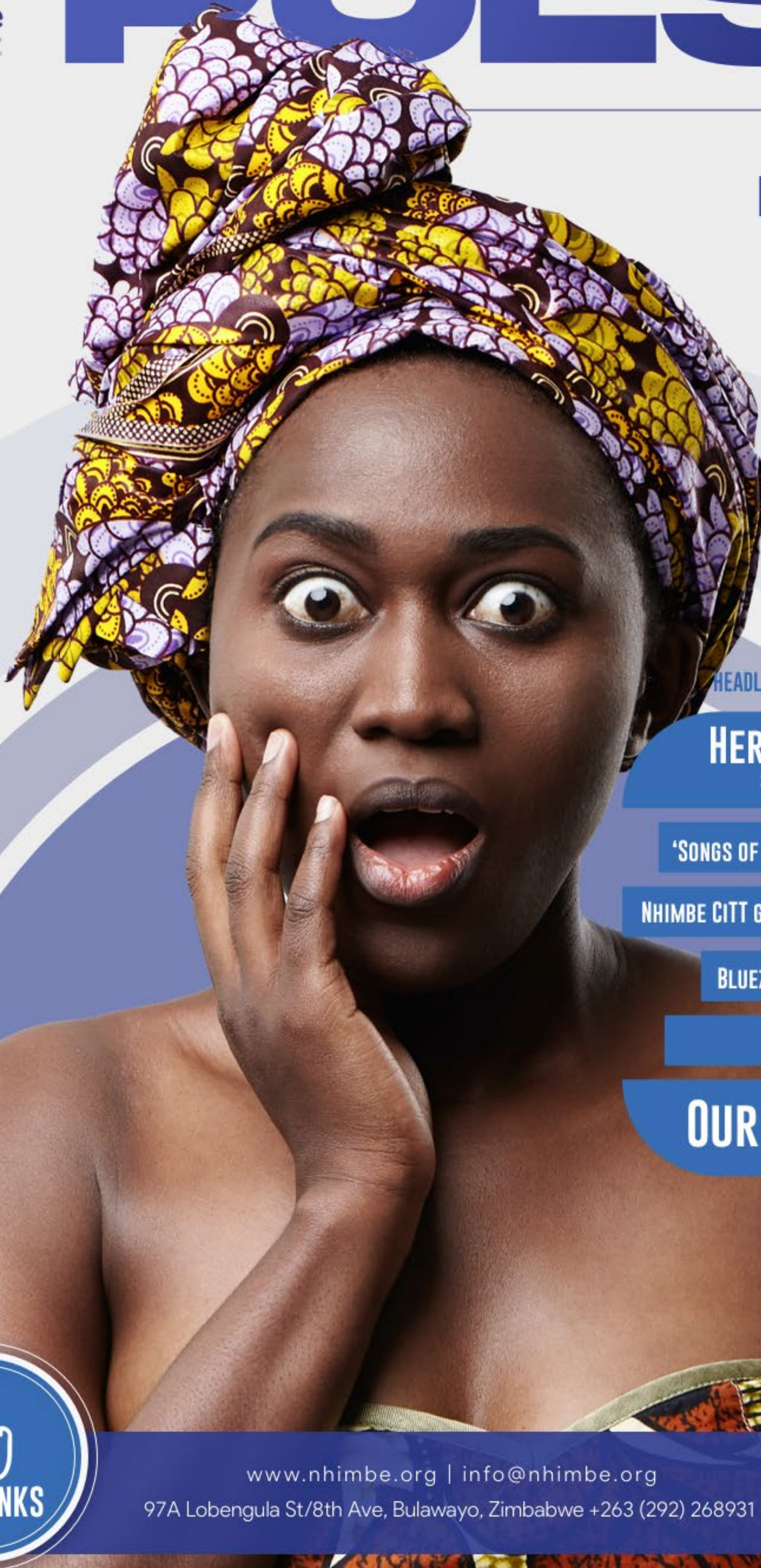




# PULSE

## Newsletter

July - August 2021



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Images courtesy of Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, UK

The exciting Bulawayo-London digital storytelling project is busily engaged online in workshops, writing and exchanging monologues, acting and filming on both sides of the story - central London and Bulawayo, the 'City of Kings'. This month introduced the women artists of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, together with Zimbabwean participants voicing some of their experiences so far. In spite of the 8, 446 kilometres between the young women in London and Bulawayo, and so many differences, they find they are, surprisingly, so much the same.

