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SAWCO in association with
Hie National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa

proudly present

Chief Bambatha calls his warriors to fight the poll tax.

BAMBATHA'S

About Bambatha 9s Children

The play begins in 1906 as the British colonial authorities in Natal impose a poll tax, to force black farmers to leave their land and seek wages working for white employers on farms and in mines. When Chief Bambatha leads a rebellion against the poll tax, the British and the white farmers slaughter thousands - trying to extinguish Zulu resistance forever. The story of Bambatha's Children is told using a mixture of mime, dance, satire and improvisation, reflecting the courage and optimism of a community which has never surrendered to the forces of apartheid.

The 'praise poet' of Bambatha mysteriously exists throughout the generations, always finding himself in the midst of people's resistance, and stating that his bones will not rest until the Zondi people, Bambatha's Children, are free.

The scenes tell the story up to 1985, and the point at which The Long March began, when BTR sacked workers at their Sarmcol plant for seeking recognition of their union, then called the Metal and Allied Workers' Union. Since then, the strikers have suffered attacks by Inkatha vigilantes and a number, including one of the Sisters of The Long March, have been killed. The play, and their continuing resistance is a testimony to their courage and a reclaiming of their history.

In an extended final scene called Comment, the play explores contemporary South Africa with the release of Mandela, and the escalating violence in Natal provoked by Inkatha vigilantes and their allies in the police. Current political figures on the South African stage make their comments on the prospect of negotiations.

Profiles of "Bambatha's Children"

Peter Mkhize (Cultural Promoter)

48 years old. Previous work at Sarmcol as charge hand, senior clerk, raw material stock controller, and computer terminal operator. Hobbies include soccer, music, cricket and tennis. Favourite musicians: Louis Armstrong and Ray Charles. Pete toured Britain with The Long March in 1987 as the promoter.

Bongani Simon Gwala (Player)

Age 32 years. Worked as a machine operator in Sarmcol. Hobbies include soccer and music. Favourite musician: Miriam Makeba. In Bambatha's Children, Bongani plays the Magistrate in the poll tax scene. In Comment, Bongani plays Sir.

Bongani Mchunu (Player)

Age 38 years. Worked in Sarmcol as a canteen cashier. Hobbies include soccer, golf and music. Favourite musician: Bob Marley. Bongani plays the parts of Chief Bambatha and Mr Brown. In Comment, he plays a member of parliament. Bongani will be remembered for playing Margaret Thatcher in The Long March.

Langa Thomas Shelembe (Player)

Age 41 years. Worked in Sarmcol as a semi-skilled fitter. Hobbies include soccer, music and boxing. Favourite musician: Lucky Dube. Thomas toured Britain in 1987 with The Long March, He appears in Bambatha's Children as one of the sons of Mdeltshe, and in Comment as the Grandfather.

Alpheus Nanozi Duma (Player)

Age 44 years. Worked as a machine operator in Sarmcol. Hobbies include music and tribal dancing. Alpheus is a church goer. Favourite musician: David Masondo (Soul Brothers). Alpheus plays the Praise Poet of Bambatha's Children, and also the part of Mdeltshe. In Comment, he appears as the Father.

Doris Thembe Mtshale (Player)

Age 30 years. Worked as a scale operator at Rainbow Chickens. Hobbies include music and soccer. Favourite

musician: Dolly Parton. Doris plays the wife of Mdeltshe in Bambatha's Children, and Madam in Comment.

Thandi Zondi (Player)

Age 23 years. Left school in 1989. Hobbies include music, tennis and soccer. Favourite musician: Roberta Flack. Thandi plays Bambatha's messenger, and a daughter of Mdeltshe. In Comment, she plays the interviewer.

Lindizwe Wilson Zondi (Player)

Age 24 years. Left school in 1986. Hobbies include music and soccer. Favourite musician: Miriam Makeba. Lindizwe plays the Narrator in Bambatha's Children, and also one of the hooligans. In Comment, he appears as Thabo Mbeki.

Khehla Phillip Ngubane (Player)

Age 39 years, Worked as a canteen tea maker in Sarmcol. Hobbies include music, stage plays and tennis. Favourite musician: David Masondo (Soul Brothers). Khehla toured

Britain in 1987 and played several parts in The Long March, including a woman of the township. He appears in Bambatha's Children as a son of Mdeltshe, and a hooligan.

Andreas Bongani Zondi (Player)

Age 33 years. Worked in Sarmcol as a batch tester. Hobbies include soccer, listening to music and watching movies. Favourite musician: Don Williams. In Bambatha's Children, Andy plays the Priest, and a son of Mdeltshe. In Comment, he appears as Gatsha Buthelezi.

Makhosonke Nelson Mvelase (Player)

Age 33 years. Worked in Sarmcol as a canteen caterer. Hobbies include TV, stage shows and music. Favourite musician: Joan Armatrading. Nelson toured with The Long March, appearing in the gumboot dance and in the township scenes. In Bambatha's Children he plays a priest, and a son of Mdeltshe. In Comment, he appears as Pik Botha.

Paul Mambo Mkhize (SAWCO Co-ordinator)

Age 24 years. Hobbies include soccer, stage plays and music. Favourite musician: Tracy Chapman.

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Songs from Bambatha's Children

Sesikhathele thina

Sesikhathele thina, sehla senyuka nemithwalo
KwaZenzele sehla senyuka nemithwalo

We are sick and tired of moving to and fro with luggage
From Zenzele we have been moving to and fro with
luggage

S'timela gudluka

S'timela gudluka seluyeza ushikishi
Zobuya e-Afrika
Zobuya ngemphelela
Zobuya kanjani

Train, get out of the way, because the comrades are coming
They are returning from Africa
They are returning indeed
They are coming

Ingoma eMkhomazi

Iphansi ingoma eMkhomazi

The song from Mkhomazi

Izwe silakhe ngolaka

Izwe silakhe ngolaka

We have built this nation through our struggle

Induna iyangimemeza

Induna iyangimemeza

Ngegazi lom'to'ofile

Yalala sengathi izovuka insizwa

Wawukhoma yini

Empini yombango

Yasho inkani

A'wu phinde

Sohlangane'skhaleni

Shiya hoho

The headman is calling
About the blood of a dead man
He lies as if he is going to wake up

Were you there?

