



# Isango Ensemble

**Mark Dornford-May**

*Director*

**Mandisi Dyantyis**

*Associate Director and Co-Music Director*

**Paulina Malefante**

*Co-Founder and Co-Music Director*

October 16–20, 2019

Power Center

Ann Arbor

## **CONTENT**

<i>Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo</i>	3
<i>A Man of Good Hope</i>	9
Artists	19

# Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo

*A production by*  
**Isango Ensemble**

**Mark Dornford-May**  
*Director*

Wednesday Evening, October 16, 2019 at 7:30  
Thursday Evening, October 17, 2019 at 7:30  
Saturday Evening, October 19, 2019 at 8:00  
Power Center  
Ann Arbor

Sixth, Seventh, and 10th Performances of the 141st Annual Season  
International Theater Series

This week's performances of *Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo* are supported by Michigan Medicine, the Herbert S. and Carol L. Amster Endowment Fund, and Masco Corporation Foundation.

This week's performances are funded in part by the Wallace Endowment Fund.

Special thanks to Naomi André, James Coviak and Mott Middle College Steel Band, Adam Eickmeyer, Cara Graninger, Niko Martinez, Mark Stone, and Karen Sheridan for their participation in events surrounding this week's performances.

Isango Ensemble appears by arrangement with Columbia Artists.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.

## **CAST**

*Monostatos* / Thobile Jim Dyasi

*Pamina* / Nombongo Fatyi

*Lady I* / Thandokazi Fumba

*Pappageno* / Zamile Gantana

*Queen* / Nontsusa Louw

*Spirit I* / Zimkhitha Mathomane

*Company* / Zanele Mbatha

*Spirit III* / Sinethemba Mdena

*Spirit II* / Zoleka Mpotsha

*Priest* / Thandolwethu Mzembe

*Lady III* / Siyanda Ncobo

*Priest* / Sonwabo Ntshata

*Priest* / Melikhaya Ntshuntshe

*Lady II* / Cikizwa Rolomana

*Tamino* / Masakana Sotayisi

*Priest* / Luvo Tamba

*Sorastro* / Ayanda Tikolo

*Priest* / Philani Xhaga

## **CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM**

*Director and Adaptation* / Mark Dornford-May

*Music Director* / Paulina Malefante and Mandisi Dyantyi

*Choreographer* / Lungelo Ngamlana

*Lighting Designer* / Manuel Manim

*Speech and Dialogue Coach* / Lesley Nott Manim

## **TECHNICAL TEAM**

*Company Manager* / Maris Sharp

*Co-Production Manager* / Sandile Mgugunyeka

*Co-Production Manager* / Andreas Ayling

*Stage Manager* / Valencia Mgugunyeka

*Relighter* / Jack Hathaway

*This evening's performance is approximately two hours and 20 minutes in duration and is performed with one intermission.*



Following Wednesday evening's performance, please feel free to remain in your seats and join us for a post-performance Q&A with members of the company.

## THE MAGIC FLUTE — AN AFRICAN TALE?

by Mark Dornford-May

In Tsonga tradition, lightning is caused by birds called the *ndlati*. These birds, with their multi-colored plumage, live in the high mountains. When a storm is brewing they fly towards heaven and then dive out of the clouds towards earth, striking a tree, a house, or a person causing death and fire in the middle of rain. The only way to prevent this bird from causing destruction is to find someone brave enough to climb into the mountains as the storm is breaking. Once they have climbed high enough, they are to play on an enchanted flute. The sound of this flute will force the birds to spare the musician and his immediate community.

Hearing this story by accident, I couldn't help wonder if Mozart had also come across it. The similarities are extraordinary. A "Magic Flute" player has to face lightning (fire) and rain (water) in order to save himself and his community. The frightening birds live like the Queen of the Night in the high mountains and appear in thunder and lightning — Mozart's stage directions specify "thunder and lightning" for the Queen's entrance. The Tsongan flute is carved from the bone of a *ndlati* bird during a storm; Mozart's flute is also carved during a storm "when lightning flashed." The only way to avert destruction in both tales is through the music of a flute. The story may never have reached Mozart but the similarities are fascinating nonetheless; maybe one of the greatest pieces of European opera had its roots and inspiration in a South African folk tale.

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* premiered in September 1791, a matter of weeks before his death at age 35. It stands as the overwhelming achievement of his life (quite a claim given Mozart's unfeasibly high output of masterpieces, in every genre). It is, quite possibly, the finest music drama ever written. Into it Mozart poured his uncanny ability to capture the essence of humanity in music; to hold up a mirror to us all. You can't know true joy without true pain, and Mozart expresses this uniquely well.

*The Magic Flute* is a simple moralistic allegory about the journey towards self-knowledge, towards compassion, towards tolerance, and towards enlightenment, a journey in which we are all engaged. It was created to be performed in a suburban theater for "ordinary" people, not the aristocracy. It is a world-beating piece of musical storytelling, and it has always belonged to Everyman.

