

u quance. "Sewela" est l'adaptation d'un ancien  
e conte populaire : Sewela, jeune fille insoumise,  
refusa d'écouter sa mère qui lui conseillait de  
v quitter une maison hantée par des monstres.  
) La maman annonçait son arrivée par un chant  
- mélodieux. Les monstres parvinrent un jour à  
- l'imiter et kidnappèrent la jeune fille.

3 "Mosadi Waka" est une ode à l'amour et à la  
s beauté féminine, tandis que "Mmutle" est  
- emprunté à un air traditionnel que les jeunes  
3 fredonnent en dansant autour du feu. Baya  
s Khala Abazali" est une complainte des  
- parents contre l'abus d'alcool, de tabac et de  
3 drogues. "Mephato" rend hommage à ces  
- sortes de troupes qui, autrefois, faisaient la  
s fierté du Botswana et jouaient un rôle social à  
i un niveau préventif. "Nyabi Boela Gae"  
s'adresse au travailleur qui a émigré à  
Johannesburg et qui, happé par la vie citadine,  
oublie son village et sa famille. Enfin,  
"Tsetsebjwe", qui n'est autre que le nom du vil-  
lage natal de Duncan Senyatso, relate l'entre-  
tien d'un garçon avec son grand-père. Ce  
dernier raconte à l'enfant l'histoire d'un lièvre  
orgueilleux, qui mourut étouffé par son propre  
cœur.

Cet album, témoigne de la vitalité d'un  
orchestre qui tourne énormément au  
Botswana, où il s'est notamment produit en  
première partie de célèbres noms, comme UB  
40, Eric Clapton et Paul Simon.

Fara C.

**THE KGWANYAPE BAND**  
**Mephato Ya Maloba**  
**At the crossroads of evolution**  
**and tradition**  
**Between earth and sky**

The Kgwanyape Band takes its name from a  
mythological creature in Botswanian folklore  
who lives in the rivers and lakes. When ange-  
red, it declenches devastating storms, uproots  
trees and razes homes. It is the incarnation of  
what westerners call a tornado. There they  
recount that it takes the form of a serpent, as  
huge and awesome as a dragon, who hides in  
the eye of the storm.

Founded in 1985 by Duncan Senyatso (lead  
vocal, guitar), by his brother Caxton Senyatso  
(bass) and by the Scottish musician Simon  
Jaquet (mandolin), the Kgwanyape Band is the  
guardian of a multi-layered culture, invigora-  
ted by its personal research. Integrity is pre-  
served. It does not cede to the pressures of a  
materialistic world. This demarch earns it a  
place as one of the most popular groups in  
Botswana.

The composition of the group reflects a desire  
for openness and adventure. On the mandolin,  
Simon Jaquet brings the singularity of Celtic  
resonances. Misja Carbo (Netherlands)  
explores the resources of the electric guitar.  
Both of these Europeans stayed few years -  
notably for this recording- in Botswana, the ori-  
gin of the other group members. The  
author-composer Duncan Senyatso deter-  
mines the artistic direction. With Caxton  
Senyatso, Maipelo Senyatso (vocals) and Anu

Thuto (drums, percussion), he maintains the grass roots groove.

Guest artists, the Australian Andrew Rigby (flute) and Luis Moreira (flugel horn), a Portuguese based in South Africa, conjugate colorful wind currents with telluric rhythms of Caxton Senyatso and Anu Thuto. The trumpeter, whose playing furtively evokes inflexions style Hugh Masekela, takes flight sometimes towards the jazz domain. The orchestra concocts an original rock, which brews African austral sources with Anglo-saxon influences. It has open ears for the rhythms of the planet : from reggae groove to zairian beat. From the vocal melodies, spring mbaqanga perfumes and articulations recollecting songs of South Africa.

At the crossroads of evolution and tradition, between earth and sky, the Kgwanyabe Band amalgamates sumptuous horizons to give birth to a universal culture which responds to Botswana's reality.

Interpreted essentially in Tswana (or Setswana, principal language of the country) and, as in "Baya Khala Abazali", in Ndebele (practiced in the northwest) and in Subiya (spoken in southern Zambia), the songs recount to everyday problems as well as legends and folklore. "Obscenity is an integral part of Setswanian poetry", recalls Duncan Senyatso about the initial tune of the album, "Sheieng".

"Maranyane" (which signifies "Technology") exerts the preservation of natural resources and maintenance of basic sanitation facilities.

"Thabo" deplores famine and the irrelevance of the educational system shortcomings which engender juvenile delinquence. "Sewela" is an adaption of an ancient folktale : Sewela, a young, disobedient girl refuses to listen to her mother's warning to abandon a house haunted by monsters. The mother announces her arrival by a melodious chant, which one day the monsters succeed in imitating thus entrapping the young woman.

"Mosadi Waka" is a an ode to love and feminine beauty, while "Mmutle" is inspired by a traditional air that youngsters sing and dance around a fire. "Baya Khala Abazali" is a parental lamentation against the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs. "Mephato" renders homage to certain regiments, the pride of Botswana, which formerly played an important role in the social control. "Nyabi Boela Gae" addresses itself to Botswanian immigrant workers in Johannesburg who, dazzled by city life, forget family and village. Finally "Tsetsebjwe", which is nothing else but the name of the natal village of Duncan Senyatso, narrates a discussion between a boy and his grandfather. The latter recites to the youngster a story of a conceited hair, fatally suffocated by his own heart.

The album bears witness to the vitality of this orchestra which tours continually in Botswana and is, notably, the show-opener for such celebrated acts as UB 40, Eric Clapton and Paul Simon.

Fara C. (Translated by Car & Far)