In the battle

When people were hitting each other
Say it again

We will meet at the battlefield

Bazali bami sengikhathele

Bazali bami mina sengikhathele
Ishumi leminyaka ngithwele nzima
Omama mina sengiyahamba
Angeke ngisabuyele khaya

Bazali bami mina sengiswele
Ishumi leminyaka ngithwele nzima

My parents, I'm sick and tired

For ten years now I have worked for nothing

Oh mother, I am leaving now
I won't be coming back home

My parents, I have got nothing

For ten years now I have worked for nothing

Zikhuzwa intshebe

Egoli mas'khuzwa intshebe

In Johannesburg we are led by a bearded man

Ngikhumbula abazali (The farm song)

Ngikhumbul' abazali bami emakhaya
Esabashiye emakhaya emaplazini
Bavuk' ekuseni baye msebenzini
Babuye ngomnyama sebey7 emakhaya

Nabantwana bancane basebenzi eplazini
Uma sebegugile sebeyabaxosha

I remember my parents at home
Whom we left at the farms

They wake up in the morning and go to work

They return home after dark
As small children they work on the farm
When they are old they are chased away

Ngubani ongasebenzela utiki?

Ubani ongasebenzela utiki
Mina ngeke. Mina ngeke.

Ubani ongasebenzela amahala
Mina ngeke. Mina ngeke.

Oh! Mina ngeke.

Who will work for a ticky?

I will never. I will never.

Who will work for nothing?

I will never. I will never.

Munt' omhlophe

Wemto 'mhlophe uyozisola
Ngalent' oyenza kumuntu omnyama
You white person, you will regret
What you are doing to a black person

Thembani bazali

Thembani bazali

Thembani basebenzi isiseduze inkululeko
Uma sigqugquzela abasebenzi
Isiseduze inkululeko

Have trust parents

Trust the workers for Freedom Day is near

When we organise and mobilise the workers
Freedom Day is near

Thina bantu base Mpophomeni

Thina bantu base Mpophomeni
Asivumelani nabaqashi

Sijoyini Mawu! Sijoyini Mawu!

Thina malungu eMawu
Ngeke siyikhokhe irenti

Ngeke. Ngeke. Ngeke siyikhokhe irenti!

Noma sishaywa noma sidutshulwa
Sohlala simunye

Simunye! Simunye! Sohlala simunye

Saze saduba nezitolo
Ngenxa yomzabalazo

Ngeke siyilethe imali yethu
Kwabamhlope

We people of Mpophomeni
We don't agree with the bosses
We joined Mawu. We joined Mawu.

We the members of Mawu
Will never pay rent

We will never pay rent

Even when they beat us up

Even when they shoot us

We are as one. We are as one. We remain as one.

We boycotted white shops
Because of our struggle

We will never give our money
To white shop owners

Ndate Barayi

Ndate Barayi iyo-iyoyiyo
Ngabekwenzenjani
Sibulawa amabhunu thina
Sibulawa amabhunu kwenzenjani

Father Barayi iyo-iyoyiyo what is happening?

We are being killed by the boers

We are being killed by the boers, what is happening?

Izinsizwa zasishiya kulomhlaba

(a song about the attacks by vigilantes in Mpopomeni during 1986, in which SAWCO workers were killed)

Izinsizwa ezingoSimon, zasishiya o kulomhlaba
Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Izinsizwa ezingoPhineas', zasishiya o kulomhlaba
Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Izintombi ezingoNumusa, zasishiya o kulomhlaba
Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Uyobukuphi wena ngalolosuku lwenkululeko
Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Heroic comrades like Simon (Ngubane) have left us in this world

Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Heroic comrades like Phineas (Sibiya) have left us in this world

Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Heroic comrades like Nomusa (Mnikathi) have left us this world

Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Where will you be on the Day of Freedom?

Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Oh! Amen! Allelujah

Sengathi inkosi ingabanani

Sengathi inkosi ingabani
Ma-Comrades lapho nikhona

Sengathi ningasikhumbula
Ma-Comrades lapho nikhona

Nathi angeke sinilibale
Ma-Comrades lapho nikhona

God be with you
Comrades wherever you are

Do remember us
Comrades wherever you are

We will also never forget you

Comrades wherever you are

(Because we know the struggle you died for)

Sithwele kanzima kulomhlaba

Sithwele kanzima kulomhlaba
Thambo sithwele kanzima kulomhlaba
Thambo bathwele kanzima abasebenzi
Wobuya weMandela
Wobuya Mayekiso
Thambo sithwele kanzima

We are carrying a heavy load in this world

Thambo, we are carrying a heavy load in this world

Thambo, the workers are carrying a heavy load

Please come back Mandela

Please come back Mayekiso

Thambo, we are carrying a heavy burden

Ngizomxoxela umama ekhaya

Ngiza kumxoxela umama ekhaya
Ukuthi ngisebunzimeni
Wakhala wakhala
Esethi "mtanami"

I am going to speak to my mother at home
To tell her I am in trouble
She cries, she cries
And says: "my child"

Finale (Medley)

Siphuma eTopiya

Siphuma eTopiya
Sihamba ngomoya
Thina solala emakhaya

We come from Ethiopia
We are going with the wind
We are going to sleep at home

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