## SYNOPSIS

### Act I

Tamino, a young traveler who is passing through the realm of the Queen of the Night, is being pursued by a fire-breathing beast. He cries for help and faints with terror. Three Ladies — soldiers of the Queen — hear his cries and spear the beast. Seeing how handsome the young man is, they go to tell the Queen what happened. Papageno, a bird catcher, is trying to lure birds into his net using his whistle. As Tamino regains consciousness the birds are scared away. Papageno is a natural improviser and he claims credit for killing the fire-breathing beast. The Three Ladies reappear and punish Papageno for his lie by locking his mouth with a padlock. They show Tamino a picture of the Queen's daughter, Pamina, whom they say has been kidnapped by an evil man, Sarastro. Tamino falls in love with the picture and promises to rescue the beautiful girl. The Queen of the Night arrives and urges a very frightened Tamino to keep his promise to rescue Pamina. To help him, he is presented with a Magic Flute. Papageno's padlock is removed and he is ordered to help Tamino and given a set of magic bells. Both instruments, bells and flute, have the power to help the owners and to change evil into good. Three spirits materialize. They send the Ladies to sleep and offer to guide the men to Sarastro's camp. Papageno and Tamino are pointed in the right direction but get separated. By chance, Papageno happens upon Pamina with her jailer, Monostatos. Rescuing Pamina, Papageno shows her a picture of Tamino, and she falls in love with him. Meanwhile, Tamino has been led by the Spirits to the outside of the camp.

He meets a Comrade of Sarastro who tells him that Sarastro is not evil but good. In his confusion and despair, Tamino plays the Flute and is answered by Papageno's bird whistle. He runs in the direction of the sound but misses the escapees.

Monostatos recaptures Papageno and Pamina, but Papageno plays his magic bells and Monostatos is seduced by their enchantment. As they make to escape again, Sarastro's arrival is announced. Pamina tells Sarastro she was escaping from Monostatos, partly because he attempted to rape her. Monostatos, who has managed to capture Tamino, demands that Sarastro put the intruder to death. Sarastro is angered at the behavior of Monostatos towards Pamina and has him imprisoned instead. He then orders that Tamino attempt various trials to prove he is worthy of Pamina's love. Papageno reluctantly accompanies him.

### Act II

At a meeting of the elders, Sarastro proposes that Tamino undergoes initiation into their Brotherhood. If Tamino is successful in the trials, Sarastro proposes that he will hand joint power to both Pamina and Tamino. The elders are at first outraged that a woman should rule over them, but after some hesitation they agree to the plan. The first of the trials undertaken by Tamino and Papageno is a trial of silence. Pamina appears and innocently tries to speak to her lover; he refuses to answer her words of love and she leaves broken hearted. Papageno, however, cannot manage to keep quiet and he fails the first trial. The Queen of the Night appears and orders Pamina to kill Sarastro, giving her a knife for

the task. Sarastro's Comrades try to restrain the Queen, but are killed by her soldiers as she escapes. In spite of this, Sarastro still pursues his doctrine of forgiveness and reconciliation and refuses to seek revenge. Heartbroken and depressed at Tamino's rejection, Pamina attempts suicide but is restrained by three Spirits. Having completed the trial of silence, Tamino is reconciled with Pamina, and she undertakes to complete his trials with him. Together they complete the second trial, the trial of fire, and go on to the third trial, the trial of water. At first it appears they have drowned, but they revive and Tamino completes his initiation. Papageno, upset at his failure with the trials and disheartened by his failure to find a woman, contemplates suicide but is stopped by the three Spirits who introduce him to the girl of his dreams, Papagena. Guided by the wicked Monostatos, the Queen of the Night makes another attempt on Sarastro's life but fails. Sarastro holds out his hand to her offering reconciliation; she refuses and leaves as the Comrades celebrate the dawn.

**Please turn to page 18 for complete artist biographies and more information on the Company.**

# A Man of Good Hope

*A co-production of*  
**Isango Ensemble and Young Vic**

*In association with*  
**Royal Opera and Repons Foundation**

*Based on the book by*  
**Jonny Steinberg**

**Mark Dornford-May**  
*Director*

Friday Evening, October 18, 2019 at 8:00  
Sunday Afternoon, October 20, 2019 at 4:00  
Power Center  
Ann Arbor

Eighth and 12th Performances of the 141st Annual Season  
International Theater Series

This week's performances of *A Man of Good Hope* are supported by Michigan Medicine and Masco Corporation Foundation.

This week's performances are funded in part by the Wallace Endowment Fund.

Special thanks to Naomi André, James Coviak and Mott Middle College Steel Band, Adam Eickmeyer, Cara Graninger, Niko Martinez, Mark Stone, and Karen Sheridan for their participation in events surrounding this week's performances.

Isango Ensemble appears by arrangement with Columbia Artists.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.

