

**third world bunfight**

*presents*

Chief Nicholas Tilana Gcaleka and friends

*in*

**iMumbo**

**Jumbo**

**"THE DAYS OF MIRACLE AND WONDER"**

*with a special appearance by*

**Rev. Mzwandile Nzulwana and the Choir of St John's Apostolic Faith Mission**

**PREMIERED AT STANDARD BANK NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL, 1997**

iMUMBO JUMBO is a dramatisation of the intrepid, sacred and quixotic 1996 quest of Chief Nicholas Tilana Gcaleka (sangoma, priest, liquor salesman, guru) to retrieve the head of his ancestor, King Hintska kaPhalo - Paramount Chief of the amaXhosa nation, killed by a Colonial posse in 1836 - and thereby to restore peace to this country which Hintska's Hell Spirit is ravaging. Performed by *sangomas*, hilltribes, clergy, choirs, mediahounds and other animals.

This work takes the form of a *sangoma* ceremony of homage to the departed ancestors. Chief Nicholas Tilana Gcaleka holds this *intombe* to tell the people of the world about his beliefs, philosophies and predictions, and to strengthen the Spirit in the audience by incorporating them in this ritual. The *sangomas* use dancing, chanting and clapping to take them into the state of trance in which they may bring the restorative powers of the ancestors to all present. To recount the tale of his quest to Scotland, he has employed a wacky neo-African drama group - THIRD WORLD BUNFIGHT - to dramatize the expedition with song, dance, acting, mime etc. in a play called 'The Days of Miracle and

Wonder'. iMUMBO JUMBO moves between these realms of highly theatrical drama and deep ritual, tangling the two together to provide an off the wall African Experience.

### **CAST:**

CHIEF GCALEKA: a 40 year-old charismatic sangoma from the rural Transkei, and his host of SANGOMAS, in their red, black and white wraps, beads etc.

REVEREND NZULWANA: a rural Transkei prophet and priest, with his 3-woman CHOIR, in their blue and white uniforms.

THIRD WORLD BUNFIGHT: a troupe of township actors (men, women and children), who play characters in the dramatization of GCALEKA's quest. NICHOLAS is the pantomime caricature of GCALEKA, REVEREND is NZULWANA.

### **SET:**

iMUMBO JUMBO is played in three quarter round. The arena floor is earth – the ritual scenes, GCALEKA's diatribes, and some of the BUNFIGHT scenes are played out here. At the back is a raised platform, about 1m high and 8m long, also used as an acting space. Central steps lead up to this from the arena. The whole set is dressed as some sort of huge eclectic shrine, quite cluttered with religious paraphernalia: framed Hindu and Christian gods, herbs, bones, African carvings, clay pots, candles etc. A vast banner of a red crucifix on white background is draped at backstage, and above it hangs a cow skull. The SANGOMAS will sit on mats on stage right, and BUNFIGHT on the left.

## **TEXT:**

### **IN THE BEGINNING**

*(Traditional music from the Transkei is playing as the audience enters into the dimly lit venue. Two female sangomas are busy with low-key ritual preparations. Candlelight and smoking herbs create the atmosphere. Then the full cast – SANGOMAS in their red and white wraps and beads; THIRD WORLD BUNFIGHT performers wrapped in blankets – enters through the audience, singing the rousing anthem 'Ngubani naba?' Moving amongst the audience, greeting them, they circle the arena singing; then gather around GCALEKA for his welcoming speech.)*

### **THE PROFESSIONALS**

GCALEKA: The Spirit of the Hurricane welcomes you! The spirits try by all means to get you, see now you are all here. The Spirit of the Hurricane catch you to come here and sing and dance with us, see how we do all our things. I'm going to give you kaffir beer, I'm going to give you a drama show - ladies and gentlemen, tonight we have a very special drama group: THIRD WORLD BUNFIGHT! They're going to tell you a story about me! I'm going to give you everything to make you happy, you understand? In other words, now when you go home tonight, the spirits of your forefathers will come to you over the dream and say: "If you can be like this man, uGcaleka, it can be very good."

