

Brooklyn Borough  
President Eric Adams  
Brooklyn Deputy Borough  
President Diana Reyna

*in collaboration with*

Symbols of Tribal Spirits:  
The Bedford Stuyvesant  
Museum of African Art

————— Presents —————

**LARGER THAN LIFE:  
A TRIBUTE TO  
NELSON  
"MADIBA"  
MANDELA**

First Annual Nelson Mandela  
Humanitarian Award  
Presentation

Opening Reception  
October 3, 2014  
Brooklyn Borough Hall  
Brooklyn, New York



SYMBOLS OF TRIBAL SPIRITS:  
THE BEDFORD STUYVESANT  
**MUSEUM OF  
AFRICAN ART**

**1918-2013**



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Pictures of Nelson Mandela and Honorees are from the internet

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Symbols of Tribal Spirits: The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit arts organization located in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. It is dedicated to providing and enriching educational experience to an under-served community in Central Brooklyn and beyond.

With its unique collection of artwork from 40 of the 55 African countries, the Museum will enrich the lives of the multicultural community in Central Brooklyn, especially the youth. Furthermore, the Museum will strive to increase a broader appreciation and encourage a deeper understanding of the diverse art and cultures from around the world.

You can help the Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art become the pride of Brooklyn by making a tax deductible contribution on our secure website at [www.bedstuymuseum.org](http://www.bedstuymuseum.org).



SYMBOLS OF TRIBAL SPIRITS:  
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**MUSEUM** OF  
**AFRICAN ART**

*“Death is something inevitable. When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace. I believe I have made that effort and that is, therefore, why I will sleep for the eternity.”*

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# Vira Lynn Jones

## Executive Director



She graced the covers of major dance magazines and the accolades she received in television interviews elevated her to the level of dance royalty. But, Ms. Smallwood wanted to make more of an impact on young women. She accepted an invitation to create a dance program at the Oprah Winfrey's Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa. However, Ms. Smallwood later made a difficult decision to leave to pursue her real dream in life: to create a school of dance that would empower inner city youth in her community. The selection committee salutes Ms. Smallwood for her sacrifices and her commitment to help her empower the young people in Bedford Stuyvesant. She has renovated a building that houses her performing arts center.

Dr. Melony Samuels sacrificed a high-paying career as an insurance executive and administrator to become the Executive Director and Founder of the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger. The non-profit organization provides some of Central Brooklyn's neediest citizens with nutrition, improving the health and well being of the people she serves, and offers education on health-conscious food choices. Dr. Samuels's visions includes expanding her efforts to serve more people by acquiring additional space. Melony has been quoted as saying that one day there may not be a need for an organization like the Bed-Stuyvesant Campaign Against Hunger. Until that day that happens, Dr. Samuels would make Nelson Mandela happy that she is contributing a great service to humanity.

First Lady Chirlane McCray was an easy selection. First, she is the most powerful woman in New York City, and the Museum selection committee is confident that this power will be used to create a more equitable environment. Throughout her life she has been an activist that has spoken out for the underdog. The Museum's selection committee felt that the First Lady would work to help the Mayor carry out a progressive agenda that would include more affordable housing, more hospitals, and more equitable initiatives that would be inclusive for all New Yorkers. She leads the battle and was the face that led the charge for the Mayor's successful Pre-Kindergarten program. As Chairwoman of the Mayor's Fund To Advance New York, Ms. McCray will work over the next four years to make New York a better place. Nelson Mandela would be so proud of the First Lady.

### To The Public:

Nelson Rolihlahla "Madiba" Mandela was 95 when he transitioned from this life to join the ancestors. When the news bulletin flashed over all the major networks, I could not control the tears that flooded from my eyes. I remember whispering to myself that the world had lost a "giant among men" and a figure who was "larger than life."

Rolihlahla, a name given to Mandela by his father, means "pulling the branch of a tree," but the name is commonly used to mean "troublemaker." I guess that is how the South African government felt toward this man who tried to end its government of apartheid, a system of forced racial segregation that relegated its citizens of color to unequal treatment. Each time I hear the name Mandela, the word that echoes through my mind is "sacrifice." Mandela sacrificed his freedom and his family life. He languished in prison for 27 years to achieve his goal of justice, equality, equal opportunity for all, and his vision of creating a truly democratic South

Africa. Mandela changed the world. He is an example of what sacrifice can achieve and his life should be an inspiration to the people everywhere to eliminate the cynicism and the sense of hopelessness that seems to consume the world.

Symbols of Tribal Spirits: The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art is proud to award the First Annual Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award. The honor will be awarded this year and each year until eternity to individuals who strive to make the world a better place by helping others. This year the Museum Selection committee selected three individuals and their stories are highlighted below.

Dwana Smallwood, the Executive Director and Founder of the Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center, was born and raised in Bedford Stuyvesant. Her exceptional dancing talent led to an extraordinary career as an Alvin Ailey Dance Company premier dancer.



