

# Nomad

KINOBE & MICHAEL WATERS





*Kinobe and Michael Waters met in Uganda in the spring of 2006, while Michael was producing a recording for a regional charity. They got together and played for one night only, but recognized the parallels in their approaches to sound and spirit.*

*It took two years for them to organize another meeting, this time with the purpose of recording the collaboration of their styles. In the spring of 2008, they toured Western Canada and created the songs on this recording. The shows were an increasing joy as the music developed, stronger with each performance. The connection with the audience actually helped to craft the pieces and direct the energy.*

*This work cemented a musical bond and a desire to bring this sound out further, and so **Nomad** was born.*

*The spirit of this music spans a lot of cultural time and space, giving birth to a unique Afro-Canadian World Music fusion!*

### **1. The Mushroom Clan**

*(Composition and music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

During rehearsals, this melody sprang up. It came after a long conversation about families, so Michael suggested it be named after Kinobe's mother, a very happy member of the Mushroom Clan.

### **2. Suite Atahualpa Yupanqui I, II & III**

*(Composition by M. Waters, music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

At age 20, Michael first heard the Argentinean folk singer Atahualpa Yupanqui. His combination of refined sophistication and rustic nobility gave Michael his first navigational star in music. When this piece arrived 30 years later, he named it after Atahualpa.

### **3. Ebbila**

*(Composition by Kinobe, music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

Bila is a name of a remote village in Uganda, the home of many great flute players who played for the king in his palace. This song is about one flute player, taken away to play for the king, dreaming of returning home to his village someday.

### **4. Nomad**

*(composition by M. Waters, music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

Michael knew when this piece arrived that it was in resonance with his friend Kinobe (the Nomad). Written in Paris while Michael was unsuccessfully trying to meet with Kinobe in Brussels, it became the finale for their shows in Canada.

### **5. Sara**

*(Composition by Kinobe, music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

Another song composed during Kinobe's visit to Canada. After the first concert, he spent several days in the forests of the remote west coast, and this song appeared. As the melody flowed through his hands, he knew it was inspired by Sarah, a wonderful soul mate he had met at the first show.

### **6. Lake of Sand**

*(Composition and music by M. Waters)*

One of Michael's acoustic psychedelic chill compositions, this piece fuses the empty stillness of the African desert with the lush lake and forest life of his Canadian home. It is written for two instruments, so in live performance, Michael records the first half while playing it, then plays the second voice live over it.

### **7. Dungu**

*(Composition and music by Kinobe)*

Hunting was one of the major activities carried out in Buganda kingdom in ancient times. It was done only by the men, and before they went out into the wilderness, they used to sing songs that called for spiritual protection during the hunt. Dungu was a name given to one of the greatest hunters of all time—he had no fear and always brought something back with him—and this is a song praising him.

### **8. Big Dave**

*(Composition by M. Waters, music by Kinobe and M. Waters)*

The Amazonian medicine ceremonies that helped Michael find his source of music are traditionally led by healers who undertake a long and extremely rigorous training. Big Dave is an apprentice in this tradition, and this song resonates the compelling vibrancy of his path.

### **9. Enyanja**

*(Traditional, music by Kinobe)*

This is a traditional song about a group of fishermen on Uganda's Lake Victoria. This lake has always been referred to as "Nalubaale" meaning the Mother of the Spirit. Sometimes when fishermen are on the lake, it gets wild and they have to sing a song, calling down the spirit of the lake for calm weather.

### **10. Earthgate**

*(Composition and music by M. Waters)*

Michael's first composition, and the one that gave rise to all the compositions in *The Medicine Path*. The song itself is inspired by Saskia Bosman, a courageous mystic he met in the 1990s, and her project to place "Earthgates" at holy sites around the world.





**Kinobe** was raised in Uganda, and has been a traveling performer since the age of nine. By the time he was 21 he had travelled to every African country, learning from musicians from both urban and remote communities. At the age of nine he began touring and performing in Europe, first with his school, then independently. He has studied with the family of Toumani Diabate, played with Ali Farka Toure and performed with Youssou Ndour and Anjelique Kidjo. Kinobe's instrument of choice, the *kora*, is a traditional 21-stringed African harp. He plays a great many other instruments and this recording also features the *kalimba* and the *tama*.



**Michael Waters** was raised in the remote West Coast forests of Canada. For 35 years he chose to play the guitar only as a spiritual practice. In 2004 his encounter with the indigenous medicine ceremonies of the Amazon triggered a 16 month wave of virtuoso composition and in 2005 he began performing publicly. He has recorded this body of compositions (called *The Medicine Path*) and has subsequently developed a new fusion of styles that is being referred to as acoustic psychedelic chill. Michael has played the same acoustic guitar for 35 years. The harmonics and overtones this instrument can now produce, after so many years of resonance, are astounding.

*Produced by* Kinobe and Michael Waters

*Music:* Kinobe and Michael Waters

*Associate Producer, Recording and Mixing:* Anthony Maki

*Mastering:* Suite Sound Labs, Vancouver, BC

*Graphic Design:* Ladybird Communications


*Photography:* Geoff Smith

*Recorded on Protection Island, British Columbia, in March 2008*

### The African musical instruments played by Kinobe



The **tama** or talking drum is a West African drum whose pitch can be regulated to the extent that it is said the drum "talks". The player puts the drum under one shoulder and beats the instrument with a stick. The drum is hour-glass shaped with two heads tuned by straps that connect the heads with each other. A tama player raises or lowers the pitch by squeezing or releasing the drum's strings with the upper arm.



The **kalimba** or thumb piano is a musical instrument that is uniquely African.

Several reeds or tines are plucked with the thumb or fingers, and the reed vibrations are amplified by a hollow box resonator or a sounding board. The name kalimba is a Bantu word which means "little music".



The **kora** is a 21-string harp-lute from West Africa. A kora is built from a large calabash cut in half and covered with cow skin to make a resonator, and has a notched bridge like a lute or guitar. The sound of a kora resembles that of a harp. The player uses only the thumb and index finger of both hands to pluck the strings, using the remaining fingers to hold the sticks either side of the strings and secure the instrument. The kora is played in Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Senegal, and The Gambia.

**Tama:** Track 6

**Kalimba:** Tracks 1, 5, & 11

**Kora:** Tracks 2, 3, 4, 7 & 9

Kinobe builds all his instruments. To order custom-made instruments from his workshop, visit [www.earthgatemusic.com](http://www.earthgatemusic.com)