



SOLÁ AKINGBOLÁ'S

# NIGERIAN BEATS

RHYTHM IN RHYME



### Solá Akingbolá

Percussionist with international, chart-topping band **Jamiroquai**, Solá Akingbolá has spent most of his life in London, UK, but his roots are in Oregun, Nigeria where he was born to Yoruba parents. Describing his relationship to Nigeria as a musical odyssey in which he finds his way home via exploration of the unique melodies, rhythmic structures and philosophical poetry of the Yoruba people, Solá reveals his passion for the language of music:

*"I was always seduced by the sound of the Yoruba language and the way it was expressed within the drumming. When a Yoruba drummer plays, it's not just music: he's talking, reciting, teasing, invoking and praising. These qualities open up other worlds of interest for me that go beyond music; worlds that lead me to history, to the essence of my people."*

Inspired early on by Afro-fusion bands like Fela Kuti and Manu Dibango, Solá's first journey into Yoruba music was playing percussion and then kit-drum for fellow UK/Nigerian percussionist Gasper Lawal of the Oro Band:

*"Gasper opened my ears and eyes to a rhythmic perspective that I always felt, but due to a lack of knowledge and technique was unable to realize. The first music I heard was Yoruba. It was inside the language I heard my parents speaking and pulsing through the drumming I soaked up as a child, listening to my dad's favourite Yoruba artists: King Sunny Adé, Ebenezer Obey, Ayinla Kollington, Yusuf Olatunji and Haruna Isola."*

Cutting his teeth on the jazz scene in the early 90s with the Ronny Jordan band and then finding his feet for the last 15 years in the jazz-funk of Jamiroquai, Solá has toured the world and played every major international venue. But no matter which route he takes as a musician he always returns to the same place – the tradition and culture that brings him home – Yoruba rhythm, language and poetry.

### Yoruba Drumming

Yoruba folk music is renowned for its advanced drumming. Although there are a plethora of drums the music is based mainly around the use of hourglass-shaped tension drums or *dundun*. It is this music that forms the basis of the West-African influence in diasporic musical styles typical of Latin America, the Caribbean and especially Cuba. The *iyaaalu* is the lead drum used in a drumming ensemble; it is made to 'talk' in such a way that the sound of Yoruba, which is a tonal language, is skillfully imitated.

The music is largely devotional in that spirituality lies at the core of Yoruba musical expression. That spirituality revolves around ancestor worship, the philosophy of *Ifa* and the *Orishas* of Yoruba mythology. Orishas are spirits or multi-dimensional beings that are said to be the manifestations of *Olodumare* (God). The complex religious and philosophical system of the Yorubas, dating back thousands of years has, as a result of the diaspora, become influential throughout the Caribbean, in many areas of Latin America and increasingly in North America and Europe. Believers consult divination specialists or 'keepers of the secrets', known as *babalawo* in order to commune with the spirit world. This practice and the philosophy associated with it, is known as *Ifa*. *Ifa* poetry takes its inspiration from the hundreds of verses associated with *Odu* which are the sets of binary markings made during the process of divination.





Central to Yoruba belief is the idea that a person's *Ori* or head – the part of their soul which is given at birth and determines destiny and success – needs to be in proper alignment. Devotees of Orisha are determined to cultivate appropriate conduct, gentle and good character or *Iwa-pele* that is the outcome of obtaining and having respect for *Ase* – the divine life-force that animates all things.

As well as being inseparable from traditional spirituality, Yoruba folk music in its various forms is inseparable from regional distinctions within Yoruba land. In metropolitan cities European as well as Islamic and other Christian influences have been brought to bear in distinctive ways leading to the formation of more popular genres such as highlife, juju, Fuji and Afro-beat.

In this album 'Nigerian Beats', Ifa poetry is set to Yoruba drumming. The listener is introduced to three traditional drums:

**Iyaalu** (*mother drum*): the most appreciated and ubiquitous drum within the *dundun* group, it is an hour-glass shaped drum with tension strings along its body that enable the drummer to alter the drum's pitch making it very flexible in terms of notes. It is played with a stick called *opa*. The Iyaalu is the drum that best imitates the Yoruba language. It is to be found in most musical situations, religious or secular.

**Bata**: the commonly-held belief is that the *bata* was the chosen drum of *Sango*, the 6<sup>th</sup> Century *Alaafin* (king) of *Oyo*, who liked to dance to it. Bata drums are also favoured amongst *Egun-Egun* (ancestor worshippers) when family lineage is being celebrated. The bata drums are conical shaped, double-headed drums played in sets of three or sometimes six. Often decorated with bells, the bata is held around the shoulders with a strap and played using one hand on the larger face while the smaller face is beaten with a hardened leather strip. The biggest of the set of drums is the *Iya* (mother), the next in size is the *Omele Abo* ('strong child') and the smallest is the *Omele Meta* ('three strong children'). These two smaller drums are used as support to the Iya, i.e. their rhythm stays more or less consistent whilst the Iya is used to 'talk'.

In the face of the growing influence of Islam and Christianity and because of its association with traditional religious music there is a lack of young drummers coming forward to learn to play bata. There is, therefore, an urgent need to preserve recordings of this dying art form.

**Sakara**: drums made from goatskin stretched over the necks of clay-pots. They are single-headed drums originally associated with a type of Islamic, socio-religious music played during the Ramadan season. *Orunsa* was the original name of the drum before it became known as *Sakara*. The drums are played by beating the skin with a thin, small stick and at the same time manipulating the skin with the thumb and fingers in order to change the tone. Different sizes of drums generate different pitches and tones. Popularised in the 1940s and 50s in Nigeria, Yusuf Olatunje was the famous exponent of this music/style of drumming.





## Nigerian Beats, Rhythm 'n Rhyme: a Yoruba drumming and poetic odyssey

### 1. Ninu Opon Ori Tiwa

(Within the tray [of divination] is where we can learn how to conduct ourselves [as Yoruba people and as humans]).

The alignment of one's *Ori* (spiritual head) is said to be conducive to the development of *Iwa-pele* (good character.) How does one achieve this alignment on an ongoing basis? Traditionally, alignment was achieved through consultation with *Ifa* via the mediation of the *Babalawo* and his divination tray (*Opon*). In modern times these religious and philosophical practices compete with and are transformed by Christian and Islamic influences as well as Western ideas of the person. Acknowledging the wisdom of the Yoruba artist Haruna Isola – a giant in the history of modern Yoruba music – this single lyric from a song on the album *The Late Muritala Muhammed* reminds Yoruba people of the essence of their being.

*Drums: Gangan (small talking drums) – Tunde Ayandosu*  
*Sakara (small) – Alhaji Fatai 'Peri' Isola*  
*Batas (Iya, Omele abo and Omele meta) – Taye Ajiboye*  
*Percussion – Solá Akingbolá*  
*Vocals – Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbekan, Solá Akingbolá*

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

Single lyric from the song *Lekeleke Gba Mi O* on the album *The Late Muritala Muhammed* by Haruna Isola (Star Records SRPS 31).

### 2. Olukumi (My friend)

This song pays homage to the Yoruba people transported to the 'new world' and their descendants who have maintained and advanced the resilience, beauty and power of Yoruba culture. Known collectively as *Lucumi*, the many Yoruba speakers in Cuba form a religious community in which many of the musical forms of Yoruba folk music are practiced with devotion.

