



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 10, 2012

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO RETURNS FOR ONE-NIGHT- ONLY CONCERT AT THE LINCOLN THEATRE

**"It isn't merely the grace and power of their dancing or the beauty of their singing that rivets the attention, but the sheer joy and love that emanates from their being."
- Paul Simon**

For more than 40 years, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has married the intricate rhythms and harmonies of their native South African musical traditions to the sounds and sentiment of Christian gospel music. The result is a musical and spiritual alchemy that has touched a worldwide audience representing every corner of the religious, cultural, and ethnic landscape. Their musical efforts over the past four decades have garnered praise and accolades within the recording industry, but also solidified their identity as a cultural force to be reckoned with.

CAPA, in association with the King Arts Complex, presents Ladysmith Black Mambazo at 8pm on Wednesday, February 8, at the Southern Theatre (77 S. High St.). Tickets are \$28 and \$33 at the Ohio Theatre Ticket Office (39 E. State St.), all Ticketmaster outlets, and www.ticketmaster.com. To purchase by phone, please call (614) 469-0939 or (800) 745-3000. Students between the ages of 13-19 may purchase \$5 PNC Arts Alive All Access tickets while available.

This performance is made possible through the generous support of CAPA season sponsor American Airlines and Spectrum Series sponsors David and Mo Meuse.

Assembled by Joseph Shabalala in Durban, South Africa, in the early 1960s, the young farm boy turned factory worker took the name Ladysmith Black Mambazo after his rural hometown, a reference to black oxen, the strongest of all farm animals, and the Zulu word for axe (mambazo) as a symbol of the group's ability to "chop down" any singing rival who might challenge them. Their collective voices were so tight and harmonies so polished that they were eventually banned from competitions.

The group's path had a specific direction. "To bring this gospel of loving one another all over the

world,” Joseph says. However, he’s quick to point out that the message is not specific to any one religious orientation. “Without hearing the lyrics, this music gets into the blood, because it comes from the blood,” he says. “It evokes enthusiasm and excitement, regardless of what you follow spiritually.”

A radio broadcast in 1970 opened the door to their first record contract. It was the beginning of an ambitious discography that currently includes more than 50 recordings. Their philosophy in the studio was—and continues to be—just as much about preservation of musical heritage as it is about entertainment. The group borrows heavily from 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.

In the mid-1980s, Paul Simon visited South Africa and incorporated the group’s rich tenor/alto/bass harmonies into his *Graceland* album—a landmark 1986 recording that was considered seminal in introducing world music to mainstream audiences. *Graceland* won many awards including the Grammy Award for Best Album of the Year. A year later, Simon produced Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s first US release, *Shaka Zulu*, which won the 1988 Grammy Award for Best Traditional Folk Album. Since then, and in total, the group has received 15 Grammy Award nominations and three Grammy Award wins, including one in 2009.

In addition to their work with Paul Simon, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has recorded with numerous artists from around the world, including Stevie Wonder, Josh Groban, Dolly Parton, Ben Harper, and many others. Their 2006 CD, *Long Walk to Freedom* had guest singers join them such as Sarah McLachlan, Natalie Merchant, Melissa Etheridge, Emmylou Harris, Taj Mahal, and others.

Their film work includes an appearance in Michael Jackson’s “Moonwalker” video and Spike Lee’s “Do It A Cappella.” They provided soundtrack material for Disney’s *The Lion King, Part II* as well as Eddie Murphy’s *Coming To America*, Clint Eastwood’s *Invictus*, Marlon Brando’s *A Dry White Season*, Sean Connery’s *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, and James Earl Jones’ *Cry the Beloved Country*. A film documentary titled *On Tip Toe: Gentle Steps to*

Freedom, the story of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, was nominated for an Academy Award. The group is also well known for its Life Savers candy commercials as well as adverts with Heinz Beans. Their performance with Paul Simon on Sesame Street is legendary and is one of the top three requested Sesame Street segments in history.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo has been invited to perform at many special occasions. By special invitation from South African President Nelson Mandela, they performed for the Queen of England and the Royal Family at the Royal Albert Hall in London. The group has also performed at two Nobel Peace Prize Ceremonies, a concert for Pope John Paul II in Rome, the South African Presidential inaugurations, the 1996 Summer Olympics, and many other special events. In 2002, the group was again asked to represent their nation in London at a celebration for Queen Elizabeth's 50th Anniversary as Monarch. They shared the stage with Paul McCartney, Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton, Joe Cocker, and Phil Collins.

Just when one would think the group should be slowing down, they are entering what could be their busiest years since *Graceland*. They have six new recording projects readying for release, a new concert DVD, and a children's project. They have long wished to release a trilogy of CDs that sing of their life experiences in South Africa called *Our South African Life*. Volume one, released in January 2011, is titled *Songs from a Zulu Farm*. This wonderful collection of original and traditional songs about life on the farm is important to the group members because the older members were born and raised on the farms outside of Ladysmith.

As Joseph Shabalala says, "We are teachers. We travel the world spreading our message of peace, love, and harmony. What could be better or more important than that?"

www.mambazo.com

CALENDAR LISTING

CAPA in association with the King Arts Complex presents LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO

Wednesday, February 8, 8pm

Southern Theatre (21 E. Main St.)

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recording industry, but also solidified their identity as a cultural force to be reckoned with. Tickets are \$28 and \$33 at the Ohio Theatre Ticket Office (39 E. State St.), all Ticketmaster outlets, and www.ticketmaster.com. To purchase by phone, please call (614) 469-0939 or (800) 745-3000. Students between the ages of 13-19 may purchase \$5 High Five tickets while available. www.capa.com

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Owner/operator of downtown Columbus' magnificent, historic theatres (Ohio Theatre, Palace Theatre, Southern Theatre) and manager of the Riffe Center Theatre Complex, Lincoln Theatre, and Shubert Theater (New Haven, CT), CAPA is a not-for-profit, award-winning presenter of national and international performing arts and entertainment in operation for more than 40 years. For more information, visit www.capa.com.

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