[Read more](#)



## 'SONGS OF LOZIKEYI'

Celebrating the Ndebele Queen <<<

Born at the Bulwayo Arts Festival 2021, the musical production 'Songs of Lozikeyi' - a collaborative effort featuring highly rated artists of Bulawayo - stole the show at the annual festival in 'the City of Kings' in Zimbabwe, and is now headed to the studio. An initiative of Nhimbe Trust, Songs of Lozikeyi celebrates the powerful Queen Lozikeyi Dlodlo, senior wife of the great King Lobengula, and later Queen Regent of the Ndebele people; warrior queen of the 1896 Anglo-Ndebele war, champion of women and justice.

With vibrant performances in song, dance and poetry, the festival production featured 21 acclaimed artists of Bulawayo, working together to create a vivid musical tribute and celebrate the life and history of the great Queen. Guided by the writings of acclaimed Bulawayo historian Pathisa Nyathi in *Lozikeyi Dlodlo: Queen of the Ndebele and other research*, the production was written by Noma Damasane ('Lady Tshawe') and Thabani H Moyo, conceptualised and directed by Phiri, with Josh Nyapimbi, Executive Director of Nhimbe Trust as executive producer.

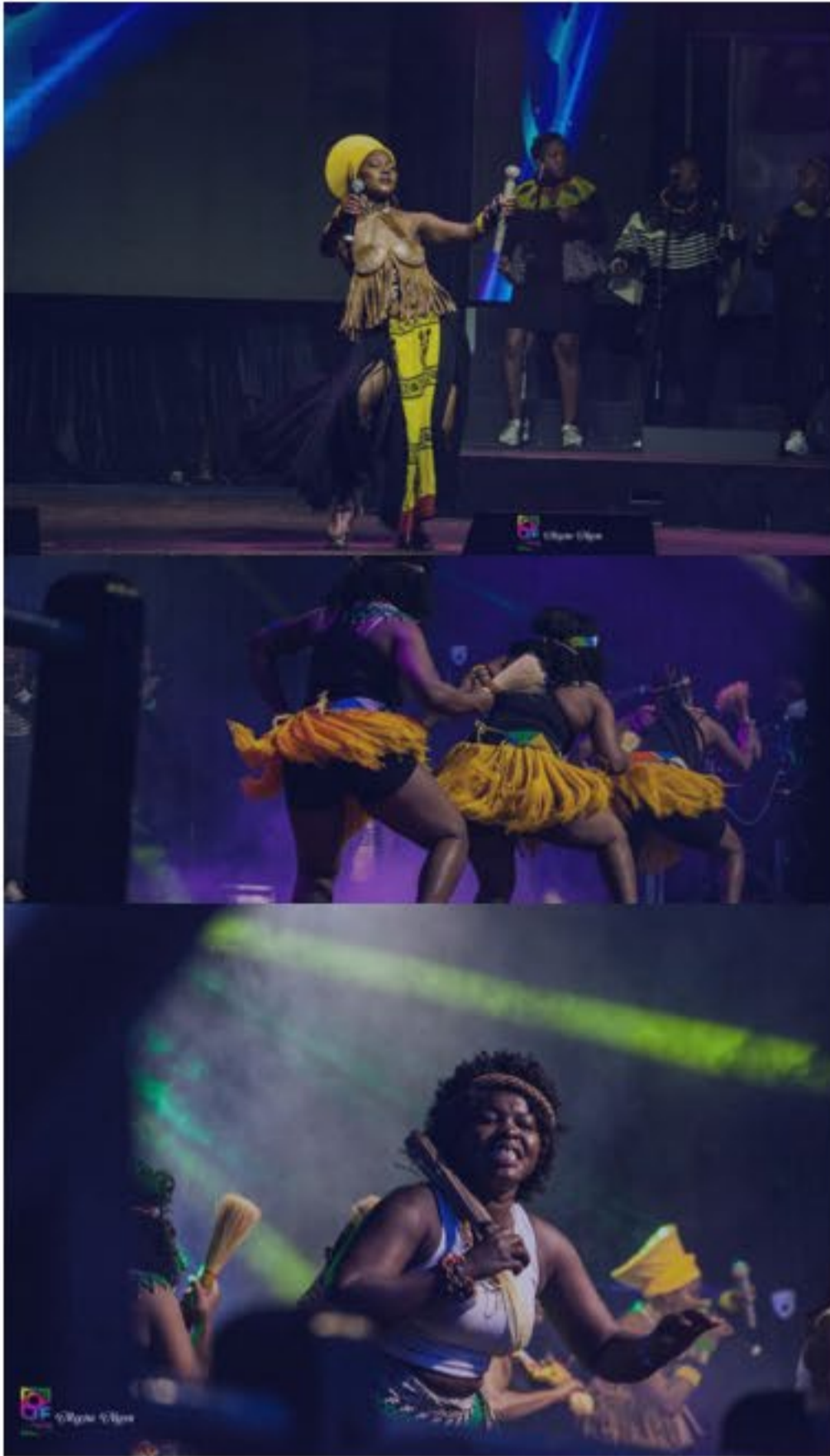
The music recording will involve part of the original cast and others - lead singers Thandy Dhlana and Nomathamsanqa 'Nkwali' Mkwanzani, poets Sithandazile Dube, and Thandokuhle Sibanda, Prince Joel Nyoni (guitar), Obey Mudiwa (drums), Paul Maseko (bass), Mthabisi Moyo (guitar), Gomez Dube



