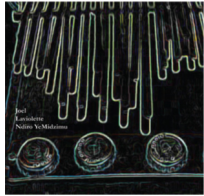




Rattletree's Live EP
Released June 2007



Joel Laviolette:
Ndiro YeMidzimu
Released Feb. 2007



Austin, Texas - represented by Mhumhi Records
Joel Laviolette (512) 905-9329 booking@rattletree.com
Press Materials and High Res Photos:
www.rattletree.com/booking.htm

High-energy Dance and Trance music played on giant Zimbabwean marimbas. Ecstatic dancers and energy flowing from band to audience and back. That is what a Rattletree concert is all about. Zimbabwean chants, intricate percussion ensembles, spirituality and an extra boost of positive energy; that's the sound of Rattletree.

"The music has always been here, we only need to listen closely," said Rattletree bandleader Joel Laviolette.

Rattletree is a marimba band that plays traditional and contemporary Zimbabwean music. The band, which Joel founded in 2001, consists of two soprano marimbas, bass marimba, baritone, drum set, hosho (shakers), congas, bells, and other percussion. All of the marimbas, including the six-foot tall bass marimba, were designed and constructed by Joel himself. The music is varied and intense, but the one constant aspect of Rattletree's music is the perpetual flow of high energy, which transfers itself to the audience-creating an immediate dancing frenzy.

Joel's passion for Zimbabwean music has sent him around the world; when he first heard the music, he began travelling the U.S. and Canada-learning the traditional Zimbabwean music from anyone he could. Soon, he realized he needed to learn from the Source and moved to Zimbabwe. Ten years later, and after touring and/or sharing the stage with many of the top names to come out of Zimbabwe, Joel moved to Austin and formed Rattletree.

"In Zimbabwe, dance is an integral part of spirit-possession ceremonies," says Joel. "They have spent more than 1000 years perfecting the intense grooves that Rattletree is blessed to transmit to its audience"

But dancing isn't the only thing that you can expect at a Rattletree performance. The intricate polyphony and beautiful melodies also lends itself to those that want to close their eyes and meditate and to those that want to stand on the side and "study" the music.

Believing that spreading the knowledge of this beautiful art is as important as playing it, Rattletree is thankful to share their music in schools, universities, churches, and Arts Councils regionally. They teach workshops and clinics to people of all ages and abilities. Joel is a featured clinician at the annual Zimbabwean Music Festival (Zimfest), and has taught countless classes in marimba, mbira, guitar, and Mozambiquean panpipe (nyanga). At a Rattletree concert, attendees can expect to not only dance like they've never danced-but they will learn about a beautiful and spiritual culture.

Rattletree shows around the Austin area have been nothing short of stellar, entrancing the crowd as well as unsuspecting passers-by into a hypnotic dance rapture. They continue to pull larger and larger crowds at home, and are focusing their attention on building regional support.

Highlights:

- * SXSW Showcase 2008
- * #1 Reverb Nation charts:local World/Reggae acts
- * Featured on NPR Weekend America

Selected quotes:

Keeping the Shona marimba music alive and growing in the Southwest!
-Banning Eyre,
Afropop Worldwide

It was a sight to see and a unique joy to hear!
-Tad Hendrickson,
Global Rhythms Magazine

Rattletree is a "must see". They are a high energy fusion of African and other world influences that is immediately accessible, and rousing.
-David Courtney, "Music Beyond Borders", KPFT Houston 90.1

The live music capitol of the world (Austin) is the perfect place for Rattletree to ground its roots.
-Carson Barker,
The Highlander News

A vehicle to higher astral realm. It is simply beyond words.
-Stella Chiweshe,
Zimbabwean Musician

Mesmerizing debut CD...
-Austin Powell,
Austin Chronicle

It's impossible to resist the African beat commanding you to move along with the energetic music.
-Wendy Wever,
Austin Daze Magazine

