

# LAUNCH OF 'AFRICAN MUSIC', JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF AFRICAN MUSIC

22 October 2007

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, and especially Prof. Diane Thram, good evening and welcome!

1. It is a privilege to say a few words at the re-launch of the journal *African Music*; indeed, for a number of reasons it is an especial great pleasure!
  - *African Music* is the Journal of the International Library of African Music, based here at Rhodes University
  - The editor is one of our own professors, Diane Thram
  - While *African Music* was founded in 1953 by Hugh Tracey and continued publishing until 1999, it has been out of production since then and has, after 8 years, now been revived by Prof. Thram. It should be noted that the re-launch coincides with 'the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hugh Tracey's passing' (2007:4)
  - An impressive multi-university and multi-national Editorial Advisory Panel has been constituted to take care of
  - An innovative dimension is that the journal includes a CD, 'produced in ILAM's studio, containing examples of the music discussed in each of the articles' in the journal (ibid.)
  - *African Music* is 'the only journal published in Africa that is devoted to African music' (ibid.)
2. But there also other impressive aspects to the first issue in 8 years, which include the spread of four countries that the five articles cover, and the wide variety of book and CD reviews on African music that span 6 countries.
3. By any measure these are all wonderful achievements that we as Rhodes and as Africans should be rightly proud of!
4. The re-launch of *African Music*, is however, also a particular personal achievement. Without the driving passion, determination and commitment of Diane, it is very doubtful that this launch would be occurring this evening.
5. About a year ago I had counselled Diane to prioritise the development of a bold and comprehensive overall long-term vision and programme for ILAM that could gain Rhodes' support and could also attract donors. That is on track and Diane has been hard at work in this regard. Approaches have been

made to various donors and ILAM is also very much part of the deliberations on size and shape.

6. But I had also sought to persuade Diane to leave for the time-being the idea of the revival of the journal and to concentrate on putting ILAM on a secure footing. Well, this is a good lesson in not always taking well-intended advice whether from a VC or anyone else, and I clearly did not appreciate Diane's determination!
7. Anyone who has been associated with the publishing and production of a journal will appreciate what a labour of love - of new knowledge, new understanding, communication of ideas, and appreciation of African music - the re-launch of *African Music* has been for Diane.
8. And also of Diane's love for ILAM and the treasure chests that ILAM contains – for being astute, Diane clearly grasped how the journal could draw attention to ILAM and further builds its profile in ways that could assist in persuading the University and donors to support the vision that has been created for ILAM.
9. In closing, on behalf of you and the University, congratulations to Diane on a wonderful achievement. May *African Music* grow from strength to strength, and may we find the support that ILAM deserves as a distinctive and unique treasure of Rhodes.