

## **Composing from an embodiment perspective**

Evans Netshivhambe

My PhD research was centred on using traditional elements learned from the Venda cultural dance performances as part of an embodied experience leading to a composition portfolio. Dance performances were central in understanding the rhythmic prototype which is part of Venda music identity. Part of the process for my research was to identify myself with my Venda musical practice which includes dancing, singing, arranging, composition (outside of academic contexts) and playing indigenous musical instruments is a process of inculturation. I have embodied these artistic activities from my childhood onwards, through my junior higher education qualification and later as part of my PhD study. The process was learning and relearning what I grew up with from experienced performers. I also needed to participate through practicing and repeatedly practicing embodied knowledge. Questions such as “When does embodiment become research?”; “What qualifies embodiment to become performing knowledge?” “what constitutes knowing from doing as opposed to knowing from observing or reading literature” and “At what point does embodiment cross over from being a community performance to being a theoretical enquiry?” started to become central to my investigation. The entire exercise then led to composing African art music that was informed by the use of the rhythmic prototype identified from the Venda musical practice. Against this backdrop, I have noticed that there is a group of popular Venda musicians who are aligning their musical identity with the rhythmic prototype I researched about even though I used it to compose African art in a different way than they used it in popular music which is of particular point of interest to my research.

**Keywords:** Embodiment, African art, composing, rhythmic prototype and participation

**Type of presentation planned** would be paper presentation and performance-demonstration (Online)

### **Short Biography**

Evans Netshivhambe is a young South African composer interested in African music identity through African art composition. His PhD in music composition incorporates Venda rhythmic elements into African art music exploring a new sound world through composition.