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## LARGER THAN LIFE: A TRIBUTE TO NELSON “MADIBA” MANDELA

First Annual

Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award Presentation

Official Opening Reception

October 3, 2014

4 P.M. to 8 P.M.

Brooklyn Borough Hall

African Music Prelude.....	DJ Jephter Njoku
African Dance Procession Lead in Guest Speakers, Honored Guests, and Award Honoree Recipients.....	Kowteff “African” Dance Company and Stilt Walkers
West African Dance Performance .....	Kowteff “African” Dance Company
Greetings and Master of Ceremonies Introduction .....	Vira Lynn Jones Executive Director/Founder The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art
South African and United States National Anthems .....	DJ Jephter Njoku
Pouring of Libations Remembering the Ancestors Who Came Before Us .....	TBA
Welcome .....	Eric Adams – Brooklyn Borough President
Welcome .....	Diana Reyna – Deputy Borough President
Congolese African Dance Performance .....	Mabina BanAfrika
Special Remarks .....	NYC Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Strong Advocate and Supporter of Cultural Arts.....	NYC Council Member Laurie Cumbo and Founder of MoCADA
West African Dance Performance .....	Kowteff “African” Dance Company
Remembering Nelson “Madiba” Mandela.....	Danny Schechter Author – Madiba A to Z: The Many Faces of Nelson Mandela
Mandela Reflections and Introduction of Keynote Speaker .....	His Excellency Bernard Legodi Consul: Political South African Consulate General in New York City
Keynote Speaker .....	His Excellency George Monyemangene South African Consulate General in New York City
Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award Honorees Presentation .....	Vira Lynn Jones First Lady Chirlane McCray Dr. Melony Samuels Dwana Smallwood
Congolese Dance Performance .....	Mabina BanAfrika
Musical Performance: Mariam Makeba “Pata Pata”.....	South African Trumpeter Lesedi Ntsande and Band
Musical Performance: Bring Him Back Nelson Mandela.....	South African Trumpeter Lesedi Ntsande and Band
Closing Remarks.....	Vira Lynn Jones

# Interesting Facts About South Africa



- The world's first heart transplant was performed in South Africa in 1967 by Dr. Chris Barnard.
- South Africa has eleven official languages.
- South Africa is rated third in the world in supplying safe, drinkable tap water.
- South Africa is the second largest exporter of fruit in the world.
- South Africa has the cheapest electricity in the world.
- Can you think of any other place in the world where two Nobel Peace Prize winners lived on the same street? Both Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu had houses on Vilakazi Street in Soweto, South Africa.
- Although Pretoria is considered to be the capital of South Africa, the country has three capitals: Pretoria (executive), Cape Town (legislative) and Bloemfontein (judicial).
- South Africa has the most luxurious train in the world, the Rovos Rail.
- Approximately 900 bird species are found in South Africa alone, which represents 10% of the world's total bird species.
- South Africa is five times the size of Japan, and three times the size of the state of Texas.
- South Africa is the first African country to host the FIFA World Cup tournament
- South Africa mines 20% of the world's gold.
- South Africa is the first country in Africa to build nuclear weapons and voluntarily give them up.
- The Karoo region in the Western Cape is home to some of the best fossils of early dinosaurs. In fact, it is estimated that some 80% of the mammalian fossils found to date were found in the Karoo.
- South Africa is home to seven world heritage sites.
- The oldest remains of modern humans were found in South Africa and are well over 160,000 years old.
- Walt Disney serves South African wine exclusively at the 73-acre Animal Kingdom Lodge in the U.S.
- The Sudwala Caves in South Africa are the oldest known caves in the world.
- South Africa has produced some of the oldest fossils in the world.
- Table Mountain in Cape Town is believed to be one of the oldest mountains in the world.



South African President Nelson Mandela taking the oath of office on May 20, 1994 during his inauguration in Pretoria to become the first black president of a newly democratic South Africa.

*“During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to the struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an idea which I hope to live for and to achieve. But, if need be, it is an idea for which I am prepared to die”*



Anti-apartheid leader and African National Congress (ANC) member Nelson Mandela raises a clenched fist after arriving to address a mass rally a few days after his release from jail, February 1990.

*“As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn’t leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I’d still be in prison.”*

*“Do not judge me by my successes. Judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again”*



Then African National Congress President Nelson Mandela and South Africa's last apartheid President Frederick de Klerk display their Nobel Peace Prizes during a ceremony in Oslo, Norway in 1993.

*“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”*



Former South African President Nelson Mandela celebrates his 89th birthday with children at the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.



# *Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award Honorees:*

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**Chirlane McCray**



**Dr. Melony Samuels**



**Dwana Adiaha  
Smallwood**

Symbols of Tribal Spirits: The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art's selection committee is proud of the three honorees that were chosen for the First Annual Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award. This honor was bestowed upon these individuals because they exemplify, embody, and epitomize many of the extraordinary principles that the late, former South African president embodied in his life: his idea of a just society, his fortitude, his exceptional dignity, and his unwavering sacrifices toward helping humanity."



