

Kungoni Newsletter

Vol 3 No 1

November 2007

KUNGONI CENTRE OF CULTURE AND ART, MUA
BOX 41, MTAKATAKA 09 511 884 / 09 294 320 / 01 262 706

www.kungoni.org

Woman of Cry, Baobab

Late in 2006, Fr Claude Boucher and Joseph Kadzombe completed a large and striking painting on fabric, entitled "Woman of Cry: Baobab". This imposing piece was a gift of thanks to the *Tropical Institute of Würzburg* in Germany, who had provided medical assistance to Fr Boucher earlier in the year. The painting expresses the suffering of the people of Malawi in the face of ever-present death and their stoic capacity to endure, like the ancient baobab trees around them. The main panel of the work depicts the anguish of death and the outer border relates many of the various causes of death in Malawi today.



In the intensity of the deserted land rises the plea of the ancestors that has been fossilized into long-standing baobabs with their countless tortured arms raised to the fiery sky. They voice the infinite depths of their longing prayer for life.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, flashes of light strike in the fiery sky. They announce the answer to their plea. People beyond the land of the colossal baobabs are stretching out their healing hands. They touch the lifeless child's body. They shower joy into the heart of the women of cry and that of the stout lamenting baobabs under the fiery sky.

Inspired by Malawian's rock painting and Yao initiation ceremonies, the outside frame depicts dramatically how death infiltrates itself into the

world: hungry crocodile, lack of child care due to poverty, victims of witchcraft, bee's sting, a child falling from a tree, snakes bites, drowning caused by a high wind while fishing on the lake, severe diarrhoea, scorpion stings, AIDS, victims of wild animals while hunting, centipede bites, fire destroying the house where children are looked inside, car accident, cerebral malaria transmitted by mosquitoes, man eating lion, breach of the sexual taboos (*mdulo*) and failure to follow the teaching of the ancestors, spider bites, alcoholism, danger coming from the wild, malnutrition and food shortage, fighting over a woman, death in child birth, drought, floods, storms, sexually transmitted disease, promiscuity, addiction to marijuana, youth delinquency and intense heat.



E-mail: admin@kungoni.org

Kungoni Open Day 2007

Open Day 2007 was held on 4th August. The day began with a morning Mass and continued until 4.00pm. Fifty-four dances were performed, making it the most diverse of the Open Days to date. Dances were grouped according to major events and rites of passage for Malawians.

Open Day Dances		
<p>Birth & puberty <i>Chisamba chantheko (Chewa)</i> <i>Chisamba chamimba (Chewa)</i> <i>Incwala (Ngoni)</i> <i>Umlolozero (Ngoni)</i> <i>Mptapasa (Chewa)</i></p> <p>Marriage <i>Ligubo (Ngoni)</i> <i>Msindo (Ngoni)</i> <i>Uyeni (Ngoni)</i> <i>Kaulesi (Chewa)</i> <i>Kanganye (Chewa)</i> <i>Ngoma (Ngoni)</i> <i>M'ganda (Chewa)</i> <i>Mphalasa (Chewa, Ngoni)</i> <i>Henga (Chewa)</i> <i>Chioda (Yao)</i> <i>Beni (Yao)</i> <i>Ingoma (Ngoni) (2 versions)</i> <i>Ntopale (Chewa)</i> <i>Chimtala (Chewa)</i></p>	<p><i>Sikiri (Yao)</i> <i>Aruwa (Yao)</i> <i>Sokolo (Sena)</i> <i>Chimbwiza (Chewa, Yao)</i> <i>Malipenga (Tonga)</i> <i>Chimitali (Chewa, Ngoni, Yao)</i> <i>(2 versions)</i> <i>Gaula (Chewa, Ngoni, Yao)</i></p> <p>Chieftainship <i>Kazukuta (Chewa)</i> <i>Gonje (Ngoni, Matengo)</i> <i>(3 versions)</i> <i>Kanonomera (Ngoni)</i> <i>Nguluti (Chewa)</i> <i>Chilambula msewu (Chewa)</i></p> <p>Beer party <i>Chandamare (Yao)</i> <i>Makuleya (Chewa)</i></p> <p>Hunting <i>Machipo (Sena)</i> <i>Ulenje (Chewa)</i></p>	<p>Rejoicing <i>Masalimo (Yao)</i> <i>Olanje (Chewa)</i> <i>Moya (Chewa)</i> <i>Mjiri (Chewa)</i> <i>Dambelo (Chewa)</i> <i>Masafu (Chewa)</i> <i>Kachigong'o (Chewa)</i> <i>Mchomanga (Chewa)</i> <i>Khunju (Ngoni, Chewa)</i> <i>Chiterera (Chewa)</i> <i>Sesanya (Chewa)</i> <i>Chiponda (Chewa)</i> <i>Mkangala (Ngoni)</i></p> <p>Funeral <i>Tunduwale (Chewa)</i> <i>Nkhwendo (Matengo)</i> <i>Likwata (Gwechengwe) (Ngoni)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>And the Lazalo Band</i></p>