I want to tell you something: before you white people came to Africa we did not know how to write. There were no books, there was no bank. If your father got some money he takes the money, put it in a tin, digs a hole, bury it and then he dies. You don't know where the money is. He will come to you over the dream and say: "Look here, there's some money in such 'n such a place, I put it there, you must go and fetch it." And you fetch it, you understand? That is our belief. But now we throw it away these things. We don't listen to our spirit.

Before you white people came with the professionals, we been the professionals, before you people came in this country, we, we the *sangomas, amagqira* - we the professionals for the spirit! Nobody can take that away from us!

*(All relaunch into the song, "Ngubani naba", and move to the edges of the arena where they cluster on grass mats to watch and accompany the proceedings.)*

## THE SPIRIT

GCALEKA: *(he addresses the audience directly)* Hey this is a big day for all our spirits, the four spirits ruling this country of ours. You know it's a four spirits: the spirit of the white people; the spirit of the mixed nations - coloureds, Indians, all those mixed nations, you understand? The spirit of the *amakhosi*, we, the blacks, *amakhosi*. Then also the spirit of the angels, of all the small children that died, you understand? They are working together these four spirits, they got no apartheid like us. A real *sangoma*, he can talk to all these spirits. Today, I know, they are all very glad we are together for this opportunity. We make nice party here together, we make the spirit strong, all of us together. Spirit must be strong to fight this bloody Hintsa Hell Spirit, blowing all over the country, attacking the people. But now we get strong. Today is a big day for all our ancestors, 'cos we are blessing them. Even if they like to invite Jesus Christ to come to this party, he is welcome, as I welcome you. But he mustn't come alone here. He must come with my ancestors: King Phalo, and King Gcaleka and Namba - the Hurricane Spirit.

*(4 children, each one clutching a huge spirit-mask, scurry into the arena. Each child represents one of the amaXhosa kings from Gcaleka's history lesson – he makes use of them to animate the lesson.)*

GCALEKA: Wait now I give you history lesson - is very important, you must listen carefully.  
You see Phalo is the father of the Xhosa nation. In 1991 he come to me over the dream, he say I must go fetch the head of his great grandson, King Hintsa, which was cut off by the Scottish soldiers in 1836. He say: "If you not fetch that head and bury it together with Hintsa's body, there be no Jesus Christ in South Africa."  
This one is the Hurricane Spirit, he's the one who help me brought the skull of King Hintsa back to South Africa; it's a spiritual snake, a black mamba, the twin of King Gcaleka. They the sons of Phalo, you understand? Hey, he's very powerful. He can destroy this country, don't cost him five minutes, very powerful. When that spirit is angry there can be a big thunderstorm. You can call your bloody scientists, they cannot stop that thunderstorm. You understand? They cannot even see him, only I can see him 'cos I fetched him from the river; his spirit is with me!  
This one King Gcaleka: the twin of the Hurricane Spirit, the mamba. He drowned in Nxinxola River in 1778, he want to be with this brother of his, but he take the kingship of the Xhosa nation with him.  
Now his son, Khawuta, this one, when his father drowned he never go there to the river to ask the kingship back from the River Spirits, Abantu Bomlambo. He think he can just become king like that. Never! You must pay the River Spirits many cattle, you understand? For 160 years the

kingship of the Xhosa nation been under the water, that's why the Xhosa nation is like a bastard.

*(An interruption from one of the sangomas, agreeing with Gcaleka in isiXhosa.)*

GCALEKA: Listen now, listen: these three are very angry, they send this one (*Hints*) to jail. THEY give the permission for the British to cut off Hints's head, it's not the British fault. His father didn't pay the account for the Spirits! Now I paid the account: 38 cattles, 1 000 goats, 1 000 chickens, from my own pocket to the Spirit. The Spirit give me the power to have those cattle, pay the account, because they want that head back, because they want peace!