(percussion), Vuyile Qongo (saxophone), and Laura Ngwenya on backing vocals. The recording is under the hand of engineer Erustus Nleya of Loud Records and Prince Joel Nyoni.

**Josh Nyapimbi** said "It feels great to get back into the studio for Nhimbe Trust's second music studio recording after the 2017 **Blood Tongue THE Musical**. This time it's the Songs of Queen Lozikeyi, working with some of Bulawayo's finest musicians. We believe the music will cut a niche for itself on the world stage both live and digitally." Featured in the six track recording is the song Halala Lozikeyi by Nkwali which was commissioned by the Queen Lozikeyi Trust, set up by her descendants to preserve her legacy. The song salutes the queen with evocative lyrics, a fitting tribute.

CONTINUED >>



**Sihlangu Dlodlo**, Chairman of the Queen Lozikeyi Trust said, “As the Lozikeyi Trust we believe that this is the time now to celebrate the Queen as a national icon, a national heroine, and to use her name to motivate young women, especially from the disadvantaged sectors of our society to stand up and be counted; to draw some inspiration and motivation from who Queen Lozikeyi was, because she stood up when the king had disappeared and took leadership and pushed people to achieve something. So this is the kind of thing we expect, we expect our young people and especially young women to stand up and be counted and not to be intimidated by circumstances.

*“Songs of Lozikeyi was a brilliant show, first of all the artists selection was very special because, Thandy Dhlana and Noma Nkwali are some of the best voices we have around. Their music is slightly different but very complementary, so this enabled the music of Lozikeyi to have that necessary variety. Thandy came in with this jazzy touch, Nkwali came in with the traditional touch and it all blended very, very well. The dancing was fantastic, I think the young choreographers did a splendid job in managing to capture the mood of the songs and the story of the songs. For me the balance was well done and the whole thing came together to present the strength and the focus that is the story of Queen Lozikeyi herself. I say “Hats off!” for a job well done”.*

The Dendere Arts Trust also costumed lead singers Thandy Dhlana and Nkwali, designed by Vuyelwa Mabhena who is a member of the Trust.

**Nkwali said:** “It’s such a great honour to be part of the Songs of Lozikeyi production. When writing the song Halala Lozikeyi two years ago, I had to consult the elderly to learn more about Queen Lozikeyi. I spoke to Khumalo who is also from the royal family and he told me a lot about our Queen; she was a very powerful woman and an inspiration to us today.



I have learnt so much already from when we started working on the production, and now looking forward to getting into the recording studio, trying out new things, working with different artists from my city. I am very grateful to Nhimbe Trust for this opportunity.”

**Thandy Dhlana said:** “I’m so humbled to be one of those chosen to be part of this initiative. It is indeed an honour. Music is my passion, my drive and my vehicle to reach out to people. It is a pivotal platform where I can table critical, controversial and unspoken issues, as well as to teach and share knowledge with communities to empower them. The creative process was an interesting journey in which I’ve learned a lot, rediscovered myself. It opened my eyes to the power that women hold, as well as their responsibility in protecting their families, communities and nation. We should all know about this”.





