

singing wells

PROJECT



Preserving East Africa's cultural music heritage now and for the future



Proposal for funding

by The Abubilla Music Foundation

October 2011



THE SINGING WELLS PROJECT - SUMMARY

The Singing Wells project is a collaboration between Abubilla Music in London and Ketebul Music in Kenya, a not for profit organisation committed to identifying, preserving and promoting the diverse music traditions of East Africa. The aim of the Singing Wells project is to record and document the unique music and dance traditions of East Africa by traveling to rural villages throughout the region with a dedicated mobile recording unit and a team of experienced music and video engineers and ethnomusicologists. The project includes the production of new material called the 'Influences' series - songs from contemporary artists which have been inspired and influenced by traditional tribal music. All output material will be professionally produced and made available to the widest possible audience through all media platforms - TV, radio, digital and print - and in particular through the dedicated Singing Wells website and digital music map of East Africa. www.singingwells.org

Fundraising for the Singing Wells project is being managed by **The Abubilla Music Foundation**, a UK registered charity (Charity number: 1142173).

Project Timeline: **Phase 1: September to December 2010 - COMPLETED**

- Create on-line presence for Ketebul Music & Singing Wells Project (SWP).

Phase 2: January to April 2011 - COMPLETED

- Design & build mobile recording studio
- Complete pilot recording session to proof concept of SWP
- Refine project objectives & develop music/video distribution strategy

Phase 3: May to October 2011 – IN PROGRESS

- Complete multimedia deliverables from pilot session, plus Lake Turkana Festival
- Develop online music map of East Africa on Singing Wells website

Phase 4: November/December 2011

- Complete new regional music recording sessions, including the Batwa people of Kisoro, Uganda and the Luo people in Western Kenya
- Complete 4-5 new 'Influences' sessions
- Develop mobile video recording and archiving capabilities
- Support training of young music engineers

Phase 5: January to March 2012

- Complete multimedia deliverables from Phase 4, including music tracks, videos, audio/photo archive library and 'Influences' songs
- Develop media output strategy for SWP material, in particular the 'Influences' series

Phase 6: from January 2012

- Fundraising for further village recordings (target: 50 field recording days) and 'Influences' series; audio & visual output and distribution of material across all media platforms

Grant request:

This request for funding is to support Phase 4 of the Singing Wells project, in particular to facilitate recording the music and dance of the Batwa people in Uganda. A detailed budget and rationale for this phase of the project is included in this document.

Project duration:

Recordings will take place between 21st and 24th November 2011. Reporting will be in January 2012. The project end date is 31st January 2012.

BACKGROUND TO THE SINGING WELLS PROJECT

East Africa is a region with a diverse cultural heritage. Its borders encompass a multitude of different ethnic groups, each with their own unique traditions and histories, languages and dialects, religions and beliefs, ways of dressing, music and dance. Over time, many of these time-honoured practices have been lost and there is little doubt that the pace of social, political and economic change today is in danger of obscuring the region's traditional cultural heritage. The importance of preserving music traditions cannot be underestimated. It provides a link from the past to the present and into the future and promotes a sense of national pride.

Ketebul Music & Abubilla Music – a unique collaboration

The Singing Wells project started with a unique collaboration between two music companies – Abubilla Music in London and Ketebul Music in Nairobi - based 4,000 miles apart but linked by shared ambitions.

"Abubilla Music in London and Ketebul Music in Nairobi came together in 2009 when, following a visit to Kenya, the team at Abubilla was inspired to put our musical talents towards good causes. Our research led us to Tabu Osusa and the work he was undertaking with Ketebul Music to promote talented artists in his own country – something we were also doing in London. Tabu and his team impressed us with their vision for Ketebul Music and what it could achieve; how they wanted to capture and preserve the traditional sounds of East Africa and share them with a wider audience. Everything Ketebul stands for resonated with us and we became determined to help them achieve their ambitious goals." **James Allen, Founder Abubilla Music**

Singing Wells Project - activities to date

In 2011, Ketebul Music in Nairobi, in collaboration with Abubilla Music in London, launched a new project to capture and archive traditional music in a number of East African villages, using dedicated mobile recording equipment. As with previous Ketebul Music projects, its focus is on cultural retrieval, bringing forgotten sounds and images back into public circulation, in formats that are accessible to a new generation of viewers and listeners. The name '**Singing Wells**' was inspired by the songs of the Samburu tribes people, heard as they draw water for their livestock from deep wells in the dry riverbed.