*(An interruption from one of the BUNFIGHT performers, eager to begin performing.)*

GCALEKA: Now you white people, you like to watch, don't like to get involved, don't like to sing and clap. Hey, tonight you have that opportunity, tonight we are all together in one spirit, we make the spirit strong. The spirit my friends is here in the heart. If you don't want the spirit you must close here and here and here put something like a cork so that the spirit can not, can not find you, understand? (*indicating his eyes, ears and finally his asshole.*)

*(Another interruption from the BUNFIGHT performer.)*

GCALEKA: Wait, wait, my friends, I want to teach the people, the people that don't want the spirit: they must close here, look, here and here and here, and then they won't get the spirit.  
Okay, okay! BUNFIGHT are very impatient. *Yizani yizani!* They want to tell you my story. BUNFIGHT ladies and gentleman!

*(The pantomime, 'THE DAYS OF MIRACLE AND WONDER', begins.)*

## **SAD TIMES, BAD TIMES**

*(The haunting strains of 'Sad Times, Bad Times', from the 1950's musical King Kong crackle out of the loudspeakers. Two small children enter carrying a large banner on poles with 'THE DAYS OF MIRACLE AND WONDER' painted upon it. Another boy mimes the melody of the flute, and does a little pas de deux with the villainous-looking, black-painted HURRICANE SPIRIT. On the raised platform behind, in single file, and lead by a child carrying a huge garden umbrella, enter the seven Xhosa CHIEFS in single file, and then the three WIVES of the KING, each cradling a cardboard cut-out of a baby. The KING carries an old gramophone player. The two groups arrange themselves in formal groupings on left and right. The CHIEFS are divided into two factions of 3 chiefs each – the OLD SCHOOL and the YOUNG BLOOD. Each faction, as well as the WIVES, speaks in unison; the KING mediates between the groups. In the*

*centre on the raised platform sleeps NICHOLAS, the pantomime caricature of GCALEKA. The writhing HURRICANE SPIRIT joins him, and the banner bearers move offstage. Under a red shroud, PROFESSOR PEIRES is led downstage by another two children. The music grinds to a sudden halt.)*

KING: My fellow chiefs, tell me, *nicinga ntoni nga li crime ininzi kangaka apha kwelilizwe lethu?* There's too much crime in this country of ours. We can't even walk freely in the streets because we are afraid. These young men, these youth, don't care a thing.

OLD BOYS: Hing!

YOUNG BLOOD: Hey!

OLD BOYS: Hing!

YOUNG BLOOD: Hey!

OLD BOYS: We are talking about crime daddy, but what about all the small boys who are falling in love with the big mamas?

WIVES: Ha!

KING: Ha! Hey?

OLD BOYS: Hmmm

KING: That's another thing!

WIVES: Eh eh -

OLD BOYS: I just think our country's been cursed you know.

YOUNG BLOOD: I think Jesus Christ has left us.

WIVES: *Hayibo!*

OLD BOYS: Ha!

YOUNG BLOOD: Hmm mm

KING: We must do something about this!

YOUNG BLOOD: What can we do daddy?

OLD BOYS: We are the elders, you must follow us.

KING: We must fight against these things.

WIVES: Eh eh -

OLD BOYS: Yes, yes -

YOUNG BLOOD: Well, I don't have much time, as you know I'm very busy in the Parliament.

OLD BOYS: What I'm saying is we must make a big feast and sacrifice some cattle -

YOUNG BLOOD: *Hayi suka man!*

OLD BOYS: - and then our ancestors will put things right.

YOUNG BLOOD: Huh!

KING: Hmm hmm, *ja*, I think you are right.

YOUNG BLOOD: *Mna*, I don't have the money to buy a cattle. Hing, hing!

OLD BOYS: Hing!

KING: *Ag man*, you talk about money when our people are getting lost, *imali imali imali!*

WIVES: tsk tsk tsk -

OLD BOYS: Yes! Look at all this killing, raping, stealing: our ancestors have forgotten us.

WIVES: Wait a minute, do you really think a sacrifice will stop the raping, huh?!

YOUNG BLOOD: Huh!

OLD BOYS: What are you saying? What are you saying?

KING: Hing! Order my chiefs, order!

YOUNG BLOOD: Pardon, I don't mean to upset you, but in this new constitution of ours everybody has the right to talk about what they want to talk about.

WIVES: Eh-eh!

OLD BOYS: Hey *kwedini*, where is your respect?