In an interview during the June festival by Mthabisi Tshuma for the Chronicle newspaper, producer **Saimon 'Mambazo' Phiri** said: "This is a work in progress. What we have been doing over the last two months has been making The Songs of Lozikeyi to celebrate the life and history of uMama uLozikeyi. Our idea was to pick the best of a city which is endowed with so much talent. ... [But] It is not just about the singing: it is also about the knowledge that we received. We got together with Pathisa Nyathi, we got together with the Lozikeyi Trust to talk to them and understand what we can create for our own people," he said. The stories of historical figures were intriguing, and the stories of legends, both living and dead, would be resurrected and brought to the stage to retell the city's history, said Phiri.

"Wherever I go in the world, the biggest players in those industries celebrate their own stories. If you look at the British, they celebrate King George and even if you go across to South Africa you will see the way that they celebrate King Tshaka and others. It is different for us. We are a country that is not telling its own stories. So, this is the start of telling our own story, our trial attempt to track the biggest symbols of our history, the women," he said.

[www.chronicle.co.zw/](http://www.chronicle.co.zw/)



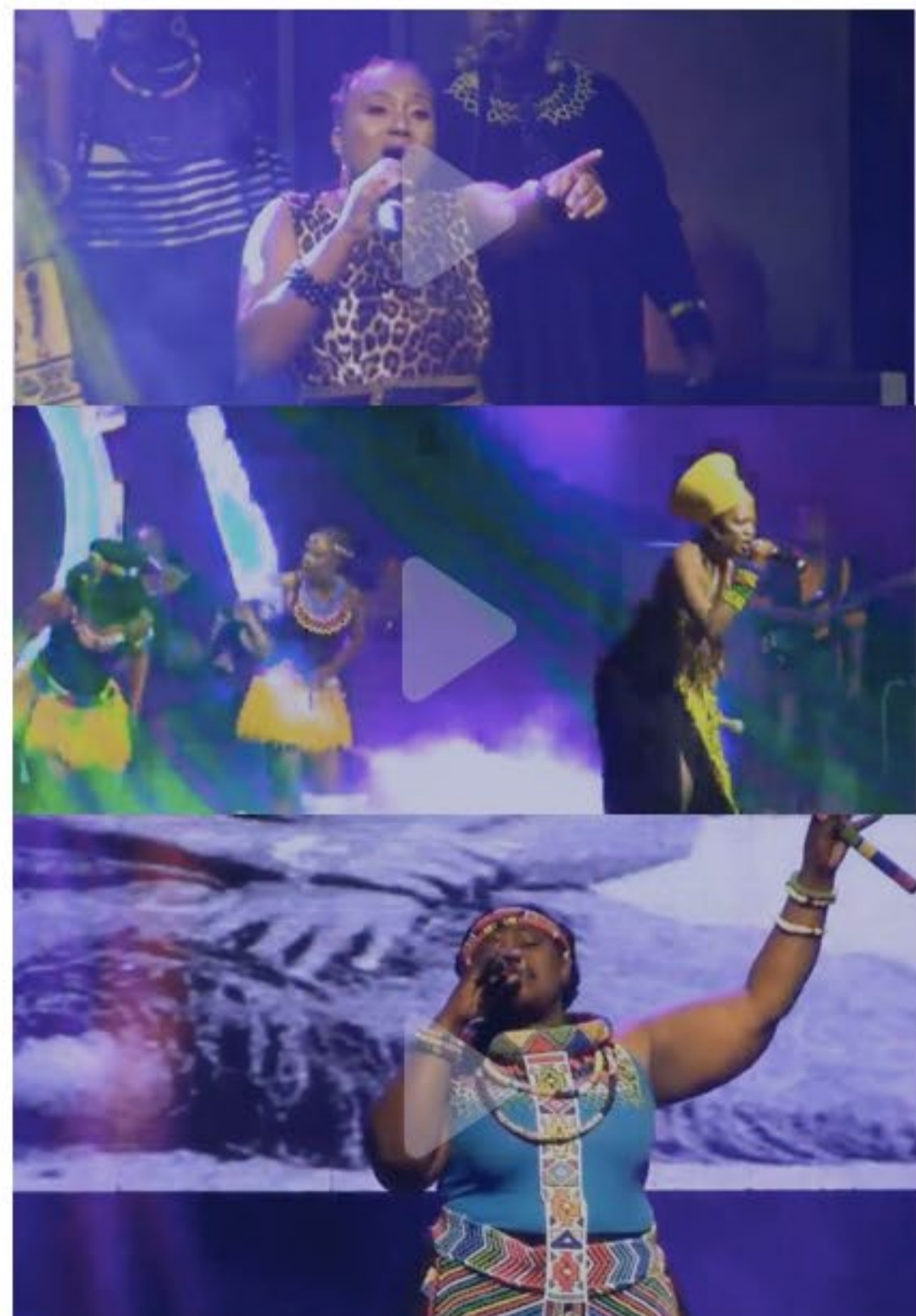
### The Original Cast at BAF 2021

The stage production at Bulawayo Arts Festival 2021 brought together 21 artists of the city, directed by **Prince Joel Nyoni** of the band Ngoma Ingoma; with fellow musicians: Paul Maseko (bass), Raymond Takawira (guitar), Caleb Mujere (drums); lead vocalists Thandy Dhlana and Nomankwali 'Nkwali' Mkhwananzi.

Supported by singers *Thandeka Moyo, Zanele Manhenga, Duduzile Sibanda* of the famed women's acapella group *Nobuntu*; poets *Thandokuhle Sibanda, Sithandazile Dube*; choreographers *Makula Moyo and Gomez Dube*, and dancers of the *Iluba Lemvelo* traditional dance group - *Lethisiwe Mafu, Muchaneta Dube, Rejoice Chauke, Senzeni Dube, Samkeliso Bhebhe*; and *Alice Gurure, Dorcas Ngwenya and Cheryl Mabaya* of *Iyasa*.

WATCH the vivid performance at the Bulawayo Arts Festival 2021

WATCH HERE





# UMNDENI: THE RIGHTFUL HEIR

Introducing  
John Mabuyane  
