

# noBountu



**General public performance: Sunday, February 13, 2022, 3 p.m.  
Collins Center for the Arts**

**Outreach performance: Monday, February 14, 2022, 10 a.m.  
via ZOOM**

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Outreach performance sponsored by:  
**THE BARBARA CASSIDY FUND**

# About *Nobuntu*

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*Nobuntu*, the female a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe, has drawn international acclaim for its inventive performances that range from traditional Zimbabwean songs to Afro Jazz to Gospel. The ensemble's concerts are performed with pure voices, augmented by minimalistic percussion, traditional instruments such as the Mbira (thumb piano) and organic, authentic dance movements.

*Nobuntu* was nominated for Best Musician of the Year at the Zimbabwe International Women Awards in London in 2015 and are currently a two-time winner for the Best Imbube Group at the Bulawayo Arts Awards 2017 and 2019. In the last few seasons, the quintet has performed at festivals and concert halls in Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic and throughout the African continent. The ensemble was a huge critical success at "Trans-Vocal" in Frankfurt and "Voice Mania" in Vienna. Their first tour to Canada, in 2016, included performances in Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Victoria.

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. The ensemble's mission is the belief that music can be an important vehicle for change, one that transcends racial, tribal, religious, gender, and economic boundaries.

Back at home, *Nobuntu* holds a number of community initiatives, one of which is The Nobuntu Pad Bank where they gather sanitary pads for young women in the arts in underprivileged communities.

*Nobuntu* has released three recordings – *Thinain* 2013, *Ekhayain* 2016 and *Obabes beMbube* in 2018. The group has made dozens of television and radio appearances throughout Africa and Europe promoting these recordings and the culture of their homeland.





# Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa known for its dramatic landscapes and diverse wildlife and mineral resources.

With a population of almost 15 million people, the capital & largest city is Harare. *Nobuntu* comes from the second largest city and the cultural capital called Bulawayo. Bulawayo is in the southern part of Zimbabwe, a place with the most diverse cultures and languages. Bulawayo is a metropolis of diverse people from all over the country.

There are 16 official languages in Zimbabwe and *Nobuntu* speak and sing in some of them in their music. Mostly, the *Nobuntu* members speak Ndebele, Shona & English.



# Performance Instruments

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*Nobuntu* uses a Mbira, a Djembe and a pair of Hosho. They also wear “Amahlwayi” on their feet, which make a kind of percussive instrument sound by dancing.

## Mbira



Mbira are a family of musical instruments, traditional to the Shona people of Zimbabwe. It is often an important instrument played at religious ceremonies, weddings, and other social gatherings. A mbira has 22-28 keys that are made from new or recycled steel. The mbira is played with the two thumbs stroking down and the right forefinger stroking up. The buzz is considered an essential part of the mbira sound, required to clear the mind of thoughts and worries (mbira.org).

## Hosho



Hosho are made from a hollowed-out and dried mapudzi (a kind of pumpkin) gourd. Several dozen small seeds from the hota plant are inside each gourd. Musicians play hosho alongside the mbira, shaking the hosho to make a sharp rattling noise. While hosho players may seem to be accompanying the more complex and melodic mbira, actually mbira players view the hosho as the lead instrument and they play to follow along.

## Djembe



A djembe or jembe is a rope-tuned skin-covered goblet drum played with bare hands, originally from West Africa. According to the Bambara people in Mali, the name of the djembe comes from the saying “Anke djé, anke bé” which translates to “everyone gather together in peace” and defines the drum’s purpose. Traditionally, the djembe is played only by men and even today it is rare to see women play djembe (wikipedia.org).

## Amahlwayi



*Amahlwayi* are leg rattles that are tied around the ankle to calf/shin area of a dancer but may be placed elsewhere on the body as well. They are a strap of small shakers and strings made from dried pods of a Amahlwayi plant. The traditional music of the Ndebele is characterized mainly by the widespread use of choral song accompanied by *amahlwayi*.





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**Sunday, February 13, 2022, 3 p.m.**

Tickets: \$15-\$35, K-12 students \$15. All fees included.



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