## **CAST**

*Jonny / Mandisi Dyantyi*  
*Company / Thobile Jim Dyasi*  
*Company / Nombongo Fatyi*  
*Company / Thandokazi Fumba*  
*Rooda / Zamile Gantana*  
*Asad as a boy / Siphosethu Hintsho*  
*Yindy / Death / Nontsusa Louw*  
*Company / Zimkhitha Mathomane*  
*Asad's mother / Zanele Mbatha*  
*Madoda / Sinethemba Mdena*  
*Yindy / Death / Zoleka Mpotsha*  
*Asad II / Thandolwethu Mzembe*  
*Company / Siyanda Ncobo*  
*Company / Sonwabo Ntshata*  
*Visa clerk, etc / Melikhaya Ntshuntshe*  
*Foosiya / Cikizwa Rolomana*  
*Company / Masakana Sotayisi*  
*SA Man / Luvo Tamba*  
*Asad I / Ayanda Tikolo*  
*SA Man / Philani Xhaga*

## **CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM**

*Based on the book by / Jonny Steinberg*  
*Director and Adaptation / Mark Dornford-May*  
*Music Directors / Paulina Malefante and Mandisi Dyantyi*  
*Choreographer / Lungelo Ngamlana*  
*Lighting Designer / Manuel Manim*  
*Speech and Dialogue Coach / Lesley Nott Manim*

## **TECHNICAL TEAM**

*Company Manager / Maris Sharp*  
*Co-Production Manager / Sandile Mgugunyeka*  
*Co-Production Manager / Andreas Ayling*  
*Stage Manager / Valencia Mgugunyeka*  
*Relighter / Jack Hathaway*  
*Chaperone / Nondibano Hintsho*

*This performance is approximately two and a half hours in duration and is performed with one intermission.*



Following Friday evening's performance, please feel free to remain in your seats and join us for a post-performance Q&A with members of the company.

## THE ISANGO PROCESS

by Mark Dornford-May

How and when did *A Man of Good Hope* start? Strangely enough, it is possible to be exact! On December 30, 2014 at 10:56 pm, I received an email from David Lan:

“I’ve just finished reading Jonny Steinberg’s new book *A Man of Good Hope*. Have you seen it? It’s fascinating and deeply moving.”  
—David

January 2, 2015 at 22:54  
“Went out and bought it, brilliant and profoundly moving” —Mark

January 3, 2015 at 00:25  
“Could you guys do it? It would be the most amazing gesture of political and human good faith, and it could be a great show — musically and in every way. I don’t expect a simple or quick answer” —David

January 3, 2015 at 10:50  
“I can’t give a simple or quick answer but I can give a quick response. A stage image — an empty stage apart from a door frame, a woman and child crouching behind it on one side, on the other stand four men.

One would have to look at *Peer Gynt*, *Mother Courage*, *The Good Soldier Schwyk*; complicated journey plays to find a way forward. It could be the most amazing theatrical exploration of Africa, of the legacy of imperialism, of loss and betrayal and hope — of course it would have to be musically astounding.

On the other hand, it is a terrible indictment of South Africa, which he describes as the most violent of societies. We have always avoided that sort of criticism of the new state, however, maybe it is time for us to try and explain that as well.

So it could be very scary but yes I think we could do it” —Mark

January 4, 2015 at 15:53  
“OK. Good. (Fateful words)” —David

Fateful words indeed! So began the journey.

---

March 2015

David and I met Jonny Steinberg in the coffee bar at the Young Vic (YV). We wanted Jonny to give us permission to workshop the book. He very generously agreed. However, he first had to call Asad [Abdullahi, the Somali refugee about whom the book is written] to see if it was okay with him for us to go ahead. The next morning, he phoned David to say Asad was okay with the idea. David, genius he is, managed to get the funding together for a three-week workshop. It was no strings attached for either the YV, Isango, or Jonny so if we all felt the workshop showed the dramatization could work then we would take it further, but equally, if any one party wasn’t happy at the end of the workshop then the project would be over.

---

June 8, 2015

Week one of the workshop started with Isango taking turns in reading the book out loud to each other. English is the second or even the third language for everyone, except for thick old me. So we read out loud and then paused and discussed and talked and even argued. Each actor then took a chapter and presented their own view of its content, in terms of both narrative and theme. Then research began on all the things we didn’t know or didn’t understand, as well as researching and listening to

the music from the different countries led by Mandisi and the development of a huge and complicated timeline of Asad's story led by Paulina. Needless to say, we barely scratched the surface with all this but it was a start, and we had to begin somewhere.

Week two was much more lively and noisy; we started to stand sections up. What we did was decide on a particular incident, for example, Asad's arrival in Johannesburg or the death of his mother. I would split the ensemble into groups of four or five and they would develop a scene or an image or piece of music or even a sound that somehow dramatized the incident. After around 45 minutes, the work would then be presented to the rest of us and discussed and further developed or ditched. We try to make it entirely democratic; it is often wonderfully illuminating and at other times it is appallingly, hilariously, dreadful. I act as sort of editor-in-chief and tidier-upper of the shape of scenes. However, collectively we were starting to get very excited and felt very strongly that we had to raise our game to match the incredible humanity of the material. Isango always works at its best when it is challenged.