## Chirlane McCray

### New York's Activist First Lady

"When we look back on our lives, I bet most people would say the best moments were when we were helping someone or doing something to leave the world a better than we found it. I am one of those people." [Ms. McCray's blog]

New York's First Lady. Mrs. Bill de Blasio. Chirlane McCray. Outspoken activist. Political strategist. Feminist. Poet. Nonconformist. No matter what name is used to describe Ms. McCray, one thing is for certain. She is the most powerful woman in New York City and the second most powerful woman in the country, behind First Lady Michelle Obama. This year Gotham Magazine published profiles of the 50 most powerful women movers and shakers who are the masterminds behind the businesses that dominate the city. Ms. McCray appeared at the top of that list.

In a May 2014 New York Magazine article, Ms. McCray explained that she was uncomfortable with labels but she felt comfortable being called an "outsider." Last year she told Essence Magazine that, "I am more than just a label." "Labels put people in boxes, and those boxes are shaped like coffins."

The activist side of Ms. McCray has spent her life speaking truth to power. Now, she is the power who will continue to speak with truth when addressing issues that matter to average New Yorkers who

have felt powerless and voiceless over the last past 12 years. Mayor de Blasio's progressive priorities will mirror her own objectives of using her power to speak up about inequity, pushing for more affordable housing, after-school programs and more hospitals. Ms. McCray lead the successful force behind the push for pre-K, generating support for the program by making numerous appearances to spark support for what was considered "the

***"As First Lady, I want to make a difference. I want my 'life lived well' to be one that leaves the world for these New Yorkers better than we found it." [Ms. McCray's blog]***

defining civil-rights issue of our day." When the de Blasio Administration rose victorious in the pre-K fight, it was Ms. McCray who thank New Yorkers for their support and appeared in recorded advertisements claiming victory.

This year Mayor de Blasio appointed Ms. McCray to head up the prestigious Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, an organization promoting public and private partnerships and distributes

millions of dollars each year toward progressive initiatives in all five boroughs.

The Wellesley graduate has to be respected for her honesty. When the media discussed her lifestyle choice earlier in her life that caused many in the community to frown, she looked straight into the public's eye and did not make excuses. If Ms. McCray would look average New Yorkers in the eye and declare that she shares their pain, it would be the truth. Her humble background is a testimony to that statement. Her family was one of two black families in an all white town in Massachusetts. In high school she was the only black student in her class. Ms. McCray experienced racism and bullying before it became a serious social problem worth addressing.

Does Ms. McCray mirror the principles that Nelson "Madiba" Mandela embodied in his life, a just society, his fortitude, his exceptional dignity, and his unwavering sacrifices toward helping humanity? Symbols of Tribal Spirits: The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art was proud to select New York's First Lady as a recipient of the First Annual Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award. Over the next four years, the Museum Selection Committee feels confident that she will continue to improve the lives of all New Yorkers.



## Dr. Melony Samuels

### Executive Director

#### The Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger

Dr. Samuels is Founder and Executive Director of the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger. Her grassroots efforts has led the charge to address hunger, poverty, and health in the Brooklyn communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Ocean Hill and Brownsville, an area that constitutes a “food desert” where access to healthy and nutritious food is limited. As a result, many residents suffer from obesity and related chronic diseases.

In 2013, Dr. Samuels was added to the Courier Life Newspaper Women of Distinction Award. When awarding Dr. Samuels the 2011 Joan H. Tisch Community Health Prize Award, its committee noted that Dr. Samuels and her efforts with the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger “... led the early response to these troubling poverty and nutrition-related health problems with a wide range of successful initiatives, particularly a community garden program that attacks these issues from all angles.”

Her work has made dramatic strides in helping eliminate hunger and food insecurity in Central Brooklyn, and she provides some of our city’s neediest citizens with good nutrition, improving their health and overall well-being. New York City is one of the richest cities in the world, but food poverty and nutrition-related poor health is around every corner.

While Dr. Samuels helps to alleviate the

preparation techniques, exercise, and healthy lifestyles to a client base that is nearly one quarter diabetic.

Before starting the nonprofit organization, Dr. Samuels was an insurance executive and administrator for Full Gospel Tabernacle of Faith. In selecting Dr. Melony Samuels for the First Annual Nelson Mandela Humanitarian Award, The Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of African Art

***“One day my desire is there will no longer be a need for organizations like the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger because America is able to feed their families”***

problems of hunger and malnutrition, the Selection Committee was most impressed by the extent to which her organization has gone beyond the traditional role of a food pantry—offering education on health-conscious food choices, food

noted her decision to quit her high-paying executive job to work aggressively and unselfishly to tackle the issue of hunger in the Central Brooklyn community that she has been quoted as saying is “a problem that is real and it is in New York.”



