Nobuntu
Randolph W. Bromery Center for the Arts
Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall

Tuesday, February 8, 2022 7:30 p.m.

Sponsored by:
In a year-long consultative and deeply collaborative process with respected advisors from local Tribal Nations, the UMass Native Advisory Council co-developed this campus Land Acknowledgement. This Acknowledgement affirms our campus connection and relationship to the land the campus is built upon and our continued connection to the Nations who were the original inhabitants and caretakers of this land. The University of Massachusetts Amherst acknowledges that it was founded and built on the unceded homelands of the Pocumtuc Nation on the land of the Norrwutuck community.

We begin with gratitude for nearby waters and lands, including the Kwinitekw -- the southern portion of what’s now called the Connecticut River. We recognize these lands and waters as important Relations with which we are all interconnected and depend on to sustain life and wellbeing.

The Norrwutuck community was one of many Pocumtuc Indian towns, including the Tribal seat at Pocumtuc (in present day Deerfield), Agawam (Springfield), and Woronoco (Westfield) to name just a few. The Pocumtuc, who had connections with these lands for millennia, are part of a vast expanse of Algonquian relations. Over 400 years of colonization, Pocumtuc Peoples were displaced. Many joined their Algonquian relatives to the east, south, west and north— extant communities of Wampanoag, including Aquinnah, Herring Pond, and Mashpee, Massachusetts; the Nipmuc with a reservation at Grafton/Hassanamisco, Massachusetts; the Narragansett in Kingstown, Rhode Island; Schaghticoke, Mohegan and Pequot Peoples in Connecticut; the Abenaki and other Nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy extending northward into Canada; and the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican of New York and Massachusetts, who were removed to Wisconsin in the 19th century. Over hundreds of years of removal, members of Southern New England Tribes would make the journey home to tend important places and renew their connections to their ancestral lands. Such care and connection to land and waters continues to the present day.

Today, Indigenous Nations in southern New England continue to employ diverse strategies to resist ongoing colonization, genocide, and erasure begun by the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese and other European Nations, and that continued when Tribal homelands became part of the United States. Native Americans from Tribal Nations across the U.S. and Indigenous peoples from around the world also travel into these Pocumtuc homelands to live and work. This land has always been and always will be, Native Land.

We also acknowledge that the University of Massachusetts Amherst is a Land Grant University. As part of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, Tribal lands from 84 Native Nations west of the Mississippi were sold to provide the resources to found and build this university.

This Land Acknowledgement is the first step in the university’s commitment to practice intellectual humility whilst working with Tribal Nations toward a better shared future on Turtle Island. We aim to foster understanding, deep respect, and honor for sovereign Tribal Nations; to develop relationships of reciprocity; and to be inclusive of Native perspectives and thriving Native Nations far into the future. Members of Massachusetts-based Tribal Nations who are kin to the historic Pocumtuc contributed their insights in composing this acknowledgement -- namely Tribal representatives from Mashpee, Aquinnah, and Stockbridge Munsee. As an active first step toward decolonization, we encourage you to learn more about the Indigenous peoples on whose homelands UMass Amherst now resides on and the Indigenous homelands on which you live and work.
NOBUNTU ARTISTS

Duduzile Sibanda
Zanele Manhenga
Heather Dube
Thandeka Moyo
Joyline Sibanda

Tonight’s program is selected from the following.

UYANGIPHOXA                Duduzile Sibanda
UTHIXO    Thandeka Moyo
CRY SONG                               Dumisani Moyo
NOBUNTU CLICK SONG  Zanele Manhenga
STREETS                                Heather Dube
CULA                                    Zanele Manhenga
SILELE                                    Trad. rearranged by Japhet Mlauzi
OBABES BEMBUBE                   Dumisani Moyo
MISODZI                                Zanele Manhenga
EWUWE                              Traditional
LAY DOWN                           Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir
AVUMILE                                Zanele Manhenga
UMUSA                                Heather Dube
AMAZING GRACE                          Trad. rearranged by Nobuntu
MOYA MOYA                             Trad. rearranged by Zanele Manhenga
IMPI                                    Zanele Manhenga

Program length approximately 90 minutes, no intermission

Nobuntu recordings can be found on:

579 West 215th Street #2B — New York NY 10034  PHONE (212) 304-3538
www.allianceartistmanagement.com
info@allianceartistmanagement.com
PROGRAM NOTES

UYANGIPHOXA — In this song, we blame all woes and troubles on Satan, and we ask for courage and strength from the Almighty.

