## Mp3 Newton Gwara And The Nheravauya Mbira Group - Nhengure



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Traditional Zimbabwean mbira music by one of the greatest living masters. 7 MP3 Songs WORLD: Mbira, WORLD: World Traditions Details: Newton Gwara, often addressed by his totem name, Matemai, is one of the very finest mbira players alive today. With a silky voice often mistaken for a woman's because of it's purity, and an mbira playing style that is deceptively complex, Gwara can easily bring forth the ancestral spirits for any ceremony that he is called to play. Growing up in the Mhondoro area and moving to Dande as an adult, Matemai is well versed in the many mbira styles in Zimbabwe, and is therefore called upon to play at a wide variety of ceremonies. He is often called to Dande to play mbira for Ambuya Nehanda- one of Zimbabwe's most powerful spirits. At an early age, Matemai got very sick and was taken to a traditional healer. There, the healer told his family that he was destined to be a great mbira player and needed an mbira if his health was to return. Matemai told me how as a child in school, he would be sitting in class trying to concentrate. His teacher would be at the chalkboard writing, but everything the teacher wrote were lyrics to mbira songs! The teacher then turned around, but the teacher had an mbira for a head! There are just too many stories to fill this space, but I will always be grateful for the music and life lessons that Matemai has taught me. Nhengure is the latest effort by Matemai. Living with Matemai for a year and a half and listening to him play on a daily basis was one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. My soul was made healthier with that exposure. This was perhaps the most difficult album for me to record because of the close personal connection I had with Matemai. We both (perhaps me more) wanted this album to be the finest representation of his abilities and sheer power as a channel for the spirits. That said, I think we did a good job. There can never be a recording-any recording-that can capture the transformation that can happen to Matemai while he is playing in a religious service. . Not

often inflecting his voice with yodeling, he prefers the power of his pure voice. I was amazed on a few occasions when he would be singing at a ceremony and then a spirit would take him and he would suddenly be singing a fifth or sometimes an octave higher that normal!! This has never been captured on any recording and probably never will. Being his playing partner for that time, I had a great personal desire to be on this album. In fact we recorded several tracks together, and we were going to release those. However, after thinking about it for a long time, I decided that the public would be better served with Matemai playing both parts and overdubbing as that way we can really hear EXACTLY what he wants to happen with the mbira. I don't think anyone will be disappointed. From a technical standpoint, Matemai's technique is different that what people in the west are used to. He tends to play Kutsinira with his left hand and Kushaura with his right hand simultaneously. Also his interpretation is often that Kutsinira plays the bass lines and Kushaura plays the higher left-hand part or melody of the song. This makes for a good time as a kushaura player as you can sit back and be amazed by Matemais bass lines! One other point that has rarely been discussed is Matemais amazing ability to not only play three or four melodies simultaneously, but SWING each line differently and independently! I have personally come across VERY few players with this ability. At the risk of offending anyone, Forward Kwenda is perhaps the only other player I've been able to hear actively do this. That brings us to the interesting point that in Zimbabwe and even in the West, People generally think of Matemai as a brilliant singer and don't realize the amazing playing he is doing. I'm sure that is fine with him, as one of his most important lessons to me was "don't try and be fancy with the mbira, because then people won't know what to sing!" I hope you like this album as much as I liked making it. People who are interested in Thomas Mapfumo Stella Chiweshe should consider this download.

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