YOUNG BLOOD: If you are not careful, I, the young chief you have elected will go report you in Cape Town or Gauteng!

OLD BOYS: *Hamba! Hamba kwedini!*

KING: Go! What are you waiting for? My third wife will buy you a ticket.

WIVES: Eh-eh.

YOUNG BLOOD: That's another thing!

KING: Hing!

YOUNG BLOOD: That polygamy!

OLD BOYS: Hing!

KING: Hing!

WIVES: Hing!

*(NICHOLAS, who has been having bad dreams through this interchange, awakes with a shriek.)*

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi! Makhosi!* Wait! Wait! I see it, yes, yes, okay, moving pictures: the river, the snake, the fire, *makhosi!* Children crying, big wind blowing, big wind blowing... I'm seeing it clearly now: in the corner is a skeleton without a head, we're gonna all be blown away!

KING: Hey Nicholas, what are you seeing? You are making my wives afraid!

WIVES: Eh eh!

NICHOLAS: My chiefs, I'm seeing men wearing skirts like women, *hayibo, bayasqueala, makhosi!* *(he pinches his nose and whines the bagpipe tune, 'Scotland the Brave')*

WIVES: *Hayibo!*

KING: Ag Nicholas, do you get my point!

NICHOLAS: Okay, okay...

*(NICHOLAS blows a whistle and all the BUNFIGHT performers scramble into action: YOUNG BLOODS dart down to the arena, don the spirit masks of the old Xhosa kings,*

*and ready themselves to dance to the chorus of the up-coming song; the remaining CHIEFS, WIVES and the children group as for a photograph on one side of the raised platform, and NICHOLAS and the HURRICANE SPIRIT position themselves on the opposite side. The HURRICANE SPIRIT is forever twisting around NICHOLAS like a shadow, his tongue flicking and his right arm raised like the head of a serpent. NICHOLAS chants the following song to the melody of an ancient amaXhosa sangoma round: "Bayeza kusasa bayeza". During the chorus the CHIEFS et al sing and clap like frenzied dolls, the masked YOUNG BLOODS do a foot-stomping dance, and NICHOLAS and the HURRICANE SPIRIT do a pas de deux. The KING beats a small drum.)*

NICHOLAS: Okay, I took some cows and chickens and I went down to the river  
‘Cos I had a sacrificial account I had to pay,  
But as I cut their throats the sound of thunder made me shiver:  
Spirits rising from the water in the middle of the day,  
And they call my name as the blood starts to spray,  
‘Gcaleka, you must chase all the demons away...’

CHORUS: *ooNomathotholo bayeza kusasa bayeza... (the spirits come in the morning)*

NICHOLAS: I say: ‘I'm trying to run my business, raise my kids and follow Jesus,  
Can't you find somebody younger to help you instead?’  
They say: ‘We'll organise your passport, your ticket and your visas.’  
And they showed me visions that filled me with dread,  
And all because the ghost of a king wants his head...

CHORUS: *ooNomathotholo bayeza kusasa bayeza...*

NICHOLAS: I'm hearing voices in my dreams and my brain is like a tv  
Showing programs about England, and the ancestors are guiding me  
And when I find my head you will see your mistake.  
‘Cause where exactly is the line between dreams and awake?  
And if you look you'll see this tale's in the mouth of a snake.  
It all depends on the choices you make.  
It all depends on the risks that you take...

CHORUS: *ooNomathotholo bayeza kusasa bayeza...*

NICHOLAS: And the angels up above, are trying to fill the sky with love.  
And the people on their knees, bodies covered with disease.  
In the middle of the night, people dancing with delight.  
And then the spirit comes (*bayeza kusasa bayeza!*)  
And then the spirit comes (*bayeza kusasa bayeza!*)  
And all the people sing (*bayeza kusasa bayeza!*)  
I hear the people sing! (*bayeza kusasa bayeza!*)

CHORUS: *ooNomathotholo bayeza kusasa bayeza...*

*(There is great joy and celebration, cheering from GCALEKA and his SANGOMAS. K.D. MATANZIMA – one of the OLD BOYS – separates himself from the body of the chiefs.)*

MATANZIMA: The spiritual man came at last!

