
GREGORY MAQOMA/ VUYANI DANCE THEATRE

EXIT/EXIST

Emmett Robinson Theatre at College of Charleston

June 5 at 8:30pm; June 6 at 2:00pm; June 7 at 3:00pm & 9:00pm;
June 8 at 3:30pm

Concept, Choreography & Performance

Gregory Maqoma

Music Composition

Simphiwe Dana

Director

James Ngcobo

Video Animation

Mileta Postic

Guitar Composition, Arrangements, Performance

Giuliano Modarelli

Vocal Arrangement, Additional Composition

Complete Quartet

Vocal Performance

Tobela Mpela

Siphiwe Nkabinde

Xolisile Bongwana

Timothy Moloi

Rehearsal Director

Shanell Winlock

Recorded Text Voice

Sbulele Gcilitshana

Sound Designer

Andile Mpahlwa

Costume

David Tlale

Lighting Design

Ralf Nonn

Sound Engineer

Benjamin Dandoy

Set Design

Oliver Hauser

PERFORMED WITHOUT AN INTERMISSION.

Additional support for the 2014 Dance Series is provided by The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

The North American Tour of Exit/Exist is produced by MAPP International Productions in partnership with The Africa Contemporary Arts Consortium.

Exit/Exist is a co-production of Théâtre de la Ville (France), Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg (KVS, Belgium), Dance Umbrella (South Africa), and Vuyani Dance Theatre. Vuyani Dance Theatre is supported by the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund.

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The 2014 Dance Series is sponsored by BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina.

These performances are made possible in part through funds from the Spoleto Festival USA Endowment, generously supported by BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, Wells Fargo, and Bank of America.

CBS News journalist Martha Teichner hosts a "Conversation with Gregory Maqoma" at 5:30pm on June 6 at the Charleston Library Society, 164 King Street.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The core of this piece is memory; rephrasing the notion of existence and the notion of simply existing in order to exist. *Exit/Exist* takes a moment to pause; to look back; to rewind the tape to the days when the tapestry of South Africa was about the collision of biographies. Maqoma, a renowned chief of the Xhosa nation is at odds with the English over the possession of cattle. The animosity that was brewing at the time left us with a body of work that we've used in putting together *Exit/Exist*.

With the deliberate choice of less exposition and an emphasis on how we use the visual element to tell this tale, while underpinning the musicality, it is hoped we will evoke the spirit of the time. Maqoma to us is not only an iconic figure of Xhosa land but a figure of historical transformation, the custodian of a movement of a people that cleared the path to an emancipation that he spent his whole life yearning for.

Gregory Maqoma and the collaborators and performers of Exit/Exist

ABOUT THE COMPANY

VUYANI DANCE THEATRE (VDT) is a dance and theater company based in Johannesburg that was founded in 1999 by Gregory Maqoma. VDT's mission and artistic objective is to produce multidisciplinary projects that question and challenge social values while exploring history, using them as launching pads for research and development. Vuyani Dance Theatre's artistic approach embraces—in a dynamic and theatrical way—the diverse tastes, motivations, and cultures that shape the uniqueness of the South African society. VDT constantly works with co-creators and performers of artistic excellence from all over the world to collaborate on productions that ultimately tour throughout Africa, Europe, North America, and South America to great critical acclaim and audience response. In addition to performance projects, VDT has numerous ongoing programs that involve both professional and junior dance companies that educate dancers at all levels and engage South African communities in movement classes and broader discussions around the arts and social issues. vuyani.co.za