## Dwana Adiaha Smallwood

Founder: Dwana Smallwood  
Performing Arts Center  
Bedford Stuyvesant

Dwana Adiaha Smallwood was sitting on Oprah's couch when she first uttered the words that have defined her career: "dance is my oxygen." It came out, naturally, when she said it, but that's the exact kind of profound statement that people are prone to making while discussing life with Oprah Winfrey. And, as life works for most of us, we have to keep breathing oxygen to stay alive. For Ms. Smallwood, she has to keep dancing to thrive.

*"Dance Is My Oxygen"*

The Bedford Stuyvesant-born Smallwood learned to dance at an early age, which led to her tenure as a principal dancer with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater from 1995-2007. She was proclaimed "one of the greatest modern dancers" by Vogue magazine and danced before millions as

a guest on The Oprah Winfrey Show as a part of her "The Best..." series. In 2013, Smallwood was featured on Oprah: Where Are They Now on the OWN network.

Ms. Smallwood earned her initial public accolades as the first place winner of the International Africa Arts Festival Star Search in her native Bed-Stuy. Since, she has been featured in American Public Broadcasting's "Great Performances," and the documentary "Beyond the Steps." She also appears in the documentary "A Hymn for Alvin Ailey."

Ms. Smallwood is a five-time first place winner of Harlem's Amateur Night at the Apollo. She also has spent a lifetime mentoring young women, helping them find their own fire within and how to nurture and help it grow. She was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from Ile-Ase in 2009 for her continued support of the world's young women.

In January 2009, Smallwood joined the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls (OWLAG) in South Africa, where she was the architect for the school's dance program, birthing the OWLAG Dance Company.

In 2013, Smallwood left OWLAG to take on the next leg of her journey. In 2014 she will realize a life-long dream by giving birth again. This time to the Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Dance is still her oxygen and she's breathing it in with abandon.

[Reprinted from [dwanamsallwoodpac.org](http://dwanamsallwoodpac.org). The profile can be read in its entirety on the Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center website]

## His Excellency George Monyemangene

### South African Consulate General for New York



His Excellency George Monyemangene was born in Botlokwa (Limpopo Province), South Africa. He earned a Masters of Management in Public &

Development Management (MM: P&DM) at the University of the Witwatersrand. In addition, he completed a certificate in the Practice of Trade Policy: Economics, Negotiations and Rules from Harvard University and a Diploma in Trade Policy with the WTO. Prior to joining DIRCO and assuming the post of Consul General-New York, Mr. Monyemangene was the Executive Director of Sekhwama Consulting, a consultancy that provided services in trade and investments on the African continent and beyond. In his tenure at the Department of Trade and Industry (henceforth referred to as the DTI), Mr. Monyemangene has served as a Foreign Economic Representative for South Africa in Mozambique and Angola and as the Head of the African Economic Relations (Bilaterals and Multilaterals). The latter post was subsequently split into two and prior to his departure from

the DTI, he occupied the position of Head of the African Economic Relations (Bilaterals) within the International Trade and Economic Division (ITED). His primary responsibilities encompassed the coordination and facilitation of South Africa's bilateral economic engagements on the rest of the African continent. This entailed the advancement of the overarching objectives of NEPAD, negotiation of and the implementation of economic cooperation frameworks and bilateral investment treaties, the promotion of intra-Africa Trade, the leveraging of bilateral economic relations to foster regional economic integration and oversight of the Regional Spatial Development Initiatives Program. He began his position as the Consul General of South Africa in New York in 2011.

## Danny Schechter

Television Producer, Filmmaker, Writer

Author: *Madiba A to Z: The Many Faces of Nelson Mandela*



Danny Schechter is a television producer, independent filmmaker, blogger, and media critic who writes and lectures frequently about the media in the United States and worldwide. He specializes in investigative journalism and producing programming about the interfaces among

human rights, journalism, popular music, and society. He was the recipient of the Society of Professional Journalists' 2001 Award for Excellence in Documentary Journalism. Mr. Schechter was a Nieman Fellow in Journalism at Harvard University and his work has been honored with, among other recognitions, Emmy awards, the IRIS award, the George Polk Award, the Major Armstrong Award, and honors from the National Association of Black Journalists.

Mr. Schechter is founder and executive editor of MediaChannel. He is also Founder and Vice President/Executive Producer of Globalvision, Inc., an award-winning media company formed in 1987. Mr. Schechter has been a broadcast and print journalist and is an internationally recognized speaker and writer on media issues. Mr. Schechter was the news director and principal newscaster for WBCN-FM, an on-air reporter for WGBH, and a news program producer and investigative

reporter at CNN and ABC.

Mr. Schechter was a civil rights worker and the Communications Director of the Northern Student Movement, and served as a "Community Organizer" in a War on Poverty program.