*(All CHIEFS, WIVES etc. now group together on the platform. The tiniest of the children sneaks across the arena to where Professor PEIRES, a prominent white historian of the amaXhosa Nation, has been standing downstage, shrouded in red fabric. She leaps once, twice, and reveals the pasty bespectacled clown face of the professor.)*

PEIRES: Eh gentlemen, chiefs, chiefs! Hello. I am Professor Peires from the University of Fort Hare in the department of history and human science research of South Africa. Eh, we hear this man, Gcaleka is wanting to go to England to fetch the head of King Hintsá...

ALL: Eh eh.

PEIRES: Ja, ja, ja, I would like to say that according to our research that no head was being cut off. The records state clearly that the soldiers removed Hintsá's ears, and uh with the help of a bayonet they took his teeth, yes his teeth, he was eh definitely killed, but not the head, not the head...

KING: According to our belief, our king was buried without his head!

ALL: Eh eh.

PEIRES: But, anybody who can read will know that this is nonsense.

ALL: Hing!

PEIRES: History is based on the proof. This man, Gcaleka, is an imposter, he just wants to *make* history. He is not even educated!

ALL: Hing!

KING: *Hamba! Phuma! (Go! Get out!)*

PEIRES: I mean, what will we do if we get a delegation from Scotland demanding the skeletons of all native Scottish people?

ALL: *Hamba!*

*(Two small boys with wooden rifles and yellow hard hats, alerted by the KING, grab poor Prof. PEIRES and bundle him off-stage.)*

NICHOLAS: My chiefs, the spirit is very happy for you, *makhosi!* (*general jubilation*)  
But, *makhosi*, what the spirit wants from you is for you to give me fifty thousand rands, to go to England, *makhosi*, and get the skull.

ALL: Ho hum...

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi*, how can we have peace in this country if you don't help me, *makhosi?* How *makhosi?*

ALL: Ho hum... (*They all begin to rock gently from side to side, humming the tune of 'Sad Times, Bad Times'.*)

NICHOLAS: (*to the audience*) You know, this could be you, maybe tomorrow, maybe next year. If the spirit calls your number you gotta do what they say, when the spirit voices talking you gotta obey. *Makhosi!* If I don't climb on an aeroplane, fly to overseas to fetch the skull of our king, this country's going to hell man. All the angels will fly away, people turning into animals. I have seen it all, you understand? *Makhosi!*  
My friends, I am asking for help, anybody out there, anybody who can help me? Anybody from the mountains, the forests, the villages, give me the money! Buy me a ticket to save the nation! Anybody out there?

(*Two children, one from each side, frog-march to NICHOLAS and hand over a crate of Castle beer and of Coca Cola and bundles of cash. Another of the OLD BOYS, the ancient and bearded Mr BHALIZULU Mhlonthlo separates himself from the Chiefs, wagging his cane in shrill fury.*)

BHALIZULU: *Yoh*, I don't want to lie to you, I don't. I'm so very disappointed with you chiefs. What *you* done to help the man? This is our son! He's coming coming, coming to save our nation and you - Now eh, you think you man who gotta lot of wives, you man who gotta lot of money, you gotta many cattle, you even gotta some English: now you don't help. You waiting for the Coca Cola and the Castle Lager must be giving the money. Hey, the winds is changing, but you, you, you... you cannot hear it!

MATANZIMA: I, K.D. Matanzima, will give you two goats!

## **rites**

(*SANGOMAS burst into the throbbing isiXhosa chant: 'inkomo ne 'sikhumba'. The first scene of 'THE DAYS OF MIRACLE AND WONDER' is over and the BUNFIGHT performers leap down to accompany the sacred dance of the SANGOMAS who take the floor while drums pound, and the smoke of the herb, mpepho, fills the air. At the height of the song one of the sangomas enters into a deep trance. Possessed by the spirit of an ancestor, she falls to the floor, writhing and calling. A senior sangoma pacifies her and*

leads her back to the side as the activity dies down and GCALEKA takes the arena again.)