Week three: David arrived. Most of the actors have known him for over nine years and so he is welcomed as an old comrade and immediately rolls up his sleeves and joins in — suggesting new angles and giving new thoughts. He runs the most exciting theater in London and is now working in a freezing cold church hall with a leaky roof (yes it does get cold and wet in Africa!) but he is completely committed and completely part of the ensemble, a genuine theater worker. Galvanized with this

new energy, we move forward at pace. A great moment is created by Paulina in her work within one of the groups; she walks on as Yindy with sticks and an old tin bucket and starts with infinite care and concentration to lay a fire. There is an eerie lack of sound, just the tiny tap of the sticks as they are laid, and then her blowing the fire into life. Yindy's poverty and her struggle to survive are completely encapsulated in that moment. David leans over with a great smile: "now that's political theater," he whispers.

Wednesday evening nerves set in — Jonny is to arrive on the morrow. We have absolutely no idea how he will react; we know the work may well seem raw, messy, and undeveloped for an outsider. Musically, although Mandisi has been beavering away (developing some of the ideas the ensemble came up with and creating his own), we are at sea. He has written an extraordinarily beautiful piece for the meeting of Asad and Sadiyca and there is a bit of a Kenyan tune and half of an Ethiopian lament but really not much. I am worried; David soothes. It is clear when Jonny arrives that he is also slightly uneasy. He is hoping it's going to work, but knows he has to protect Asad's story and yet doesn't want to appear to sit in judgement on the project. David talks to him outside the hall while we warm up. By lunchtime all the nerves are gone. Jonny is leaning over the piano helping Mandisi with the words for his Sadiyca/Asad aria and has clearly enjoyed what he has seen in the morning. The next few days are great, busy with discussions and lots of questions from the ensemble for Jonny and lots more scenes starting to emerge from the group work. Mandisi is really on fire now, and tunes

are exploding around us like mortar shells, enabling Lungelo to start to choreograph sections. Are we going to take it forward? Lunchtime Friday is D day! David, Jonny, Mandisi, Paulina, and I sit around the rehearsal room table with sandwiches and coffee provided by the indefatigable Megan. I already know Isango are committed.

DAVID: So what do we think?

Pause.

DAVID: I'm in.

MARK: We are in too.

JONNY: Yep, me too.

Huge smiles all round.

DAVID: Great. Next question is how the hell do we fund it!

So it began.

---

October 2015

Isango were on an eight-week American tour with two new productions, a stage version of *uCarmen* and an adaptation of Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We had a gap week — a week where the production bookings just couldn't be continuous; financially potentially disastrous — the whole company in America with no income, nowhere to stay, and kicking their heels. Tim Fox of Columbia Artists, who built the tour, came to our rescue. He had been intrigued by what I had told him about *A Man of Good Hope*; he talked to David Dower at Arts Emerson in Boston who generously agreed to give us a space to continue to workshop the show and help accommodate the company. It was an artistic and financial lifeline. We hadn't had the funding to do anything on the production for the last four months.

When a few more funders and presenters came through, and the preparation was over, like Asad, we were ready to start our journey. Although like Asad, our journey was not continuous — we had to keep

stopping and earning other money through touring in order to keep going.

---

March 16, 2016

The exciting and moving opening night in Cape Town. We had gotten enthusiastic permission from Bonita Bennet, director of the District Six Museum, to open the show there. It's a space that commemorates the appalling apartheid group areas act and the clearances it generated; whole communities literally bulldozed to the ground, a time when most South Africans were treated as foreigners and refugees in their own country. The space was a perfect physical and emotional backdrop to the performance, and we played for two weeks to a completely mixed audience which is, very sadly, still unusual in Cape Town. In fact, to everyone's delight, it was so busy we had to extend the run for another week.

---

July 11–15, 2016

Stephen Daldry arrived in Cape Town with David to join us for more rehearsals and more work. I have known Stephen for over 30 years now, and a lot of the ensemble have known him since 2005 when he first came out to Cape Town to work on our film *Son of Man*. Stephen has a totally different sort of energy to me, or Mandisi, or Paulina, but somehow it's a good mix, sort of theatrical fusion food. The production — although we had played it in the District Six museum for 20-plus performances — was still by no means finished. David had taken away the "D6 Script" and cleaned it up and improved it a lot, but still it wasn't right. The wonderful thing about an ensemble is that you collectively absorb, and therefore understand, the narrative better each night. This gives you the opportunity to shape things more accurately all the time. Isango never stops working

on its productions, we are constantly changing and altering the way we tell our stories. It might be Mandisi rewriting or re-adapting a song, or Lungelo changing a dance step, or one of the ensemble coming up with a better idea of shaping a scene. *Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, which we created over 12 years ago, is still rehearsed, changed, and developed every time it has an outing. We all believe any one performance is simply a rehearsal for the next one, we can never stop improving. With this in mind, here is a sample of rehearsal room dialogue...

STEPHEN: We should get a real boy for the first scenes.

MANDISI: Yho Boss! He's even madder than you!

MARK: Are you barking mad? Have you any idea of the legal and practical complications of working with kids?

STEPHEN: Well, yes actually!