He has written numerous books and is author of *Madiba A to Z: The Many Faces of Nelson Mandela*. He has produced and directed many television specials and documentary films including two about Nelson Mandela: "A Hero for All: Nelson Mandela's Farewell" (1999) and "Mandela in America" (1990).

Mr. Schechter graduated from Cornell University in 1964 where he wrote for the Cornell Daily Sun and was a member of the Quill and Dagger Society. He later received a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and an honorary degree from Fitchburg State University. He was an Adjunct Professor at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University.



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## Eric Adams

### Brooklyn Borough President

Eric Adams was elected in 2013. He was previously a New York State Senator in the 20th Senate District that represented the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Flatbush, Crown Heights, Park Slope, Sunset Park, and Prospect Heights. Prior to his election as the State Senator, Borough President Adams served as a police officer in the New York City Police Department for 22 years. He is the co-founder of 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, an advocacy group for black police officers, and often spoke out against policy brutality and racial profiling. Borough President Adams is a Brooklyn native who received a B.A. from John Jay College in criminal justice and a Master's degree in public administration from Marist College.



## Diana Reyna

### Brooklyn Deputy Borough President

Deputy Borough President Diana Reyna is a native New Yorker who is the first Dominican American woman elected to public office in New York State. She was a former New York City Council Member and Chairman of the Kings County (Brooklyn) Democratic Party. As a Council Member, she concentrated her efforts in funding youth programs and family literacy as well as fighting crime and reducing gang violence. Deputy Borough President has a degree from Pace University in Pleasantville, New York.



## Letitia A. "Tish" James

### New York City Public Advocate

New York City Public Advocate James is the current and fourth elected New York City Public Advocate. She previously served as a member of the New York City Council, representing Brooklyn's 35th Council District. Public Advocate James has a B.A. from City University of New York Lehman College and a Law Degree from Howard University School of Law. She was admitted to the New York state bar in 1989. She is currently working for a Master's degree in Public Administration at Columbia University.

## Laurie Cumbo

New York City Council Member, 35th Council District

New York City Council Member Cumbo represents the 35th Council District, representing the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, Crown Heights and Prospect Heights. Council Member Cumbo was born and raised in Brooklyn. She graduated from Spelman College in Atlanta and received a Master's Degree in Visual Arts from New York University (NYU). From 2001 to 2011, she served as a graduate professor in the Arts and Cultural Management program at the School of Art & Design at Pratt Institute. Based on her graduate work at NYU, in 1999 she founded and served as executive director of the Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Arts (MoCADA).



## Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.

New York City Council Member, 36th Council District

New York City Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr. currently represents the 36th Council District that includes the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Bedford Stuyvesant and northern Crown Heights. Councilman Cornegy formerly served as a Democratic Party district leader and the president of the Vanguard Independent Democratic Association. Council Member Cornegy has a B.A. degree from St John's University and a M.A. from the University of Alabama.



## Bernard Legodi

Consul Political  
Office of the South African Consulate General



## Jumaane D. Williams

New York City Council Member, 45th Council District

New York City Council Member Williams represents the 45th Council District, representing the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Canarsie, Flatlands, East Flatbush and parts of Flatbush. He is the Deputy Leader of the New York City Council and chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. In August 2013, the New York City Council passed Council Member Williams' landmark legislation, the Community Safety Act, that established the first-ever Inspector General to oversee the New York Police Department (NYPD) and created an enforceable ban against bias-based profiling. Council Member Williams has a B.A. in political science and a M.A. in urban policy from Brooklyn College.





## KowTeff

### West African Dance Company

KowTeff is one of Brooklyn's leading community based African Diaspora folkloric arts institution. For twenty three years, the company has used arts to empower people of African descent through education and entertainment. The name KowTeff, means "coming from above" in the Senegal's Wolof language. It fully describes the company's powerful and diverse arts presentations. KowTeff trains the over twenty member group of dancers, drummers, singers, actors, storytellers, and stilt walkers in a wide variety of African, American and Caribbean folk traditions. For KowTeff, the arts are a tool for healing the community and keeping values, principles, and customs of African traditions alive.

### History

Founded in 1992, KowTeff has researched, taught and performed African Diaspora Dance throughout the Tri-State region and abroad. Co-founder and artistic director, Afua Sewaa Codrington, has over three decades of training and study

with internationally recognized master traditional artists and African griot families. KowTeff has educated and entertained thousands of audience members with free classes and community based performances in underserved communities such as Brownsville, Crown Heights, East Flatbush, and Bedford Stuyvesant.

KowTeff has been invited to present on academic panels for the Brooklyn Arts Council and to conduct workshops for the Department of Culture in St. Kitts. Today KowTeff is a duly incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization engaging capacity building efforts to secure philanthropic support and strengthen infrastructure so that its work can continue into the future.

