

Hopkins Center for the Arts

at Dartmouth

presents

Isango Ensemble *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*

Adapted and Directed by Mark Dornford-May
Music Arranged by Mandisi Dyantyis
Music Directors Pauline Malefane and Mandisi Dyantyis
Choreography by Lungelo Ngamlana
Lighting Designer Mannie Manim
Relighter Jack Hathaway

Funded in part by the William B. Hart Memorial Fund, the Kenneth 1952 & Ellen Roman Fund, and a gift from Brenda Mainer and Robert O. Wetzel '76.

Tue & Wed, Oct 22 & 23, 7:30 pm
2019 • Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

Program

Production Team

Mark Dornford-May..... Director
Mandisi Dyantyi Music Director
Paulina Malefane Music Director
Lungelo NgamlanaChoreographer
Manuel Manim.....Lighting Designer
Lesley Nott Manim..... Speech and Dialogue Coach

Technical Team

Maris SharpCompany Manager
Sandile Mgugunyeka.....Co-Production Manager
Andreas AylingCo-Production Manager
Valencia Mgugunyeka..... Stage Manager
Nondibano Hintsho..... Chaperone

Approx duration: 2 hours with a 20-minute intermission

Cast

Thobile Dyasi.....	Monostatos
Nombongo Fatyi	Pamina
Thandokazi Fumba	Lady I
Zamile Gantana.....	Pappageno
Nontsusa Louw	Queen
Zimkhitha Mathomane.....	Spirit I
Zanele Mbatha	Chorus
Sinethemba Mdena.....	Spirit III
Zoleka Mpotsha	Spirit II
Thandolwethu Mzembe	Priest
Siyanda Ncobo	Lady III
Sonwabo Ntshata.....	Priest
Melikhaya Ntshuntshe	Priest
Cikizwa Rolomana	Lady II
Masakana Sotayisi.....	Tamino
Luvo Tamba	Priest
Ayanda Tikol.....	Sorastro
Philani Xhaga.....	Priest

Tour Direction: Columbia Artists Management LLC—Tim Fox / Alison Ahart Williams
5 Columbus Circle @ 1790 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
www.columbia-artists.com

Program Notes

The Magic Flute: An African Tale?

In Tsonga tradition, lightning is caused by birds called the *ndlati*. These birds, with their multicolored 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, and causing death and fire in the middle of rain. The only way to prevent this bird from causing destruction in both tales 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 has 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 just as 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 none the less; who knows—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* was premiered in September 1791, a matter of weeks before Mozart's 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 in music the essence of humanity; 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, compassion, tolerance and 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 triumphant piece of musical storytelling, and it has always belonged to Everyman.

— Mark Dornford-May, Director

Synopsis

ACT 1

Tamino, a young traveler 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 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. Papageno happens upon Pamina with her jailer, Monostatos. Rescuing Pamina, Papageno shows her a picture of Tamino, and she falls in love with him. Tamino meanwhile 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 2

At a meeting of the elders, Sarastro proposes that Tamino undergo initiation into their Brotherhood. If Tamino is successful in the trials, Sarastro proposes that he will hand 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 one 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 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,

Synopsis *continued*

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 in 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.

Isango Ensemble's Instruments

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. While 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 joins 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 drinks 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.

About the Artists

CREATIVE TEAM

Mark Dornford-May 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 all of Isango's stage productions: *The Mysteries—Yiimimangaliso*, *The Snow Queen*, *Der Silbersee*, *The Beggars Opera—Ibali Loo Tsotsi*, *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Christmas Carol—iKrismas Kherol*, *Aesop's Fables*, *La Boheme—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 Dyantyis, 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*. Mandisi traveled to New York to work with graduate acting students of New York University's Tisch School of Acting as they explored relationships between South African and American theater methods. In 2012, Mandisi was the musical director and composer for Isango's *Venus & 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 USA Tour. In 2016 Mandisi 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 *Dancing the Death Drill*, for which Mandisi created new music as well as incorporating WWI songs. In 2019 Mandisi arranged Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* for marimbas and created new music for the show.

