



MHARARANO THE MBIRA ACADEMY

presents

Chinyakare, the newsletter

December 2013

Zimbabwean Mbira Music in the heart of Devon with the Mhararano Mbira Academy at Dartington Space

BEING A STUDENT AT MHARAARANO MBIRA ACADEMY

...is a unique experience and a privilege. This is the only Educational Establishment I know, where the students are able to take a major part in writing the course or subjects that they want to study. The focus is on the individual, the mbira and the culture of Zimbabwe and within these parameters anything is possible.

I first met Chartwell Dutiro in November 2003 at a 'Sounds of Africa' weekend on Dartmoor, Devon; very close to where Mhararano is now based. The first two people I met at the Scout Camp venue that weekend were Grace and Warren who became two of my closest friends and my introduction to Mbira.

Beautiful bewitching sounds emerging from two unassuming bundles of powerful magic, this was the beginning of the Mbira Birthing Ritual.

November rain and mists
draw in from the moor
singers hungry for the sounds of Africa
move like magnets
towards the source

Darkness appears wrapped in wool with
white eyes searching familiar faces
combined forces of Warrior and Eland
balance life's rhythms

Mbira and gourd brought together
Devine unification
created by the Ancestors
thousands of years before

fingers pluck at metal heart strings
shells vibrate and amplified sounds
flow like water
from the cave of the mother

physical bodies turn inside down
upside out, hearts and
souls are torn apart as they fight
erupting emotions

One voice becomes many, weaving song
and history, voices arriving
out of the darkness bringing light and
returning, from whence they came

Now 10 years on with years, months, days and hours of learning; mbira song, hosho dance, Shona language and traditional pot making, I am enrolling at Mhararano Mbira Academy so that I can study to a greater depth. Alongside studying the mbira and culture on a practical level I will also be studying and questioning my understanding and the understanding of others on a theoretical level in the hope of achieving a thesis written to the standard of a Master's Degree.

The music pulls
at the core of my being
connecting
my African Ancestors
my Celtic Ancestors

This spiritual music teaches
ancient ways of healing
body, mind, soul
ancient ways of recognising
truth, respect, love

Catherine Rose, November 2013

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