### Programs

KowTeff achieves its mission through two programs: A School of African Dance that presents classes held at public spaces in Brooklyn and an African Dance Company that presents folkloric African Diaspora traditions. Serving hundreds of students and thousands of audience members

each year, KowTeff programs enrich the cultural life of communities by fostering self-awareness, pride, self-determination, and community development.







## Lesedi Ntsane

### South African Trumpet Player

Lesedi Ntsane, who is from South Africa, was introduced to the horn while at the Salvation Army Church, where he later learned to play. Ntsane was born into a musical family. His mother was a singer and his father played the trumpet. His grandfather was the director of one South Africa's classic musical unit, The Merry-maker's Orchestra.

During his days in high school, Ntsane played for the Springs Boys High School Brass Band, winning national marching band competitions for five consecutive years. He later enrolled at the M.C. Art Academy at the South African State Theatre and then later at Tshwane University of Technology under the mentorship of Bernt Baumann, John Davies, and Kevin Davidson.

Ntsane later joined an amazing South African band, the 4 Seasons, that was based

in Tshwane, leading a number of their festivals and community outreach while holding the music banner with pride. The band's magnetic and powerful union led them to winning the Regional 2009 Puisano competition and later being selected as one of the two Provincial winning bands.

Ntsane has enjoyed working with great musicians and bands such as the Phatt Brass Big Band, led by John Davies, The New Cool ensemble, led by Dan Selsick. He also did various sideman appearances with various groups. The South Africa Jazz Foundation also featured Ntsane in 2010 as part of the Big Band with Gloria Bosman, Feya Faku, Howard Johnson Lyne Arrialle. He had the privilege of working with bands like the Violent Femmes (2007) and in 2009 he had the honor of playing lead trumpet for the O'Jays Sunshine Tour in South Africa.

He has performed in various venues such as the Museum of Modern Art with Masauko Chipembere of black Sunshine, the Brooklyn Museum with Zozo Afro Beat, The Shrine with Tamara Davidson, Ngozi'Issee, Something Jazz Club with the John Foster Brooks Big Band, Joe's Pub with Nomasa Mazwai, Osekre and the Lucky Bastards, The New School Afro Cuban Orchestra led by Bobby Sinabria, Majesty and The New Vibrations around Brooklyn and the Lower East Side and the Bernard Linnette Quintet. Ntsane has also done some amazing film-scoring projects with LA-based composer, Bo Jacobson and some projects for Lalela Library Music.

For the past two years he has been working at Jazz at Lincoln Center as part of the Webop Educational Program. He has had the opportunity to work with Riza Printup, Dr. Patrice Turner, Adam Platt, Anthony Lee, Vanessa Cruz, Tim Sullivan, Julian Smith, the Harlem Children Zone and the Washington Heights Head Start Program.

Ntsane has represented the New School for Jazz as part of a Jazz Combo called "The New School swingers" which did a live Radio Broadcast at WBGO radio Station in New Jersey. Later he was given dates as a leader with initially a trio to play at Union Square Park featuring Francesco Alessi and Alexander Claffy and later a quartet for the Schools welcoming party and various private events.

Since 2012, he has performed consistently with a small band at the Brooklyn-based South African Restaurant, Madiba, where he has worked with other musicians and singers such as Bakithi Khumalo, Stanley Banks, Tony Cedras, Anton Fig, Morris Goldberg, Maciek Shejbal, Zan Tetrokovic, Kyle Poole, Ian Bagette, Eden Ladin, Mike King, Jazzmeia Horn, Javi Santiago, Dororta Piotrowska, Wignall Ismel and, Tshepo Puoane.

Ntsane graduated from Tshwane University of Technology with a Diploma in Music in 2010. In 2011, he moved to New York City to further his studies at the prestigious New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music where he had the privilege of private tutelage of Billy Harper, Jimmy Owens, Charles Tolliver, Cecil Bridgewater, Marcus Printup, Andrew Cyrille, Gerald D'Angelo.

He recently graduated at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music with a Bachelors of Fine Arts. Ntsane has continued to take on various projects whilst working on the release of his projects. He has established his own production company, PhattChops Productions.



## Mabina BanAfrika Congolesse Dance Company

Mabina BanAfrika, which means “Dance of African Children,” is a New York City-based African dance company. It was cultivated out of the experiences and life’s journey of Founder and Artistic Director Eto’o Tsana, a native Harlem choreographer, teacher/instructor and dancer extraordinaire. Founded in 2011 on the principles of performance, humanitarianism, and anthropology, Mabina BanAfrika is a direct reflection of the multicultural heritage of Ms. Tsana, her culturally rooted studies, her world travel experiences, and her extensive dance training.

Mabina BanAfrika’s mission is to reinforce and share information related to the African Diaspora, utilizing the performing arts as a medium to connect, educate, entertain and give back to our communities.

