

IHLATHI

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This short piece is a setting of the poem “Amahlath’ Amnyama ase Afrika” by neo-traditional workers’ praise poet Alfred Temba Qabula, to whom it is also dedicated: “Yelulama ngokushesha, Qabula.” It opens with the call of the common ground hornbill, which, according to Zulu mythology, is the bringer of stormy weather. The Zulu braced gourd bow—*umakhweyana*—then “articulates” the poem in a synthetic environment. The piece could be seen as a postscript to the CDs *dUrban Noise* and *scraps Works* and at the same time as a preamble to a long overdue Qabula project. The piece was realized at the Gerald Lapierre Studio of the University of Natal, Durban.

Amahlath’ Amnyama ase Afrika

Ngokwemiqondo yethu
kuyindawo esingayinaki
kanti, yindawo eyikhaya
nekomkhulu layo yonke indalo
ukuphepha, injabulo, kukhona kulendawo.
Impilo, ingozi nezinhlupheko zikhona

Ngezikhathi zezikhathi zezimpi, ihlathi
ngezikhathi zokugula, ihlathi
ngezikhathi zenjabulo, ihlathi
uju lwezinyosi, izithelo, ayikho indlala
amanzi aqandayo amnandi phakathi ehlathini
nezitha ziyalijabulela, zithi
siyohlwisa ehlathini kuze kubemnyama
siyongena ngomnyama ngeke basibone
siyobabulala bangazi ukuthi babulawe ngobani.

The Black Forest of Africa

We never take it seriously,
Not knowing it’s the center of all nature,
Security, happiness, all these are there,
Life, death, suffering, all are there.

In times of war, the forest,
In times of sickness, the forest,
In times of happiness, the forest,
Honey, fruits . . . there is no hunger in the forest,
Cold water, deep in the forest,
Even enemies like it,
They say: “we will wait for dusk,
We will enter without being seen,
We will kill them and no one will know
Who killed them” [1].

Reference

1. Alfred Temba Qabula, “Amahlath’ Amnyama ase Afrika,” in *Izinsingizi: South African Poetry from Natal* (Natal, South Africa: Culture and Working Life Project, 1989) pp. 5–6.

Jürgen Bräuninger was born in 1956 in Germany and studied in Stuttgart with Ulrich Susse and Erhard Karkoschka and at San Jose State University, California, with Alan Strange and Daniel Wyman. Since 1985 he has lectured in composition and music technology at the University of Natal, Durban, South Africa. In addition to many compositions for ensembles of acoustic and electronic instruments, he has also contributed to a number of film soundtracks. He has produced South African jazz albums as well as recordings for workers’ cultural groups and neo-traditional praise poets. Furthermore, Bräuninger has collaborated with choreographer/director Jay Pather on various Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre productions, among them Ahimsa-Ubuntu and A South African Siddhartha. Some of his more recent work can be heard on the CDs dUrban Noise and scraps Works.

DOLOR EN MI

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In the past few years I have dedicated my compositions to chamber pieces with tape and electronics; *Dolor en Mi (Pain on Me)* is part of a full-length CD project entitled *Manifiesto*, which includes some other of my more recent pieces. Found environmental sounds—sounds that interact with us constantly—and their possible transformations are the main sound sources of the tape part of *Dolor en Mi*. These sounds were recorded in Spain, France and Mexico City and then transformed for and incorporated in the piece at my personal studio. One of my aims in the work was to create a guitar piece that evokes the daily sounds of a Latin-American city without writing a guitar part that sounds “Latin American.” The final result is a collaboration between composer and performer—recording guitarist Pablo Gómez—within Mexico City’s underground. I also hid microphones in a cemetery on Mexico’s “Day of the Dead” and in an emergency room, and made recordings of street sounds and made samples inside cinemas and from TV. The recorded voices speak of pain and death; the guitar navigates its way through a sound world of pain, responding to it in many different ways. Pain becomes the source of musical ideas, and the guitar becomes only the link between all of us in the real world and pain as an indescribable but unavoidable human feeling. The piece was originally conceived for guitar, tape and live electronics using a Max patch and a digital mixer to transform some of the guitar sections in real time. It also contains some sections in which the performer is asked to perform physical actions while playing. *Dolor en Mi* is dedicated to Pablo Gómez but has been performed by many other artists in various countries.

Rodrigo Sigal was born in 1971 in Mexico. He studied composition at the Tlamatinime Center for Research and Musical Studies (CIEM), Mexico City, where he studied with Maria Antonieta Lozano and Alejandro Velasco. Since 1996 he has been part of a composition workshop directed by Mario Lavista. Since 1991 he has been working as a composer and sound engineer in his private studio, composing for dance, video, radio and television; since 1994 he has also been the coordinator of the computer lab at CIEM, where he also teaches MIDI and computer music. Since 1995 Sigal has been part of Producciones Silencio, a group that has been promoting the music of young composers through a self-production scheme, concerts and recordings. In 1996 Producciones Silencio edited their first CD, String Quartets, with financial help from Tower Records (CIEM 001). He has received awards from the National Fund for Culture and the Arts (FONCA); the CIEM; Las Rosas Conservatory in Morella, Michigan; the Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada; AGON Studios in Milan, Italy; and the Electroacoustic and Computer Music Lab (LIEM) in Madrid, Spain. He received first prize at the 1999 Luigi Russolo Composition Competition for his tape piece Cycles. He is at present a student at the Music Department, City University, London, working with Denis Smalley and Javier Alvarez. Since 1996 his work has been based on the research of different sound environments created by electronic means, in which acoustic instruments can interact in different ways. He has discovered that interaction with performers is one of the best parts of the process of composing music.