



TAU TŠA HLOKA SEBOKA DI ŠITWA KE NARE E HLOTŠA

———— ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 2016-2018/9 ————



Artistic programme inspired by the vision....

MminoWaSetšo2020

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As we move further into the 22nd century where the global economic model will be positively skewed towards a Knowledge Economy, we will position the cooperative to be a global Indigenous Music and Dance knowledge base that services the unique needs of clients.

Our *MminoWaSetso2020* vision entails the re-engineering of traditional music and dance into a unique brand that inspires practitioners and its workforce to see beyond their secluded past, reinvigorate communal collective, challenge colonial hegemony, emerge from the shackles of their social environment, see opportunity in all aspects of life. A center of excellence with an organizational culture that attracts and encourages partnership between authors, scholars, artists, government, investors and the general public for sustainable livelihoods.

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Produced by:



With kind support from:





RE-ENGINEERING DINAKA/KIBA IN GA MOLEPO

Mahlaga Molepo is co-founder and member of Molepo Traditional Dance (2015-2020) BINF(UNISA), BA (Hon) INF *cum laude*(UNISA), MINF (UP), PhD INF candidate (UNISA)

Molepo Traditional Dance is one of the few cooperatives which will receive organisational funding over a three year period(2016-2018/19). This announcement was made by the National Arts Council of South Africa (NAC) on the 31 May 2016.

We thank the selection committee of the NAC for the opportunity. The funding will assist implement our objectives in line with the mission and constitutional mandate of the cooperative. The funds will also go a long way in solidifying the work done since the year 2014 when a decision was taken to register a legal entity in order to deal with the challenges faced by practitioners of one of the oldest institutions in Southern Africa - Mmino wa Setšo.

For our organization to thrive, it is important to evaluate the progress made since 2015. As we move towards our fifth anniversary, it is important to reflect on the challenges we face as well as the opportunities for growth.

We have been able to produce, organize and host two notable projects in the year 2015: the **2nd Annual Molepo Dinaka/Kiba Festival** and **Immortalizing the memory of Dinaka/Kiba practitioners**. Activities alongside the 2nd Annual Molepo Dinaka/Kiba Festival included Rutang Bana Ditaola Workshops - a traditional bead-making session where elders with communal knowledge on bead-making shared their knowledge and expertise with the young. The project helped with the transfer of traditional bead-making knowledge to forty-five (45) young people who also received certificates of attendance. The workshops helped produce 300 pieces of various traditional beads. The workshops were followed up by another research project aimed at evaluating the use of workshops for knowledge transfer and skills development among practitioners of Mmino wa Setšo in Ga Molepo.

The success of the above-mentioned projects lays the groundwork for more innovative programs in the near future. That said, challenges such as professional skills shortage and incapacity remain an obstacle in the achievement of our medium to long term objectives. This is why it is imperative to prioritise Training and Skills Development.

We are also deeply concerned about the negativity emanating from the community of Mankgaile. We have been accused of, amongst others, the commercialisation of *Mmino wa Setšo*. Although this is an unfounded allegation, we are aware that the root cause of the allegation is a lack of understanding and vision. Of great concern is our realization that these allegations have been concocted by some ill-disciplined and loud-mouthed members of Makhudu Traditional Council, who are also close family members. It is important to highlight that we will not be derailed by such negativity. Our efforts for the renewal of the institution of *Mmino wa Setšo* in the 21st century will prove to be effective in the not so distant future. When that time comes, our detractors will begin to take lessons from our projects. If you cannot beat them, join them.

Our research shows that practitioners of Dinaka/Kiba are underrated, and their art form overtly marginalized in democratic South Africa. This is made worse by the the lack of structures among practitioners. It is therefore our conviction that this communal heritage has to be re-engineered to deal with structural and socio-economic challenges faced by baletši (practitioners).

The cooperative has a potential to diversify its product and service line, as well as make an entrance into the first economy. Our economy needs cooperatives to create employment as well as preserve what is left of our rich heritage. The 2016-2018 Artistic Programme will assist the cooperative to become self sustaining while keeping in check the material conditions of baletši (practitioners).

This publication briefly outlines the three artistic programmes we will be rolling out in 2016 until the years 2018/19. Our artistic program has been badly affected by a delay in the release of funds. On behalf of the cooperative, I would like to wish all the teams which will be involved in implementing the artistic programme the best of luck.

The future looks bright.

Pula!