## **SPIRITUAL MAN**

GCALEKA: You know, our intention - the Xhosa - if you doubt about things, you can go to a man like this, a man with the spirit (*indicating NICHOLAS, who sits next to him on the steps leading to the platform, centre stage*). I'm not understand a well-educated man, 'cos a well-educated man is teach by you white people to be well-educated...

*(An interruption of agreement from one of the BUNFIGHT performers, in isiXhosa.)*

GCALEKA: Ja, that reminds me, one day I have a dream, a man comes to me calls me 'Sonny', calls me there by the kraal there. He ask me a question which I cannot even answer, he say: 'Why the people don't like *sangomas*?' I say to him: 'I don't know, because before I becoming *sangoma* I got a lot of friends. *I want to know from you.*'

He say: 'You know why?'

I say I dunno.

He say, 'In the year 2004, there in that place of Mandela there's going to be a *sangoma* there' - a spiritual man, President! Already told me. All the ministers round the table going to be *sangomas*, we'll be listening to the spirit not to the books! The spirit of the people already knows this, they jealous, that's why they not like *sangomas*.

Hey, when you gonna become *sangoma* you get sick, man, you sick. You go to *sangoma*, become very sick, the *sangoma* heals you, then you become *sangoma*. 12 May 1992, hey this thing is funny man... I start being *sangoma* same date as Hintsas was died. Hey, this thing is funny man. The British people say they've got no authority to approve the head belong to Hintsas. *I've got the authority: spiritual authority!* The spirit nominated me to go fetch the bloody skull!

*(Yet another interruption from a SANGOMA, this time praising GCALEKA.)*

GCALEKA: Hey, they worried man, the spirits are worried. If this skull not buried soon, not buried together with Hintsas's head, there's going to be a big calamity in this country, I'm telling you...

*Yiza umfundisi.*

*(GCALEKA calls to the Reverend NZULWANA, who has been sitting up amongst the audience in his radiant white house- coat and blue sash. He makes his way down to the arena.)*

## **HEALING WATER**

GCALEKA: Now this man, Nzulwana, he's a prophet, a spiritual man of Jesus, very powerful indeed. Sometimes you dream some dream, and then you tell me: I don't believe it. Then after a week, the spirit come to me, say: "Nzulwana – what that man say is right!" This man very strong. He was going with me to Britain, he can tell you news.

*(The two spiritual leaders greet, ad lib about their trip, the co-existence of Jesus and the ancestors etc. Then NZULWANA raises his silver staff, and his CHOIR of five women in white blouses, skirts, headscarves and sneakers, and blue capes and sashes, rises out of the audience crooning their heart stopping 'Amen' song. They join him in the arena. Members of BUNFIGHT arrange benches centre-stage for them, and move flaming candelabra forward to frame them.)*

NZULWANA: You know, I told these people a lot of things before they happened, and the most of these things have happened already. *Uxolo lweNkosi malubenani.*

ALL: Amen

NZULWANA: That is why I go to overseas with chief Nicholas Gcaleka, I have a lot of dreams according with the skull, according with the head of our Paramount Chief Hintsa. The Holy Spirit told me all these things before they happened. In my dreams I have a lot of prophesies. *Uxolo lweNkosi malubenani.*

ALL: Amen

NZULWANA: This gift is not from college. This gift is from God only. This is the gift from heaven. *Uxolo lweNkosi malubenani.*

ALL: Amen

NZULWANA: So I praise the Lord. I praise the Jesus. Everything I do here, I do it in the name of - Jesus. *Uxolo lweNkosi malubenani.*

ALL: Amen

NZULWANA: Even this water, this is the healing water, if I want this water to cure you, I ask it to - Jesus. I am sure this water will cure you in the name of - Jesus. *Uxolo lweNkosi malubenani.*

ALL: Amen

NZULWANA: Jesus is everything to us. Jesus do everything that we need. He is our saviour. He rescue us. Now all you white people and black people together

here with us - I think God blesses us. Please, let us rise, let us all rise up and pray together. *Masethandzeni!*

*(He insists upon the whole audience rising, and then prays in isiXhosa for peace in South Africa. The CHOIR bursts into a snappy gospel song, 'Jerusalem, ikhaya lam', and is joined by BUNFIGHT and the SANGOMAS – the whole company dancing and singing. NZULWANA drifts amongst the audience, laying his right hand on the heads of the unsuspecting, calling for divine blessings.)*

NZULWANA: You know we black people, we believe in dreams, they come these people to us, those who are dead already. And they say, "It's your father. It's your grandfather." They tell you something, and that thing will really happen. That is what we believe! Halleluiah!

