vava*, *Buku Yi Hibyerile*, etc. When the company folded, he joined CCP Records. He welcomed the new millennium with the CD *Magidi-Mambhiri* (The Year 2000), which by the way was Shimatsatsa No. 20. It was followed by albums such as *Shimovana* (Shimatsatsa No. 23). The legend was honoured by his province Limpopo at a gala event held at Meropa Casino dubbed Limpopo Morula Awards in 2004 for his dedication and excellence. He also received other awards from Munghana Lonene FM, SATMA and his record company for his platinum upon platinum sales. Still dominating this category, his 2005 CD *Xidudla Kedibone* scooped SAMA 12's Best Tsonga Music Album category. However, in 2006 the category award went to MD Shirinda for his *Gama Ra Nsele*. Thomas followed up with albums like *Mavholovholo* (Shimatsatsa No. 26) and *Rejina* (Shimatsatsa No. 27) The king reclaimed his crown when he once again won MTN SAMA 14's Best Tsonga Music Album category. Looking back to the poor performance

of his debut album *Nyoresh* in 1981, the son of “Sixpence” and Tsatsawani has conquered the odds of illiteracy and claimed his rightful place in history. Since the day his uncle Daniel Chauke Makhoba showed him how to play guitar, the subject of Chief Hasani John Maluleke of Xikundu dedicated his life to xiTsonga traditional music. To this composer, arranger, lead guitarist and singer the music is a family business involving his wives, Shinyori Sisters: Lucia, Florence, Evah, Ethel and Joyce. His band consists of Mzamani Thomas “Skhuvete” Mathonsi – bass guitar; Phanuel Ringani – keyboard, and Adziambeni Maphiri – drums. By 2007 his manager was the great Tom Vuma. His daughter Constance (Conny) is an award-winning solo artist who launched her solo career in 1993. His son Themba is a keyboardist, professional sound engineer and award-winning solo musician; besides working behind the desk in the studio, he regularly joins his father’s band on special occasions as seen on the DVDs *The Best of Thomas Chauke Na Shinyori Sisters Vol. 1* as well as *Vol. 2*, which are also available on CDs. What more can I say about Shinyori’s long successful career that he launched in 1964 except – Bomba Mhlengwe!

The Northern Sotho traditional music like that of other indigenous groups is still largely unrecorded. In the 1970s and 1980s the SABC sent talent scouts out into the rural communities to record the talent. These were transferred onto its transcriptions for airplay. The music was dominated by dipela/mbira performers with few “kiba” (male group dance) and mmapadi (female group dance) recordings. The most known traditional music stars included Johannes Mohlala, Johannes Mokgwadi, Ernest Rammutla, Mothemola Motau, Pershua Magampa and Mohlatleho wa Ramaloko. Their music was neither marketed nor sold. It was the sole property of the SABC. This meant that it could only be heard on radio, but not in record bars. The same went for kiba music. It was performed by groups from various Limpopo villages like GaMalebogo, GaMamabolo, GaSekhukhune, GaModjadji, Botlokwa, GaMolepo, GaSeleka, GaMashashane, GaMphahlele, GaMatlala, Moletji, GaDikgale, GaMokopane, GaSekgopo and so on. Later on the groups performed from hostels and mining compounds in the urban areas where the men worked. Though it was ignored by the music industry and stigmatised as barbaric and paganish, it continued to live in the people’s blood. As they say “in the music the village never ends”. You can move the African out of the village, but you can’t move the village out of the African! In the 1980s a new generation of traditional musicians emerged. Among them was a young teacher from Sekhukhuneland by the name of Mathunyane. He was backed by female dancers and his group was known as Mathunyane le Dinakangwedi. Later his protégé Phaladi Lesufi from Mohlaletse, deep in rural Sekhukhuneland, formed his own group, Phaladi Lesufi le Mathumaša blending kiba with praise singing. During my tenure at Thobela FM in the late 1990s we introduced kiba music contests, encouraging the youth to take the art form to another level. The talent search was sponsored by a businessman called

