

# MARIMBA



## Introduction

With the aim of rescuing and recovering part of the abundant Ovimbundu root culture, the Marimba project traveled to **the kingdom of Bailundo**, where once, as still told by its descendants, tradition is respected and absorbed by society as a generous historical heritage. In the **kingdom Bailundo** some songs and dances depict a colonial context where rural work was one of the most important sources of income in that land, other songs tell stories of hunters and hunters, of a tribe that survived under different reigns, stories of struggle, motherhood and survival of the **Ovimbundu** people in **the kingdom of Bailundo**.

## Katyavala

**Katyavala** is a group of music and cultural dance with more than 100 women founded in 1983, with the purpose of rescuing, disseminating and valuing habits and customs of the region's ancestry, the **Katyavala** voices sing songs in the national language Umbundo that reflect lessons inscribed in the collective memory recovered through the songs, the use of native instruments of the region such as the "onhedjengo", "ombulumbumba", "katchenke", "otchisandje", "tchingunfu", "kaluhi", "kalyalya" and "olunguaya" and folk dances typical of ovimbund culture known as "Elissemba", "onhatcha", "Okatita", "Osawaya", "Okamusa", "Otchisosi", "Otchitiku" and "Nawāsindikile".

## "The Journey"

Our journey began with the desire to find the sounds from scratch in the province of Huambo and why not, the Bailundo, between the rugged and more forest landscapes the trip had stories from the region, in the voice of the **ambassador** of the **kingdom Bailundo Manuel Castelo Ekuikui**, who led us to Huambo.



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The day after arrival in Huambo we were greeted attentively by the **Provincial Government** of Huambo and Dr. Huambo. **Lotti Nolika Governor of Huambo** who congratulated and praised the project, followed to the local crafts fair that opened doors with music and dances welcome to the group and then we were greeted by the group of ladies Katyavala, in traditional robes in vivid colors and with an extraordinary energy.

The characteristics of the musicality we wanted to find were very directed to the ancestral past of these peoples so the goal of the Marimba group in Angola was to record the sounds with all the power that the earth has when in contact with music, this goal was achieved during the recording of the songs of the Katyavala group made in a village belonging to the kingdom Bailundo, the administrator of the village better known as Soba, was accompanied by some members of the village and these received all with songs of joy, we were visits and the women in a movement between the breath and fingers in the mouth, issued a small sounding scream, still keeping this expression so tribal African.

The Katyavala group performed for the recording with great enthusiasm, there were many who sang and danced to the sound of the Batuques played by women and this experience was like reliving a past where the old tribes gathered for a party.

Later the meeting with the **King of Bailundo Ekuikui VI Tchongolola Tchongonga**, gave us knowledge about customs and traditions, Bailundo has very strong characteristics and its rituals are respected to this day and the cultural values are one of the most respected in our country, these are the celebration of the survival and pride of Bailundo. We were greeted with a welcome ritual where all the status of traditional power was present, and it was in a hall where King Ekuikui VI Tchongolola Tchongongai made a point of telling stories of the kingdom's past, which has more than **121 years of existence**, from the homonymous Mount Halavala, to the names of sovereigns such as **Katyavala Bwila I, Ekuikui II, Mutu ya Kevela** and others, we visited as tradition the Akokoto, which is the place or sacred tomb where the skulls of the ancient kings of this region rest.



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The kingdom despite celebrating 121 years has stories that have come since 1700 and has under the motto “**Bailundo, a people, a land, a hope**”, where art and culture prevail with joy, organisation and as an immense beauty of African character of the entire Ovimbundo ethnicity.

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*“Marimba Project in the Bailundo Kingdom” Angola August 2023*



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