



**FESTIVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN DANCE FEATURING
THE GUMBOOTS AND REAL ACTIONS PANTSULA DANCE COMPANY**

Wednesday, November 1, 2017, at 7pm
Foellinger Great Hall

PROGRAM

FESTIVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN DANCE

FEATURING

THE GUMBOOTS AND REAL ACTIONS PANTSULA DANCE COMPANY

PANTSULA DANCE COMPANY

Floor Dancers

Sibusiso Mthembu (choreographer)

Pule Ngcaba

David Mokale

Nkosana Mlauzi

Patrick Dhlamini

DJ/Sound Engineer

Vouks Nojokes

Artistic Director

Sello Rueben Modiga

GUMBOOTS DANCE COMPANY:

Floor Dancers

Thanduxolo Mhlongo

Thulani Meyiwa

Katlego Makgopela

Mlingwa Mayo

Owen Mabuza

Bassist/Vocalist

Mtshantsha Sabata

Drummer

Philani Maphumulo

Vocalists

Nkosinathi Malinga

Sizwe Nkosi

Thabang Maremela

Djembe/Lead Vocalist

Siyabonga Hlatswayo

Director

Thapelo Motluong

GUMBOOTS COMPANY

Gwa—Gwa—Gwa

Black & Hansa

We Mama

Midodo

Imali

Veletinah

Namhlangifayo

Mhlangifayo

Dilika

Month End

Yelele

Mamiya

Izintabeni

Kwelizayo

Stimela

20-minute intermission

PANTSULA COMPANY

Platform scene

Shebeen scene

Soccer scene

Tradition scene

Stunt Dance scene

Sound Connection scene

DJ Stunt scene

PANTSULA AND GUMBOOTS COMPANY

Gumtsula—Finale

Festival of South African Dance appears by arrangement with:

Columbia Artists

5 Columbia Circle @ 1790 Broadway

New York, NY 10019

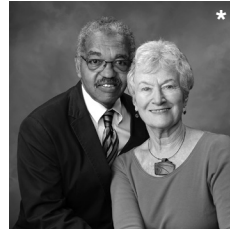
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PROGRAM NOTES

GUMBOOTS COMPANY

GWA—GWA—GWA is a vibrant and energetic song that mine workers created with their gumboots. They sing it to get into a working mood.

BLACK & HANSA is a song that talks about two brands of beer that mine workers enjoy after work and during their off days.

WE MAMA is a song that tells of how difficult the first day underground often is for first time mine workers. It makes them miss their mother's love.

MIDODO is a song that tells of how much working in the mine can be blissful and fun once you get used to it.

IMALI is a song that tells you why these men came to Johannesburg in the first place. Money and more money.

VELEMINAH is a song that tells of how men working in the mine cook and eat together at the hostels.

NAMHLANGIFAYO is a song that tells of how their respective families will cry and suffer if they were to die underground.

MHLANGIFAYO tells of how these men wish to be buried next to their father's kraal when they die. They sing this song each time they miss home.

DILIKA is a happy song that tells of how near month end is. The day these men will be paid.

MONTH END is song that tells of how happy these men are for having been paid. It tells about the parties and fun they will be having because it's month end and month end means pay day.

YELELE is a fun, celebratory song that means fun and more fun.

MAMIYA is a song about a woman who brews traditional beer called Umqombothi for the men. They normally sing this song to her when they want her beer.

IZINTABENI is a song that tells of how these men miss their women who are miles and miles away.

KWELIZAYO is a song that means till we meet again. This is a song that men only sang when they were going back home to their families during the Christmas holidays. They sang this song as they were not sure if they will see each other again as many die from different causes.

STIMELA is a song that tells of how these men re-live their heartache and pain because of the train once again. It was the same train that took them away from their families and it is the same train that takes them away from the bond and the brotherhood they formed with all the other men.

PANTSULA AND GUMBOOTS COMPANY

GUMTSULA (THE FINALE) is a combination of gumboots dance and Pantsula dance style, unique South African dance cultures from the mines and the townships will show that through music and dance.