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A RE APRENG SETŠO (LET'S WEAR ROYAL)

Programme name

"A re apareng setso"

Rationale: The name is a Northern Sotho phrase which means let's wear traditional (in this case clothing). Our research indicates Africa has several ways of documenting its heritage and traditional clothing is one of them. With this program, we do only want to diversify our product range, develop a new market but also ensure we preserve the dwindling number of community members who wear tailor made traditional costumes made famous by past generations (now mostly elders in their late 80's and 90's). Also worn with traditional beads, the artistic programme would link very well with our previous bead-making *Rutang Bana Ditaola Workshops* where the attendees were given certificates and the current portrait drawing project. The portraits/identikits that will be drawn during the project "Immortalizing the memory of Dinaka/Kiba practitioners will be featured on all the costumes produced by the artistic program. Some of the funding will be channeled to the drawing of more portraits.

Intended beneficiaries

Traditional communities of the Northern Sotho and Bapedi tribes in Limpopo and beyond, including practitioners of Dinaka/Kiba and alternative artforms.

Programme objectives

- To outsource fashion design services to at least five emerging local fashion designers
- Train and develop 25 young male and female in the area of sewing
- Purchase at least 10 sewing machines
- To re-invigorate the dwindling numbers (2/10) of tailor-made specialized traditional costumes available in the targeted locations
- Produce a thousand (1000) costumes by mixing the identified five traditional costume colors of the Northern Sotho/Bapedi tribes with specialized modern designs by December 2017
- Purchase fabric textile from suppliers
- Organize at least two exhibitions per month at selected locations
- Employ at least ten (10) *MminoWaSetšo Consultants* for marketing and direct selling.

Scope of the programme

- Craft
- Visual art

Programme activities

- Fashion Design
- Sewing
- Presentations
- Exhibitions
- Training and Development

Intended outcomes

- Traditional fashion catalogue publication
- Packaged inventory of various traditional costumes for sale
- Graduation of sewing students
- Partnerships with boutiques
- Employ *MminoWaSetšo Consultants*



DINAKA/KIBA REVISITED(DOCUMENTARY)

Rationale: this artistic programme is important because it will document and preserve National Heritage for future generations.

Programme name

Dinaka/Kiba Revisited (Mmino wa Setšo - A Documentary) will be the first documentary to be made about one of the oldest institutions in Southern Africa: Mmino wa Setšo. The documentary is all encompassing but focuses on certain regions in Limpopo province.

Treatment

The story of Mmino wa Setšo will be told through the camera lens and a perspective of the practitioners themselves. From, Ga Molepo Polokwane Limpopo province, a team of cultural experts, practitioners, scholars, photographers, film makers, researchers, content producers and visual artists embark on a journey to seven Limpopo regions and one township in Gauteng over four months to re-discover the story of Dinaka from practitioners. During apartheid, migrant workers from Limpopo left their families in search of jobs.

Over the years, the need for recreation in a new environment with obstacles such as racial segregation, the restriction of movement and exploitation in the work environment often left these migrants missing life in their respective villages in Limpopo province. As a result, they would form Dinaka groups as an escape route from their daily struggles. Alexandra and Tembisa Townships are the two foremost townships most renowned for hosting migrants from Limpopo and this is where practitioners of Dinaka music and dance took refuge. By nature, Dinaka music is spiritual and has a healing effect on a person's physiology and psychology. This makes it an important tool for social cohesion, the healing of past wounds and the celebration of a rich culture that was deliberately misinterpreted by our former colonial masters. Dinaka Music and Dance should both be celebrated and preserved for future generations.

As old as it is, estimated to have originated in the 1700's, Dinaka/Kiba has managed to survive colonization and apartheid. In democratic South Africa, with society changing at a face pace due to global social and economic forces influencing the much debated knowledge economy, We perceive Dinaka/Kiba music and dance as an endangered artform. The effects on the deterioration of communal life can be felt in the hopelessness that beholds traditional rural communities of Limpopo, where it is believed the music and dance is cosmic and its practice therefore influences many aspects of African life. There appears to be an imbalance in the distribution of financial resources by government cultural agencies and this has left Dinaka practitioners disillusioned by the social and economic conditions they live in.

This is a ground breaking life story that asks the question: are we doing enough to decolonise the mind in as far as Indigenous Knowledge is concerned given our colonial history looking into the future? The cooperative's *MminoWaSetšo2020* Strategic Plan fits very well this call for proposals. Never before has Dinaka Music and Dance in its classic form, afforded a platform in a documentary. One of the objectives of the *MminoWaSetšo2020* Strategic Plan is documentation; aimed at sourcing out tacit knowledge possessed by cultural experts within the cooperative before they retire or die.

The concept of "documentary" is quite common amongst artists in other artforms; but strange and non-existent amongst Dinaka/Kiba Communities of Practice (DCoP). The production is a documentary which unfolds in a form of scenes meant at sharing knowledge on the **theory, production and composition, indigenous learning modes, traditional choreography(also known as *meletse*) and public performances** meant at asking the question: what can traditional music and dance do for public space? We believe one of the reasons why Dinaka Music and Dance is marginalized by society is mainly due to lack of understanding caused mainly by our colonial past. This production borrows heavily from the crux of Traditional Education while at the same time trying bridge the gap between traditional and modern education. It has all the characteristics of an entertaining, educational, unique, vibrant production which our society needs.

