



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TWO ZIMBABWEAN EXILES JOIN FORCES
IN A NEW COLLABORATION BLENDING DANCE AND MUSIC**

651 ARTS, in association with Dance Theater Workshop, presents
Nora Chipaumire + the legendary Thomas Mapfumo, in
*lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will
break: gukurahundi*

New York Premiere

May 21 & 22, 2010 at 8pm — Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts

(April 5, 2010 - Brooklyn, NY) 651 ARTS, in association with Dance Theater Workshop, presents New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award-winning contemporary dance artist **Nora Chipaumire**, and the legendary "Lion of Zimbabwe" — musician **Thomas Mapfumo** with his band, **The Blacks Unlimited**, in a new cross-genre collaboration. The New York premiere of *lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break: gukurahundi* (or *lions...*) features performances by Chipaumire and Souleymane Badolo –from Burkina Faso - with original music composed and performed live on stage by Mapfumo & The Blacks Unlimited.

"This piece springs out of the Zimbabwean psyche" says Chipaumire "the title is the summation of the hope, the struggles, and the history of Zimbabwe without pointing fingers and laying blame. There is a collective acceptance that things are wrong and that we must fix it. *lions...* presents a new way to see, hear and celebrate an authentic Africa, while also challenging assumptions, and addressing the broader implications of identity, globalization, dislocation and immigration."

This dynamic collaboration marks the first time these two artists have worked together directly. Both artists live in exile from their native Zimbabwe, and incorporate the politics of their youth and current existence in their work.

Mapfumo uses music to challenge what it means to be a Zimbabwean; and Chipaumire, through choreography, seeks to convey her own personal history of growing up during the Revolution and express the dislocation of the exiled artist living in the Western world.

Nora Chipaumire, whose work with the celebrated dance troupe Urban Bush Women has been critically-acclaimed, has also garnered high praise for her fearless, provocative and politically relevant solo work. Born in Mutare, Zimbabwe during the *Chimurenga Chechipiri*, or second war of liberation, Chipaumire is now a self-exiled artist based in New York. Her work has been greatly inspired by art from her native country such as shona sculpture and chimurenga music – art that results from the often violent convergence of rural, urban, African, non-African, cultural, economic, colonial, and technological ideas. Chipaumire's multi-media dance works are wholly contemporary, and illuminate the struggles of human identity in an increasingly borderless world with a sense of authority and urgency. As Marcia B. Siegel of *The Phoenix* says, "Her dancing hits you with a vengeance." Chipaumire is a two-time New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award-winner (2007 and 2008), and is a Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (MANC) 2007-08 Choreographic Fellow. Chipaumire is featured in the documentary *Movement (R)evolution Africa* and is the subject of the film, *Nora*, directed by Alla Kovgan and David Hinton.

Thomas Mapfumo is a cultural icon and world-renowned musician from Zimbabwe who currently lives in the U.S. (Oregon). Mapfumo has made music for more than four decades within and outside of Africa. Mapfumo, is widely embraced as "The People's Poet," and is celebrated for his music innovations, as well as his concern for human rights and confrontation of systematic injustices in Zimbabwe and southern Africa. His songs integrate the ancient mbira from traditional Zimbabwean folk music with Afro-rock, with lyrics ranging from the envisioning a cultural revolution, to the corruption and vile manipulation of politicians. Since the late 1970s, Thomas Mapfumo & The Blacks Unlimited have been credited as trailblazers of *Afro-pop* style, and as one of the most significant bands originating out of southern Africa to have impacted world music.

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Friday, May 21 & Saturday, May 22, 2010 at 8pm
Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts at Long Island University
Brooklyn Campus
\$25 | \$20 students, seniors and groups of 10 or more
www.kumbletheater.org
718-488-1624

This program is part of Black Brooklyn Renaissance presented by Brooklyn Arts Council, in partnership with Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break: gukurahundi is funded by New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project (NDP), with generous support by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the MetLife Community Connections Fund of the MetLife Foundation.

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The development of *lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break: gukurahundi* was also made possible, in part, through a series of creative residencies hosted by ASU Presents, Tempe, AZ; Dance Theater Workshop, New York City; Ecole des Sables, Senegal; and the Museum for Contemporary Art, Chicago.



651 ARTS is committed to developing, producing and presenting performance and cultural programming from the African Diaspora, with a primary focus on contemporary performing arts. 651 ARTS serves the cultural life of New York City, with a particular focus on Brooklyn, one of America's most culturally diverse communities.

651 ARTS' 2010 Season is sponsored in part by the following: **The Brooklyn Community Foundation, Carnegie Corporation, Con Edison, The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Fan Fox and Leslie R Samuels Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, Councilwoman Letitia James, The Lambent Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Honorable Velmanette Montgomery, The National Endowment for the Arts, National Performance Network, The New York State Department of Cultural Affairs, The New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and The New England Foundation for the Arts**

DanceTheaterWorkshop

Dance Theater Workshop is the preeminent U.S. based center for dance and performance that maintains an uncompromising mission to identify, present, and support independent contemporary artists and companies to advance dance and live performance in New York and worldwide. Dance Theater Workshop supports innovative artists through all facets of their creative process and offers audiences the opportunity to experience and engage with artistic expression in bold and evocative ways.

Dance Theater Workshop's 2009-2010 Season Supporters

(as of July 1, 2009)

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