

# Cal Performances Presents

Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## Hugh Masekela's Chissa All-Stars



Hugh Masekela	<i>flugelhorn, vocals, band leader</i>
Francis M.E. Fuster	<i>percussion</i>
Sello Montwedi	<i>drums</i>
John Blackie Selolwane	<i>guitar</i>
Arthur Tshabalala	<i>keyboards, vocals</i>
Abednigo "Fana" Zulu	<i>bass, vocals</i>
Ngenekhaya "Khaya" Mahlangu	<i>saxophone, vocals</i>
Tshepo Mngoma	<i>violin</i>
Themba Elliot Mokoena	<i>second guitar</i>
Sibongile Khumalo	<i>lead &amp; backing vocals</i>
Nakosinathi "Nathi" Gcabashe	<i>lead &amp; backing vocals</i>
George Cruze	<i>tour manager</i>

*Cal Performances' 2007–2008 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.*

## Hugh Masekela

Ever since the day in 1954 when Archbishop Trevor Huddleston gave him his trumpet, Hugh Masekela has played music that closely reflects his beginnings as a little boy in Witbank. The street songs, church songs, migrant labor work songs, political protest songs and the sounds of the wide cross-section of ethnic culture South Africa possesses from Xhosa, Zulu, Swazi, Khoi-sa, Griqua, Sotho and Tswana peoples of the south, southeast, central and western regions to the Ndebele, Tsonga, Venda and Pedi provinces of the north and northwest. The urban sounds of the townships, the influences of the Manhattan Brothers, Dorothy Masuka, the Dark City Sisters, the Mahotella Queens and Mahlathini, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Miriam Makeba, Spokes Mashiyane, Lemmy Mabaso, Elijah Nkwanyana, Kippie Moeketsi, Mackay Davashe—all these form an intrinsic part of his musical roots, intertwined with vivid portraits of the struggles and the sorrows, the joys and passions of his country.

After Huddleston asked Uncle Saude, the leader of the Johannesburg “Native” Municipal Brass Band, to teach Hugh the rudiments of trumpet-playing, he quickly proceeded to master the instrument. Hugh’s initial inspiration was the film *Young Man with a Horn*, in which Kirk Douglas portrayed the great American jazz trumpeter Bix Beiderbecke. Soon, some of his music-loving schoolmates also became interested in playing instruments, leading to the formation of the Huddleston Jazz Band, South Africa’s very first youth orchestra, at St. Peter’s Secondary School, where the anti-apartheid priest was chaplain.

Huddleston was deported by the racist government of the time for his emancipation militancy, and when Hugh kept on badgering him to help him leave the oppressive country for music education opportunities abroad, the priest worked very hard to get him to England. After playing in dance bands led by Zakes Nkosi, Ntemi Piliso, Elijah Nkwanyana and Kippie Moeketsi, Hugh joined the star-studded African Jazz Revenue in 1956. Following a Manhattan Brothers tour of the country in 1958, he played in the orchestra for Todd Matshikiza’s musical, *King Kong*, with Jonas

Gwangwa and some of the aforementioned musicians. *King Kong* was South Africa’s first blockbuster theatrical success, touring the country for a sold-out year with Miriam Makeba and the Manhattan Brothers’ Nathan Mdllele in the lead roles. The musical later spent two years on London’s West End. At the end of 1959, Abdullah Ibrahim, Kippie, Jonas, Makhaya Ntshoko, Johnny Gertz and Hugh formed the Jazz Epistles, the first African group to record an LP, and performed to recordbreaking audiences in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

After the March 21, 1960, Sharpeville Massacre, in which 69 Africans peacefully protesting the pass laws, along with thousands of their fellow comrades, were mercilessly mowed down, the ensuing national outrage caused the government to proclaim a state of emergency and the banning of gatherings by more than 10 people. As the brutality of the apartheid state increased, Hugh finally left the country with the help of Trevor Huddleston and his friends Yehudi Menuhin and Johnny Dankworth, who got him admitted into London’s Guildhall School of Music. Miriam Makeba, who was already enjoying major success in the United States, Harry Belafonte, Dizzy Gillespie and John Mehegan later helped him to get admission to the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

Hugh finally met Louis Armstrong, who had sent the Huddleston Band a trumpet after Huddleston told the trumpet king about the band he helped start back in South Africa before deportation. With help from Makeba and Belafonte, Hugh eventually began to record, gaining his first breakthrough with *The Americanization of Ooga-Booga*, produced by the late Tom Wilson, who had been producer of Bob Dylan and Simon & Garfunkel’s debut successes. Stewart Levine, his business partner in Chissa Records, went on to produce hit records for Hugh on Uni Records, beginning with *Alive and Well at the Whisky* in 1967 and then *Promise of a Future* in 1968, which contained the gigantic hit song “Grazing in the Grass.”