Continued from page 2

Five scenes documentary breakdown:

SCENE ONE: The theory of Dinaka Music and Dance

SCENE TWO: Production and composition

SCENE THREE: Indigenous learning modes in the genre

SCENE FOUR: Traditional choreography(meletse)

SCENE FIVE: Public performances

Visual style, music and voice

This will be a high definition production, accompanied by archived material, photography. The documentary will document Dinaka/Kiba music and dance's role in the preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, social cohesion, its ability to provide physical and psychological therapy to the practitioners and the community at large. All acts will be documented in still and motion picture. Big epic environmental imagery shots will be projected during the filming in order to create a realistic, engaging, fascinating and spiritual experience for the viewer.

Intended beneficiaries

Individual practitioners such as composers, producers, drummers, dancers, instructors of Dinaka/Kiba Music and Dance as well as performance groups/ensembles.

Programme objectives

- To produce at least 1000 pieces of a quality DVD Documentary by November 2017
- Tell the story of Dinaka/Kiba from practitioners perspective
- Legally deposit the DVD into the National Library Archive by December 2017

Scope

Multi-disciplinary

Programme activities

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Graphic design
- Travel
- Filming
- Photography
- Research (i.e. Archival material, academic literature review)
- Dinaka/Kiba group performances
- Narration

Programme outcomes

- Publication of documentary
- Legal deposit
- Packaging, selling of DVD (physical and digital version)
- Live community video screenings

DINAKA/KIBA MEMORIAL FANPARK

in memory of past and present practitioners



Rationale: With the following programme we would like to build momentum for acquiring a piece of land which will be used for the operations of the project. We are currently in negotiations with traditional authorities in Ga Molepo to lease a 5 hectares piece of land for this purpose. The identified land is located within an area where the apartheid government forcefully removed the traditional community of Makgwareng in the 1960's. There are still traces of artefacts depicting the traditional community that lived there and we would like to preserve these remains. In essence, the artistic programme will link very well with our current project "Immortalizing the memory of Dinaka/Kiba practitioners" which will use the services of Visual artists to draw portraits/identikits of Dinaka/Kiba practitioners between the years 1964 and 2015. The objective is to draw at least one hundred 100 portraits for a transfer onto textile fabric(i.e. t-shirts, headwraps and various traditional costumes). With the availability of the portraits, local sculptors who work with wood will be called upon to carve the portraits as statues of at least one meter height mixed with other materials such as steel and cement to give them a steady platform to stand on around the identified Dinaka/Kiba Memorial Fan Park. Politicians have memorial parks but none whatsoever for Dinaka/Kiba practitioners. This will be the first of its kind.

The idea is to construct a site that is far removed from the Western European notion of art and expression as exemplified by Museums and Galleries as seen from a western perspective. We would like to give the site an innovative architectural design that allows the community to continuously engage in shaping the artistic spaces(e.g. re-plastering where traditional paints will be employed as an outer layer seasonally by different members of the community with a varied painting style and expression) – an approach that taps into new models and the built environment as a changing entity. Plus, the area has plenty of rocks which will be used in construction as a cost saving mechanism.

Programme name

Maduke – the Open Air memorial Dinaka/Kiba Fan Park. *Maduke* is a Northern Sotho word mostly used as a call to action by Dinaka/Kiba practitioners to during public site performances. The portrait wood carved statues will be arranged in a form of a circle resembling a typical Dinaka/Kiba ensemble formation during performance at the fan park. The fan park will also be used for public site performances; for instance, during the *Annual Molepo Dinaka/Kiba Festival* Here, the community will be able to remember those who have actively participated in the artform from yesteryears and those who hold the baton in the current. We will employ the services of emerging Architects and Visual Artists for the artistic programme.

Intended beneficiaries

Local wood working sculptors, Dinaka/Kiba practitioners; their immediate and extended families and the traditional community at large.

Programme objectives

- Prepare a 5 hectares land for construction
- Carve at least a one hundred (100) sculptures of Dinaka/Kiba practitioners.
- Pave a hundred meters (100m) route that connects the village with the fan park
- Build permanent unique artistic structures which resemble the architectural designs of the traditional community

Scope of the programme

- Craft
- Visual art
- Literature

Programme activities

- Drawing of portraits
- Carving of wood sculptures
- Small scale construction
- Architectural designs
- Site mapping

Intended outcomes

- Open Air Dinaka/Kiba memorial Fan Park
- Reinvigoration of communal collective memory
- A landmark for tourist attraction
- A tour guide compilation and publication