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A PULSING, MAGNETIC, MUSICAL EXPLORATION OF ZIMBABWE'S
LIBERATION STRUGGLE

ARTSEMERSON PRESENTS

NEHANDA

FIVE PERFORMANCES ONLY
EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER
ROBERT J. ORCHARD STAGE
MAY 17 – 21, 2023

[Boston, MA – Monday, April 24, 2023] – ArtsEmerson, Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theater and film and the professional presenting and producing organization of Emerson College, is thrilled to present **Nehanda** by the visionary creative artist/performer nora chipaumire. **Nehanda** will run five performances only from May 17 – 21, 2023 at the Emerson Paramount Center Robert J. Orchard Stage. **Nehanda** explores the legend of Nehanda, a powerful spirit venerated by the Shona people—native of Zimbabwe and central Mozambique—who inhabits only women. Using the 1896 case "Regina v NIANDA" to inform the libretto, this new concert experience features elements of opera and instruments that wholly subvert the form—turntables, Ngoma drums, and samples of field recordings. With the electric charge of a political rally and the power of a ritual, **Nehanda** weaves together a powerful portrait of anti-colonial resistance.



Photo credits L to R: nora chipaumire, Photo by Mieke Ulfig, Nehanda, Photo by Sachyn Mital.

nora chipaumire once described **Nehanda** as "a Zimbabwean Joan of Arc." *The New Yorker* describes chipaumire's prior performances as "distinctly punk, the Zimbabwean-born choreographer channels three musical heroes: Patti Smith, Grace Jones, and Rit Nzele."

"Our audiences are going to fall in love with the work of visionary creator and performer nora chipaumire," says ArtsEmerson Executive Director David C. Howse. "**Nehanda** is an immersive and powerful musical experience that was inspired by nora's revolutionary, fearless thinking about the brutal legacy of colonization in the artist's

native country of Zimbabwe—a topic that so many countries, including here in the United States, are still grappling with today."

"For my entire life I have been in search of justice and **Nehanda** is the spirit of justice," says nora chipaumire. "Whenever we [the performers] sit with the public in any city, including Boston, that is success."

Tickets for **Nehanda** may be purchased 24/7 at ArtsEmerson.org, or by calling 617-824-8400 (Tue-Sat from 12:00PM ET - 6:00PM ET). The Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston) is open for walk-up service Thu-Sat from Noon - 6:00 PM ET. Tickets start at \$25. Groups of 10+ attending a performance save up to 30%.

Thanks to generous support from Rockland Trust, a limited number of \$10 Mobile Rush tickets will be available at 10:00 AM ET each performance day on a first-come, first-served basis, exclusively through the TodayTix mobile app. For more information, please click on "General Public" when you visit [ArtsEmerson's Offers web page](#).

A limited number of on-stage spots are now on sale for all performances of Nehanda. These limited spots are only \$20 and fully accessible to all.

The Friday, May 19 evening performance will feature a post-show discussion with Dr. Joyce Hope Scott, Clinical Professor, African American Studies, Boston University on the topic of reparations and post-colonization in Africa.

For production stills and other media kit assets, click [here](#).

LISTINGS INFORMATION FOR NEHANDA

Dates:

May 17 – 21, 2023

Venue:

Emerson Paramount Center
Robert J. Orchard Stage
559 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

Performance Schedule:

Wednesday, May 17, 2023	7:30PM ET	Press Performance
Thursday, May 18, 2023	7:30PM ET	
Friday, May 19, 2023	8:00PM ET	Post-show discussion with Dr. Joyce Hope Scott
Saturday, May 20, 2023	8:00PM ET	
Sunday, May 21, 2023	2:00PM ET	

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Content:

Recommended for Ages 12+

This performance features a moment of male nudity.

