

- U.K.



## Global Beats: Madalitso Band perform at Zanzibar's Sauti Za Busara festival

Madalitso Band performed this song during the Sauti Za Busara festival in Zanzibar.

The title of the song translates as The Smell of Beans. It is about a man who is taken advantage of by his boss.

The duo are popular in Malawi, and won many fans at the festival. It was their first trip abroad and the first time they had seen the sea.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-42737277/global-beats-madalitso-band-perform-at-zanzibar-s-sauti-za-busara-festival>

& BBC RADIO WORLD SERVICE - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p07j8fml>



What do you get when you mix a home-made one-string slide bass (Babatone), a cow-skin foot drum, thumped with your heel whilst strumming a 4 string guitar and two harmonious voices? The joyful upbeat traditional folk music of The Madalitso Band from Malawi.

The duo songwriters were originally discovered busking outside a shopping mall in Lilongwe in 2009. Their locally known 'Banjo music' became popular in Malawi and have only recently been catapulted onto the international stage.

Their first ever performance outside of Malawi was at the **Sauti Za Busara Festival in Zanzibar 2017**, featured on **BBC Africa** and followed by barnstorming European festivals in 2018.

This is their first International release and captures their cheery raw vibrancy and will be getting audiences dancing again as they return this year to perform at **WOMAD**.

<https://africanmusicguide.co.uk/>

## - U.S.A



### **Madalitso Band**

#### *Wasalala*

(Bongo Joe)

A contender for the flat-out happiest album of the year, just a few months in, is the new album *Wasalala* from the duo Madalitso Band from the southeast African nation of Malawi.

Lead singer Yobu Maligwa, who also plays the babatoni—a giant, homemade one-stringed bass—and Yosefe Kalekeni on four-string guitar, backing vocals and homemade foot drum have recorded an entrancing and infectious album for their first international release; after busking locally for years, the duo performed for the first time outside their country in 2017 and has since toured Europe.

Madalitso Band's homemade instruments are simply functional on one level, while having a certain charm on another level; while the constant, simple drum beat provides a basic pulse at optimal dance tempos, there's a rawness provided by the frequent buzz of rattling strings that becomes a defining sonic characteristic rather than a flaw.

Maligwa's bass notes zip and glide with vigor, making sliding interjections, and at times, he'll simply linger on a single note with increasing intensity, as if trying to extract as much excitement as possible from that note with relentless repetition.

Musically, the entire album is upbeat and bright, but lyrically, there are stories that are wildly divergent in subject and tone.

The album's title track "Wasalala" ("She Glows") concerns a dumpster-diving orphan girl who ends up leading a successful life, and other tracks such as "Mita" are simple yet passionate love songs. However, "Naphiri" is sung from the point of view of a tormented, beaten wife whose husband finally tells her to "just pack and go."

Kalekeni strums elementary guitar chord progressions and harmonizes with Maligwa, whose bold singing is unabashedly cheery, like on "Nambewe" where he absolutely radiates energy.

One telling moment on *Wasalala* comes at the end of "Mita" where some chuckles can be heard; clearly, the duo is having an absolute blast while making the recording, and it's a joy that can't be faked nor contained.

<http://www.chattanoogapulse.com/music/music-review/new-music-from-madalitso-band-sleep-laboratory/>



## **Madalitso Band**

*Wasalala*

Bongo Joe

Review by Bruce Miller

The South Africa-derived rhythms of Malawi's regional folk/pop hybrids, often produced on homemade instruments out of economic necessity, have garnered a bit of attention of late. There's been the success of babatoni player Gasper Nali; the Malawi Mouse Boys' gigs at Peter Gabriel's WOMAD festival and tours of Australia, New Zealand, and the US; Moya Malamusi's recent field documentation of regional bands titled *Banjo Bands of Malawi*; as well as releases by the Tonga Boys and Kukaya on Poland's 1000hz label. So it's no surprise to find the Madalitso Band playing Denmark's Roskilde Festival, doing multi-week tours of Europe, featuring on BBC Africa, and having this, their second LP, released on Geneva's Bongo Joe label.

