

## Sunduza Dance Theatre

Sunduza means "to push". We are based at the Pumula Open Air Theatre in the Western most township from the centre of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Founded in 1985 and led by the late Simon Banda the group in the early years was better known as the High Stars Sunduza Boys. Since 1992 when the company first started touring internationally, and recording, it became a full dance theatre company incorporating women.

Still rooted in the *isicatamiya* 'a cappella' tradition even today, we have taken our productions to the UK, Canada, the Far East, Switzerland, Ireland, in collaboration with our UK production house.

We have also supported a twelve year programme in Sheffield UK in which two principal artists have been leading a rich programme of activities in Yorkshire schools through Southern E Media Education & Arts- its local partner.

Tragically both original music and dance directors, Simon Banda and Mandla Sibanda passed away in 2012 but the young generation have come forward and revived three of our main productions extracts of which can be found on YouTube (*SunduzaTV*).

**Injabulo-** a production for young people through music and dance tells the story of a young musician looking for work in the mines of South Africa. It employs a large range of dances, colourful costumes and masks and scintillating harmonies.

**Matata-** related closely to the diaries of Scottish Missionary Robert Moffat in the nineteenth century and published by the National Archives it tells of the meeting he had with King Mzilikazi on his journey through Matabeleland. It also reflects on the difficult problems faced by the youth today many of which are a product of history and uses football as a metaphor for aids awareness as one problem.

**Voices from the Rocks-** The Story of the Matopos. Closely based on the book researched by the late Professor Terence Ranger from Oxford University the production uses his beautifully researched oral history transporting the audience through the story of the Matopos National Park. Now it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is the story of the land in microcosm, a story of changing land use, dispossession and intertwined colonial and local histories. All of it is set to beautiful song, dance and multimedia.

The multi-talented cast draw on truly international experience as several members have performed on tour with other companies as well as with Sunduza. The cast includes Charlie Banda, Bekithemba Sibanda, Khalipani Ndlovu, Peter Ruwangai, Bhapi Mdladla (Fafasa), Simba Sagide, Mkululi Khanye, Gugulethu Mhlanga and Leroy Sibanda. They are supported by their international producer Philip Weiss who devised the production concepts. The stage productions have largely been adapted for the stage by the late Mandla Sibanda, as writer and Simon Banda (composer, musician and choreographer). Productions have been at Glastonbury, Womad, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (George Square Theatre, Fringe Club, London's South Bank, Crucible Theatre (Sheffield), Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Aberdeen Childrens Festivals, The West Yorkshire Playhouse, Singapore International Arts, Festival, Belfast Folk Week to name just a few highlights.

**Sunduza -Buya-** 2013/14 initiated by musician and choral director Janet Wood to celebrate the life of Simon Banda encompassing a new recording with support from Arts Council England.

Sunduza have several recordings available online as well as archival DVDs of their live shows that include David Fanshawe's much celebrated African Sanctus performed in cooperation with the Sheffield Oratorio Chorus.

## AMASIKO LEMVELO LEARNING TRUST



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