*Drums: Bata (Iya, Omele abo, Omele meta) – Taye Ajiboye*  
*Sakaras – Alhaji Fatai 'Peri' Isola*  
*Gangan (small talking drum) – Tunde Ayandosu*  
*Percussion – Solá Akingbolá*  
*Vocals – Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbekan, Solá Akingbolá*

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

### 3. Enia Lasoo Mi (People are my clothes)

Contrary to Western individualism, this song speaks of the Yoruba and more generally African sense of community and responsibility in which true wealth is said to be social.

*Drums: Iyaalu (large talking drum), gangan – Tunde Ayandosu*  
*Sakara – Alhaji Fatai 'Peri' Isola*  
*Percussion – Solá Akingbolá*  
*Vocals: lead vocal – Solá Akingbolá; backing vocals – Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá*

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.





#### 4. **Ifanla** (*Ifa is infinite*)

Literally translated as: 'Ifa presents a great poem in exchange for an even greater poem; a potent medicine for an even more potent medicine,' the lines of this poem speak of the infinite wisdom of *Ifa*.

*Drums: Sakaras & percussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Vocals* – Solá Akingbolá

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

Poetic lyrics transcribed from the oral corpus and reproduced here with kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola, the Awise Awo Ni Agbaye. This poem is to be found in 16 Great Poems of Ifa (UNESCO. Niamey 1975).

#### 5. **Ori Ni Kan** (*Ori is the one*)

This is a beautiful poem about the Yoruba concept of destiny. When one's *Ori* (inner head) is in alignment with one's actions, one can reach one's true potential. One of the ways one can receive assistance in the process of alignment is by consulting *Ifa* (deity of divination).

This poem is also a riddle. *Orunmila* asks all the *Orishas*: "Which of you can follow your devotee on their longest, most arduous [psychological] journey imaginable?" All the *Orishas* take the challenge, but all, including *Orunmila*, are found wanting at the same juncture. Only *Ori* can go farther.

*Ori ni kan*. When one's *Ori* is in alignment one should celebrate to the full. This poem is a recitation from the *Odu: Ogunda meji*.

*Drums: Bata (Iya, Omele abo, Omele meta)* – Taye Ajiboye

*Percussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Vocals* – Solá Akingbolá

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

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#### 6. **Witch Dance**

Yoruba beliefs about supernatural forces extend to include a plethora of negative forces including witches. This rhythm composed by Gasper Lawal on the album *Abiosunni* imagines witches dancing.

*Drums: Bata: Cuban (Iya, Itotele, Okonkolo), sakaras, percussion* – Solá Akingbolá

Music composed and arranged by Gasper Lawal (Hotcap Records 1985).

Produced by Solá Akingbolá.

#### 7. **Seegesi Olooya** (*Special praise name of the Goddess Osun*)

When the first primal forces, spirit beings, arrived on earth, they were given all the necessary things to succeed. However they chose, to their detriment, to overlook the influence and contribution of the female among them – the goddess *Osun*. Without her wisdom nothing was possible and so the male spirits were humbled.



This poem speaks about the importance of acknowledging creative female power in the world. Without it there can be no balance or stability.

*Drums: Sakara* – Alhaji Fatai ‘Peri’ Isola  
*Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade  
*Percussion* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Vocals* – Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.  
Lyrics transcribed from the oral corpus and reproduced here with kind permission of Professor Rowland Abiodun: *Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas*. (Indian University Press 2001).

#### 8. **Boya Iro Ni** (*Did they tell a lie?*)

This poem acknowledges the power and humility of *Osun*, Goddess of fertility.

*Drums: Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade  
*Sakara* – Alhaji Fatai ‘Peri’ Isola  
*Bembe (bass drum), percussion* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Vocals: lead vocal* – Solá Akingbolá; *backing vocals* – Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.  
Poetic lyrics transcribed from the oral corpus and reproduced here with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola, the Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, spokesperson and ambassador for the Yorubá religion and culture in the world. Professor Wande Abimbola has transcribed many Ifa poems from the oral corpus. This poem can be found in *Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas*. (Indiana University Press 2001).

#### 9. **Kulumbu Yeye** (*Praise song for the Yoruba Goddess of fertility - Osun*)

Dancing through the market place with their objects of good fortune, the devotees of the Yoruba Goddess *Osun* have untold blessings bestowed upon them. This is a celebratory song praising *Osun*.

*Drums: Bata (Iya)* – Taye Ajiboye  
*Sakara* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade  
*Iyaalu* – Tunde Ayandosu  
*Percussion* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Vocals* – Ayo Ajana, Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbekan, Solá Akingbolá

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.  
Lyrics transcribed from the oral corpus and reproduced here with the kind permission of Professor Rowland Abiodun. This poem is to be found in: *Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas* (Indiana University Press 2001).



## 10. **Ojo To Wa Ninu Ose** (*Days of the week*)

This song appears to be a simple childrens' ditty; a rendition of the days of the week. The translation reveals, however, the philosophical significance accorded to the division of time into days and explains why the *Babalawos* (keepers of the secrets) would divine to reveal, for each day, the meaning of being in the world.

Aiku (*Sunday – day of Not Dying*)

Aje (*Monday – day for the Creation of Wealth*)

Isegun (*Tuesday – day of Victory*)

Ojo Ru (*Wednesday – day that is all Mixed Up*)

Ojo Bo (*Thursday – day for Sacrifices*)

Eti (*Friday – day of Impossibilities*)

Abameta (*Saturday – day for Three Resolutions*)

Thanks to Professor Akin Oyetade of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London) for this song.

*Drums and percussion:* Sakaras – Solá Akingbolá

*Vocals:* Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbeka, Solá Akingbolá.

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

## 11. **Aro Orunmila** (*Orunmila's riddle*)

Aro is a type of riddle found in the Odus of Ifa. Orunmila asks: "How can a dead goat make more noise than a live one?"

The answer: "When the goat's skin becomes a drum".

**SULAIMAN AYANTADE**



**IYAALU BATA**



**TAYE AJIBOYE**



**IYAALU TALKING DRUM**





The client who receives this poem through divination is reminded of Ifa's infallibility: All is transformation.

*Drums: Sakara & percussion – Solá Akingbolá*

*Vocals – Solá Akingbolá*

Music composed, arranged and produced by Solá Akingbolá.

Lyrics transcribed from the oral corpus and reproduced here with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola, the Awise Awo Ni Agbaye. 16 Great Poems of Ifa (UNESCO Niamey 1975).



**Solá Akingbolá** ist der Perkussionist der international berühmten Band **Jamiroquai**. Er verbrachte zwar den größten Teil seines Lebens in London, dennoch hat er eine sehr starke Bindung zu seinem Heimatort Oregun in Nigeria, wo er in einer Familie des Yoruba-Volkes geboren wurde. In einer Schilderung seiner Beziehung zu Nigeria, die er als eine musikalische Odyssee beschreibt, in der er durch die Erforschung der einzigartigen Melodien, rhythmischen Strukturen und philosophischen Poesie des Yoruba-Volkes seinen Weg nach Hause findet, bringt Solá seine Leidenschaft für die Sprache der Musik zum Ausdruck:

*„Der Klang der Yoruba-Sprache und die Art und Weise, wie sie mit Trommeln ausgedrückt wurde, hat mich schon immer bezaubert. Wenn ein Yoruba-Trommler trommelt, dann macht er nicht nur Musik, sondern er spricht, rezitiert, zieht jemanden auf, lobt und ruft die Götter an. Diese Eigenschaften eröffnen mir andere Welten, die über die Musik hinausgehen; sie führen mich zur Geschichte, dem grundlegenden Kern meines Volkes.“*

Solá wurde schon früh von Afro-Fusion-Bands wie Fela Kuti und Manu Dibango inspiriert. Als Perkussionist und Kit-Drummer für den britisch/nigerianischen Perkussionisten Gasper Lawal der Oro Band kam Solá zum ersten Mal mit Yoruba-Musik in Berührung.