Matome Maponya. Sadly the traditional music fanatic has passed away. Many young boys and girls got the opportunity to show-off their talent and walk away with prizes. One of the undisputed champions of the talent search was a group of young boys from GaMokopane known as CCV Boys. The name was inspired by an erstwhile SABC TV channel called Contemporary Community Values TV. It was around that time that I came to know of a young, talented, eloquent, passionate and prolific prophet of kiba music called Sello Galane. He introduced contemporary elements into kiba music to set it free. He took it to the South African stadiums and theatres and performed it side by side with jazz and Afro-pop bands. Though Dr Philip Tabane had in the past already won some awards for his Northern Sotho work, he was always considered a jazzman just like Sello Galane for the mere fact that they also played other universal sounds. Efforts of groups like Marumo A Ngwato (*Ngwan'a Rena*), Mafološankwethabeng and the late Lesiba Maja (*Konkoriti*) have added momentum to the genre. In 2002 it was Tlokwe Sehume And Medu who won the category in the 8th SAMA for *Naga Ya Fsa*.

The isiNdebele section has groups like Ingwabo La Langala, Saaiplaas Boys and others but it is dominated by the "Colourful Guitar Queen", **NOTHEMBI MKHWEBANE**. Born Nothembhi Emelina Mkhwebane in Mpumalanga's Belfast, she was brought up by her grandparents who worked on the farms around Carolina. She worked in the mealie fields and looked after livestock. At the age of 12 her uncle taught her the art of playing guitar and the rest is history. In 1976 she left her home for Tshwane where she was employed as a domestic worker. With the guitar being her only friend, she started composing songs and recording them on a small tape recorder. She struck a deal with David Gresham Records (DGR) to release her debut album. The album was titled *Izintaba Kazihlangani, Amathunzi Ayahlangana*. Nothembhi was later invited to perform as a supporting act for Ladysmith Black Mambazo at one of their Pretoria concerts. With her group Nezilemane they impressed the crowd and demand for their live performances grew. She later joined Phoenix Records where she released three albums. After realising the complexities of showbiz, she enrolled for Sub A in her early thirties in 1986 at an adult education centre. In the end she got her matric certificate! To uplift upcoming artists she launched a project called "Kuvuswa Ezibusako South African Association". In 1987 she won the "Ndebele Traditional Music Concert" contest in Tshwane. This led to her invitation to play in "The Indestructible Beat Of Soweto" show at the New York Lincoln Centre. Her international exposure led to another invitation to perform at London's Apollo and Fridge Theatres. Besides her music she also designs Ndebele clothes, paints murals and creates bead works. She quit her job in 1994 to focus on her music career. She lives in Mamelodi West, Tshwane with her children who are part of her band. Her passion in developing the isiNdebele traditional music won her the Woza Africa Mthuli Shazi Performance Art Award in America. In

1999 she toured Britain for the Africa Arts Directory. The singer who composes and plays guitar, keyboards, mouth organ and isikhumero also toured Portugal. She cited her inspiration as guitarists like Dr Philip Tabane, Mfaz'Omnyama and Tracy Chapman. Her many albums include *3 Umhlophekazi*, *Ipashi Le Khethu*, *Vukani Bomma*, *Zimami Balibalele* as well as *Kwa Za-Zam*, which she recorded as Nothembu And The Siblings. Her 2000 collaboration with Phuzukhemisi, Sihlanganis' *Izizwe* is a must for collectors of the genre. This undisputed queen of Ndebele strings was also honoured by the 5th SAMA at the Sun City Super Bowl in 1999 and continues to make waves. In 2006 Nothembu who owned a plot in Willows, Tshwane was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the first South African Traditional Music Achievement Awards.

IsiXhosa music also has various representatives in this category but the industry's most recognised are Suthukazi Arosi who won SAMA 8 for *Ubuntu* as well as **GCOBANI MHLABENI**. Gcobani was born in Mtyholo near King William's Town, Eastern Cape. His love for music saw him register with UCT's Music Department in 1996. His career took off after he won the Shell Road To Fame talent search. After signing with BMG he released his debut album *Umhlobo Wenene* (2001), which won the SAMA's Best Xhosa Album that year. In 2005 he was invited to participate in the annual Masala World Beat Festival in Hanover, Germany. Most Xhosa musicians in this genre are also praise singers.