But make no mistake about it, while these tours, accolades, and releases do much to bring some infectious music to the West, Malawi remains one of the world's poorest countries, and the Mouse Boys still live without electricity, on a dollar a day. The duo that comprises Madalitso spent years playing the streets of the nation's capital, Lilongwe, which, despite being the governmental hub, contains massive poverty and unemployment. Knowing Malawi's conditions, from its issues with drought, deforestation, and extreme poverty, it's amazing music this infectious runs throughout the country. The basic groove, perfected on an early 1970s LP by the Kachamba brothers, perhaps the most contagious slab of wax to ever come out of the continent, owes something to South African Kwela and jive.

But it's not that simple. Homemade instruments such as the ones played on this record, seem like orchestras. The guitar, played by Yosefe Kalekeni, holds tight to the rhythm while Yobu Maligwa's long-necked, banjo-like *babatoni*, the sliding bass sound prominent in many of the country's regional bands, serves as bottom end as well as lead. While key shifts are few, dynamics, subtleties, and variety seem endless. And their vocal harmonies are like choruses. Any track on this record demonstrates this; there simply are no weak spots. "Vina Vina Malawi," the album's opener, builds tension over the basic chords before the duo's vocals chime in, praising their country, wallowing in happiness. And this spirit permeates the record.

This is music of necessity. While it's important that they are receiving global recognition, this has nothing to do with their reasons for making music in the first place. The world should take notice of Malawi, and records like this one will help. Yet it's clear the Madalitso Band aren't waiting around for the world to care.

<http://www.rootsworld.com/reviews/madalitso-19.shtml>

- FRANCE

# Télérama'

<https://www.telerama.fr/musiques/wasalala,n6262003.php>



<https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/interferences/interferences-27-avril-2019>



*Chaque jour, Nova met un coup de projecteur sur une nouveauté : le Nouvo Nova vous présente dorénavant les coups de coeurs de la programmation, afin que vous ne ratiez rien des dernières trouvailles qui nous ont titillé l'oreille. Aujourd'hui : « Vina Vina Malawi » de [Madalitso Band](#).*

*Surnommé « le cœur chaud de l'Afrique », le Malawi est connu pour son immense lac, ses plantations de thé et... ses banjos. Popularisé à la fin de l'ère coloniale, l'instrument a d'abord beaucoup été joué autour des mines et des susdites plantations. Au moment de l'indépendance, il a ensuite disparu des boutiques. C'est ainsi qu'à partir des années 70, on a commencé à voir apparaître des jeunes garçons aux coins de rue, jouant d'instruments à cordes faits maison : la « banjo music » était née, devenant de fait la musique la plus populaire des villages du pays.*

Aujourd'hui, le Madalitso Band s'inscrit dans cette tradition. Deux jeunes musiciens qui ont parcouru toute leur vie les rues de Lilongwe, la capitale, avec une contrebasse à une corde (nommée « Babatone »), une guitare, un tambour en peau de vache — et leur deux voix en harmonies. Le duo célèbre son pays d'origine sur « Vina Vina Malawi », extrait de *Wasalala*, un premier album brut et saisissant paru chez l'inestimable label suisse Les Disques Bongo Joe. En concert bientôt à la Dynamo Banlieues Bleues, au Festival Hey Gamin !, au [Festival Un singe en été](#), au Bourg de Lausanne (CH), au Festival du Péristyle, au Festival Délices Perchés, au Festival Convivencia, au Festival Oasis Bizz'art.

<http://www.nova.fr/madalitso-band-les-joueurs-de-banjo-venus-du-malawi>

& PODCAST - <http://nova.fr/podcast/neo-geo/fantastic-negrigo-pulo-ndj-et-le-duo-pigment-en-rythme-dans-geo>



## Madalitso, le groove « fait maison » du Malawi

Leur histoire ressemble à un conte de fées, dont la musique a le secret. Le groupe Madalitso, originaire du Malawi, est en tournée en France : ils seront le 16 juillet à Forcalquier et le 17 à Moustiers, dans le sud-est du pays. Madalitso, ce sont deux musiciens, Yosefe Kalekeni et Yobu Maligwa originaires d'un quartier pauvre près de Lilongwe, la capitale du Malawi, qui ont fabriqué leurs instruments eux-mêmes. Leur premier album, Wasalala, vient de sortir.

<http://www.rfi.fr/fr/emission/20190713-malawi-madalitso-groove-fait-maison>



## Madalitso Band : le duo de choc du Malawi bientôt sur les scènes européennes

Après la sortie de leur premier album, Wasalala sur le label Bongo Joe, le duo de musiciens qui a fait ses armes dans les rues de Lilongwe, s'apprête à ambiancer les scènes européennes.