By the 1970s, Masekela had attained international fame, selling out all of America’s festivals, auditoriums and top nightclubs. Heeding the call of his African roots, he moved first to Guinea, then to Liberia and Ghana after recording the historical *Home Is Where Music Is* with Dudu Pukwana.

After a pilgrimage to Zaire in 1973, he met Fela in Nigeria and again with Stewart Levine, he met Hedzoleh Soundz, a grassroots Ghanaian band Fela introduced them to. For the next five years, they produced a string of hit records, including international favorites such as “The Marketplace,” “Ashiko.” “The Boys Doing It,” “Vasco da Gama,” “African Secret Society” and the evergreen “Stimela.” After a tour and two duet albums with Herb Albert, Hugh and Miriam played a concert in Lesotho on Christmas Day 1980 to a crowd of 75,000, who had come to see them after they had been away from the region for 20 years. In 1981, Hugh moved to Botswana, where he started the Botswana international School of Music with Dr. Khabi Mngona. His record label Jive Records helped him to set up a mobile studio in Gaborone, where Levine produced *Techno Bush*, on which the hit single “Don’t Go Lose It Baby” appeared. In 1986, he unexpectedly had to leave for England with his band Kalahari, his wife Lindi Phahle and 14 others, having been swept up in raids on so-called “communist terrorist camps” manned by South African Anti-Apartheid activists.

While in England, Masekela conceived the Broadway musical *Sarafina* with Mbongeni Ngema and recorded the hit “Bring Back Nelson Mandela” in 1986 with Kalahari. After touring *Graceland* with Paul Simon, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Miriam Makeba, Masekela returned home following the un-banning of political parties and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. In 1991, he launched his first tour of South Africa, “Sekunjalo This Is It,” with Sankomota and Bayete; it was a four-month tour, selling out in the country’s major cities. His recent albums, *Black to the Future* and *Sixty*, have both gone platinum.

Masekela uses his position to give a platform to a fresh generation of South African talent. He was heavily influenced by African-American music since his infancy, having been raised on the 78rpm gramophone records of the jazz greats since his infancy. He attended school with Dave Grusin, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, David Izenzon, Donald Byrd, Eric Dolphy, John Handy, Les McCann, Eddie Gomez, Richard Davis and Ron Carter, and played on some of Bob Marley’s very

first recordings. Hugh’s favorite musician today is the late Franco of Zaire, and he claims that he’s still learning music.

## Chissa All-Stars

Long before the term “world music” was coined, South African born trumpeter and flugelhornist Hugh Masekela was ingeniously fusing his own vibrant post-bop style with R&B, pop and African rhythms. In 1968, Masekela became an overnight sensation with his irresistible instrumental hit “Grazing in the Grass.” With its breezy horn lines and catchy, percussive rhythms, the song topped the *Billboard* charts, earned a Grammy nomination—eventually selling four million copies worldwide. Since then, Masekela has recorded with a broad spectrum of artists from Fela Kuti and Harry Belafonte to Herb Alpert and The Byrds. In the 1980s, he toured with Paul Simon in support of the acclaimed album *Graceland*, which also featured South African artists Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Masekela’s ex-wife, Miriam Makeba.

In addition to Hugh’s extensive career as one of Africa’s most beloved performers, he is also the founder and co-owner of Chissa Records—South Africa’s first and only black-owned record label. As the label’s producing manager, Hugh has been at the helm recording many of South African classic roots performers and he has also been instrumental in launching the careers of many of his country’s musical new garde. Chissa received nine nominations at the 2007 South African Music Awards.

For this very special tour, Hugh supplements his regular group with renowned South African classical and Afro-pop diva Sibongile Khumalo and Afro-jazz performer and producer “Khaya” Mahlangu—as well as a few others from the label’s impressive roster—to comprise his fiery “Chissa All-Stars” ensemble.

Ranging from the traditional Township jazz and *mbaqanga* of Soweto, through classic Afro-pop, and onward to the urban *kwaiito* music of modern Johannesburg, the music of the Chissa All-Stars showcases South Africa’s ever-rich cultural, political and musical journey.