ARTISTIC TEAM



GREGORY VUYANI MAQOMA (concept designer/choreographer) was born in Soweto in 1973 and became interested in dance in the late 1980s as a means to escape the political tensions growing in his place of birth. He started his formal dance training in 1990 at Moving Into Dance where, in 2002, he became the associate artistic director. Maqoma has established himself as an internationally renowned dancer, choreographer, teacher, director, and scriptwriter. He founded Vuyani Dance Theatre (VDT) in 1999 when he was undertaking a scholarship at the Performing Arts Research and Training School (PARTS) in Belgium under the direction of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. Maqoma is perhaps best known for producing trilogies. He first created the award-winning Rhythm Trilogy (comprising *Rhythm 1 2 3*, *Rhythm Blues*, and *Rhythm Colour*) followed by the Beauty Trilogy (*Beautiful*, *Beautiful Me*, and *Beautiful Us*). Several works in his VDT repertoire have won him accolades and international acclaim. This includes FNB Vita Choreographer of the Year in 1999, 2001, and 2002 for *Rhythm 1 2 3*, *Rhythm Blues*, and *Southern Comfort*, respectively. In 2006 and 2007, Maqoma won the Gauteng MEC Award for the group work *Beautiful Us* and solo *Beautiful Me*. He received the Standard Bank Young Artist Award for Dance in 2002 and the 2012 Tunkie Award for Leadership in Dance, which is presented annually to a South African who has elevated the standard and visibility of dance in South Africa. He teaches in universities in Africa, Europe, and the United States.

JAMES NGCOBO (director) is a stage, television, and film actor best known for his roles as editor Joe Dlamini on the South African drama series *Hard Copy* (2005), and as Mojo Khumalo on the South African sitcom *Stokvel* (2003-2008, 2010). Ngcobo has appeared at London's The Young Vic Theatre in *The Revolution*, toured the United States in *The Horn of Sorrow*, toured Britain in *The Cherry Orchard*, and performed in *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* at Britain's Royal Festival Hall. He trained with Kwa-Zulu Natal's Loft Theatre Company appearing in such productions as *La Ronde*, *Mujaji*, *Horn of Sorrow*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. As a director he has become known for adaptations, including: Es'kia Mphahlele's *The Suitcase*; Fred Khumalo's autobiography, *Touch My Blood*; Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*; and *Thirst*, which saw Philippe Pelen Baldini's *The Water Carriers* transposed into an African setting. In 2007, Ngcobo won Best Director for *The Suitcase* at the Naledi Theatre Awards. In 2011, he turned his attention to the myth of the warrior king, Sunjata, who, legend has it, founded the Malian empire in the 13th Century—the land of Timbuktu, the spiritual and intellectual capital of Africa. In 2013, Ngcobo was appointed the new artistic director of the Market Theatre in Johannesburg.

SIMPHIWE DANA (composer) is one of South Africa's most soulful singers and is renowned around the world and adored for her impressive vocal prowess. An award-winning singer whose albums have ascended to the top of international charts, her music captures the hearts of those listening to it. Her third album, *Kulture Noir* (2010), has received two 2010 METRO FM Music Awards for Best Female and Best Contemporary Jazz Album, and also claimed the number one spot on the German World Music Charts and the number three spot on the European Music Charts.

RALF NONN (lighting designer) was born in Germany and holds a degree in mining-engineering from Germany's Bochum University. From 1987 to 1989 he studied dance in Essen, and subsequently moved to Belgium and joined the dance company Plan K (currently, Charleroi Danse). Nonn launched his lighting design career in 1996 as a lighting director for the Compagnie *Un Oeuf* (Brussels). In 1997, he became a freelance lighting designer and began work with Toneelgroep Amsterdam (Netherlands), Meg Stuart (US), Royal Flemish Theatre (Belgium), Ultima Vez Dance Company (Belgium), Ballet Marseille (France), Ballet Lyon (France), Deepblue (Netherlands), David Byrne (US), and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (Belgium), among others. Nonn has also worked on projects with solo artists and dance and theater companies from Europe, South America, and East Asia. His work on special event productions includes *Les metamorphoses du Louvre* (Paris), which was presented to more than 12,000 spectators. Nonn's work can also be found in international film and television.

BENJAMIN DANDOY (sound engineer) was born in Belgium and studied sound in Brussels' INSAS (Superior National Institute for Show and Cinema). After completing his studies, he relocated to Lisbon to work on live music sound reinforcement at Expo'98. Upon his return to Brussels in 1999, he joined choreographer Wim Vandekeybus's Ultima Vez Dance Company, where he remained for more than ten years working on the company's productions, world tours, and extensive music collaborations, including works with David Byrne, Marc Ribot, David Eugene Edwards, Daan, and Mauro Pawlowski. Dandoy also works independently on a variety of other Belgium-based theater and video editing productions. He recently began touring with the acclaimed show *Kiss and Cry* by choreographer Michèle-Anne De Mey and film director Jaco Van Dormael.