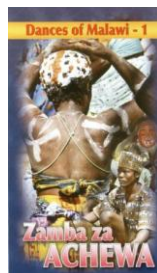
Kungoni stages the open day each year to encourage the continued and increased participation, enjoyment and pride of local Malawians in their traditional culture and performing arts.

New VHS Video

In collaboration with Montfort Media in Balaka, Kungoni Centre has published VHS videos of traditional dances of the Central and Southern Regions of Malawi. This collation includes the following titles:

Zamba za Achewa (120 minutes)

Zamba za Angoni (63 minutes) and *Zamba za Ayao* (57 minutes)



Volunteer profiles

We are currently being assisted by two volunteers from Australia.

Gary Morgan is assisting with various aspects of the museum and culture dimension of Kungoni, in particular overseeing the digital archive project that has been funded by the US Ambassador's Fund (see also our Newsletter November 2006, Volume 2 Issue 2 and Update below).



Gary's wife Susanna Harders is managing the *Pa Ntondo pa Namalikhate* accommodation here at Kungoni. She is a microbiologist by training but has transferred her skills successfully to the hospitality industry here at Mua and has learned a lot in the process. Gary and Sue have been with us since August 2006 on a two year placement. They are supported by Australian Volunteers International, Australia's primary volunteer organisation, which has funding from AusAID, Australia's government agency for international aid.

Building works at Kungoni



With increasing numbers of visitors, the one public toilet in the Kungoni gardens was proving inadequate. A new toilet block with *amai* and *amuna zimbudzi* will soon be open in the gardens, closer to the administration offices. It is decorated in the colourful frescoes that characterise Kungoni, with motifs based on Akafula rock art.

Archival update

The digital archive project, in which textual and image holdings of Kungoni are being digitised for their safety and enhanced future use is advancing very well. All streams of the project are on, or within, schedule. By the end of July, 31 of Fr Boucher's field notebooks had been entered to computer as Word documents and 27 notebooks scanned as a photo-archive; 992 photographs have been scanned; and 254 DVDs have been burnt (with two copies of each) from the video holdings.

(The digital archive project is supported by the US Ambassadors' Fund for Cultural Preservation.)

Workshop for carvers, dancers and staff of Kungoni

Between 2nd and 12th June, a series of workshops were organised by Kungoni to assist carvers, performers and staff in managing their lives to achieve the goals that they hold for themselves and their families. The workshops were facilitated by Mr. C.A.P.S. Msukwa and Mr. A.V.C. Msukwa and addressed issues such as planning, money management, communications within the family and small business options. The participants met in small groups comprising husband and wives, so that gender issues and perspectives could be considered. The workshops were well received by the staff and carvers and Kungoni will consider ways to continue this process into the future.



The workshops for happy lives were supported by Mr Murray Katz of Alberta, Canada, a long time colleague of Kungoni who has organised exhibits and sales of Kungoni carvings in Canada over several years. His assistance will allow Kungoni to better empower its carvers and staff to take charge of their lives and build sustainable futures.

E-mail: admin@kungoni.org

The aim of Kungoni Centre is to guide Malawians and visitors into a deeper understanding of the country, culture and heritage of the Central Region of Malawi.