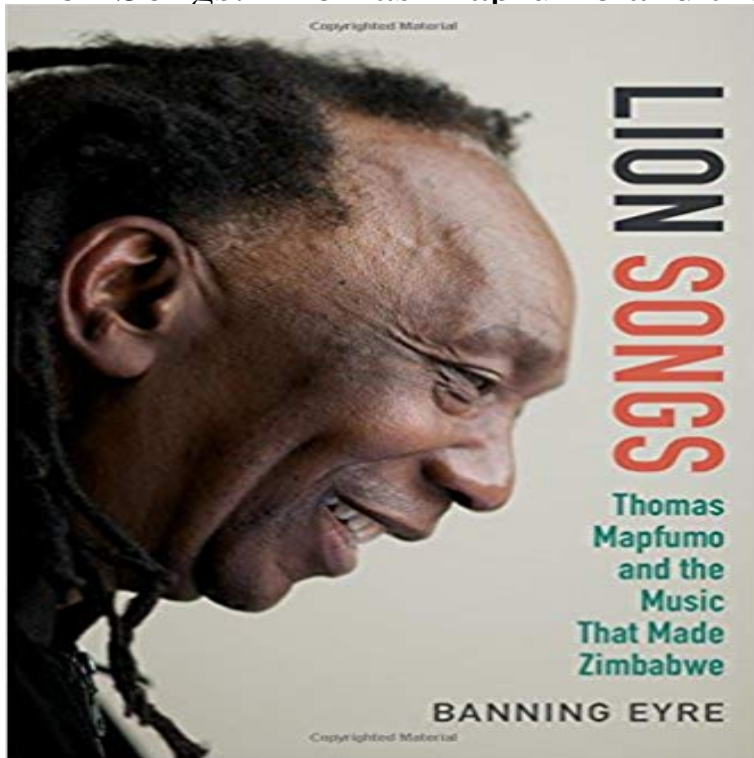


Lion Songs: Thomas Mapfumo and the Music That Made Zimbabwe



Like Fela Kuti and Bob Marley, singer, composer, and bandleader Thomas Mapfumo and his music came to represent his native country's anticolonial struggle and cultural identity. Mapfumo was born in 1945 in what was then the British colony of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). The trajectory of his career from early performances of rock n roll tunes to later creating a new genre based on traditional Zimbabwean music, including the sacred mbira, and African and Western pop is a metaphor for Zimbabwe's evolution from colony to independent nation. *Lion Songs* is an authoritative biography of Mapfumo that narrates the life and career of this creative, complex, and iconic figure. Banning Eyre ties the arc of Mapfumos career to the history of Zimbabwe. The genre Mapfumo created in the 1970s called chimurenga, or struggle music, challenged the Rhodesian government which banned his music and jailed him and became important to Zimbabwe achieving independence in 1980. In the 1980s and 1990s Mapfumos international profile grew along with his opposition to Robert Mugabes dictatorship. Mugabe had been a hero of the revolution, but Mapfumos criticism of his regime led authorities and loyalists to turn on the singer with threats and intimidation. Beginning in 2000, Mapfumo and key band and family members left Zimbabwe. Many of them, including Mapfumo, now reside in Eugene, Oregon. A labor of love, *Lion Songs* is the product of a twenty-five-year friendship and professional relationship between Eyre and Mapfumo that demonstrates Mapfumos musical and political importance to his nation, its freedom struggle, and its culture.

Editorial Reviews. Review. Thomas Mapfumo, the musical Lion of Zimbabwe, has been fortunate in finding Banning Eyre, a worthy Boswell to his Johnson. *Lion Songs* has 9 ratings and 6 reviews. Like Fela Kuti and Bob Marley, singer, composer, and bandleader Thomas Mapfumo and his music came to represent

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Popular Thomas Mapfumo, the Lion of Zimbabwe, stands beside Fela Kuti, Youssou NDour, and Franco as Africas
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