

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, March 2, 2014, 7pm

Zellerbach Hall

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

Joseph Shabalala (*with us in spiritual support*)

Msizi Shabalala

Russel Mthembu

Albert Mazibuko

Thulani Shabalala

Thamsanqa Shabalala

Sibongiseni Shabalala

Abednego Mazibuko

Ngane Dlamini

Babuyile Shabalala

Pius Shezi



In Honor of Nelson Mandela

Cal Performances' 2013–2014 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

IN 2014, LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO celebrates over 50 years of joyous and uplifting music. Within Ladysmith's singing are the intricate rhythms and harmonies of their native South African musical traditions. In those 50-plus years, the *a cappella* vocal group has created a musical and spiritual message that has touched a worldwide audience. Its singing efforts have garnered praise and accolades from a wide body of people, organizations, and countries.

As we all know, the father of their nation, Nelson Mandela, passed away on December 5, 2013. His passing, while terribly sad, brings a celebration for a life and message that Ladysmith Black Mambazo has been connected with for many years. Nelson Mandela, who bestowed on the group the title of "South African Cultural Ambassadors to the World" asked the group to join him on his trip to Oslo, Norway, in 1993, when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. And when Mr. Mandela was inaugurated as the country's first black President, he asked the group to perform at the celebration.

Upon his passing, the group said, "Nelson Mandela has finished his journey. Although he has physically left us now, his message of peace continues within us all. He was able to change our nation because of his incredible will, dignity, and humanity. Now, it is left for all of us to carry on his mission. We must continue the journey of making not just South Africa, but the whole world, a peaceful, forgiving place. As we continue to spread the message of Peace, Love, and Harmony, we rededicate ourselves to Mandela and his dream of a Rainbow Nation and a Rainbow World. May his journey continue in the soul and spirits of all who were touched by him."

Ladysmith Black Mambazo, South Africa's Cultural Ambassadors to the World, was assembled in the early 1960s in South Africa by Joseph Shabalala, then a young farmboy-turned-factory worker. "Ladysmith" is the name of Joseph's hometown, a small farming area between Durban and Johannesburg; "Black" being a reference to the oxen, the strongest of all farm animals; and "Mambazo," the Zulu word for chopping axe, a symbol of

the group's ability to "chop down" any singing rival who might challenge them. Their collective voices were so tight and their harmonies so polished that by the end of the 1960s the singers were banned from competitions, although they were welcome to participate as entertainers.

A radio broadcast in 1970 opened the door to the group's first record contract—the beginning of an ambitious discography that currently includes more than 50 recordings. Its philosophy in the studio was—and continues to be—just as much about preservation of musical heritage as it is about entertainment. The group sings a traditional music called *isicathamiya* (is-cot-a-me-ya), which developed in the mines of South Africa, where black workers were taken by rail to work far away from their homes and their families. Poorly housed and paid worse, the mine workers would entertain themselves after a six-day week by singing songs into the wee hours on Sunday morning. When the miners returned to the homelands, this musical tradition returned with them.

During the 1970s, Ladysmith Black Mambazo established itself as the most successful singing group in South Africa. In the mid-1980s, Paul Simon visited South Africa and incorporated the group's rich tenor-alto-bass harmonies into his famous *Graceland* album—a landmark recording that was considered seminal in introducing world music to mainstream audiences. A year later, Mr. Simon produced Ladysmith Black Mambazo's first worldwide release, *Shaka Zulu*, which won a Grammy Award in 1988. Since then, the group has been nominated 15 times and earned three more Grammys—for *Raise Your Spirit Higher* (2004), *Ilembé* (2009), and *Live: Singing for Peace Around the World* (2013), which received the award for Best World Music Album on January 26, 2014.

In addition to its work with Mr. Simon, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has recorded with numerous artists, including Stevie Wonder, Dolly Parton, Sarah McLachlan, Josh Groban, Emmylou Harris, and Melissa Etheridge. The group has provided film soundtrack material for Disney's *The Lion King, Part II*, as well as Eddie Murphy's *Coming to America*, Marlon

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Brando's *A Dry White Season*, James Earl Jones's *Cry the Beloved Country*, and Clint Eastwood's *Invictus*. A film documentary entitled *On Tip Toe: Gentle Steps to Freedom: The Story of Ladysmith Black Mambazo*, was nominated for an Academy Award. The group has have even appeared on Broadway and has been nominated for Tony Awards.

In 2014, the group releases its newest CD, *Always with Us*. This new recording is a tribute to group and Shabalala family matriarch

Nellie Shabalala, Joseph Shabalala's wife, who passed away in 2002. The songs are recordings Mrs. Shabalala made with her church choir in 2001. Ladysmith Black Mambazo has added their voices to Mrs. Shabalala's recordings to create a collection of hauntingly beautiful songs that are a tribute to her life and memory. The group looks forward to sharing these songs with the world.

For more information, visit mambazo.com or innworld.com/ladysmithblackmambazo.