MUSICIANS

TOBELA MPELA (vocalist) is a singer and actor who is a South African native from Umtata and first moved to Johannesburg when he was a young boy. He trained for two years at Phakalani Music Industry Institute studying studio production, song writing, and vocal training under noted bass guitarist Victor Masondo. In 2002, Mpela was cast as lead singer on the television series *Soul City 5*. A year later, he joined the cast of Umoja as lead singer and travelled to Australia, Denmark, the United States, France, Israel, New Zealand, China, Jamaica, and Barbados. In 2007, he joined African Footprints as a singer, touring throughout Mexico. He received a best acting award for his appearance in the short film *My Husband and Boy Friend*, and also appeared in the National Children's Theatre productions of *The Wizard of Oz* (2008) and *African Tapestry* (2010). Mpela continues to act and sing on several television and musical productions.

SIPHIWE "SIP" NKABINDE (vocalist) was born in Bergville, South Africa. He showed artistic abilities from a young age, singing a *cappella* (*isicathamiya*) and in his local school choir as a boy. Studying *pantsula* dance and Latin American dance prior to returning to his roots in Zulu traditional dance, Nkabinde has since grown up to become a passionate artist adept in song-writing, singing, dancing, acting, and piano. In 2001, he joined the cast of Umoja and toured the world for almost nine years, until his departure when he decided to focus more on music. In 2009, he joined the Afro-Pop group Fohloza as a backup singer and also began working as a session musician at SLAM Production Studio, recording music for radio and television. In 2011, Nkabinde worked with Themba Mkhize on the musicals *Kwela Bafana* and *iLembe*.

XOLISILE BONGWANA (vocalist) began his dance career in 1999. In 2005, Bongwana joined dance troupe Uphondo Lwe Africa as a singer and dancer and toured throughout the United Kingdom. He joined Dodgy Clutch Production in 2008 and appeared in the UK, US, and Spanish tours of *Elephant*. In 2011, Bongwana performed as a singer and dancer in Robyn Orlin's *Walking Next to Our Shoes*, which was presented throughout the United States, Switzerland, and France. He joined Vuyani Dance Theatre as a dancer and singer in 2011.

TIMOTHY MOLOI (vocalist) completed his studies at Wesleyan University and returned to his native South Africa in 1999. Since then, he has performed with the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra, Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, East Cape Philharmonic, Electric Pops Orchestra, Johannesburg Festival Orchestra, and Soweto Gospel Choir. He performed during the FIFA 2010 World Cup opening ceremony and several televised music and acting performances, including the *MTN South African Music Awards*. His 2009 *Love That Music* album (released by Thatch Music) received two MTN award nominations. Moloi has appeared in several South African stage productions, including *Motown Gold* (The Lyric Theatre), *Coming Home* (Baxter Theatre Centre), *Bring on Broadway* (Artscape Theatre Centre), and more. He has performed for President Nelson Mandela and was featured at the African Peace Awards and on Oprah Winfrey's *Live Your Best Life* event.

GIULIANO MODARELLI (guitarist) blends world folk, Arabic, flamenco, Latin, and Eastern European styles to create a stylistically unique sound for the guitar. He has studied with renowned sitarist Dharambir Singh and Indian classical maestro Buddhadev Dasgupta. In addition to being a solo artist, he is also a core member of the UK-based band Samay, which combines traditional forms with a range of contemporary influences (such as jazz, flamenco, samba, funk and chill out) to reinvent the sound of Indian classical music and create powerful and dynamic arrangements. As part of the international project Sunev, featuring Grammy Award-winning tabla star Bikram Ghosh (*RhythmScape*), he collaborated with Ghosh to write and perform for the soundtrack of the Mira Nair film, *Little Zizou* (2008). He writes for theater and dance, touring nationally and internationally, and regularly works and trains in India where he tours with many outstanding artists.