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THEATRE . . .

. . . BY PIKIRAYI DEKETEKE



Simba proves a hit with SA theatre groups

AFTER having worked for about four months with South African community theatre groups, Zact national chairman, Simba Pemhenayi, has proved quite a hit with the South Africans who have contracted him for two years as theatre co-ordinator for the Community Art Project (CAP) in Cape Town.

The excited Simba has braced himself to the challenges of advocating the ideals of community-based theatre to a community which is far ahead in terms of theatre skills, creativity and management.

He brings to the South Africans the concepts of theatre as a vehicle for development, education and as an opportunity for the people at grassroot to participate in their own social, economic, cultural and political development.

Simba has had an impressive career in theatre starting with his own theatre group, Batsiranayi Theatre Company, which has today grown into a professional outfit where he was executive director.

He also rose within the ranks of the Zimbabwe Association of Community Theatre whose last congress elected him to the position of national chairman to lead a nationwide movement of community theatre groups.

He started his career as a small-time actor performing in community halls and schools in his home area of Mufakose before staging international performances in Holland and Ghana at the Pan African Festival and then holding various positions within his home community and Zact.

The Community Art Project is a non-governmental organisation covering areas of education, training and development and has been working with the marginalised communities in the Western Cape since 1977.

CAP runs programmes in community arts which include theatre, visual art, children's art and media.

Simba will be responsible for a women's course in theatre for development, theatre skills course for grassroots theatre groups, research and information gathering in the performing arts field and the organisation of the CAP festival in December of each year.

At a time when there is a big drain down South, I asked Simba about his feelings at leaving his country at this stage of its theatrical development for the so-called greener pastures of South Africa and he said:

"I see it as opening new avenues for co-operation in the area of culture be-

tween Zact and South Africa and an opportunity to share the struggles we have gone through here for the recognition of community theatre and the role it has played in concientising people about so many issues.

"I hope my contribution in South Africa will help in the transformation period of South Africa through collective participation for development."

While the South African theatre scene is much more advanced than in Zimbabwe in terms of technology and creativity, Simba feels that what is needed is making people realise how theatre could be used for their own participation in development, employment creation as well as enhancing the existing cultural movements in South Africa.

"In South Africa they have created their own theatres and the style is the same as formal or conventional theatre. Artistically, the South African society is very rich, but my contribution will focus on the integration of art and empowerment as well as bridging the gaps that have been created by apartheid," he said.

A new leader for his theatre group has been nominated while his vice-chairman in Zact will likely takeover as chairman until the association's next elections.



SIMBA PEMHENAYI . . . looking forward to taking on the South Africa theatre scene which will probably be his biggest challenge as a theatre practitioner.



JAZZ . . .

BY TERENCE MAPURISANA



Recognition for jazz superstar

TENOR jazz saxophonist Kenny G was last week named the favourite adult contemporary jazz artiste at the 21st annual American Music Awards, in Los Angeles.

Kenny, who received a trophy in the adult contemporary category, is one of the modern jazz artistes who has managed to sell millions of jazz albums worldwide.

In Zimbabwe, his latest album, *Breathless* is becoming a

coming Nelson Rangell.

Kenny G is one of the jazz artistes who has paved the way for young people to appreciate jazz.

A native of Seattle, Washington, Kenny became fascinated with the sax when he saw other musicians playing saxophones. "There is romance, compassion, a feeling like the human voice. I felt it could be easy to express myself through it."

Kenny first emerged with his

atures the artiste's prowess during his live shows as proved by the latest video that I received, where he can blow his sax without even missing a single note. It includes the song, *Don't Make Me Wait For Love* which he did a duet with Michael Bolton.

And with that approach, I can tell you something, he has built a huge following in the jazz circuit.

His self-titled album

Silhouette attract fans because of his emphasis on melody. "There are plenty of guys around who can play the sax but my sense of the melody is one of my strongest points."

On this latest album, *Breathless*, he has worked with Phillip Ingram, Davis Foster, Peabo Bryson among others.

On his album, he crosses over from jazz to pop and displays his real love of jazz music.