*„Gasper öffnete meine Augen und Ohren für die rhythmische Perspektive, die ich zwar immer fühlte, aber durch Mangel an Wissen und Technik nicht umsetzen konnte. Die erste Musik, die ich hörte, war Yoruba. Sie war in der Sprache, die ich meine Eltern sprechen hörte, und pulsierte in den Trommelklängen, die ich als Kind in mich aufnahm, während ich der Musik der von meinem Vater bevorzugten Yorubakünstler zuhörte: King Sunny Adé, Ebenezer Obey, Ayinla Kollington, Yusuf Olatunji und Haruna Isola.“*

In den frühen 1990er Jahren sammelte Solá seine ersten Erfahrungen in der Jazz-Szene mit der Ronny Jordan-Band und etablierte sich in den vergangenen 15 Jahren mit der Jazz-Funk-Band Jamiroquai. Er unternahm weltweite Tourneen und trat in jedem namhaften Konzerthaus der Welt auf. Aber egal, welchen Weg er als Musiker einschlägt, er kehrt immer wieder zu der Tradition und Kultur zurück, die ihn nach Hause führt – zum Rhythmus, der Sprache und Dichtkunst der Yoruba.

### **Yoruba-Trommeln**

Die Musik des Volkes der Yoruba ist für ihre fortgeschrittenen Trommeltechniken bekannt. Es gibt eine Vielzahl von Trommeln, jedoch ist die Musik hauptsächlich um die *Dundun* aufgebaut (die Trommel gleicht in ihrer Form einer Sanduhr und ist an beiden Enden mit einem Trommelfell aus Ziegenfell bespannt; die Trommelfelle sind entlang des Körpers mit Lederschnüren verspannt). Diese Musik bildet die Grundlage des westafrikanischen Einflusses auf die musikalischen Stile Lateinamerikas, der Karibik und besonders Kubas. In einem Trommel-Ensemble ist die *Iyaalu* die Lead-Trommel. Diese Trommel wird eingesetzt, um die Sprache der Yoruba, eine sogenannte Tonsprache, zu imitieren (daher der Ausdruck ‚Talking-Drum‘ - ‚Sprechende Trommel‘).



Die Yoruba spielen zum größten Teil religiöse Musik, da sie durch ihre Musik ihre Spiritualität zum Ausdruck bringen. Dazu gehören die Ehrung der Vorfahren, die Philosophie von *Ifa* und die *Orishas* der Yoruba-Mythologie. Orishas sind Geister oder mehrdimensionale Wesen, die als Manifestation von *Olodumare* (Gott) angesehen werden. Das komplexe religiöse und philosophische System der Yoruba, das tausende von Jahren alt ist, gewann durch die Diaspora in der Karibik, in vielen Teilen Lateinamerikas und auch zunehmend in Nordamerika und Europa an Einfluß. Gläubige besuchen einen Orakelausleger oder ‚Vater der Geheimnisse‘ (*Babalawo*), um mit der Geisterwelt zu kommunizieren. Die damit verbundene Praktik und Philosophie nennt man *Ifa*. Die *Ifa*-Dichtung wird durch hunderte von Kombinationen des *Odu* (Orakelzeichen aus Strichkombinationen, die während der Orakelanrufung gemacht werden) inspiriert.

Im Mittelpunkt der Yorubareligion steht der Glaube, daß *Ori* oder der spirituelle Kopf einer Person (der Teil der Seele, den die Person bei der Geburt erhält und der Schicksal und Erfolg bestimmt) richtig ausgerichtet sein muß. Anhänger der Orisha legen Wert auf gutes Benehmen und sanften, guten Charakter oder *Iwa-pele*, das Resultat des Respektes für *Ase*, die göttliche Lebensenergie, die allem innewohnt.

Die verschiedenen Formen der Folkmusik der Yoruba sind untrennbar mit der traditionellen Spiritualität und den regionalen Unterschieden innerhalb des Yoruba-Landes verbunden. In den Großstädten machten sich europäische, islamische und christliche Einflüsse bemerkbar und führten zur Entstehung von bekannteren Musikrichtungen wie Highlife, Juju, Fuji und Afro-Beat.

In diesem Album wird *Ifa*-Dichtung zu Yoruba-Trommeln vorgetragen, und es werden drei traditionelle Trommeln vorgestellt:

***Iyaalu*** (Mutter-Trommel): Die beliebteste und meistgespielte Trommel der *Dundun*-Gruppe. Sie gleicht in der Form einer Sanduhr, und die Trommelfelle sind entlang des Körpers mit Lederschnüren verspannt. Durch Armdruck auf die Verschnürung läßt sich die Tonlage der Trommel verändern und macht sie so zu einem vielseitigen Instrument. Die Trommel wird mit einem gebogenen Stock, *Opa*, geschlagen. Die *Iyaalu* eignet sich am besten zur Imitierung der Yoruba-Sprache, und sie wird in religiöser und sekulärer Musik eingesetzt.

TUNDE AYANDOSU

IYAALU OMELE ABU & META, BATA

AYO AJANA

IYAALU BATA

ALHAJI FATAI ISOLA





**Bata:** Man nimmt an, daß die *Bata* die Lieblingstrommel *Sangos*, des *Alaafins* (König) von *Oyo* (Bundesstaat im Westen Nigerias) war, der im 6. Jahrhundert lebte und gerne zu ihrem Rhythmus tanzte. Auch die *Egungun* (Medien als Maskentänzer, die in einem Ritual von Ahnen besessen sind) bevorzugen sie bei Festlichkeiten, bei denen der Familienstammbaum gefeiert wird. *Bata* sind konische Trommeln mit zwei Trommelfellen und sind oft mit Glöckchen geschmückt, die im Rhythmus mitklingen. Sie werden in einem Satz von drei, manchmal auch von sechs Trommeln gespielt. An der Trommel wird ein Riemen befestigt, der über der Schulter getragen wird. Das größere Trommelfell wird mit der Hand geschlagen, während für das kleinere ein gehärteter Lederstreifen benutzt wird. Die größte Trommel des Sets ist die *Iya* (Mutter), die nächst kleinere ist die *Omelo Abo* („kräftiges Kind“) und die kleinste ist die *Omele Meta* („drei kräftige Kinder“). Die beiden kleineren Trommeln werden zur Unterstützung der *Iya* gespielt, d.h. ihr Rhythmus bleibt mehr oder weniger unverändert, während die *Iya* ‚spricht‘.



Durch den wachsenden Einfluß des Islam und des Christentums und durch die Assoziation der *Bata* mit traditioneller religiöser Musik gibt es einen Mangel an jungen Trommlern, die daran interessiert sind, *Bata* spielen zu lernen. Deshalb ist es sehr wichtig, Aufnahmen dieser aussterbenden Kunstform für die Nachwelt zu erhalten.

**Sakara:** Trommel aus Ziegenfell, das über die Öffnung eines Tontopfes gespannt wird. Diese Trommel wurde anfänglich in einer Art islamischer, sozio-religiöser Musik während des Ramadans gespielt. Der ursprüngliche Name der Trommel war *Orunsa*. Die *Sakara* wird gespielt, indem man mit einem kleinen, dünnen Stock auf das Trommelfell schlägt und zur gleichen Zeit mit Daumen und Zeigefinger darauf drückt, um die Höhe der Töne zu variieren. Je nach Größe bringen die Trommeln unterschiedliche Töne und Tonhöhen hervor. Yusuf Olatunje war ein bekannter Vertreter dieser Musik und dieser Art zu trommeln, die in den 1940er und 50er Jahren in Nigeria populär wurde.