The  
Writer and Director



JOHN MABUYANE FILMS  
PRESENTS...



## CITT GRADUATES MAKING WAVES

### “John Mabuyane presents ...”

The latest from the young filmmakers and actor John Mabuyane (23) – a graduate of the Nhimbe Trust Children in Theatre & Television (CiTT) programme in 2016 - who has made huge strides and kept busy throughout the lockdown, against all odds. John’s busy lockdown started well in February 2020, when the anti-poaching film GONAREZHOU, his acting debut into the film industry soon after his graduation from Nhimbe in 2016, won Best First Feature Narrative at the 28th edition of the Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles, USA.

In 2020 Mabuyane was assistant director for the film 18 MONTHS LATER which won Best Narrative in the Bioskop Zimbabwe Short Film competition in the European Film Festival Zimbabwe 2020 programme, which ran from October to November.

[www.chronicle.co.zw/](http://www.chronicle.co.zw/)

During the 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in November/December 2020, John Mabuyane Films presented WAR CRY, inspired by true events which took place in Bulawayo and the “war cry” of South African women protesting against femicide.



WATCH HERE

In November, the first film written by Mabuyane, SCARS/ AMANXEBA, THE MOVIE, won the Outstanding Short Film Award at the Roil Bulawayo Arts Awards 2020, and lead actress Charmaine Mainey Mudau the Best Actress Award. Early in 2021 Mabuyane acted in two films - STORY OF NEHANDA, an original Zimbabwean movie written by Special Matarirano and Sydney Taivavashe, on the lost story of Mbuya Nehanda - one of the leaders of the Chimurenga revolt of 1889; and in POOR COUSINS by Sydney Taivavashe and Nelned Pictures in May, currently making waves and set to premiere in August.



Mid-year, John Mabuyane Films teamed up with actor and film director Elton Sibanda to produce and present DICK PRINT, a stage play by Sibanda that explores toxic masculinity in relation to sexuality, and was staged at the Bulawayo Theatre in May, and in Harare in June.

Most recently he presented 'UMNDENI' ('The Rightful Heir') - a story that explores family dynamics on issues of wealth, poverty, inheritance disputes, culture and religion; screened on YouTube on 7 July 2021.