PROFILES

THAPELO GORDON MOTLOUNG is the director of the Gumboot Dance Company and playwright of *Stimela The Gumboot Musical*. Motluong's versatility as a director caters to several different specializations such as Traditional/Indigenous African Dance, Tap, Pantsula, and Gumboot. Motluong's mission, as a playwright and director, is to preserve and restore the African tradition as well as shed light on topics deemed controversial in certain South African communities.

Motluong's work is produced predominantly throughout South Africa and New Zealand reaching critical acclaim with such titles as *Like Cain and Abel* (2005), a story of love and tolerance regarding LGBTQ community on a global scale and *Spirit and Bones* (2010), a story of the abongoma, or traditional healers, of South Africa which was commissioned for several festivals throughout South Africa. *Stimela 'The Gumboot' Musical* comes to the United States in the fall of 2017 to tell the rich history of Gumboot dancing through the stories and struggles and South African gold miners in the late 1800's.

Awards and Career Milestones:

—2010, Motluong's *Spirit and Bones* was commissioned for the Grahamstown National Arts Festival, Performing Arts Center of the Free State (PACOF), and the State Theatre's Mzansi Fela Festival in South Africa.

—2014, Motluong invited to direct at the Botho Heriatge Festival in its premiere season at the Wushwini Arts, Culture, and Heritage Centre in Durban, South Africa.

—2017, The Gumboots Dance Company production of *Stimela the Musical* tours New Zealand visiting the Oamaru Opera House and The Theatre Royal.

REAL ACTIONS PANTSULA was established in 1992 by Sello Reuben Modiga. Modiga established the group after realizing the talent of young dancers in Orange Farm, a small town in South Africa outside of Johannesburg. The group consists of 30 young, talented teenagers around the community. One of Modiga's missions, as director and choreographer of the group, is to take South Africa's youth off the street in an effort to give them a life free from the harmful influence of their community through the power of dance.

Real Actions Pantsula has traveled locally, provincially, nationally and internationally since its existence. They consider themselves 'the real thing', with their unique interpretation of Pantsula and their own aspirations of distinguishing themselves from other Pantsula crews. They believe that a positive impact on their community, through their passion for dance, will revive the spirit of 'Ubuntu'—a word that in Zulu means "humanity."

The group's choreography, like many Pantsula dance companies in South Africa, consists of quick, syncopated stepping usually set to modern pop, electronic, techno, or deep house music. Historically, Pantsula dancing would evoke certain political overtones, speaking out against the Apartheid government, socio-economic injustice in South Africa, and even the AIDS epidemic. That freedom of expression dating back to the early 1980's has created an art form which is a proud expression of South African culture.

STIMELA "THE GUMBOOT MUSICAL" is written and directed by critically acclaimed, South African playwright Thapelo Gordon Motluong. It is a vibrant musical piece told through narration, music and Gumboot dance. It tells a tale of rural African men who come by train from all walks of life in search of greener pastures in the City of Gold, Johannesburg. As time passes, life proves to be more challenging than they expected. They endure difficult working conditions in the gold mines simply to make ends meet so they can send money back home. The journey unfolds through a series of flashbacks as we learn about each man's story from the eyes of Zakhele Ndlovu, a young Zulu man who leaves behind his mother and the love of his life, Buhle Zwane.

The production explains the history of Gumboot dancing, while also integrating Gumboot choreography throughout the show. Gumboot dancing, also known as "Isicathulo", was conceived by South African workers in the 1880's who were transported to Witwatersrand, South Africa by European settlers to mine for gold. The

gold mines were often flooded so the miners were provided with gumboots to protect their feet. The miners were forbidden to speak while they worked, so they would often jangle their ankle chains in order to communicate with one another.

As an art form, Gumboot dancing uses the same methods of body articulation in a polyrhythmic pattern while wearing Wellington gumboots, reminiscent of the way the miners would move their chains to communicate. Today, the dance exists as a strong symbol of South African history and culture, used in routines on the streets and plazas of tourist areas in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Thapelo Motluong and the company of *Stimela The Gumboot Musical* have toured their production all throughout South Africa as well as parts of New Zealand reaching critical acclaim. Motluong's mission as a playwright is to preserve and restore the South African tradition while sharing South African art forms, like Gumboot dancing, with the world.