PAULINA: We are talking about taking a boy from a township and putting him on stage in London.

STEPHEN: Yep!

MARK: Great idea, Mr. Elliot!

STEPHEN: I think you are probably the rudest man in the world.

MARK: Even If we could organize it what about the cost?

DAVID: If it's a good plan I will find a way to make it work. Silence.

Led by Lungelo, we trawled the township schools and found two great young actors, one of whom you will see tonight. Megan sorted out visas and everything else. Isango's ensemble strength was now up by two! As the project continued to go forward, with Claire's help, we collected new partners, BAM in New York, and Les Théâtres de la Ville Luxembourg.

Our artistic journey is nothing like the shocking reality of Asad's odyssey,

but it is nevertheless a journey. Tonight, you will walk with us along the road for a couple of hours.

## ISANGO ENSEMBLE'S INSTRUMENTS

### Marimbas

The first instruments you'll notice onstage are marimbas. Not to be confused with xylophones, marimbas feature wooden bars mounted above resonators. Our resonators are made of wood, but traditionally they were made from hollowed gourds. Traditional marimbas are tuned to only play notes from a specific melodic scale; our marimbas are chromatic — like keys on a piano. Just as our singers have different vocal ranges, the marimbas they use come in four sizes corresponding to their pitches. Highest to lowest, they are soprano, alto, tenor, and bass.

### Drums

Carved from wood or made from old oil drums and covered with rawhide (often goatskin), traditional drums are quite simply loud — you won't see many of them around the stage, but you'll definitely hear them. While it's the large interior cavity that resonates, the rawhide drumhead is tightened and tuned to a specific note using a series of ropes knotted all the way around.

### Feet and Hands

The oldest percussion instruments of all, and ones that we use a great deal, are our hands and feet. Many times during the performance clapping rhythms underpin the melodic tune. During the show's dance sequences, the stomping of the ensemble join the djembes in drumming and punctuating the rhythms of the music onto the wooden stage. The sound adds a rich musical quality to the dancing.

### Others

We use empty plastic drink bottles and drums made out of dustbins. Strangely enough we have to bring these dustbin drums with us wherever we tour. South African dustbins have a mix of rubber and plastic which seems to be unique. Once we decided to save on costs and not to ship them over. It was disastrous — we broke UK dustbins to pieces every single night! Coins, chains, and tin mugs are also all played during the show. Water is poured and “night” and “day” sounds are created by the company vocally.

## ARTISTS

**Isango Ensemble** is based in Cape Town. The core of the company was formed by director Mark Dornford-May and music director and singer Paulina Malefane in 2000, drawing performers from across the townships surrounding the city, embracing artists at all stages of their creative development. Its work to date has focused on reimagining classics from the Western theater canon, finding a new context for these stories within a South African or township setting, and on creating new work relevant to the heritage of the nation. It is the mixture and clash of its cultures, races, and experiences that enables it to create work of the highest caliber.

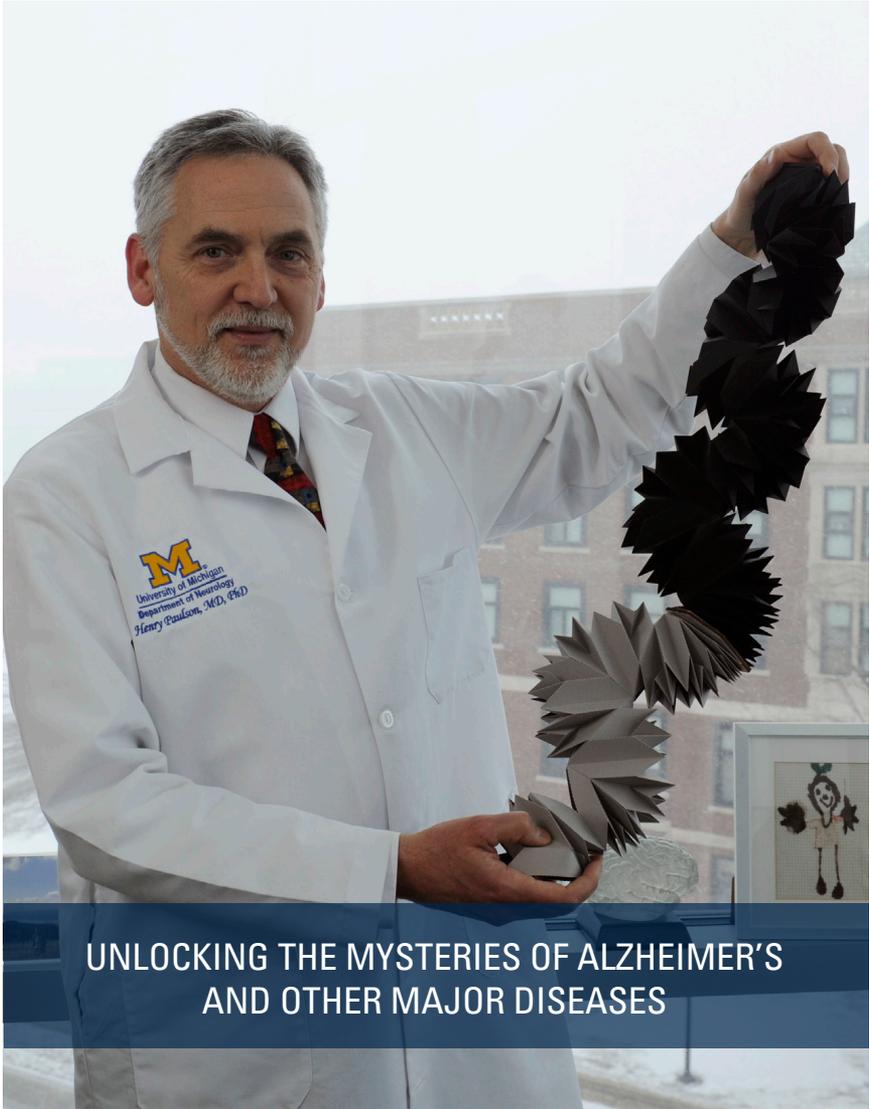
In 2001 two of the ensemble's first stage productions toured from Spier Festival in Cape Town to Wilton's Music Hall in London. From there *The Mysteries — Yiimimangalisa* transferred to West End and *uCarmen* was performed at many of the world's major arts festivals. Other stage work includes co-productions with the Young Vic of *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, featuring Mozart's score transposed for an orchestra of marimbas, and *A Christmas Carol — Ikrismas Kherol*. These won several awards including *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo* winning an Olivier Award for "Best Musical Revival" and the Globes de Cristal for "Best Opera Production" following a sold-out season at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo* also played a season in the West End. In 2009 Isango played a second West End season of *The Mysteries — Yiimimangalisa*. In the summer of 2012, *La Bohème — Abanxaxhi*, a unique partnership with The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, played at