Gagnez vos places pour le concert de Madalitso Band et Damily le 14 juin à Pantin à l'occasion du festival Banlieues Bleues en envoyant votre nom et prénom à [agenda@pan-african-music.com](mailto:agenda@pan-african-music.com), avec « Madalitso » en objet.

Voici un duo dont les grooves aussi enthousiastes qu'entraînants appartiennent à ce qu'on appelle, au Malawi, la « banjo music ». Le banjo, c'est une guitare qui ressemble aux guitares classiques, mais à quatre cordes. Il est accompagné par une basse de fabrication locale à une seule corde nommée Babatone, et d'un tambour couvert d'une peau de vache qu'on joue avec le pied. Un ensemble basique, mais qui montre en l'espèce que pour faire danser, on n'a pas forcément besoin d'un big band. À leur manière, Yobu Maligwa et Yosef Kalekeni, les deux compères de Madalitso

Band, valent bien un grand orchestre. Tous deux ont longtemps vécu de petits boulots et ont développé leur son en animant les marchés ou les mariages, chantant des compositions jamais écrites, qui peuvent laisser place à l'improvisation pour s'adapter à l'auditoire. À chaque fois, le banjo enchaîne ses accords avec l'efficacité d'un guitariste de funk, quant à la basse — pardon le Babatone — elle fait, avec des lignes simples, un show rythmique qui pousse les morceaux à leur paroxysme, appelant à la transe, et s'arrête net juste avant que ça ne dégénère (après, il faut gérer les possédés, et ça fait désordre).

On retrouve dans leur musique des traits communs avec les voisins d'Afrique australe : kalindula du Katanga (RDC), basses du KwaZulu-Natal ou des furieux joueurs de Tsapiky de Madagascar.

Autant le dire, que des références en matière de groove. Les deux duettistes ont joué à l'extérieur du pays pour la première fois en 2017 à Zanzibar (festival Sauti Za Busara). Six mois plus tard, ils prenaient leur premier avion pour jouer en Europe. L'été 2019 s'annonce pour eux chargé : car c'est désormais la France, la Suisse et d'autres pays européens qu'ils vont ambiancer. On peut leur faire confiance, tant leur groove est contagieux.

<https://pan-african-music.com/maladitso-band-tournee-europe/>



## Madalitso Band: Banjo Fever

With Wasalala, Yobu Maligwa and Yosefe Kalekeni pay their respects to banjo music: an intentional, optimistic, joyful first album, where strings and harmonies give a taste of Malawi.

Paris-Lilongwe, 1.30pm GMT: it is one of those long-distance calls where we sense each other above all through the inflections of the voice. It sounds clear and playful on Yobu Maligwa's side, a storyteller and vocalist pastor who became a swift player of the babatoni, an imposing hand-made double bass with one string. The younger of the pair, Yosefe Kalekeni, punctuates the discussion with his hoarse voice, much more taciturn here than on the four strings of his guitar or on the foot drum. In the village, he lived on small jobs, looking after cows for a neighbor.

The connection is good. The two thirty-somethings regularly burst out laughing. "Journalists ask us a lot of questions, you really want to know who we are!" It's true. Not only did Wasalala, the debut album signed by the intrepid Bongo Joe Records, reveal the pure energy of an album recorded in its raw state, with lush harmonies that give us a glimpse of the authentic collaboration and joy of the two voices, but it also propelled Madalitso on a major tour in Europe. They draw attention to a little known and yet popular musical tradition around Lake Malawi: banjo music.

Yobu and Yosefe are respectively from Ntcheu and Dedza, two quiet villages in southwest Malawi, not far from where the prominent Californian producer Ian Brennan recorded the songs of the [Malawi Mouse Boys](#) — evangelical ex-sellers of mouse skewers — then the blues of the inmates of the central prison of [Zomba](#) in 2013.

Meanwhile, Madalitso has been enchanting the dusty red streets of Lilongwe for ten years now, a post-colonial capital financed by segregationist South Africa, now populated by 800,000 people who, like the two friends, arrived from the countryside where work is sporadic and the harvests of tea, tobacco, and corn too unstable. After the Second World War, it was in these plantations and near the uranium mines that banjo music was born, an outlet tinged with blues from working class families that was very popular in the villages thanks to musicians like Alan Nakomo and the Kuwoza River Band. It then followed the roads of a massive rural exodus, reaching urban centers in the 1970s, apparently even to the extent of influencing the South African kwela.