The members of Mabina BanAfrika are respectfully called Mabina Danseuses, culturally diverse yet united as one in traditional African and Afro-contemporary

dance platforms with an emphasis on styles and techniques rooted from the Kongo Kingdom traditions and other rich cultures across the Diaspora. Each member contributes a wealth of



experiences and training from their respective backgrounds including but not limited to: Afro-Caribbean, Liturgical,

Afro-Spiritual, House, Hip-Hop, Afro-Latin, and Theatre. Mabina Danseuses have traveled world wide representing the company and performing with renowned artistes. Mabina BanAfrika has successfully transitioned between the worlds of ‘Dance Company Theatre Productions’ and the ‘Mainstream Entertainment Industry.

In addition to creating original works, Mabina BanAfrika also works collaboratively with professional artists from different dance and music genres. Together they showcase the diversity of “Our Being” by confronting the complexities that they face as displaced children of the Motherland, expressing their true selves through art.

It is their individual and collective histories, commitment to self exploration, study and intellectual/cultural exchanges that make Mabina Danseuses a unique class of artists and Mabina BanAfrika a premier Dance Company.



SYMBOLS OF TRIBAL SPIRITS:  
THE BEDFORD STUYVESANT  
**MUSEUM OF  
AFRICAN ART**





1 FEMALE FERTILITY FIGURES

Dogon People  
Mali

The wooden statues are identifiable as fertility figures by the enlarged breasts and pregnant bellies. The Dogon people live in the mountain cliffs of the city in Mali called Bandiagara. The Dogon people are best known for their religious traditions, their mask dances, wooden sculpture and their architecture.



2 CHOKWE FEMALE MASK  
(MWANO PWO)

Chokwe People  
Angola, Democratic Republic of the  
Congo, Zambia

The mask represents the ideal female beauty, Mwano Pwo, danced with male counterparts, Chihongo, during initiation ceremonies and other important occasions to bring fertility and prosperity to the village. The masks share the depiction of facial scarification patterns, filed teeth, fanciful and inventive hair styles, tear motifs and cruciform markings on the forehead.



3 FEMALE STATUE

Hemba People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

A wooden statue in celebration of a female ancestor.

# South African Zulu Musician Wrote Song “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”



In 1961 an American singing group, The Tokens, scored a major hit and enjoyed million dollar royalty checks from the song, “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”. Despite the popularity of the song, the original author of the megahit, South African Zulu musician, singer and composer, Solomon Popoli Linda, died in poverty and faded in obscurity in 1962. However, in 2000 that all changed when a South African journalist wrote a feature article about Linda in the Rolling Stone Magazine.

Solomon Popoli Linda (1909 – 1962), also known as Solomon Ntsele (“Linda” was his clan name), composed the song that originally titled, “Mbube” (meaning lion”), that later became the popular music success “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” The Lion Sleeps Tonight”. Linda gave its name to the Mbube style of isicathamiya, an a cappella-style singing popularized later by world renowned South African group, Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

He attended the Gordon Memorial mission school, where he learned about Western musical culture, hymns, and participated in choir contests. Influenced by the new syncopated music that had been introduced into South Africa from the US during the 1880s, he included it in the Zulu songs he and his friends sang at weddings and feasts.

In 1931, Linda, like many other young African men at that time, left his homestead to find menial work in Johannesburg, by then a sprawling gold-mining town with a great demand for cheap labor. He worked

in a furniture store and sang in a choir known as the Evening Birds. In 1933, the group disbanded.

When Linda started working at the Johannesburg’s Carlton Hotel, he started a new group that retained the Evening Birds name. The group evolved from performances at weddings to choir competitions. Linda’s musical popularity grew with the Evening Birds, who presented “a very cool urban act that wears pin-striped suits, bowler hats and dandy two-tone shoes”

In 1939, while recording a number of songs in the studio, Linda improvised the song “Mbube” (Lion). “Mbube” was a major success for Linda and the Evening Birds, reportedly selling more than 100,000 copies in South Africa by 1949. Linda sold the rights to a record company for 10 shillings (less than US \$2) soon after the recording was made. However, it is alleged that, by British laws then in effect, those rights should have reverted to Linda’s heirs 25 years after his death in 1962.

The original South African recording was discovered during the early 1950s by American musicologist Alan Lomax, who gave it to his friend, folk musician Pete Seeger of The Weavers. Seeger retitled it “Wimoweh” (an approximate phonetic rendering of the song’s Zulu language refrain “uyembube”). The song was popularized by The Weavers who had a Top 20 Music Chart hit in the USA.

The Weavers’ Carnegie Hall version was also the inspiration for the 1961 version recorded by the popular music group, The Tokens. The group retitled the song

to “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”. Most people are now familiar with this version.

In 2000, a South African journalist wrote a feature article for the Rolling Stone, describing Linda’s story and estimating that the song had earned more than \$15 million for its use in The Lion King alone. A television documentary was made called A Lion’s Trail that tells Solomon Linda’s story. It appeared on PBS. In 2004, with the backing of the South African government and Gallo Records, Linda’s descendants in South Africa sued the Walt Disney Company for its use in The Lion King movie and stage musical without paying royalties to them.