The accordion-dominated Sesotho music boasts stars like Rutlha Masupha, Tau ya Matshekha, Apollo Ntabanyane, Mahosana ya Ka Phamong, Ditshukudu, Makaota A Kalame, Chakela, Soil Water And Sun, Majakathatha, Manka Le Phallang and Hatladi Le Lehlohonolo who won SAMA 9 for *Ha O Cha O Cheche*.

Award-winning group **MANKA LE PHALLANG** has its origins in the Maluti Mountains of Lesotho. Its members Ngaka Thipane, Mohau Mosobela and Teboho Ramakhula came into South Africa to work at the Welkom mines of the Free State. Their debut album *Leseli* went gold in a very short space of time and thereafter they became an unstoppable hit machine. Their chain of hits include *Ea Nyoloha Khanya*, *Khutsana* and *Moea O Foke*. When the SAMAs were launched in 1995, they were the first group to win the Best Traditional Performance category (Sesotho Music) for Molleloa. In 1997 they were nominated for Matatiele pitted against Tlou Makgola for *Lefu La Moshoeshoe* and the category winners Matsie No. 7 for *Ho Bohloko*. Manka le Phallang's album *Molimo Ke Waka* won the Standard Bank SAMA 8.

The Setswana Traditional Music category was won by Johnny Mokhali at the 2nd FNB SAMA for *Sediba Sa Mafoko*. Though most groups have not been recorded for commercial purposes, the genre is very rich as it is blended with the sounds of their neighbours, the San. Some of the unique musical instruments played include "serankure". Beyond the borders of South Africa in neighbouring Botswana, one of the most known groups is Culture Spears whose members are Kabelo Mongwe, Thembeni Ramoseteng, Madeline Lesolobe,

Lydia Oile and Jelina Mokgwatlheng. Though they came into prominence with the release of their second album *Kulenyane*, their debut album was released in 2005. In 2008 the award-winning group was working on its forthcoming album to be titled *Khudu*.

Many tshiVenda music groups were recorded by the SABC mainly performing Tshikona (male dance groups) and female styles like dombo. These are still on transcriptions and can be found in the libraries or archives of the national broadcaster. However, later there were groups and individuals who achieved commercial success. The performers included the following: Fhululedzani Tshinyadzo, Thrilling Artists, Alpheus Ramavheea, Elfas And Simba and Zozo. They helped promote the genre, but the section has always been dominated by Adziambeyi Band. The group's earlier albums include *Midzimu Ya Madimoni* (Beat City, 1983), which was produced by Thomas Motshwane who was affectionately known as "Umakhulela Endleleni" and among the most recent were *Dzhatsha* (Gallo, 1992) and *Mutahabvu Vol. 11* which won SAMA 7's Best Venda Music category.

The most pleasing development in this category of music was the launch of the *South African Traditional Music Achievement Awards* (SATMA) held at the International Convention Centre in Durban on 30 September 2006. The awards were organised by Dumisani Goba whose opening speech started with the slogan "My culture, your culture – one nation". The winners in various categories of the event, which was also attended by some traditional leaders, included:

- Thomas Chauke
- Worship House
- Ingwabo La Langala
- Chakela
- Lenny Naidoo
- Ihashi'Elimhlophe
- Oflende
- Zulu Messengers
- Nico van Rensburg
- Zolani Mkiva
- Shwi Nomtekhala
- Khathide Ngobe
- Nkanyiso Zulu
- Lifetime Achievement Awards
- Best Shangaan Music
- Best Venda Music
- Best Ndebele Music
- Best Famo
- Best Indian Music
- Best Maskandi Music
- Best Mbqanga Music
- Best Isicathamiya Music
- Best Volk Song
- Best Praise Singer
- Best Selling CD
- Best Traditional Music Deejay
(PBS Radio)
- Best Traditional Music Deejay
(Community Radio)
- Miriam Makeba
- Ladysmith Black Mambazo
- Welcome "Bhodloza" Nzimande
- Nothembi Mkhwebane

- Lasting Legacy
 - Mahlathini Nkabinde
 - Princess Magogo
 - Hugh Tracey
 - Nofinish Dywili

Initiatives like these give me hope that someday will realise fully representative multilingual music awards in this land of many possibilities.