Paulina Malefane music director, 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 *U-Carmen 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 that were broadcast on German television. In 2012, she played the role of Venus in Isango's *Venus & 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 2015 US tour, she once again played Carmen and sang Titania in the

About the Artists *continued*

new adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 2016 Malefane 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 Orchestra again in 2017 in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (conducted by Sir Simon Rattle), semi-staged by Peter Sellars, and will be reprising her role in June/July 2019 when the piece is presented by the London Symphony Orchestra. She 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—Yiimimangaliso*, *Aesop's Fables*, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists—Izigiwili 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*. Lungelo currently teaches at NYU annually 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 Theater, 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.

Lesley Nott Manim, speech and dialogue coach, 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.

PERFORMERS

Thobile Dyasi was born in Pampierstad, Northern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *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* (University of Cape Town, where he took a performer's diploma in opera).

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

About the Artists *continued*

Thandokazi Fumba was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2016. Her theater and opera credits include: *For Isango Ensemble Aesop's Fables, A Man of Good Hope* (Isango Ensemble) and *Paulina* in the Siyaya Traditional Group.

Zamile Gantana 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 was born in Khayelitsha, Cape Town in 2004. He attends Rhodes High School and joined the Ensemble in 2016. His theater credits include *A Man of Good Hope* and *Aesop's Fables*.

Nontsusa Louw was born in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. Her theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables, 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* (Isango Ensemble).

Zimkhitha Mathomane was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017. Her theater and opera credits include *A Man of Good Hope* and *Aesop's Fables* (Isango Ensemble).

Zanele Mbatha 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 *SS Mendi—Dancing the Death Drill* (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 was born in Bisho, Eastern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables, 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). His film credits include: *Unogumbe* and *Breathe—Umphefumlo*.

Zoleka Mpotsha was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2009. Her theater and opera credits include: *The Mysteries—Yiimimangaliso, The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo, Aesop's Fables* and *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). Her film credits include: *Unogumbe—Noye's Fludde* and *Breathe—Umphefumlo*.

Thandolwethu Mzembe was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017. His theater and opera credits include *A Man of Good Hope, SS Mendi—Dancing the Death Drill, St. Matthew Passion* and *Aesop's Fables* (Isango Ensemble).

About the Artists *continued*

Siyanda Ncobo was born in Willowvale, Eastern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. Her theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *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* (Isango Ensemble). Her film credits include: *Breathe—Umphefumlo*.

Sonwabo Ntshata was born in Umtata, Eastern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2007. His theater and opera credits include: *The Mysteries—Yiimimangaliso*, *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*, *A Christmas Carol—iKrismas Kherol*, *Aesop's Fables*, and *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 was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017. His theater and opera credits include *A Man of Good Hope* and *Aesop's Fables* (Isango Ensemble).

Cikizwa Rolomana was born in Umtata, Eastern Cape, and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. Her theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *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 was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. His theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*, *La Bohème—Abanxaxhi*, *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 was born in Cape Town, Western Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2011. His theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*, *La Bohème—Abanxaxhi*, *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 was born in King William's Town, Eastern Cape and joined Isango Ensemble in 2013. His theater and opera credits include: *Aesop's Fables*, *The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo*, *La Bohème—Abanxaxhi*, *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 was born in Cape Town and joined Isango Ensemble in 2017. His theater and opera credits include *Aesop's Fables* and *A Man of Good Hope* (Isango Ensemble).

Connecting Artists to the Community

While at Dartmouth, Isango Ensemble performed a school matinee, followed by a Q&A session. Additionally, members of the company will participate in a post-show discussion after Wednesday's performance. For more information about Hop Engagement and Community programs, call 603.646.2010 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu/faculty-staff or hop.dartmouth.edu/community.

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Walt Cunningham, director

Sat, Oct 26, 7:30 pm

The college's gospel choir raises the roof with twice-yearly concerts of new and contemporary gospel music by a big choir, soloists and big band.



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