UTHIXO — This is a sacred song of praise, Uthixo is Ndebele word for the Creator.

CRY SONG — This song is a cry against abuse and a cry to all peoples and nations to stop all forms of abuse. Abuse is a tragedy we face in our day-to-day living and it must stop.

NOBUNITU CLICK SONG — This song in the Ndebele language features unusual clicking sounds. Ndebele is one of the main languages of Zimbabwe.

STREETS — This song encourages people to be themselves and proud of who they are. It is a song of empowerment.

CULA — We believe a song fixes any emotion. We encourage anyone who is down and out to sing and they will be happy again. If you are happy sing some more.

SILELE — This song talks about a spiritual healer who is a wanderer. In our culture, spiritual healers are revered and always sought out for advice.

OBABES BEMBUBE — This song is an homage to the type of music that we do. Our fans have affectionately called us Obabes BeMbube. This song celebrates the opportunity that Mbube has given us to travel all over the world.

MISODZI — In this song a mother encourages her child to stand up and fight for whatever they want.

EWUWE — This is a medley of traditional lullabies.

LAY DOWN — Slaves sang this motivational song as they were working in the fields. It encourages one to keep going even in the toughest situations.

AVUMILE — This song is a victory song.

UMUSA — The lyrics in this song encourage kindness and love to prevail in our society at all times.

AMAZING GRACE — This is our Imbube version of the famous song Amazing Grace.

MOYA MOYA — A sad woman laments her inability to have children in this song.

IMPI — In our warrior song, we thank the Almighty for fighting for us and helping us see places we never thought we would see.
About Nobuntu

Nobuntu, the female a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe, has drawn international acclaim for its inventive performances that range from traditional Zimbabwean songs to Afro-jazz to gospel. The ensemble’s concerts are performed with pure voices, augmented by minimalistic percussion, traditional instruments such as the Mbira (thumb piano) and organic, authentic dance movements.

Nobuntu was nominated for Best Musician of the Year at the Zimbabwe International Women Awards in London in 2015 and are currently a two-time winner for the Best Imbube Group at the Bulawayo Arts Awards 2017 and 2019. In the last few seasons, the quintet has performed at festivals and concert halls in Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic and throughout the African continent. The ensemble was a huge critical success at “Trans-Vocal” in Frankfurt and “Voice Mania” in Vienna. Their first tour to Canada, in 2016, included performances in Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Victoria.

The word Nobuntu is an African concept that values humbleness, love, purpose, unity and family from a woman’s perspective. The ensemble represents a new generation of young African women singers who celebrate and preserve their culture, beauty and heritage through art. The ensemble’s mission is the belief that music can be an important vehicle for change, one that transcends racial, tribal, religious, gender and economic boundaries.

Back at home, Nobuntu holds a number of community initiatives, one of which is the Nobuntu Pad Bank where they gather sanitary pads for young women in the arts in underprivileged communities.

Nobuntu has released three recordings: Thina in 2013, Ekhaya in 2016 and Obabes beMbube in 2018. The group has made numerous television and radio appearances throughout Africa and Europe promoting these recordings and the culture of their homeland.

