



Walton Arts Center

# Performance Guide



## Nobuntu

Photo Credit: Werner Puntigam

*Internationally celebrated female quintet from Zimbabwe, Nobuntu offers music that ranges from traditional Zimbabwean songs to Afro Jazz to Gospel. The ensemble performs with pure voices, augmented by minimal percussion, traditional instruments such as the Mbira (thumb piano) and organic, authentic dance movements. The word Nobuntu is an African concept that values humbleness, love, unity and family from a woman's perspective. The ensemble represents a new generation of young African women singers who celebrate and preserve their culture, beauty, and heritage through art.*

### Ideas for Curriculum Connections:

Arkansas Learning Standards: Fine Arts Standards  
Vocal Music: P.4.BVMIV.3; P.4.BVMIII.5; P.6.BVMI.3;  
R.9.BVMIII.1; CN.10.BVMI.1; CN.11.BVMI.2; CN.11.  
BVMI.3. Music Appreciation: P.4.MA.1; P.5.MA.1;  
P.6.MA.2; R.7.MA.3; R.9.MA.1. Fine Arts Standards  
Music: P.6.5.3; CRA.SL.1; R.7.5.3, R.7.6.3, R.7.7.3,  
R.7.8.3; R.8.6.1; R.8.5.1, R.8.6.1; R.8.7.1, R.8.8.1;  
R.9.5.1, R.9.6.1, R.9.7.1, R.9.8.1; CN.10.6.1, CN.10.7.1,  
CN.10.8.1; CN.11.6.1, CN.11.7.1, CN.11.8.1, CN.11.6.2,  
CN.11.7.2, CN.11.8.2; P.6.MA.2; R.9.MA.1



Photo Credit: KB Mpfu

## The Group

Nobuntu is a female a cappella quintet from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The word Nobuntu is an African concept that values humbleness, love, unity and family from a woman's perspective. They formed after realizing the absence of an all-female professional a cappella group in Bulawayo. The ensemble represents a new generation of young African women singers who celebrate and preserve their culture, beauty and heritage through their art. They believe that music can be an important vehicle for change that transcends racial, tribal, religious, gender and economic boundaries.

Their repertoire is a fusion of traditional Zimbabwean rooted music, gospel, Afro-Jazz and crossover in pure voices with minimalistic percussion, traditional instruments and some dance movements.

## The Members

Zanele Manhenga

Singer, songwriter and poet who has been singing since the age of 10. Uzah believes music is a tool that can bring about social change; her music compositions depict that whenever she writes.

Thandeka Moyo

Singer and songwriter who is also a fashion designer and makeup artist. She discovered her talents while at St. Columbus High School where she was part of the school choir.

Duduzile Sibanda

Musician, songwriter, writer and session musician. Duduzile started singing at church gatherings and in

school at an early age. Music is her first love and passion and she says "through it, I live."

Joyline Sibanda

Started dancing and singing at the age of 12.

Heather Dube

Musician, songwriter, dancer and percussionist.

## The Country

Zimbabwe, officially the Republic of Zimbabwe, is a landlocked country located in southern Africa. The capital and largest city is Harare and the second largest being Bulawayo. It is a country of roughly 16 million people with English, Shona and Ndebele being the most commonly spoken languages.

In the 1880s, British colonists arrived with the British South Africa Company. They obtained a concession for mining rights and in less than ten years, had established British rule over the area. It was named Southern Rhodesia and became a self-governing British colony in 1923. During this rule, land was organized with a disproportionate bias favoring Europeans and many indigenous peoples were displaced. Growing African nationalism led to a rebellion against Rhodesia's predominantly white, European government in the 1960s. After twenty years of unrest, the country was renamed Zimbabwe and Britain formally granted independence to the new nation in 1980.

# Learning Activities

## The Rain Game

Simulate a rainstorm starting with a few drops and moving into a downpour and then diminishing. Seat students in a circle on the floor. Start by quietly tapping your fingertips together slowly. Signal to the students to do what you're doing. Slowly increase the frequency and intensity of the finger tapping. Clap your hands together, becoming louder. Move the clapping to floor slapping. Get as loud and thunderous as you can. Reverse the process slowly, returning to an occasional finger tap.

## Discussion: Rain

Discuss student observations of the rain.

Ask:

- What did this remind you of?
- What sense(s) did you use to experience this?

Discuss the importance of rain. Ask:

- Why do we need rain?
- What would happen if it did not rain?
- What other forms of weather provide water to the earth?
- How is rain made?

## Learning Activity

Read *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*.

Locate Kenya and Zimbabwe on a map. Ask:

- What kinds of animals live on Kapiti Plain?
- Which animals are wild? Which are domesticated?
- Why is Ki-pat concerned about the cattle?
- Did the bow and arrow make the rain come?
- How do we know what the weather may be?
- How did the plain change after the rains came?
- How did Ki-pat feel about this?



Photo Credit: ODC Dance Company

## Write a Review of the Show

Practice critical thinking and evaluation skills.

Ask students to write a review of the performance. In preparation, ask students about their favorite films and TV shows. Based on their answers, show students examples of professional reviews written about their favorite media.

Then, discuss what students remember from the performance. This discussion is meant to help students generate ideas about what they might write about. As such, you can use the Reflect and Assess questions on the last page to guide the conversation.

When writing their reviews, ask students to consider the elements of music and performance. Make sure that they include:

- A brief description of the ensemble and theater space to convey the mood of the show.
- What they learned about a capella
- What they liked/disliked about the show
- How many stars (up to five) they would rate the show
- If they would recommend it to other schools, friends and family



Photo credit: Tswarelo Mothobe (left), Mgcini Nyoni (right)

### Reflect and Assess

Ask the following questions. Record the group's answers on the board and discuss.

- What did you notice about the show?
- How does Nobuntu's musical style compare to your favorite music?
- How many of their songs had you heard before?
- What was your favorite song they performed? Why?
- What did you like most about the performance?
- What emotions did you feel as you listened to the various songs?
- How did the performance make you feel, overall?
- What moment in the performance do you remember most?
- Could you distinguish between the voices? How did they sound different yet blend together to make a song?

### Learn More Online

Official website of Nobuntu

[www.nobuntu-music.com](http://www.nobuntu-music.com)

## Volume 17 Number 4

Colgate Classroom Series performances help students meet Arkansas Learning Standards.

### Learn more at:

[www.waltonartscenter.org](http://www.waltonartscenter.org)

### Walton Arts Center

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Learning & Engagement

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