



For more information contact:
Fatima Kafele, Kafele PR
917.723.1494/fkafele@gmail.com
@651ARTS

**651 ARTS Presents the New York Premiere of *Exit/Exist* by
Gregory Maqoma/Vuyani Dance Theatre**

*The South African dance company is part of the Brooklyn-based organization's
25th season of presenting work of contemporary artists of the African Diaspora*

Brooklyn, NY/September 27, 2013---651 ARTS, a presenting organization dedicated to the work of contemporary artists from the African Diaspora presents the New York premiere of ***Exit/Exist***. The renowned South African dancer, choreographer and director **Gregory Maqoma** and his company **Vuyani Dance Theatre** reinvigorates tradition to understand the complexities of our contemporary world in this critically acclaimed work.

Exit/Exist will take place on Nov. 1 and Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m. at Kumble Theater at LIU Brooklyn located at 1 University Plaza, between Dekalb Avenue and Willoughby Street. Tickets are \$25; \$20 for students and seniors and can be purchased by visiting www.651ARTS.org or www.Kumbletheater.org or by calling 718.488.1624. The production is appropriate for adults and children ages 10 and up.

As inspiration for this piece, Maqoma looks to his ancestral past: Chief Maqoma, a 19th century warrior who fought to maintain Xhosa cultural traditions of the Eastern Cape in the face of colonial dispossession. Maqoma embodies this forgotten history in a transformational and poignant solo performance that fuses storytelling with his own unparalleled contemporary dance vocabulary and spirited live music from the vocal ensemble Complete and world-fusion guitarist Giuliano Modarelli. Through his signature integration of traditional and contemporary dance, Maqoma invites audiences to reflect on who we are, where we come from, and how all of these facets, past and present, inform our personal and collective identities today.

The Johannesburg Star said of the work, "What distinguishes Maqoma... is his intelligently provocative exploration of kinetic African identity where the rural impinges on the urban, where the hallowed intersects with the popular."

Gregory Vuyani Maqoma started his dance training in 1990 at Moving into Dance. While studying under the direction of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker at Performing Arts Research and Training School (PARTS) in Belgium in 1999, Maqoma founded Vuyani Dance Theatre (VDT). Vuyani Dance Theatre is marked by a fusion of African contemporary urban styles, music and culture with those produced by contemporary European counterparts. The *Exit/Exist* North American tour is produced by MAPP International.

For more information about 651 ARTS, contact 718.636.4181. For media inquiries, contact Fatima Kafele at fkafele@gmail.com or 917.723.1494.

About 651Arts

For 25 years, 651 ARTS has been 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. For more information, please visit www.651ARTS.org.

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