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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 23, 2006

**SOUTH AFRICAN MUSICAL AMBASSADOR
LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO RETURNS TO CAL PERFORMANCES
THURSDAY, MARCH 30 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

***SCHOOLTIME*: SPECIAL 1-HOUR SHOW FOR STUDENTS, FRIDAY, MARCH 31 AT 11:00 A.M.**

BERKELEY, February 23, 2006 — Marrying the intricate rhythms and harmonies of South African musical traditions with the sounds and sentiments of Christian gospel music, **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** returns to Cal Performances **Thursday, March 30 at 8 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. For over 30 years, the soul-stirring music of this nine-member *a cappella* group, directed by **Joseph Shabalala**, has been synonymous with African music and rollicking good performances. Long considered South Africa's cultural emissary both at home and abroad, the Grammy Award-winning group performed at Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration and accompanied F.W. de Klerk when he received the Nobel Peace Prize. The program is based on Ladysmith's new album, *Long Walk to Freedom*, which celebrates the 20th anniversary of their ascension to the world stage and the 12th anniversary of the dawning of democracy in South Africa. In a style all its own, the performance – laced with intricate steps and gestures – comes from the heart. “Imagine the five-man Temptations, multiply by two, add Zulu lyrics, and you get the idea” (*The Boston Globe*).

Additionally, Ladysmith Black Mambazo will give a *SchoolTime* performance for Bay Area students, **Friday, March 31 at 11:00 a.m. in Zellerbach Hall**; tickets available in advance only.

JOSEPH SHABALALA & LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO

Ladysmith Black Mambazo is known for its mesmerizing, athletic and funny stage performances that delight audience members of all ages. The traditional music sung by the ensemble is called *isicathamiya* (is-cot-a-me-ya) and was born in the mines of South Africa. Almost 20 years ago, Paul Simon traveled to South Africa to record with Joseph Shabalala and

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the other members of Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Captivated by their stirring bass, alto and tenor harmonies, Simon incorporated Ladysmith's traditional sounds of black South Africa into his *Graceland* album, a project that introduced the group to the world and ignited explosive interest in world music. Since then, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has performed worldwide for presidents, dignitaries, kings, queens and the Pope. They have performed at two Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies, the Olympics and Queen Elizabeth II's "Party at the Palace" celebration in 2002.

The idea for Ladysmith's unique style came to Joseph Shabalala in a dream in 1964. He recruited members of his immediate family and close friends to help him realize the harmony he had dreamed of and, in time, Ladysmith Black Mambazo emerged with its deep, rich, resonant sound. "It is quite a dream for a Zulu South African to dream."

The name Ladysmith Black Mambazo came as a result of winning every singing competition the group entered. Each word has a distinct meaning: "Ladysmith" is the hometown of the Shabalala family; "Black" refers to the black ox, considered to be the strongest animal on the farm; and "Mambazo" is the Zulu word for ax, symbolic of the group's ability to "chop down" its competition.

They recorded their first album in 1970. Since then the group – which sings in English, French, Zulu and various African dialects, with touches of doo-wop, gospel and reggae – has recorded more than 40 albums, selling over six million records at home and abroad. *Shaka Zulu*, their first album released in the U.S. won a Grammy Award for Best Traditional Folk Album in 1987. Ladysmith Black Mambazo has recorded with numerous artists including Yo-Yo Ma, Stevie Wonder, Dolly Parton, George Clinton, and Ben Harper. They provided the soundtracks for Spike Lee's *Do It A Cappella*, Disney's *The Lion King Part II*, Eddie Murphy's *Coming to America* and others. Their appearance with Paul Simon on Sesame Street is the most requested in the show's history.

The group's newest recording, *Long Walk to Freedom*, is a collection of 12 classic Mambazo songs featuring guest vocal performances by Melissa Etheridge, Emmylou Harris, Taj

Mahal, Sarah McLachlan, Natalie Merchant, and Zap Mama. “I am so happy to share this recording with our friends and fans from around the world,” says founder Joseph Shabalala. “Forty-five years ago I had a dream of creating music that might make South Africa a better place. This dream has come true in so many ways that I could never have imagined those many years ago. It’s wonderful to have so many talented guest artists on this project show share that vision.”

Over the years, as members of the group have retired, Joseph Shabalala has enlisted the talents of his four sons, bringing youthful energy to the group and assuring that his teachings of “peace, love and harmony” and the musical traditions of his people do not disappear. *The New York Times* writes, “the group had more than enough vocal harmonies to back up its messages of universal harmony.” Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s members are Joseph Shabalala, Msizi Shabalala, Russel Mthembu, Albert Mazibuko, Jabulani Dubazana, Thulani Shabalala, Thamsanqa Shabalala, Sibongiseni Shabalala and Abedengo Mazibuko.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** on **Thursday, March 30** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$24.00, \$34.00** and **\$46.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

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Cal Performances’ 2005/2006 Centennial Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, March 30 at 8:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

World Stage

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

Program: The South African *a cappella* group **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** will perform songs from their new album *Long Walk to Freedom* as well as songs from their broad repertoire of original compositions.

Tickets: \$24.00, \$34.00, \$46.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door.

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Friday, March 31 at 11:00 a.m.

SCHOOLTIME PERFORMANCE

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

Program: In a one-hour special performance for Bay Area schoolchildren, the South African *a cappella* group **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** will perform songs from their new album *Long Walk to Freedom* as well as songs from their broad repertoire of original compositions.

Tickets: \$3.00 per student or adult chaperone, available in advance only through Cal Performances at (510) 642-1082. *SchoolTime* performances are open to students in grades 2 through 12 in Bay Area public and private schools. Supplemental study guides for the classroom are provided. For more information about the *SchoolTime* program, contact the *SchoolTime* coordinator at Cal Performances by email at eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu, or by phone at (510) 642-0212.

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