## **Nigerian Beats, Rhythm 'n Rhyme: Eine Reise in Yoruba Trommeln und Poesie**

### **1. Ninu Opon Ori Tiwa**

(In der Schale [des Orakels] können wir erkennen, wie wir uns verhalten sollen [als Yoruba-Volk und als Menschen]).

Man sagt, daß die Ausrichtung des *Ori* (spiritueller Kopf) zur Entwicklung von *Iwa-pele* (gutem Charakter) beiträgt. Wie kann man eine permanente Ausrichtung erreichen? Traditionell wurde die Ausrichtung durch Konsultation mit *Ifa* durch das Medium *Babalawo* und seine Orakelschale (*Opon*) erreicht. In unserem modernen Zeitalter konkurrieren diese religiösen und philosophischen Praktiken mit christlichen und islamischen Einflüssen und westlichen Ideen über den Menschen und werden durch sie beeinflusst. Mit diesem Lied wird die Weisheit des Yoruba-Künstlers Haruna Isola, der führenden Größe der modernen Yoruba-Musik, bestätigt. Dieser Text eines Liedes aus dem Album „The Late Muritala Muhammad“ erinnert das Yoruba-Volk an die Essenz ihres Daseins.

*Trommeln:* *Gangan* (kleine Talking-Drum) – Tunde Ayandosu

*Sakara* (klein) – Alhaji Fatai ‚Peri‘ Isola

*Batas* (*Iya*, *Omele abo* und *Omele meta*) – Taye Ajiboye

*Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang* – Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbekan, Solá Akingbolá



Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Liedertext von *Lekeleke Gba Mi O* vom Album „The Late Muritala Muhammad“ von Haruna Isola (Star Records SRPS 31).

## 2. **Olukumi** (*Mein Freund*)

Dieses Lied ehrt die Yoruba, die in die ‚Neue Welt‘ verschleppt wurden, und ihre Nachfahren, die die Widerstandskraft, Schönheit und Kraft der Yoruba-Kultur erhalten und gefördert haben. Die vielen Yoruba-sprechenden Menschen in Kuba, die *Lukumi*, bilden eine religiöse Gemeinschaft in der viele der musikalischen Formen der Yoruba-Folkmusik bei der Andacht gespielt werden.

*Trommeln: Bata (Iya, Omele abo, Omele meta)* – Taye Ajiboye

*Sakaras* – Alhaji Fatai ‚Peri‘ Isola

*Gangan (kleine Talking-Drum)* – Tunde Ayandosu

*Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang* – Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbekan, Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

## 3. **Enia Lasoo Mi** (*Menschen sind mein Gewand*)

Im Gegensatz zum westlichen Individualismus erzählt dieses Lied vom Sinn für Gemeinschaft und Verantwortung der Yoruba und der Afrikaner allgemein, für die wahrer Reichtum nicht am Geld, sondern an der Anzahl ihrer Freunde gemessen wird.

*Trommeln: Iyaalu (große Talking-Drum), Gangan* – Tunde Ayandosu

*Sakara* – Alhaji Fatai ‚Peri‘ Isola

*Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang: Lead-Gesang* – Solá Akingbolá; *Begleitgesang* – Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

## 4. **Ifanla** (*Ifa ist unendlich*)

Wörtlich übersetzt heißt es: „Ifa bietet für ein großes Gedicht ein noch größeres Gedicht; für eine wirkungsvolle Medizin eine noch wirkungsvollere Medizin“. Das Gedicht erzählt von der unendlichen Weisheit Ifas.

*Trommeln: Sakaras & Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang* – Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der poetische Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und hier mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Wande Abimbola, Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, veröffentlicht. Das Gedicht ist in ‚16 Great Poems of Ifa‘ (UNESCO. Niamey 1975) enthalten.

## 5. **Ori Ni Kan** (*Ori ist der Einzige*)

Ein wunderschönes Gedicht, das davon handelt, was ‚Schicksal‘ für die Yoruba bedeutet. Wenn der *Ori* (innere Kopf) im Einklang mit den Taten einer Person steht, kann diese Person ihr wahres Potential entfalten. Um Hilfe bei der Ausrichtung zu erhalten, kann man *Ifa* (Gottheit des Orakels) befragen.



Das Gedicht ist auch ein Rätsel. *Orunmila* fragt alle *Orishas*: „Wer von euch kann euren Anhängern auf ihrer längsten und beschwerlichsten (psychologischen) Reise folgen?“ Alle *Orishas* nehmen die Herausforderung an, aber alle, einschließlich *Orunmila*, scheitern an der gleichen Stelle. Nur *Ori* gelangt weiter.

*Ori ni kan*. Wenn der *Ori* einer Person ausgerichtet ist, hat man Grund zu feiern.  
Dieses Gedicht ist eine Wiedergabe des *Odu* (Orakelspruchs): *Ogunda meji*.

*Trommeln*: *Bata* (*Iya, Omele abo, Omele meta*) – Taye Ajiboye  
*Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Gesang* – Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und hier mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Wande Abimbola, Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, veröffentlicht.

Aus, 16 Great Poems of Ifa' (UNESCO. Niamey 1975).

#### 6. **Witch Dance** (*Hexentanz*)

Zum Glauben der Yoruba an übernatürliche Kräfte gehört auch eine Vielzahl negativer Kräfte, wie z.B. Hexen. Dieser von Gasper Lawal komponierte Rhythmus ist auf dem Album ‚Abiosunni‘ enthalten und repräsentiert einen Hexentanz.

*Trommeln*: *Bata*: *kubanisch* (*Iya, Itotele, Okonkolo*), *Sakaras*, alle *Perkussionsinstrumente* – Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert und arrangiert von Gasper Lawal (Hotcap Records 1985).

Produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

#### 7. **Seegesi Olooya** (*Lobpreisungsname der Göttin Osun*)

Als die ersten Urwesen auf der Erde ankamen, wurden ihnen alle Dinge gegeben, die sie benötigten, um erfolgreich zu sein. Zu ihrem Nachteil übersahen sie jedoch den Einfluß und Beitrag der Göttin *Osun*, des weiblichen Wesens, das zu ihrer Gruppe gehörte. Ohne ihre Weisheit war nichts möglich, und so fühlten sich die männlichen Geister gedemütigt.

Das Gedicht erzählt davon, daß es wichtig ist, die weibliche Kreativität anzuerkennen. Ohne sie gibt es kein Gleichgewicht und keine Stabilität.

*Trommeln*: *Sakara* – Alhaji Fatai ‚Peri‘ Isola  
*Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade  
*Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá  
*Gesang* – Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá.

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und hier mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Rowland Abiodun veröffentlicht.  
Enthalten in ‚Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas‘ (Indian University Press 2001).



### 8. **Boya Iro Ni** (*Haben sie gelogen?*)

Dieses Gedicht bestätigt die Macht und Bescheidenheit der Fruchtbarkeitsgöttin *Osun*.

*Trommeln: Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade

*Sakara* – Alhaji Fatai ,Peri' Isola

*Bembe (Baßtrommel), Perkussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang: Lead-Gesang* – Solá Akingbolá; *Begleitgesang* - Ayo Ajana, Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der poetische Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Wande Abimbola, dem Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, offiziellen Vertreter und Botschafter der Yoruba-Religion und -Kultur, hier veröffentlicht. Professor Wande Abimbola hat viele Ifa-Gedichte aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen. Dieses Gedicht ist aus ‚Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas‘ (Indiana University Press 2001).

