



Communication and Marketing Department  
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso  
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa  
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town  
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

[www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)

24 May 2013

## UCT to confer honorary doctorates on Caiphus Semenya and Letta Mbulu

10h00, Friday, 7 June 2013, at Jameson Hall, UCT

**Media Alert: For accreditation contact Kemantha Govender at tel: 021 650 5672, 084 737 6522 or [kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za](mailto:kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za) by Monday, 3 June 2013.**

The University of Cape Town will award honorary degrees to two South African icons, Caiphus Semenya and Letta Mbulu, for their contribution to music and the role they played in the fight for democracy in the country.

Their nominations for honorary degrees recognise their achievements, as well as the respect and reverence they have engendered in communities that love their music and identify with their history and quest for freedom.

The ceremony where they will be receiving their degrees will take place at 10h00 on Friday, 7 June 2013, at the university's Jameson Hall.

Apart from their international reputation as talented musicians, Semenya and Mbulu each have, through their respective musical achievements, also served as unofficial "cultural ambassadors" for South Africa. The married couple are role models in South Africa, epitomising values on which to build stable communities such as tolerance, dignity, respect, accomplishment and the importance of family.

In 1981 Mbulu narrated *You Have Struck a Rock*, a documentary on African women's campaigns around non-violent disobedience. In the 1980s Semenya toured with the anti-apartheid musical *Buwa*. The couple returned to South Africa in 1990. In 2009 they were awarded the Order of iKhamanga in recognition of their excellent contribution to music and the struggle against apartheid.

Semenya is an accomplished musical director and composer, whose body of work includes conceptualising and conducting a Quincy Jones production at the Montreux Jazz Festival featuring several South African artists, including Mbulu and Hugh Masekela.

His compositions have been performed by music legends such as Cannonball Adderley, Harry Belafonte, The Crusaders, Lou Rawls and Nina Simone. He composed the African music for *Roots* and *The Color Purple*, which earned him an Emmy Award and Grammy nomination, respectively.

Mbulu has recorded more than 20 albums on renowned labels with highly regarded producers. When she left South Africa for the United States of America in December 1964, she was already well established as a teenage star, having been featured in many big concerts, including the famous African Jazz and Variety show as well as the musical *King Kong*.

A protégée of Miriam Makeba, Mbulu went on to perform alongside other musical greats and is regarded by some as having the greatest voice of all the “songbirds” of the era.

**Media are invited to attend the honorary doctorate award ceremony at 10h00 on Friday, 7 June 2013, at the Jameson Hall, UCT. Please do RSVP to Kemantha Govender (contact details follow below) by Monday, 3 June 2013.**

*ENDS*

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

**Kemantha Govender**

Media Liaison Officer  
Communication and Marketing Department  
University of Cape Town  
Welgelegen, Upper Chapel Road Extension  
Rosebank  
Tel: (021) 650 5672 Fax: (021) 650 3780  
Cell: (084) 737 6522  
E-mail: [kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za](mailto:kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za)  
Website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)