Phase 1 of the project saw the launch of a new website for Ketebul Music and the launch of a dedicated website for the Singing Wells project which would serve to introduce the project to a both a wide audience and potential project sponsors. The SWP site also includes a Music Map which charts the music and dance of the villages and groups visited during the project. A simple click allows you to witness the cultural music heritage of East Africa. www.singingwells.org/music-map

Phase 2 of the project saw the design and build of the mobile recording 'studio' and delivery to Ketebul Music for testing. In March 2011, the SWP team undertook a pilot recording programme, traveling to the Coastal Region of Kenya to record the music of Mijikenda people. The pilot was designed to test the new mobile recording equipment, refine the project logistics and reevaluate the project objectives and outcomes. It proved to be very successful and has demonstrated the full extent of our project monitoring and evaluation procedures. In addition, in May 2011, Ketebul Music took the mobile recording equipment to the Lake Turkana Festival for a further four days of live, cultural music recording in the field. For more news of the pilot programme, please visit www.singingwells.org/news

During **Phase 3** of the project, we see the development of the Music Map on the Singing Wells website which we are calling 'Discover the Music'. The music, dance and oral histories of each recorded group from the pilot programme will be uploaded onto the map and, as the project continues, we will build a comprehensive database of the traditional, tribal music of East Africa which can be viewed and shared by a wide audience.

THE SINGING WELLS PROJECT – PHASE 4

Statement of Intent

A team of sound and video engineers, artists and ethnomusicologists from Ketebul Music, supported by volunteers from Abubilla Music will undertake a programme of field recordings of traditional, cultural music groups. The programme will comprise eight full recording days and reporting in November 2011, to include music and dance groups of the Batwa people near Kisoro in Uganda and the Luo people in Western Kenya. The programme will also include the recording of material for the 'Influences' series - new songs written and performed by contemporary Ketebul Music artists which have been influenced by the traditional sounds of tribal music groups. During phase 4, we will be able to draw on the resources, experience and equipment already invested in the SWP during the pilot programme.

The Batwa

The Batwa, historically a nomadic, forest dwelling community of hunter-gatherers, are widely acknowledged to have been the first human residents of the forest areas which stretch across much of what is now Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and DRC. In recent history however, the Batwa have become a displaced and largely forgotten ethnic group and their traditional culture and way of life is threatened with extinction. The Batwa community first became fragmented as other ethnic groups populated their homelands, cutting back the forest to provide land for crops and livestock. However, it was in 1991, with the creation of formal conservation areas outlawing all human activity in the forests surrounding the Virunga mountains, when everything changed for the Ugandan Batwa. Unable to live and hunt in the forest, the Batwa were forced to live in areas not suited to their traditional way of life. They became largely excluded from Ugandan society. Batwa communities suffered from poverty and exclusion and were offered little stake in the tourist industry which has developed in forests where they once lived.

The plight of the Batwa in Uganda is now being recognized and there are initiatives in place to support their communities and help them reclaim their traditional way of life. The United Organisation for Batwa Development (UOBDU) was founded in 2000 to address land problems and develop sustainable livelihoods. UOBDU has identified four key areas of support: land & housing; education and adult literacy; income generation and forest access & benefit-sharing. By way of example, the Batwa Cultural Trail is a new initiative launched by the Uganda Wildlife Authority and UOBDU. The trail will provide an income for Batwa and it is the first initiative to afford them a stake in the conservation and management of the National Park which was once their home.

Rationale for taking the Singing Wells project to Kisoro, Uganda

The overall aim of the Singing Wells project is to identify, record, preserve and promote the cultural music heritage of East Africa. In taking the project to Uganda to document and record the traditional music and dance of the Batwa, we can help to stem the tide which is threatening to obscure the music traditions of this ethnic group. The SWP will ensure that the unique sights and sounds of the Batwa are fully and professionally documented, preserved for the future and promoted to a wide audience through all media platforms. We also intend that the SWP will provide a positive and lasting benefit for the whole Batwa community. The immediate benefit will be a source of new income as each of the music groups will receive a gratuity payment for their performances. The lasting benefit will be the preservation, awareness and appreciation of the Batwa people and their cultural music heritage. The SWP will literally put the Batwa back on the map as we add their music and dance to the 'Discover the Music' map on the Singing Wells website. We will make the recordings available to other NGOs and ethnomusicologists and we hope this will, in time, provide new opportunities and sources of income for the Batwa. In planning our visit, we have worked closely with UOBDU and the Forest Peoples Programme to ensure that the Batwa community receive the maximum benefit from the Singing Wells project.