### 9. **Kulumbu Yeye** (*Lobpreisungsname von Osun, der Fruchtbarkeitsgöttin der Yoruba*)

Die Anhänger der Yoruba-Göttin *Osun* erhalten unzählige Segenswünsche, während sie mit ihren glückbringenden Gegenständen über den Marktplatz tanzen. Dies ist ein Festlied zu Ehren von *Osun*.

*Trommeln: Bata (Iya )* – Taye Ajiboye

*Sakara* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gangan* – Sulaiman Ayantade

*Iyaalu* – Tunde Ayandosu

*Percussion* – Solá Akingbolá

*Gesang* – Ayo Ajana, Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbeka, Solá Akingbolá

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und hier mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Rowland Abiodun wiedergegeben. Das Gedicht wurde in ‚Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas (Indiana University Press 2001) veröffentlicht.

### 10. **Ojo To Wa Ninu Ose** (*Wochentage*)

Dies scheint ein einfaches Kinderlied zu sein, eine Aufzählung der Wochentage. Die Übersetzung enthüllt jedoch die philosophische Bedeutung der Unterteilung der Zeit in Tage und sie erklärt, warum die *Babalawos* (Bewahrer der Geheimnisse) die Götter anrufen, um für jeden Tag den Sinn des Lebens zu interpretieren.

*Aiku (Sonntag – Tag des Nicht-Sterbens)*

*Aje (Montag – Tag zum Erschaffen von Reichtum)*

*Isegun (Dienstag – Tag des Sieges)*

*Ojo Ru (Mittwoch – Tag, an dem alles Durcheinander ist)*

*Ojo Bo (Donnerstag – Tag für Opfer)*

*Eti (Freitag – Tag des Unmöglichen)*

*Abameta (Samstag – Tag der Drei Vorsätze)*



Vielen Dank an Professor Akin Oyetade, 'School of Oriental and African Studies' (SOAS, University of London), für dieses Lied.

*Trommeln und Perkussion: Sakaras – Solá Akingbolá*  
*Gesang: Abiola Dosunmu, Joy Aigbeka, Solá Akingbolá.*

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

### 11. **Aro Orunmila** (*Orunmilas Rätsel*)

*Aro* ist eine Art Rätsel, das man in den *Odus* (Orakelsprüchen) von *Ifa* findet. „Wann kann eine tote Ziege mehr Lärm machen als eine lebendige?“

Die Antwort: „Wenn das Fell der Ziege zum Trommelfell wird.“

Der Ratsuchende, der dieses Gedicht durch die Befragung des Orakels erhält, wird daran erinnert, daß *Ifa* unfehlbar ist: Alles verändert sich.

*Trommeln: Sakara & Perkussion – Solá Akingbolá*  
*Gesang – Solá Akingbolá*

Komponiert, arrangiert und produziert von Solá Akingbolá.

Der Liedertext wurde aus der mündlichen Überlieferung übertragen und hier mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Professor Wande Abimbola, Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, wiedergegeben. Veröffentlicht in '16 Great Poems of Ifa' (UNESCO Niamey 1975).



1. **NINU OPON ORI TIWA** (*Our Destiny is in the Tray*)

Ninu opon Ori tiwa (x 2)  
O pe maa tan mi  
E lo si mi

2. **OLUKUMI** (*My Friend*)

Olukumi (CHORUS)  
Iya mi  
Baba mi  
Egbon mi

Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Oyo ni Matanzas  
Mo fe ki gbogbo omo alubata ni Matanzas  
Omo Sango ni won  
Omo Sango ni won  
Won so fun mi pe Ogun mi baba

(CHORUS)

Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Oyo ni Bahia (x 2)  
Omo Iyemoja o (x 2)  
Aora si Santiero

Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Oyo ni Matanzas  
Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Oyo ni Bahia  
Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Ogun ni Puerto Rico  
Mo fe ki gbogbo omo Sango ni Trinidad  
Omo Sango ni won  
Omo Ogun ni won  
Omo Iyemoja o o  
Omo Osun  
Omo Osoosi  
Omo Obatala  
Omo Orunmila  
Omo Oyo ni won  
Omo Yoruba won  
Omo Yoruba won

3. **ENIA LASOO MI** (*People Are My Clothes*)

Onikoyi omo ogun ibiro  
Omo gboyin gboyin  
Gboyin  
To di mesin lorun ese  
Ti ko je kesin  
Onikoyi le joko

Omo iwa jowa  
Mule Onikoyi wu mi  
Ogun ojujumo  
Ti Mule Baba Wa  
Su mi lo

Ikoyi o Eee  
Ikoyi o Eee

To ba ri mi so ri telefisian  
To ba gbo mi sinu redio  
Enia Lasoo mi

Sulaiman Ayantade Omo Iseyin  
Ayo Ajana  
Tunde Ayandosu  
Abiola Dosunmu  
Taye Ajiboye  
Fatai Ayinla Isola  
Mo dupe o  
Inu mi dun  
Mo dupe  
Gbogbo Omo Yoruba mo dupe o

Enia lasoo mi (CHORUS)

To ba ri mi sori telefisian  
To ba gbo mi sinu redio



4. **IFANLA** (*Ifa is Infinite*)

Ifanla nla laa fi gba fanlan laa  
Oogun un nlan lanla laa fii gboogunn lanla (x 2)

5. **ORI NI KAN** (*Ori is the One*)

Ifa mo ni ta lo to alaasan ba rokun  
Sango ni oun to alaasan baa rokun  
Won ni nje boo ba rin titi  
Bo ba burin burin  
Bo ba de Koso  
Ilee Baba re nkan  
Bi won ba se gbegiri  
Bi won ba roka  
Bi won ba fun won lorogbo  
Ati akuko adie kan nko  
Sango ni bi mo ba ti yo tan  
Ngo pada sile mi  
Won ni Sango oo to alaasan ba rokun  
Orunmila lo dodede ni bere

Ifa mo ni ta lo to alaasan ba rokun  
Ogun ni oun to alaasan ba rokun  
Won ni nje boo ba rin titi  
Bo ba burin burin  
Bo ba de Ire  
Ilee Baba re nko  
Bi won ba fun o lewa eyan  
Bi won ba be ja fun o tan  
Ti won fakuko adie sebo se re  
Bi won ba fun o loti ati emu nko  
Ogun ni bi mo ba ti yo tan  
Ijala tan tan ni o maa sun bo wale mi  
Won logun oo to alaasan ba rokun  
Orunmila loo dodede ni bere  
Ifa mo ni ta lo to alaasan ba rokun

Osun ni oun to alaasan ba rokun  
Won ni nje bo ba rin titi  
Bo ba burin burin  
Bo ba de Jumu  
Ilee Baba re nko  
Bi won ba fun o opolopo eko  
Pelu efo yarin ati sekete nko  
Osun ni bi mo ba ti yo tan  
Ide were were ni fi sesin gun wale mi  
Won l'Osun lo to alaasan ba rokun  
Orunmila lo dodede ni bere

Ifa mo ni ta lo to alaasan ba rokun  
Orunmila ni oun to alaasan ba rokun  
Won ni nje bo o ba a rin titi  
Bo ba burin burin  
Bo ba doke lgeti  
Ilee Baba re nko  
Bi won ba fun o leku meji oluwere  
Eja meji abiwegbada  
Obidie meji abedo lukeluke  
Ewure meji abamu rederede  
Eyinla meji to fi wo sosuka  
Bi won ba gun yan tiwon roka  
Bo o ba gbo ti aboda  
Bo o ba gbata ti o siju  
Bo o ba gbobi ti o lado  
Orunmila ni bi mo ba ti yo tan  
Ngo pada walee mi  
Won l'Orunmila o to alaasan ba rokun  
Akapo ee ju si  
Eee soro  
E e jawe  
Orunmila mo jewo obun  
Waa daso ro mi  
Mapo Elere