In 2006, Linda’s heirs attained a legal settlement with the Abilene Music Company, that had the worldwide rights and had licensed the song to Disney. This settlement applies to worldwide rights, not just South African, since 1987. The primary outcomes of the settlement of 2006 stipulated that the Linda heirs receive payment for past uses of “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” and an entitlement to future royalties from its worldwide use. The terms also acknowledged that the song “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” derived from Mbube. Last of all Solomon Linda was acknowledged as a cocreator of “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” and will be designated as such in the future.

A trust was created to administer the heirs’ copyright in Mbube and to receive payments due from the use of “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”.

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4 TERRA COTTA VESSEL  
(THE WOMAN HAS HIPS)

Mangbetu People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Mangbetu people believe that an elongated skull with a flattened forehead pleased the gods. At birth the heads of babies were tightly wrapped with cloth in order to create the elongated look. The custom of skull elongation called Lipombo by the Mangbetu, was a status symbol among the ruling classes. It denoted majesty, beauty, power and higher intelligence. Since 1950, the elongated skull practice has dissipated. The circular formations on the terra cotta vessel represent hips.





5 MASK WITH COWRIE SHELLS

Dan People  
Liberia, Ivory Coast

Dan masks are sacred objects. They are used for protection and as a channel for communication with the spirit world.





6 CHOKWE FEMALE MASK  
(PWO)

Chokwe People  
Angola, Democratic Republic of the  
Congo, Zambia

The mask is an outstanding example of Pwo, a classic Chokwe mask that honors founding female ancestors. Pwo's joint performance with her male counterpart, Cihongo, bring fertility and prosperity to a community. Inscribed motifs on the mask's forehead and cheeks are classic graphic designs that aesthetically enhance a woman's beauty. The central cruciform on the forehead has been interpreted as a cosmogram while the markings on either cheek are described as a solar disc joined by tears.



7 SONGYE FETISH POWER FIGURE  
(NKISI), PROTECTOR OF THE  
VILLAGE

Songye People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

This figure was typically used as a protector of the community from evil forces and disease. The power of the figure depended on the ingredients contained in the horn set into the head or concealed in the abdominal cavity.

8 WARRIOR MASK

The Wobe Guere/We People  
Liberia, Ivory Coast

The Guere ethnic group are found traditionally in Ivory Coast. They are associated with the Wobe and Gere and are often grouped together with them as "We" people. The mask of the We people are often grimacing and fierce looking. They are generally created to be frightening. Animal, human, and metal materials may be used such as teeth, nails, shells, brass bells, feathers, hair, hide, and horns.



9 GWA SO'O CHIMPANZEE OR  
MONKEY MASK

Hemba People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

The exaggerated features of the half-human, half-chimpanzee mask contrast greatly with the noble and reserved ancestral figures of the classic Hemba people. The wide, open mouth and raised eyebrows were not meant to be comical, but rather fearsome and terrifying. Misi gwa so'o masks were used at funerals to symbolize the presence of death.



10 MALE AND FEMALE NKISI STATUES

Bantu People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Among the Bantu of the Congo Basin, Nkisi (a.k.a. Nkishi) (plural varies minkisi, zinkisi or nkisi according to dialect) is the general name for a spirit, or for any object that spirit inhabits. It is frequently applied to a variety of objects used throughout the Congo Basin in Central Africa thought to contain spiritual powers or spirits.

11 MBANGU OR SICKNESS MASK

Pende People  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

The most famous Pende Mask is the Mbangu or sickness mask that represents the lifelong struggle between sickness and health. The badly distorted mouth, cheeks and nose attest to the suffering of the afflicted. The Mbangu mask is used in rituals to heal the sick, and because sickness is thought to be brought on by misbehavior that displeases the deceased ancestors, to teach morality lessons.



12 ROYAL FIGURE DEDICATED TO THE KING, OR FON

Bamileke People  
Cameroon

The Bamileke are part of the Grasslands groups in Cameroon: the Bamileke, Bamun and Bemenda-Tikar. The wooden figure was probably placed near royal chair of the King, or Fon. Large carved figures and thrones are used by the king to assert his power.



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All African artifacts listed in this book are part of  
the Bedford Stuyvesant Museum's permanent collection:  
*(in order of appearance)*

1. Female Fertility Figures
2. Chokwe Female Mask (Mwano Pwo)
3. Female Statue
4. Terra Cotta Vessel  
(The Woman Has Hips)
5. Mask With Cowrie Shells
6. Chokwe Female Mask (Mwano Pwo)
7. Songye Fetish Power Figure (Nkisi),
8. Warrior Mask
9. Gwa So'ó Chimpanzee or Monkey Mask
10. Male and Female Nkisi Statues
11. Mbangu or Sickness Mask
12. Royal Figure Dedicated to the King, or Fon

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