The Project Objectives

- To support Ketebul Music so they may continue to identify, record, promote, document and archive traditional East African music now and in the future.
- To record traditional music and dance in village communities, ensuring that music groups are able to perform as a whole, in their local environment, supported by their families and friends.
- To increase the understanding of the cultural heritage of the indigenous people of East Africa and promote this to a wide audience.
- To facilitate the co-creation of new songs which represent the fusion between traditional and contemporary East Africa music - the 'Influences' series.
- To increase awareness of the issues facing historically marginalized communities, in particular the people of the Batwa.
- To make all recorded material available to other NGOs working with Batwa communities so that they may use the material to support their own objectives in helping these marginalized people.
- To establish a lasting relationship with the local communities visited during the SWP and help facilitate programmes of other NGOs and charitable organisations which support these communities. For example, Abubilla Music are facilitating the supply of at least three Midomo water purifiers to remote villages in Kenya.

The Project Outcome & Deliverables

- A comprehensive, multimedia package to feature the artists, music and dance traditions of the Batwa people in Uganda and the Luo in Western Kenya. This will include documentary and music videos and music tracks made available for distribution and on-line through the Singing Wells 'Discover the Music' map of East Africa, for the general public to appreciate.
- A comprehensive sound archive library of the unique percussion of each recorded group, plus interviews with individual artists, made available on-line for musicians and ethnomusicologists.
- A photo archive library of recorded groups, instruments, costume and dance.
- Production of a new 'Influences' series of material featuring the fusion of traditional and contemporary East African music.
- Delivery of SWP music/video content, 'Influences' series and news stories across all media - TV, radio, digital and print.
- Training of sound engineers trained in mobile recording, video and archiving techniques.

Project reporting

A full financial and narrative report will be provided by the project end date of 31st January 2012.

The Singing Wells project has a dedicated website where the progress of the project is updated on a regular basis. Reports during the field recording sessions will be posted daily when possible and a comprehensive report will be written by members of the SWP team at the end of the field trip.

Music tracks, video documentaries, interviews and photographs will be added to the 'Discover the Music' map on the Singing Wells website following post-production.

Detailed Budget for SWP Phase 4 - The Batwa Recordings

This budget covers the estimated costs to take the Singing Wells project to the Kisoro area of Uganda and complete 3 field recording days of the music and dance of the Batwa people.

The budget has been prepared in collaboration with Ketebul Music and is based on the known costs from the field recording pilot programme undertaken in March 2011. Working allowances for technical staff and all per diem allowances have been fixed and agreed following this pilot phase. Some costs, such as vehicle hire and fuel costs, are estimated and may be subject to slight changes. Accommodation costs are fixed and include a discount from the hotel.

All recording equipment has been donated by the Abubilla Music Foundation (AMF) and is offered for use by Singing Wells team pro bono. The AMF is also supplying a second SLR digital camera with HD video capacity for Phase 4 of the project.

Note: Members of Abubilla Music who are travelling with the SWP project team are doing so on a voluntary basis and will be covering all their own expenses.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SWP: The Batwa Recordings	Budget (USD)	Comments
Return Flights Nairobi to Kigali	\$2,445.00	for 7 Ketebul Music staff
Accommodation in Kisoro for 5 nights	\$1,390.00	for 7 Ketebul Music staff
Meal requirements	\$840.00	for 7 Ketebul Music staff at \$20 per day for 6 project days
Van hire and fuel	\$1,800.00	Hire of two vehicles; fuel costs for vehicles & generator
Hire of generator	n/a	Generator supplied by UOBDU pro bono
Resource personnel for music recordings	\$675.00	for 4 Ketebul Music engineers
Facilitation costs for dialogue with community music groups	\$2,000.00	for 5 Batwa music groups
Facilitation costs for Kisoro representative	\$300.00	
Administration costs	\$550.00	To include music recording licence fees & phone cards
Estimated total budget	\$10,000.00	

Governance

The Singing Wells project is governed by an executive management board which has full responsibility for operations for the project. Fundraising and expenditure is managed by The Abubilla Music Foundation.

Tabu Osusa – Ketebul Music

Tabu has been a key part of the East African music industry – promoter, composer and band manager – for the last 30 years. A Kenyan native, he has been actively involved in running some of the top bands in the country, including the acclaimed Orchestra Virunga and The Nairobi City Ensemble. Tabu co-chairs the steering committee of the 'Spotlight on Kenyan Music' project, which seeks to discover and promote young talent performing a blend of African music.

