

# BAFO MENTOR

## Pre-task : Two-chords

Madala Kunene hums and sings Zulu folk songs, aphorisms and proverbs. Madala is the Zulu word for an old man, a mature person, a knowledgeable individual or a sage. Madala Kunene's quest through his music and teachings is to preserve ancient Zulu cultural and heritage knowledge. In 1994, at the Umzansi Art Center in Clermont Township, Durban, Madala ran singing classes for seven-year-old girls, passing on many songs about growing up, about respect for the elders, about cleanliness, about working together and about diligence. Some songs were in the form of games, of call-and-response relay songs, of swapping lead voices as training. For urban-grown primary school maidens, the parents really appreciated the grounding in Zulu folklore that Madala Kunene gave.

As a child, Madala experienced the trauma of forced removals, when his family and others were packed onto trucks at gunpoint at night and taken to Kwa Mashu, a new township. The Apartheid government was removing African communities that were mixed with Coloureds, Indians and Whites and that were living close to the city. It was a brutal uprooting of childhood memories. Madala always sings about his cherished place uMkhumbane (Cato Manor)

Madala Kunene's concept and style of guitar playing is the two-chord structure. But he emphasizes that his two-chord is unique and different. Generally for novice guitarists, the two-chord approach is the entry into guitar playing. It provides a level of stamina, in order to maintain smooth chord transitions and strumming through a whole song. Playing two-chord songs helps to build up a repertoire of tunes. With just a little practice, any aspiring guitarist can have many different songs learned.

Here are some famous international two-chord songs:

***Born In The USA*** by Bruce Springsteen (B – E)

***Lively Up Yourself*** by Bob Marley (D – G)

***Achy Breaky Heart*** by Billy Ray Cyrus (C – G)

***Jane Says*** by Jane's Addiction (A – G)

***Something In The Way*** by Nirvana (D – F#m)

***Blurred Lines*** by Robin Thicke (D – G)

***Paperback Writer*** by The Beatles (C – Em)

***Break On Through*** by The Doors (D -Em)

***Eleanor Rigby*** by The Beatles (C – Em)

Madala is often given the title 'King of Zulu guitar.' However, his music expands far beyond the traditional maskanda. His music is of universal appeal. He calls it Madalaline. Madala can be recognised in performance throughout the world through his multi-coloured and typically African attire. He was recorded extensively by Melt2000 and has produced more than ten world-class records.

## **Now, answer these questions**

1. Can you find any two-chord songs that you know and love. Why are you picking this song?

2. *Eleanor Rigby* is now also a jazz tune by The Crusaders. Do you know other two-chord songs that have jumped genres?

3. From your selection, the library or online - choose a Madala Kunene composition that captures your imagination.

4. Do you have your own two-chord song that you can share with us? If not, perhaps you can improvise together with a two-chord Madala song, feeling into that call and response nature of the music?