Hackney Empire in London for five weeks. Also in 2012, the company created a new stage version of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* in partnership with Shakespeare's Globe.

In 2016, Isango Ensemble adapted Jonny Steinberg's book *A Man of Good Hope* in co-production with the Young Vic, the Royal Opera, Répons Foundation, BAM, and Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg. The show ran for two months at the Young Vic in London in fall 2016, and then played at BAM in Brooklyn in February 2017, Hong Kong Arts Festival in February 2018, and in Europe in May/June 2018 at Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg, Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen in Germany, and Bergen International Festival in Norway. In 2019 the production toured Adelaide, Auckland, several cities in France, and the United Kingdom at the Royal Opera House.

Films created by Mark Dornford-May and the ensemble include *uCarmen eKhayelitsha*, *Son of Man*, *Unogumbe — Noye's Fludde*, and *Breathe — Umphefumlo*. The films have met with popular and critical acclaim, playing at festivals including the Berlin International Film Festival, Los Angeles Pan African Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, and others in Australia, the US, the UK, Europe, and Africa. They have won the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival as well as several "Best Feature" Awards. In Spring 2019 Isango entered into a new partnership with Comic Relief. For more information, please visit [isangoensemble.co.za](http://isangoensemble.co.za).

**Mark Dornford-May** (*director*) is co-founder and artistic director of Isango Ensemble. Born in Yorkshire and brought up in Chester, he has worked in South Africa with members of the company since 2000. He has directed



## UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER MAJOR DISEASES



Drs. Henry Paulson and Andrew Lieberman have formed a unique coalition of more than 50 clinicians and scientists studying protein-folding disorders as a group, which holds the promise to establish new ways to prevent and treat these devastating conditions.

all of Isango's stage productions: *The Mysteries — Yiimimangaliso, The Snow Queen, Der Silbersee, The Beggars Opera — Ibaloo Tsotsi, Carmen, The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, A Christmas Carol — iKrismas Kherol, Aesop's Fables, La Bohème — Abanxaxhi, The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili Ezidlakazelayo, Venus and Adonis, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, and *St. Matthew Passion*; and produced and directed all its films: *uCarmen eKhayelitsha* (winner of the Golden Bear Award at the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival), *Son of Man, Unogumbe — Noye's Fludde*, and *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Mandisi Dyantisy** (*music director*) is associate director and co-music director of Isango Ensemble and has been with the company since 2006. He has been co-music director and arranger/composer for all Isango Ensemble productions since 2006, including *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, A Christmas Carol — iKrismas Kherol, Venus and Adonis, The Mysteries — Yiimimangaliso, Aesop's Fables, and The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili Ezidlakazelayo*. He traveled to New York to work with graduate acting students of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, as they explored relationships between South African and American theater methods. In 2012, he was the musical director and composer for Isango's *Venus and Adonis* which opened the Globe to Globe season at Shakespeare's Globe in London and subsequently returned to the Globe in May 2013. He arranged and directed the music for the films *Unogumbe* and *Breathe — Umphefumlo*. In 2015 he adapted Bizet's *Carmen* and Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Isango's US tour. In 2016 he composed and conducted the music for *A*

*Man of Good Hope* which ran at London's Young Vic, New York's BAM, and London's Royal Opera House. 2017 saw the creation of Isango Ensemble's production of *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, based on Fred Khumalo's book, for which Mr. Dyantisy created new music as well as incorporated WWI songs. In 2019 he arranged Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* for marimbas and created new music for Isango's production.