“We met on the street. At first, our duo was called Tiyese, “Let’s try it.” One year, we were always running into the same lady. She loved our music so we sang gospel songs to her,” Yobu recalls. “One day, she told us that we had tried hard enough, that it was time to succeed and that Madalitso would suit us better: it was a blessing in chichewa. Shortly afterwards, in 2009, we met Emmanuel.” Emmanuel Kamwenje, a Malawian activist and producer who is passionate about traditional music, pushed them into the studio to record a few songs, but while they excited the villages, “In the city, people prefer modern music, pop or hip-hop. For most of them, we’re just farmers, we represent the past. Except for a few state stars, it’s very difficult to perform and make a living from music in Malawi.”

And it was indeed by leaving the country for the first time by responding to the invitation to the [Sauti za Busara](#) festival in Zanzibar in 2017 that Madalitso put the audience in a trance and attracted the attention of a few European musicians who would soon lead them to Bongo Joe, the Roskilde Festival in Denmark, and the BBC. Good move. “Thanks to our last tour in Europe, we were able to earn enough to build a house, it’s a bit of a break. The problem is that now people are jealous: they think we are very rich and they are trying to steal from us. But they’re imagining things. We’re far from being stars, even if we’d like to be,” exclaims Yobu laughing.

On Wasalala, Yobu and Yosefe choose humility and prefer social chronicles of daily life, love and radiant optimism like “Vina Vina Malawi”, which is nothing more than a declaration of love for their country, to the stories of cash that make younger people dream. Yet they are well aware that the picture is not exactly rosy. The second poorest country in the world, Malawi is often cited for its AIDS prevalence rate, which is among the highest in Africa, the persecution of albinos, the recent discovery of sexual initiation camps for young girls, the corruption of its political class, and the worrying consequences of climate change. “Music allows us to forget the problems,” says Yosefe, suddenly very close to the phone. And Yobu goes further. “And then with a positive message, you can change attitudes, have a lasting impact on people,” as well as on “Naphiri,” where they encourage women not to put up with either violent men or lives they would not have chosen. With all our blessings.

**ENGLISH** - <https://qwest.tv/media/madalitso-band-banjo-fever>

**FRENCH** - <https://qwest.tv/media/fr/madalitso-band-banjo-fever/>

## - SWEDEN

# LIRA

Madalitso Band upptäcktes av en lokal producent när de spelade utanför ett shoppingcenter i Malawis huvudstad Lilongwe för tio år sedan. Längre var duon främst ett fenomen på hemmaplan, men förra året hittade Madalitso Band även en internationell publik via spelningar på europeiska festivaler och mindre platser. Soundet påminner om landsmannen Gasper Nali som jag recenserade i Lira tidigare i år. Liknande musik, men låtarna med Madalitso Band är mer svängiga och raka, dessutom sjunger båda två, de liksom peppar varandra, bygger upp en energisk känsla.

Yobu Maligwa spelar babatoni och sjunger, Yosefe Kalekeni spelar fyrsträngad gitarr och fottrumma, och fyller i med bakgrundssång, en enmanskör kan man säga. Babatonin (en tre meter lång ensträngad basgitarr) har en större plats på Gasper Nalis nämnda skiva, mer originellt kan jag nog tycka, även om Madalitso Bands sväng, med gitarren som pådrivare, skapar ett mer intensivt driv. Jag blir på lika gott humör som när jag såg dem live. Okomplicerad musik – på ett positivt sätt.

<https://www.lira.se/skivrecension/wasalala/>

## **- EUROPEAN PLAYLISTS**

Radio Krimi en playlist: <http://www.radiokrimi.com/blog/new-music-addition/183-playlist-du-19-avril-2019>

Foutraque, chronique: [http://foutraque.com/chronique\\_disque.php?id=5341](http://foutraque.com/chronique_disque.php?id=5341)

Chroniques de HiKO: <https://les-chroniques-de-hiko.blogspot.com/2019/05/madalitso-band-wasalala-les-disques.html>



## - ZIMBABAWE



# MADALITSO



“When the two men outfit introduced themselves as a band just before their performance, instinctively I became skeptical of their performance. However, Madalitso is for me one of the coolest bands ever.” So said one of the audience members enchanted by this incredible pair of musicians.