Bill Odidi – Ketebul Music

Bill is a radio producer with the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation in Nairobi with over 10 years experience in media. He also works as a correspondent for Radio France International and contributes articles to the Daily Nation newspapers Bill specialises in promoting music and the arts in Kenya. He has also worked as project manager with Ketebul Music on the Retracing Benga and Kikuyu music. “Music is the heartbeat of a people. Where there is music there is life.”

James Allen – Abubilla Music

James is a senior Director and Member of the Board of Bain & Company, a global management consultancy, where he co-heads the firm’s Global Strategy practice. He has 20 years of experience in international business and has worked in Africa extensively during that time. He founded Abubilla Music in 2008 to develop young recording artists and has been working with Ketebul Music since 2009 to establish the Singing Wells project. He has an MBA from Harvard University and an MA in International Economics from Johns Hopkins. James is a dual US-British citizen and has lived in the United Kingdom, with his wife and three children, since 1995.

Andy Patterson – Abubilla Music

Andy is a musician, sound engineer and producer from the North East of England. He studied at the University of Surrey as part of their Tonmeister course, graduating in 2005. He has since worked in the music industry in a variety of roles, performing both engineering and technical duties for a wide range of clients, from the world of pop music through to film composers. He has worked with Abubilla Music for over two years and has co-engineered and produced all of their CDs to date. His other clients include Gerry Rafferty, Colin Vearncombe and Q Radio.

Guy Morley – No Nation

Guy is music programmer for the Big Chill festival – one of the highlights of the UK’s cultural calendar, and is the founder of No Nation, an independent arts programming, production and promotion company. No Nation has developed links across East Africa and has recently worked on a project for Sound and Music looking at the influences of early American country music in Africa.

Victoria Denison – The Abubilla Music Foundation

Victoria has joined the Abubilla team with responsibility for fundraising and sponsorship for the Singing Wells project and is administrator to the Trustees of The Abubilla Music Foundation.

SINGING WELLS PROJECT - PHASE 4 ITINERARY

Date	Activity
20th Nov	Pre-travel briefing; pack equipment
21st Nov	Travel day: Flight Nairobi to Kigali; drive Kigali to Kisoro
22nd Nov	Batwa recording day 1
23rd Nov	Batwa recording day 2
24th Nov	Batwa recording day 3
25th Nov	Travel day: Drive Kisoro to Kigali; flight Kigali to Nairobi

Region

Kisoro, Uganda - Music of the Batwa

Dates

21st - 25th November 2011

Personnel

- Tabu Osusa - Ketebul Music
 - Steve Kivutia - Ketebul Music
 - Jesse Bukindu - Ketebul Music
 - Willy Gachuche - Ketebul Music
 - Patrick Ondiek - Ketebul Music
 - Nick Abonyo - Ketebul Music (intern)
 - Winyo - Ketebul Music 'Influences' artist
 - Zaninka Penninah - Liaison (UOBDO)
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- James Allen - Abubilla Music
 - Andy Patterson - Abubilla Music
 - Kathy Allen - Abubilla Music Foundation (trustee)

Date	Activity
26th Nov	Travel day Nairobi to Kisumu
27th Nov	Recording day 1: Unguja & Rang'ala - Dodo & Benga
28th Nov	Recording day 2: Siaya - Orutu, Nyatiti & Ohangla
29th Nov	Recording day 3: Kisumu Town - Ohangla
30th Nov	Recording day 4: Mbita/Rusinga - Ramogi
1st Dec	Recording day 5: Mbita/Rusinga - Ramogi
2nd Dec	Travel day Kisumu to Nairobi

Region

Kisumu, Kenya - Music of the Luo

Dates

26th November - 2nd December 2011

Personnel

- Tabu Osusa - Ketebul Music
 - Paul Kelemba - Ketebul Music
 - Steve Kivutia - Ketebul Music
 - Jesse Bukindu - Ketebul Music
 - Willy Gachuche - Ketebul Music
 - Patrick Ondiek - Ketebul Music
 - Nick Abonyo - Ketebul Music (intern)
 - Winyo - Ketebul Music 'Influences' artist
 - Jojo - Liaison in Kisumu, Siaya & Rang'la
 - Nathan - liaison in Mtiba
 - Ochien'g Nelly - liaison in Mtiba
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- James Allen - Abubilla Music
 - Andy Patterson - Abubilla Music
 - Kathy Allen - Abubilla Music Foundation (trustee)