Mokun Otan  
Mesin Ilelawe  
Mapo Elejelu  
Gbolajokoo omo okin kin tii merin fon  
Orunmila iwo laraa waju  
Emi lero eyin  
Se bi iwo loo komo loran bi iyekan omo  
Ifa moni ta lo to alaasan ba a rokun

Ifa ni Ori o  
Ori ni kan  
Lo to Alaasan ba a rokun

Orunmila ni bi Babalawo baku won a ni e lo ru Ifa re da si koto  
Bi adosu Sango baku won a ni ko Sango e danu  
Bi akapo Oosala baku won a ni e ko gbogbo nkan e e to  
Orunmila nijo ti eeyan tii nku tani won ge Ori re e le  
Ifa ni Ori o

Ori ni kan  
Lo to alaasan ba rokun  
Bi mo ba lowo lowo Ori n on ro fun Ori mi iwo ni  
Bi mo ba bimo laye Ori n on ro fun Ori mi iwo ni  
Iregbogbo ti mo ba re laye Ori n o n ro fun Ori mi iwo ni

Ori pele  
Atete niran  
Atete gbe ni ko sa  
Ko soo sa tii dani gbe  
Leyin Ori eni  
Ori pele  
Ori abiye  
Eni Ori gba gbe gbo o re  
Ko yo sese  
Ko yo sese  
Ko yo sese

*(Lyrics reproduced with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola.  
Awise Awo Ni Agbaye, 16 Great Poems Of Ifa, UNESCO Niamey 1975)*

## 7. SEEGESI OLOOYA (A Praise Name for Osun)

A difa fun awon odu metadinlogun  
Ti wo nti kole orun bo wa si kole aye  
Obirin lo se  
Iketadinlogun won  
Nigba won dele aye, won lagbo oro  
Oro wa ninu won (CHORUS)

Won l'agbo opa  
Opa mbe mbe  
Won l'agbo eegun  
Won tegbale fee eegun  
Won o wa se fun osun  
Seegesi olooya iyun  
O wa ni oun o maa wo o  
Bi won o se se e ti e e daa

E fi sile o jare  
Ati eji ogbe, oyeku meji  
Iwori meji , odi meji, irosun meji  
Oworin meji, obara meji, okanran meji,  
Ogunda , osa , orangan meji,  
Ati bee bee lo

(SAKARA [DRUM] SOLO)

Won o ba mu osun lo so de mo  
Ni oun naa ba si dake  
Ni o ba nsise re  
Ori ni o ma ndi  
O wa ni ooya kan  
Won o mo pe aje ni  
Nigba won ti ntorun bo l'oldumare ti yan gbogbo awon ire  
O si wa yan alatele won  
Eyi ni un si ni obirin  
Obirin gbogbo lo lajee  
Won o wa mu osun  
Won se gbogbo nkan ko gun

(CHORUS)



8. **BOYA IRO NI** (*Did They Tell a Lie?*)

Nigba to ba si di odun  
Kerindinlogun Kerindilogun ni Olodumare  
Olofin, orun maa gbe (CHORUS)  
Awon to ba n sayewo nile aye yewo  
Boya iro ni won pa faraye  
Boya ooto ni won so fun won

Idanwo ti maa se fun won ni pe  
Ki won o kesi Orunmila wa o  
Ati gbogbo awon to ba tun ye nkan wo faraye pe oun fe ri won  
Nigba won gbade Olodumare a se ayewo lodo araare ni Olodumare  
Ba ni ki Orunmila o ye un wo.

(CHORUS)

Orunmila se ayewo tan  
Olodumare eni ta lo tun ku o  
Orunmila ni afi eni to tun sikeji oun to je obirin  
Olodumare waa dahun pe oun naa tun sayewo  
Orunmila ni bee ni  
Olodumare ni ko wa yeun woo

(CHORUS)

Nigba ti Osun ye Olodumare wo  
O ja gbogbo ohun to daniyan si  
Sugbon ko soo geere  
O so koko oro ni  
Sugbon ko huu legbo legbo bii ti lfa

Olodumare wa bi Orunmila pe  
Ewo si tun leyi loba ko alaiye lo se  
Bo ti se fi nkan yii daa lola  
Olodumare eni o daa  
Oni enu bo ti se soo mo yi oun fi ase si lailai  
Bo ba soo bata  
Bo ba soo bata

Eni to ba daa lejaa ko si ma n se mo lara lesekeke lojo naa  
Ko gbodo dijo keji  
Idi niyi ti erindindinlogun fi maa n yara se  
Amo ohun ti won o maa so ko nii taayan lara  
Bi erindinlogun se gba ase lodo Olodumare nuu

(CHORUS)

9. **KULUMBU YEYE** (*Praise Song to Osun*)

Orisa bi iya o si  
Iya lalaleja

Orisa, orisa

Kulumbu yeye yeye kulumbu (x 2)

Oni gbogbo ohun ti enia ba an se e

Ti ko ba fi ti obirin kun  
Oni ko le se se se  
Oni ki won o ma fi iba fun obirin  
Oni ti won o ba ti fi iba fun obirin

Ile aye yio maa toro  
Ile aye yio maa toro  
Ile aye

Oun a si jo woja  
Oun o diri owewe  
Oun a si mesin gun

Ile aye yio maa toro  
Ile aye

10. **OJO TO WA NINU OSE** (*Days of the Week*)

Aiku – Day for not Dying  
Aje – Day for the Creation of Wealth  
Isegun – Day for Victory  
Ojo Ru – Day that is Mixed Up



Ojo Bo – Day for Sacrifices  
Eti – Day of Impossibilities  
Abameta – Day of Three Resolutions

*Bi oni ti ri ola ko ri beeni jeki babalawo o difa oororuun.*  
(Because each day is different, the babalawo will divine each day)

11. **ARO ORUNMILA** (*Orunmila's Puzzle*)  
(Taken from Odu Ogbeweyin)

Orunmila lo di mo jaro  
Mo jaroo mi  
Oro mo ja o pati (CHORUS)

Oro ti mo ja  
Mo japa aja  
Mo si ja fufuleele adaba  
Mo jale Oloun pere  
Aseta nrele Ado

Erinmi nrode Owo  
Orunmila loun lo soke Igeti  
Ilee Baba oun  
Orunmila loun tun ri kini kan  
Won ni baba Akeyo

Won ni kin lo ha po o ori  
Ee ti je  
Kin lo tun ri

O ni oku ewure  
O lo mo lee ke ju aaye loo  
Won ni oku ewure  
Ewure to ba ku ni o waa kee  
Won lo gbese re de  
O ni won o loo mewure wa  
Won ko gi tii

(CHORUS)

Won lu u lu u  
O ke ke ke  
Eni ti mbe lojude ko gbo daji mbe  
O ni won lu u pa  
Ni won ba mewure  
Awo e lo ni won o ko ho  
Won howo e  
Esu ti baa gbegi  
Won ti kan awo un si l  
Won kan kan yi eti awo un po  
Won bere so bee se  
Won toju 'yan  
Won toju oka  
Won je gbogbo e tan  
Won mu oti  
Won yo daa daa  
Nigbati won e e pe  
Awon se gbogbo won un tan  
Ilu ti gbe nta

Ilu ti gbe nta  
Ngbaa won jeun tan  
Ki won o moo pe awon nnakun  
Esu bo di Ilu lo sopa si

Eni ti mbe nruu Akinmoorin  
Eni ti mbe nruu Iloora  
Won o deti ti on fi ngbo  
O ni oun so pe oku ewure  
O mo lee ke jaaye lo

Eni niro ni  
O lee gbo niisiin  
A bee gbo  
Eni ti mbe nruu Fiditi  
Mbe naa ni ti njoo bo



Oun ngburooo lu kaan  
Eyi ni pe ki eleyi un ni  
Ko mo pe gbogbo nkan ti Ifa nso foun  
Ko tete se  
Iro ni pa

Ko si nkan to nso ti ko je ododo (x 2)

(CHORUS).