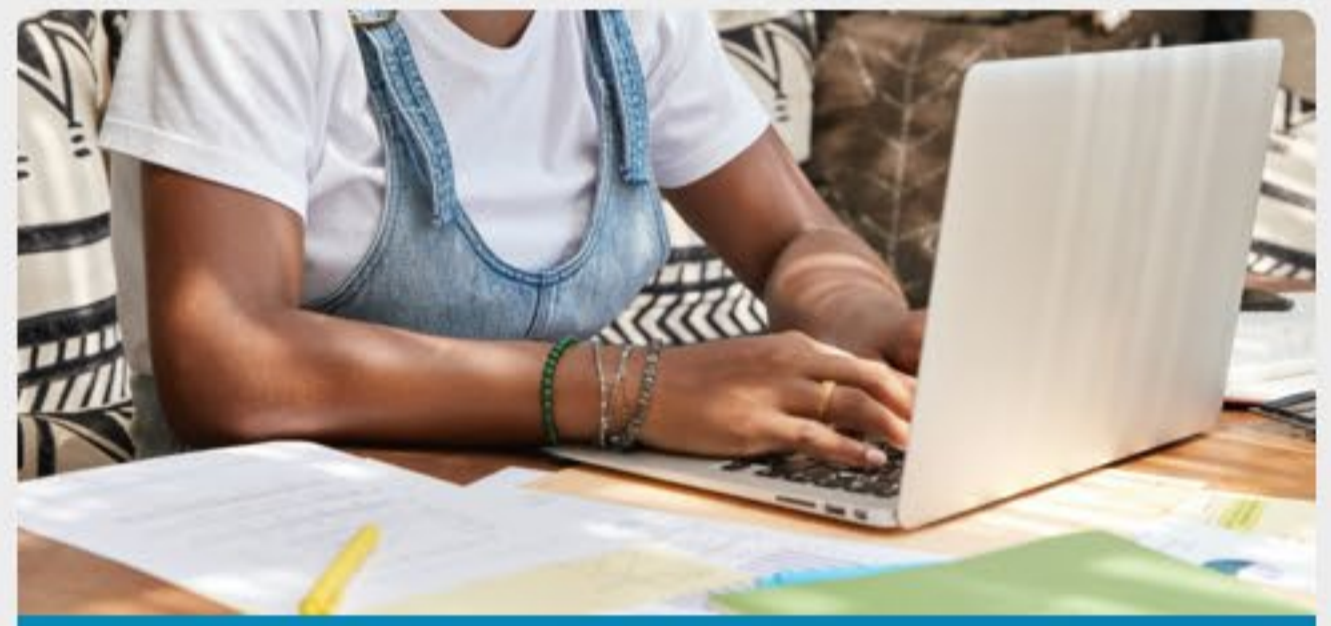
Read more on John Mabuyane films [HERE](#)

WATCH HERE



# BLUEZ CAFÉ RENOVATION: BRICK BANK APPEAL

Donations can be made directly to Nhimbe Trust



The bold vision to create a multidisciplinary arts centre in the heart of Bulawayo, continues unabated in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic raging across the world. Back in 2017, artists

First established in 2017, the burgeoning Bluez Café under Nhimbe Trust was forced to relocate to 97A Lobengula Street, an old townhouse donated to Nhimbe by the Youth Contact Centre, which is in dire need of repair and refurbishment. To provide a dedicated centre for the city's producers of culture, the venue requires major renovation, costs of which are beyond Nhimbe's capacity, and unreachable without financial support.

***Nhimbe Trust set up the BRICK BANK appeal in 2021 to raise funds on the physical, structural needs of the new premises - and invites and urges all stakeholders and supporters to donate to this crucial development.***

The cost of a single brick is pinned at USD 0.35.

The National Arts Council of Zimbabwe applauded the development, and stakeholders in Bulawayo's cultural industries have expressed their strong support for the refurbishment plan.

## WRITE FOR US!

Are you a writer or blogger with a finger on the pulse of our industry in this part of the world, and keen to share your perspectives?

Nhimbe Trust publishes short articles on arts, culture and development in Bulawayo and the rest of Zimbabwe, news and info on events and products, burning issues concerning the cultural industry and its people, and survival strategies. Our readership through several platforms is wide and diverse.

We consider submissions from anyone interested in joining the writing team. Please note that due to budget constraints, we are unable to offer honorariums or payment for contributions.

CONTACT US



## OUR PARTNERS



Government of Zimbabwe



City of Bulawayo



Championing Arts Development



Funded by

This project is co-funded by the European Union