Running Time:

Approx. 120 minutes, no intermission

Public Health Information:

Masks covering mouth and nose are mandatory inside all Theatres of Emerson College venues at all times (except for speakers, performers, and musicians while actively participating in a performance or presentation.) Based on most recent scientific findings, we are recommending N95, KN95, or well-fitting 3-ply surgical masks; however, any mask with at least 3-ply construction is permissible. No gaiters, bandanas, or masks with vents are allowed. [Click here to review full Public Health info.](#)

COMPANY CREDITS & BIOGRAPHIES

ARTISTIC DIRECTION

nora chipaumire

nora chipaumire was born in 1965 in what was then known as Umtali, Rhodesia (now Mutare, Zimbabwe). She is a product of colonial education for black native Africans – known as group B schooling – and has pursued other studies at the University of Zimbabwe (law) and at Mills College in Oakland, CA (dance). chipaumire’s latest work is “NEHANDA”, a large-scale opera. Before and up to the start of the global pandemic chipaumire has been touring “#PUNK 100% POP *NIGGA” (verbalized as “Hashtag Punk, One Hundred Percent Pop and Star NIGGA”), a three-part live performance album. Her other live works include “portrait of myself as my father” (2016), “RITE RIOT” (2012) and “Miriam” (2012). She recently released a Radio Opera (2021), has been featured in several dance films and made her directorial debut with the short film “Afro Promo #1 King Lady” (2016). Her long-term research project “nhaka,” a technology-based practice and process to her artistic work, instigates and investigates the nature of black bodies and the products of their imaginations. “nhaka bhuku 1” has been published in 2020 at the courtesy of Matadero Publishing House (Spain).

nora chipaumire is a four time Bessie Award winner and was a proud recipient of the 2016 Trisha Mckenzie Memorial Award for her impact on the dance community in Zimbabwe. She was also nominated for a NAMA award as one of those exiled Zimbabweans making an impact on the arts at home and abroad in 2020. chipaumire is honored to include the acknowledgements of the arts communities in awards such as the recent COVID-19 related “Dance Bubble” grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2021), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2018), a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant (2016), a Doris Duke Artist Award (2015) and a Princeton Hodder Fellowship (2014). She is currently a Fellow at Quick Center for the Arts at Fairfield University (2020) and an Artist in Residence at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, LMCC (2019-2021).

PERFORMED BY

Sylvestre Akakpo Adzaku, Tatenda Chabarwa, nora chipaumire, Jonathan Kudakwashe Daniel, David Gagliardi, McIntosh "SoKo" Jerahuni, Fatima Katiji, Mamoudou Konate, Othnell "Mangoma" Moyo, Lucia Palmieri, Mohamed Yousry Fathy "Shika" Saleh, Kei Leon Soares-Cobb, Tyroneisaacstuart, Peter van Heerden, Shamar Wayne Watt, Gilbert Zvamaida

SOUND ENGINEER

Vusumuzi Moyo

SOUND ASSISTANT

Kwamina Biney

TECHNICAL AND PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

Heidi Eckwall + Serena Wong

TOUR MANAGER

Sylvestre Akakpo Adzaku

COMPANY MANAGER

Astrid Rostaing

ASSOCIATE COMPANY MANAGER

Mirna Matošić

ASSOCIATE COMPANY MANAGER

Svenja Wichmann

TOUR PRODUCER, BOOKING

ArKtype - Thomas O. Kriegsmann

PRESENTER INFORMATION

ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College, and its mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — ArtsEmerson is committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative and globe-spanning live and virtual performances, films, and conversations invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Executive Director, David Howse. For more information visit ArtsEmerson.org.

Emerson College

ArtsEmerson and HowlRound Theatre Commons both operate from within the Emerson College Office of the Arts. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theater District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,700 undergraduates and 1,400 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals. The College has an active network of 51,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu. For media inquiries specific to Emerson College, please contact Michelle Gaseau (E: Michelle_Gaseau@emerson.edu, O: 617-824-3547, C: 617-429-2624).

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