Discovered on the streets of Malawi, playing a homemade guitar-like instrument called a babatone this duo has been touring the world wowing crowds across the globe.

Their performance at Global Stage yesterday afternoon set the venue on fire. Their songs have a lot of easy to sing-along hooks that are contagious to the audience.

Madalitso has a unique sound that leans towards jazz, and is distinctly of African origin. The upbeat transitions lean toward the Kanindo style of music that instantly compelled the audience to dance. The lead singer has a powerful voice and retained an infectious smile throughout their one-hour performance.

## - MALAWI



**Madalitso Band, the duo of Yobu Maligwa and Yosefe Kalekeni which recently released their second album *Wasalala* are set to tour Europe with several performances lined up.**

The group's co-manager Emmanuel Kamwenje said Monday all is set for Madalitso Band's Europe tour and that they are expected to leave on June 4, 2019, three days after Alleluya Band also makes their annual tour of Italy. *"Preparations are underway to make sure that the tour is a success but this time around they are set to perform in many festivals. It is actually a 60 days tour with France as the main hub where they will hold 20 gigs," Kamwenje said.*

He said apart from France, the group which made a breakthrough on the international stage after their performance at Sauti za Busara Festival in Tanzania in 2017, Madalitso Band will also perform in Norway, Switzerland and United Kingdom. *"In United Kingdom they will be performing at Womad and Wilderness festivals where Faith Mussa will be playing as well so the picture looks good for Madalitso Band as well as Malawi."*

Kamwenje, who manages Madalitso Band alongside Neil Nayar, said they would want Malawi music to penetrate the international market and open up more doors. *"It is not only about Madalitso Band but we are looking at opening more doors for Malawian artists. We need to embrace all these international festivals if we are to shine," he said.*

Madalitso Band has made strides from performing in the streets in Lilongwe to representing the country on different international platforms. Their performance at Sauti za Busara Festival remains key as it is the one which opened up opportunities after they were spotted by event organisers. Kamwenje also said that having released their second album, the group now has more songs to offer to the audiences. *"The second album talks about an orphaned girl child who struggles with life but later light shines on her after being assisted by some well-wishers hence the title Wasalala," Kamwenje said*

Madalitso Band debuted with *Fungo la Nyemba*. With some of the songs released earlier online, the album has earned itself a place on the Transglobal World Music Chart which is a network of world music specialised journalists, critics, writers and DJs. Madalitso Band's *Wasalala* is listed on position 32 on the list which also includes renowned Mali star Salif Keita on position 17.

<https://times.mw/madalitso-band-gears-for-europe/>

**Malawi's Madalitso Band is set to rock the stage with reggae icon Ziggy Marley when the local duo performs at the World of Music, Arts and Dance (Womad) Festival.**

According to [www.womad.co.uk](http://www.womad.co.uk), the event, scheduled to take place from July 25 to 28 at Charlton Park, Wiltshire in UK, will also see singer and songwriter Salif Keita, electronic music legends Orbital, and singer and guitarist Anna Calvi performing.

"The Womad festival boasts of diversity in sound split over six stages, while embracing all styles of music from around the globe, focusing on originality and high-quality free expression.

"For well over 30 years, Womad has sought to recognise and unite passionate artists and fans alike, both from its base in England and abroad," reads part of the information on the website.

Madalitso Band's manager Emmanuel Kamwenje says the festival marks the start of another exciting year for the duo.

"This is an announcement of major bands at the 2019 Womad Festival and Madalitso Band will be there as part of this year's tour. More performances are set to be announced later," he said.

Until February 2017, the band from Mtandire slum in Lilongwe was just one of the numerous street performers in the city.

The troubadours survived on hand to mouth, lurking from different corners of Lilongwe until an opportunity came knocking to perform at one of the biggest music festivals in Africa, the Sauti za

Busara. On the verge of missing out on a life-changing opportunity due lack of funds, their appearance paid dividends as last year, the band, comprising two friends Yobu Malingwa, 37, and Yosefe Kalekeni, 27, toured Europe for the first time where they performed at some of the top music festivals and events.

<https://mwnation.com/madalitso-band-off-to-uk/>