### 1. **NINU OPON ORI TIWA** (*Our Destiny is in the Tray*)

Inside the tray we will find our collective destiny  
as Yorubas

My friend do not try to deceive me,  
I am at ease with this knowledge.

Let us remember, children of the Yorubas

### 2. **OLUKUMI** (*My Friend – A Yoruba word used in Cuba*)

My Friend,  
My Mother, (CHORUS)  
My Father,  
My Brother

I would like to acknowledge all the people of Matanzas (Cuba) who are  
descendants from Oyo  
in Yorubaland.

I would like to acknowledge the Bata players in Matanzas.

They are descendants of Sango (x 2)

They told me that Ogun (the god of iron) is their father.

(CHORUS)

I would like to acknowledge the descendants of

Oyo in Bahia (Brazil) (x 2)

They are descendants of Iyemoja (the Yoruba Goddess of the  
Oceans) (x 2)

Here is where the saints are.

I would like to acknowledge the descendants of  
Oyo in Matanzas,

... the descendants of Oyo in Bahia,

... the descendants of Ogun in Puerto Rico,

... the descendants of Sango in Trinidad,

They are children of Sango,

... children of Ogun,

... children of Iyemoja,

... children of Osun,

... children of Osoosi,

... children of Obatala,

... children of Orunmila,

... children of Oyo,

They are children of the Yorubas (x 2)

### 3. **ENIA LASOO MI** (*People Are My Clothes*)

Onikoyi, children born after a successful battle or war.

Someone who rises to the challenges life throws his/her way.

An entanglement hinders the war horse, preventing it from grazing.

The Onikoyi family are all similar in their mannerisms, a quality I prefer.

I love your family for their lack of timidity.

The history of daily war in your family prevents me from coming to  
your home.

Ikoyi O Eee

Ikoyi O Eee

If you see me on television,

If you hear me on the radio.

It is because people are my clothes.

(Listing the names of all the musicians on the album.)

### 4. **IFANLA** (*Ifa is Infinite*)

Ifa presents one great poem for another great poem,

A potent medicine for an even more potent medicine.



5. **ORI NI KAN** (*Ori is the One*)  
(Recited from the Odu Ogunda Meji)

Orunmila said that one always bends down when entering the doorway.  
Ifa asked the question,

“Who among you gods could follow your devotee to a distant journey over the seas?”

Sango (a 6<sup>th</sup> century King who was deified) answered that he could follow his devotee to a distant journey overseas.

The question was asked of him,

“What will you do if after travelling for a long distance,

Walking and walking,

You arrive at Koso

The home of your fathers?

If they prepare gbegiri soup (soup made from beans)

And they prepare yam flour pudding,

If they offer you bitter kola (favourite food of Sango) and a rooster?”

Sango answered, “After eating to my satisfaction,

I will return to my home.”

Sango was told that he could not follow his devotee to a distant journey overseas.

Orunmila said that one always bends down when entering the doorway.

Ifa asked the question,

“Who among you gods could follow your devotee to a distant journey over the seas?”

Ogun (Yoruba god of iron) answered that he could follow his devotee to a distant journey over the seas.

The question was asked ...

Walking, walking,

You arrive at Ire (a town in Ekiti, believed to be the home of Ogun, the god of iron)

The home of your fathers.

If they offer you fried beans

And they kill a dog for you together with a hen.

If they offer you guinea-corn beer and palm wine?”

Ogun answered saying, “After eating to my satisfaction,

I will chant Ijala (traditional hunter’s poetry) loudly and gloriously  
And go back to my home.

Ogun was told that he could not follow his devotee to a distant journey over the seas.

Orunmila said that one always bends down when entering the doorway.

Ifa asked the question,

“Who among you gods could follow your devotee to a distant journey over the seas?”

Osun answered (goddess of the rivers, a great lover of the home and children) ...

Walking, walking,

You arrive at Ijumu the home of your fathers?

If they give you plenty of corn starch pudding,

Together with yarin vegetables (vegetable growing wild in newly cultivated lands)

And maize beer?”

Osun answered saying, “After eating to my satisfaction,  
I will ride upon small pieces of brass back to my home.”

Osun was told that she could not follow her devotee to a distant journey over the seas.

Orunmila said that one always bends down when entering the doorway.

Ifa asked the question,

“Who among you gods could follow your devotee to a distant journey over the seas?”

Orunmila (god of Wisdom) answered ...

The question was asked, “What will you do if after travelling ...

Walking, walking,

You arrive at Igeti Hill (a place at Ife, believed to be the place where Orunmila stayed for a long time whilst on earth)

The home of your fathers,

If they offer you two fast moving rats,

Two fish that swim gracefully,

Two hens with big livers,



Two goats heavy with foetus,  
Two cows with fat horns,  
If they prepare pounded yam  
And they prepare yam flour pudding  
If you take well brewed guinea-corn beer,  
And you take alligator pepper  
And good kola nuts?"  
Orunmila answered, "After eating to my satisfaction,  
I will return to my home."  
Orunmila was told that he could not follow his devotee to a distant  
journey over the seas.

The Ifa priest was dumbfounded!  
He could not say a word,  
Because he did not understand the parable.

Orunmila, I confess my helplessness,  
Please clothe me with wisdom.  
Mapo in the city of Elere (The title Mapo was given to Orunmila in the  
town of Elere)  
Mokun of the town of Otan (Orunmila was given the title of Mokun,  
an important traditional title of the town of Otan in Ekiti)  
Mesin of the city of Ilawe (another title given to Orunmila in Ilawe,  
an Ekiti town.)  
Mapo Elejelu (the name of a ruler of a place in the area of Ekiti,  
known as Ijelu)  
Gbolajokoo, offspring of tusks, that make the elephant trumpet.  
Orunmila you are the leader, I am the follower.  
You are the sage who teaches one wise things like ones relation.

Ifa's question is, "Who among the gods can follow his devotee to a  
distant journey over the seas?"

Ifa said it is Ori  
It is Ori alone who can follow his devotee to a  
distant journey overseas.  
Orunmila said, "When an Ifa priest dies,  
People may ask that his divination instruments be thrown into the ditch.

When a devotee of Sango dies  
People may say that his Sango instruments should be thrown away.  
When a devotee of Oosaala dies  
People may ask that his paraphernalia should be buried with him."  
Orunmila asked, "Ever since human beings have died, whose head is  
ever severed from his body before burial?"

Ifa said it is Ori  
It is Ori alone, who can follow his devotee to a distant journey over the  
seas without turning back.  
If I have children on earth, it is Ori whom I will praise.  
My Ori it is you.  
All the good things that I have on earth.

It is my Ori to whom I will give praise.  
My Ori, it is you.  
Ori I hail you,  
You who always remembers your devotees,  
You who gives blessings to your devotees more quickly than other gods.

No god blesses a man without the consent of his Ori.  
Ori I hail you,  
You who allows children to be born alive,  
A person whose sacrifice is received by his own Ori,  
Should rejoice exceedingly.

