

MUSIC AND ARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA
UBUNTU



Ambassadors of Freedom

As with other social movements throughout history, music was used as a conduit for change during South Africa's 46-year period of Apartheid. An entire generation of South African musicians boldly carried the anti-Apartheid message to audiences both at home and abroad, publicizing the oppressive living conditions that were being experienced by the majority of the country's population. As one of its major focuses, the *UBUNTU* festival pays tribute to these iconic musical figures and ambassadors of freedom who sacrificed so much in the struggle for justice in their homeland.

Trumpeter, composer, and singer **Hugh Masekela** left South Africa in 1960 at the age of 21 to spend what would be 30 years in exile from his home country. Upon arrival in New York City, he immersed himself in the jazz scene where, under the tutelage of Dizzy Gillespie and Louis Armstrong, he was encouraged to develop his own unique style and incorporate African influences. In 1990, Masekela returned to South Africa, following the end of Apartheid and the release of Nelson Mandela—an event anticipated in the artist's anti-Apartheid anthem "Bring Home Nelson Mandela," which had been a rallying cry around the world.

Vusi Mahlasela—widely known as "The Voice"—was one of many artists who remained in South Africa. His political education began when he witnessed the massacre of more than 200 black South Africans in the Soweto Uprising in 1976. Mahlasela faced constant police harassment for his songs about freedom and justice and was even placed in solitary confinement. After the fall of Apartheid, Mahlasela recorded his first album; in the title track, "When You Come Back," he sings to his friends and political exiles who left the country, telling them that "we will ring the bells and beat the drums when you come back."

Together, Masekela and Mahlasela perform a concert titled *Twenty Years of Freedom*—celebrating the 20th anniversary of the first free elections in South Africa—to open Carnegie Hall's *UBUNTU* festival on Friday, October 10 in Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage.



Abdullah Ibrahim



Angélique Kidjo

Renowned pianist and leading exponent of Cape jazz **Abdullah Ibrahim** also spent decades in exile, first leaving for New York City following the notorious Sharpeville Massacre of 1960. Returning to Cape Town in 1973, Ibrahim recorded “Mannenberg—Is Where It’s Happening,” which became an unofficial national anthem for black South Africans. After organizing an illegal benefit concert for the African National Congress in the wake of the Soweto student uprising in 1976, Ibrahim was forced into exile again. After he was invited to return to South Africa by a freed Nelson Mandela, he wrote *Mantra Modes*, a work fraught with emotions about reacclimatizing that was his first recording with South African musicians since 1976. He also performed at Mandela’s inauguration in 1994. Ibrahim performs a solo concert in Zankel Hall on Friday, October 17, leads a master class for young jazz musicians on Saturday, October 18, and makes a third appearance in Harlem on Monday, October 20 as part of Carnegie Hall’s free series of Neighborhood Concerts.

The late, iconic singer **Miriam Makeba** was known throughout the world as “Mama Africa.” After leaving the country in 1960, the South African government revoked her passport, denying her the ability to return, even for her mother’s funeral. In the years she spent in exile, Makeba performed throughout world, spreading the message of the plight of her homeland. In 1963, she became the first artist to testify about Apartheid at the United Nations. Not until 1990, when Mandela was released did Makeba return with Mandela’s encouragement. In her years outside of the country, Makeba was clear that South Africa was still her home and her bedrock as an artist, stating in her biography, “I kept my culture. I kept the music of my roots. Through my music, I became this voice and image of Africa and the people without even realizing.” Closing the festival on Wednesday, November 5, Grammy Award-winning vocalist **Angélique Kidjo** celebrates the life and music of her mentor Miriam Makeba, in a performance with special guests who include Makeba’s former supporting singers Zamokuhle “Zamo” Mbutho, Faith Kekana, and Stella Khumalo.

Friday, October 10 at 8 PM
Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage
Hugh Masekela
Vusi Mahlasela
TWENTY YEARS OF FREEDOM

Friday, October 17 at 8:30 PM
Zankel Hall
Abdullah Ibrahim, Piano

Saturday, October 18 at 5 PM
Resnick Education Wing
Abdullah Ibrahim Master Class

Monday, October 20 at 7 PM
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
Neighborhood Concert
Abdullah Ibrahim and Friends

Carnegie Hall’s Neighborhood Concerts are sponsored by Target®.



Wednesday, November 5 at 8 PM
Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage
Angélique Kidjo and Friends
MAMA AFRICA: A TRIBUTE TO MIRIAM MAKEBA

Workshops and master classes are made possible, in part, by Mr. and Mrs. Nicola Bulgari and The Gladys Kriebie Delmas Foundation.