**Paulina Malefante** (*music director and performer*) is co-founder and co-music director of Isango Ensemble. She has worked with members of the company since 2000. She is also an advocate for The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. She saw world-wide success playing the role of Carmen, both on stage and in the Golden Bear-winning feature film *uCarmen eKhayelitsha*, for which she won a Golden Thumb from Roger Ebert. She was awarded the "Best Actress" award at the South African Film & Television Awards for the film *Son of Man*. She made her Proms debut at London's Albert Hall in 2006 with the songs of Kurt Weill. In the same year, she sang the role of Bess in *Porgy and Bess* at both Umea and Malmo in Sweden. In 2008, she was invited to give a series of master classes to the theater and music students at UCLA. In 2009, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle, she sang a series of concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic, which were broadcast on German television. In 2012, Ms. Malefante played the role of Venus in Isango's *Venus and Adonis*, which opened the Globe to Globe season at Shakespeare's Globe in London. Following its success, she and the production returned to the Globe in May 2013. In 2013, she also played Noah in *Unogumbe*, an adaptation of Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, and in 2015, the role of Zoleka in *Breathe — Umphefumlo*. On Isango's US tour in 2015, she played Carmen

and sang Titania in the new adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 2016, she created and played the roles of Yindy and Sadicya in *A Man of Good Hope* at London's Young Vic and New York's BAM. She performed with the Berlin Philharmonic again in 2017 in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (conducted by Sir Simon Rattle), semi-staged by Peter Sellars, and she reprised her role in this past summer when the piece was presented by the London Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Malefane also teaches at the University of Cape Town's College of Music.

**Lungelo Ngamlana** (*choreographer*) is an associate artist of Isango Ensemble. He joined the company in 2007 and has been the choreographer for all subsequent Isango Ensemble productions. Prior to joining Isango, he was hosted by the Royal Opera House for the International Dance Fellowship in 2007. His theater credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Christmas Carol — iKrismas Kherol*, *The Mysteries — Yiimangaliso*, *Aesop's Fables*, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili Ezidlakazelayo*, *Venus and Adonis*, *La Bohème*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Carmen*, *A Man of Good Hope*, *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, and *St. Matthew Passion*. He currently teaches at NYU each year, and before joining Isango Ensemble he worked as a teacher, performer, and choreographer with many dance and theater groups, both at home in South Africa and internationally.

**Mannie Manim** (*lighting designer*) is co-founder of the Market Theatre, and has been director of performing arts administration at the University of the Witwatersrand and director of the Baxter Theatre Centre. His career in theater lighting and producing spans over 50 years and he has worked with Isango Ensemble since its first production

more than 10 years ago. His accolades include Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from the French government, Naledi Life Achievement Award, Fleur du Cap Lifetime Achievement Award, Arts and Culture Trust Lifetime Achievement Award, and the National Order of Ikhamanga, Silver.

**Jonny Steinberg** (*author*, *A Man of Good Hope*) is an award-winning South African author. His books include *Midlands* and *The Number* (both of which won the *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award), *Three-Letter Plague* (*Sizwe's Test* in the US, where it was named one of *Washington Post's* "Books of the Year" and shortlisted for the Wellcome Trust Book Prize), *Thin Blue*, *Little Liberia: An African Odyssey in New York City*, and *A Man of Good Hope*. In 2013, Mr. Steinberg was among the inaugural winners of the Windham-Campbell Literature Prizes, awarded by Yale University. He currently teaches African studies at the University of Oxford.

**Lesley Nott Manim** (*speech and dialogue*) has worked in professional theater, film, and television since 1975 as a performer, director, and vocal, acting, dialogue, text interpretation, and accent coach for both South African and international productions. She has designed and taught workshops and master classes in voice and acting as well as adjudicating drama festivals. She has been dialogue coach and casting assistant for television, film, and commercials. She has taught text interpretation at the Market Theatre Laboratory, voice classes and tutorials at the University of Witwatersrand, and text interpretation, accent, and performance skills at AFDA Cape Town. She has a private practice teaching individuals communication skills. She has worked with Isango Ensemble since 2007 as speech, dialogue, and text interpretation coach.

**Thobile Dyasi** (*performer*) was born in Pampierstad, Northern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *Carmen*, *A Man of Good Hope*, *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble); and *L'elisir d'amore*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Il viaggio a Reims*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and *La rondine* at University of Cape Town, where he received a performer's diploma in opera.

**Nombongo Fatyi** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. Her theater and opera credits include *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Man of Good Hope*, and *St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble).

**Thandokazi Fumba** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2016 for *A Man of Good Hope*. She also performed in *Paulina* with the Siyaya Traditional Group.