About the artists

Zanele Manhenga is a talented singer, songwriter and poet who began her journey singing at family gatherings together with her older sister, Afro-jazz artist Dudu Manhenga, when she was just a child. Zanele has appeared numerous times as a performer and an MC at the Sistaz Open Mic, in Harare. This Pamberi Trust initiative strives to give young and upcoming female artists a platform to enter the arts mainstream. In addition to the open mic sessions, Zanele has attended grooming workshops under the gender project F.L.A.M.E., which she credits for her growth and confidence along her musical journey. Zanele has performed, recorded, toured and been mentored by Dudu Manhenga and Color Blu while she was in South Africa and Mozambique. She has performed as a background vocalist for many artists including Pastor Gee, Ignatious Mabasa, Ronny Roots, Bob Nyabinde, Jeys Marabini, Lwazi Shabangu, and Cool Crooners. With these and other artists she has performed at Harare International Festival of the Arts HIFA (2007), Beira Jazz festival (Mozambique 2009), Harare Jazz Festival 2010-2012, Grahamstown Arts Festival (South Africa 2009-2010), October Jazz (2011-2014) and Bob Marley Commemoration (2012). In 2011, Zanele Manhenga studied for a National Certificate in Musicology at the Zimbabwe College of Music. She trained on various instruments including the Mbira and practiced traditional Zimbabwe dance. Zanele released a single online called Nginje in 2013. In 2014, Zanele was signed by 10th District Music and joined Nobuntu. She has contributed songs on the latest Nobuntu album, Ekhaya and is the Mbira player of the group, a singer and songwriter.
Thandeka Moyo is a talented songwriter, singer, dancer, make-up artist and designer. She started singing in high school at St. Columbus in 2003 and was very much involved with the high school choir. From 2008-2010 she went to study cosmetology at Bulawayo Polytechnic and focused on image consultancy and personal grooming. During this time, she joined the Bulawayo Polytechnic Choir and performed in district competitions. Thandeka has worked with a number of upcoming artists in Zimbabwe including the UK based gospel artist, Nkosie ka Ndlovu and afro-soul artist, Mduduzi Ngoma. Thandeka joined Nobuntu in September 2014.

Duduzile Sibanda is a self-taught singer and songwriter who discovered her ability to sing at a very young age. Coming from a music-loving family, she grew up singing at family gatherings, church functions, and in the school choir. Her passion for performing has continued to grow. After high school, Duduzile pursued music as a backing singer for local musicians Khulekani Bhethule (Khuxxman), Zenzele Ndebele, Gabs Fire, Mjox and many more. She also provided vocals on a series of jingles for Radio Dialogue. In 2011 she joined a 6theater project titled *Stitcha* produced by Qhube Productions where she furthered her music career and explored theater. After *Stitcha* she began doing backing vocals for Ramadu, an Austrian based musician, who was working on his release *Zim Classics*. Duduzile is a founding member of Nobuntu. She is a singer, songwriter and dancer on both albums, (*Thina* and *Ekhaya*). In 2016, Duduzile, along with friend and fellow Nobuntu member, Zanele Manhenga, started uMuz’Wentombi (The House of Woman), a culture and arts platform meant to bring women together in the city of Bulawayo.

Heather Dube is an energetic dancer, percussionist and vocalist who started at a very young age performing in school choirs and traditional groups. In 2007, she worked with Indlovukazi ZikaNyongola, a Friends of Joshua Trust Initiative. In 2008, she was part of the Amawumbo Dance Company that toured France and Belgium and performed in festivals such as the Martiuges Festival, Chambery Festival, and Tohout Festival. In 2009, she was part of Kwabatsha Dance Company and toured around the country. In 2010, Heather was selected to represent Zimbabwe at the Shangai Expo in China as a dancer. She is also a session vocalist and has done backing vocals for Khuxxman, Hudson Simbarashe, and Vusa Mkhaya as well as a percussionist for the Austria based group called Mozulu Art. She started her journey with Nobuntu in 2011 and is a dancer, vocalist and percussionist both on stage and in the studio.

Joyline Sibanda is a talented dancer and singer who started performing in 2004 at Vuka Africa and with Cont Mhlanga in a show called *Mzilikazi*. She then worked with Friends of Joshua Trust as a dancer and singer of *Indlovukazi Zikanyongola*. In 2011 she toured Germany with Intombi Zomqangala. Joyline Sibanda is a singer and dancer and an original member of Nobuntu. Since her start of dancing and singing at the age of 12. Her personal motto is "I love what I do."
Upcoming Events:

Cirque Flip Fabrique: Six
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.
Randolph W. Bromery Center for the Arts
Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall

Emily Johnson/Catalyst: Being Future Being
Monday, February 28, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.
Bowker Auditorium

For more information on all Fine Arts Center events and for tickets please visit:

fineartscenter.com

This presentation of Nobuntu is funded in part by the New England States Touring program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program and the six New England state arts agencies.