(Repeat to the end)

*Translation used with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola Awise  
Awo Ni Agbaye.  
Published by UNESCO Naimey 1975*

## 7. **SEEGESI OLOOYA** (A Praise Name for Osun)

It was divined for the seventeen Odus  
Who were coming from heaven to earth  
A woman was the seventeenth of them.  
When they got to earth,  
They cleared a grove for Oro (CHORUS)



Oro had his own space  
They cleared the grove for Opa  
Opa's abode was secure.  
They prepared a grove for Eegun,  
Eegun had a home.  
But they made no provision for Osun,  
Also known as, "Seegesi, the prominent hair plaiter with the coral beaded comb"  
So, she decided to wait and see  
How they would carry out their mission successfully.

(CHORUS)

Osun sat quietly and watched them  
Beginning with Eji-Ogbe and Oyeku meji  
Iwori meji, Odi meji, Irosun meji,  
Owonrin meji, Obara meji, Okanran meji,  
Ogunda, Osa, Orangun meji and so on.

(SAKARA DRUM SOLO)

They decided not to countenance Osun in their mission  
She too kept mute,  
And carried on her rightful duty,  
Which is hair-plaiting,  
She had a comb  
They never knew she was an "Aje"  
When they were coming from heaven,  
God chose all good things;  
He also chose their keeper,  
And this was a woman.

All women are Aje,  
And because all other Odu left Osun out  
Nothing they did was successful.

(CHORUS)

*Translations used with the kind permission of  
Professor Rowland Abiodun. Taken from Osun Across the Water: A Yoruba  
Goddess in Africa and the Americas, Indiana University Press 2001*

## 8. **BOYA IRO NI** (*Did They Tell a Lie?*)

Every sixteen years Olodumare (God)  
Olofin of heaven used to subject diviners on Earth to a test,  
To find out whether they were telling lies or the truth to the inhabitants  
of earth.  
This test involved calling on Orunmila and all the other diviners on earth.  
Olodumare would say that he wanted to see all of them.  
When they arrived,  
Olodumare would ask them to divine for him.  
So, Olodumare asked Orunmila to divine for him.

(CHORUS)

When Orunmila finished divining for God,  
Olodumare asked, "Who is next?"  
Orunmila said that the next person was his partner, who was a woman.  
God answered, "Is she also a diviner?"  
To which Orunmila replied, "That is true."  
Olodumare then asked her to divine for him.

(CHORUS)

When Osun examined God  
She hit upon all the things on his mind  
But she did not reveal all.  
She mentioned the gist of things without going to the root of the  
matter like Ifa.

(SAKARA DRUM SOLO)

God asked Orunmila what kind of diviner is this?  
Orunmila then explained to Olodumare,  
How he honoured Osun with the sixteen cowries (implements for divining)  
God said, "It is alright."  
He added that even though she did not go into details,  
He, Olodumare (God) gave his assent to it.  
He added, "From today on and forever,  
Even if what *eerindinlogun* (divination with 16 cowries) says may not  
be detailed



Anybody who disbelieves it,  
Would see the consequences instantly.  
It must not wait until the following day.”  
This is why the predictions of eerindinlogun come to pass quickly  
Even though the stories may not be impressive.

That is how eerindinlogun received ase (power)  
Directly from Olodumare.

(CHORUS)

*Translated with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola Awise Awo Ni Agbaye. Taken from the publication Osun Across The Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas, Indiana University Press 2001*

### 9. **KULUMBU YEYE** (Praise Song to Osun)

There is no Orisa like one’s mother  
One’s mother is a child’s saviour.

Kulumbu yeye yeye kulumbu (x 2)

In anything we do  
If we do not establish the place for women  
That thing will not succeed.  
Ifa says that we should acknowledge the power  
of women

And that if we acknowledge their power,  
The world will be peaceful (x 2)  
Kulumbu yeye yeye kulumbu (CHORUS)

That she may dance into the market place to proclaim her blessings.  
That she may plait her hair in the owewe style  
That she may ride on horseback  
(be seen as fortunate and successful)

The world will be peaceful

The translation used with the kind permission of professor Rowland Abiodun.

*Taken from the publication Osun Across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas, Indiana University Press 2001*

### 10. **OJO TO WA NINU OSE** (Days of the Week)

Aiku – Day for Not Dying  
Aje – Day for the Creation of Wealth  
Isegun – Day for Victory  
Ojo Ru – Day that is Mixed Up  
Ojo Bo – Day for Sacrifices  
Eti – Day of Impossibilities  
Abameta – Day of Three Resolutions

*Bi oni ti ri ola ko ri beeni jeki babalawo o difa oororuun.*

(Because each day is different, the babalawo will divine each day)

### 11. **ARO ORUNMILA** (Orunmila’s Puzzle)

Orunmila said that he told aro tales  
His own aro tale.  
He told his own aro tale splendidly and beautifully (CHORUS)

He said that he told the aro tales up to a point, where he had to tear away  
His dog’s front legs.  
And he helped the dove to remove the dirty straw from its neck.  
And he travelled long distances until he suddenly entered the abode of  
Oloun (God)

It was the time when Aseta (a title indigenous to Ado Ekiti) was going  
to the city of Ado.

When Erinmi (name of an important Owo title) was going to the city of Owo  
And when Orunmila himself was going to Igeti Hill,  
The home of his Fathers.  
Orunmila told his companions that he saw yet another strange thing.

They said, “Father, maker of eyo marks (a type of horizontal tattoo  
made on the left arm and leg of any prince or princess of the Oyo  
ruling house. This, with 6 horizontal facial marks on each cheek  
arranged in sets of 3, shows that a person is of royal blood).



What is it that you say you have seen?"  
What is it?  
What strange thing have you seen again?"

He said, "A dead goat, can certainly cry louder than a living one."  
They said, "A dead goat!"  
"How can a dead goat ever cry?"  
They said, "You have come up with yet another trick."  
He asked them to go and bring a goat.  
He asked them to beat it properly with a stick.

They beat it and beat it,  
It cried and cried.  
But a man standing outside the house could hardly hear half of its cries.  
He asked them to beat it to death.  
They then got hold of the goat and beat it to death.

The first thing he asked them to do was remove its skin,  
They removed the skin.  
Esu (god of the crossroads) helped to prepare a piece of carved wood  
on which they fixed the goat's skin.  
They nailed small wooded pegs around the goats skin.  
They started to cook the meat,  
They prepared iyan (pounded yam)  
They prepared oka (yam flour pudding)  
They ate everything.

They drank beer  
And became quite satisfied.  
By the time they finished doing all those things,  
The drum placed outside the house had become dry.  
When they finished eating,  
And as they were resting their stomachs after the good meal,  
Esu went to the drum and applied drum sticks to it.

People who were as far away as Akinmoorin (a village three miles from Oyo)  
And those as far away as Iloraa (a village two miles from Oyo)  
Did not have to listen before they heard the drum

He said, "When I told you that a dead goat can cry louder than a living one,  
You said that it was a lie.  
Do you hear the drum now  
Or don't you hear?"

People as far away as Fiditi (about nine miles from Oyo)  
Started from there dancing to the drum.  
Saying that they heard a strange drum.  
This story is for this client,  
So that he may not say that all the things Ifa  
predicts for him  
Do not come to pass quickly,  
And therefore say that they were all lies.

There is nothing he (Ifa) says, that is not true.

*Translation reproduced with the kind permission of Professor Wande Abimbola  
Awise Awo Ni Agbaye. Taken from "16 Great Poems of Ifa", (UNESCO Niamey 1975)*



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**Solá Akingbolá**





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