**Zamile Gantana** (*performer*) was born in Kimberley, Northern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2000. His theater and opera credits include *La Bohème — Abanxaxhi*, *The Mysteries — Yiimimangaliso*, *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Christmas Carol — ikrismas Kherol*, *Aesop's Fables*, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili Ezidlakazelayo*, *The Silver Lake*, *The Beggar's Opera — Ibali Loo Tsotsi*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *uCarmen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Man of Good Hope*, *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, and *St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble). His film credits include *uCarmen eKhayelitsha*, *Son of Man*, *Unogumbe — Noye's Fludde*, and *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Siphosethu Hintsho** (*performer*) was born in Khayelitsha, Cape Town in 2004. He attends Rhodes High School and joined the Ensemble in 2016 for *A Man of Good Hope*.

**Nontsusa Louw** (*performer*) was born in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. Her theater and opera credits with Isango include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *uCarmen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Man of Good Hope*, *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, and *St. Matthew Passion*.

**Zimkhitha Mathomane** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017 for *A Man of Good Hope*.

**Zanele Mbatha** (*performer*) was born in Daveyton, Johannesburg, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2000. Her theater and opera credits include *The Mysteries — Yiimimangaliso*, *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Christmas Carol — ikrismas Kherol*, *Aesop's Fables*, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili Ezidlakazelayo*, *The Beggar's Opera — Ibali Lotsosi*, *West Side Story*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *uCarmen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Man of Good Hope*, and *Dancing the Death Drill — SS Mendi* (Isango Ensemble); and *Qhamka Man of Men*, *Five Past Two*, and *Women Abuse* (Sibikwa Theatre). Her film credits include *uCarmen eKhayelitsha*, *Son of Man*, *Unogumbe — Noye's Fludde*, and *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Sinethemba Mdena** (*performer*) was born in Bisho, Eastern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo*, *La Bohème — Abanxaxhi*, *Carmen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill*, *A Man of Good Hope*, and *St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble).



*Yomlingo, A Christmas Carol — iKrismas Kherol, Aesop's Fables, The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists — Izigwili ezidlakazelayo, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill, and St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble).

**Melikhaya Ntshuntshe** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017 for *A Man of Good Hope*.

**Cikizwa Rolomana** (*performer*) was born in Umtata, Eastern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. Her theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, La Bohème — Abanxhaxi, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill, and St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble); and a concert for Bryn Terfel (Cape Town Opera). Her film credits include *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Masakane Sotayisi** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. His theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, La Bohème — Abanxhaxi, A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill, Venus and Adonis, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble). His film credits include *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Luvo Tamba** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, La Bohème — Abanxhaxi, Venus and Adonis, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and A Man of Good Hope* (Isango Ensemble). His film credits include *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Ayanda Tikolo** (*performer*) was born in King William's Town, Eastern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. His theater and opera credits include *The Magic Flute — Impempe Yomlingo, La Bohème — Abanxhaxi, Venus and Adonis, uCarmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi — Dancing the Death Drill, and St. Matthew Passion* (Isango Ensemble); *Porgy and Bess, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Beethoven, Opera Extravaganza, and Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. His film credits include *Breathe — Umphefumlo*.

**Philani Xhaga** (*performer*) was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017 for *A Man of Good Hope*.

*UMS welcomes Isango Ensemble as the company makes its UMS debut this week.*

---

### **Isango International Council**

*Patron* / Sir Ian McKellen  
Baroness Gail Behr, Sharon D. Clarke, Stephen Daldry, Graham Devlin, Dame Linda Dobbs, Mike Downey, Andy Harries, Kwame Kwei-Armah, David Lan, Sean Matthias, Sir Simon Rattle, Ian Taylor, Professor Elelwani Ramugondo, Reverend Canon Mpho Tutu van Furth

### **Isango Cape Town Staff**

*Administrator* / Megan-Leigh Adams  
*Finance* / Andy Crabtree  
*Stage Technician* / James Anthony  
*Administrative Assistant* / Judy Roberts

**THIS WEEKEND'S VICTORS FOR UMS:**



Presenting Sponsor

**Michigan Medicine**

---

Supporting Sponsors

**The Herbert S. and Carol L. Amster Endowment Fund  
Masco Corporation Foundation**

**MAY WE ALSO RECOMMEND...**

- 10/25-26 Sankai Juku: *Meguri*  
11/15-16 Teač Dařsa: *Loch na hEala (Swan Lake)*  
4/3-4 *HOME*

*Tickets available at [www.ums.org](http://www.ums.org).*

**ON THE EDUCATION HORIZON...**

- 10/24 Post-Performance Artist Q&A: *Zauberland*  
(Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre)  
*Must have a ticket to that evening's performance to attend.*
- 10/26 You Can Dance: Sankai Juku  
(Ann Arbor Y, 400 W. Washington Street, 1:30 pm)  
*Registration opens 45 minutes prior to the start of the event.*
- 11/1 Penny Stamps Distinguished Speaker Series: John Cameron Mitchell  
(Bethlehem United Church, 423 S. Fourth Avenue, 7:00 pm)

*Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.*