*(The CHOIR croons into their 'Amen' song, and move their benches to the side of the arena while NZULWANA sprinkles the audience with holy water.)*

## **STATE OF THE NATION**

GCALEKA: Hey the spirits are strong tonight, the spirit is strong. Now they want peace. Hintsas's hell spirit is destroying this country. Look at this country! Look at the jails! I think there next to the magistrate's court, there must be a *sangoma* there, before they can send you to jail, he say: 'Why you rape the old woman! Why you rape the 80 years woman when you are a young man like this?' You say: 'No, I don't know what's wrong with me chief, I apologise for what I have done.' But you done it already! The *sangoma* must call your mother and father about a deep investigation into your customs. Ask them what you done about your spirit. Because now you in court, you say in court: 'I don't know what happened to me. I don't even remember that.' It's because the hell spirit attack you. If Hintsas's spirit jump on you, you go crazy man, you understand? You rape this woman, it don't cost you five minutes. But now instead of investigating your spirit, they send you in jail 15 years, 15 years, 15 years, 15 years, 15 years. How many years?

ALL: 15 years!

GCALEKA: I think they gonna sentence whole of South Africa to 15 years for rape, because Hintsas's spirit is attacking us, he's gonna force us to do it! *Vumani! (Agreed?)*

ALL: *Siyavuma!* (we agree!)

GCALEKA: The people throw away their customs, throw away their ancestors. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: You see what will happen now in this country, the people will be sleeping with dogs. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: You'll see the women lying on their backs, and the dogs on top. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: You'll see the men fucking the dogs from behind, fucking his own children. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: The spirit is going to force us, we gotta do it. We got no choice. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Now enough is enough, now we must call the *sangomas*. Now we must ask, why is enough enough? What is wrong with the people! *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Why there, in the Transkei, a small boy like this rapes an old lady of 65 years. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: I want to know that time this boy was fucking his grandmother, what was happening. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: How does this twelve-year-old boy know his grandmother has something to fuck? *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Now this boy is in prison, 15 years, and nobody's fixing his spirit. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Why are you who say, 'camagu, camagu' raping? The old man raping dogs in front of all the people. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Why the chiefs not bury the bloody skull of Hintsu? Want to listen to scientists, not even care for there own bloody culture. *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Don't feel shame for me. If I got trouble I face the bloody trouble because I'm a spiritual man. I fight with my ancestors, my spirit! You understand? *Vumani!*

ALL: *Siyavuma!*

GCALEKA: Okay, *qalani* BUNFIGHT.

## **HEATHROW**

*(The BUNFIGHT crew: NICHOLAS, BHALIZULU, REVEREND Nzulwana and the HURRICANE SPIRIT are gathered on the central steps at Heathrow Airport, London. In front of them one of the children crouches with a sign: 'HEATHROW'. Up at the back women and children are dresses as angels with rubbish bag gowns and plastic wings...)*

BHALIZULU: Ja, you know, we took a plane from, from, from Port Elizabeth in the afternoon, me Bhalizulu Mhlontlo, Nicholas and Nzulwana, then we get there in Jo'burg, eh what you call that place? - eh, Jan Smuts Airport, after six, we stay there some hours before they say it leave the plane to England about eleven o'clock.

REVEREND: Amen, amen.

BHALIZULU: Then the bell ring to call us, we fly all night, fly all night, we go nicely, we go nicely, we get down, plane was get down to London about something to twelve, we find airport was full, full of people, eh what you call it - eh – Heathrow.

*(An eerie moment: they have entered The Underworld, the soft rise of choral voices; then BANG - lights, song, action! JOURNALISTS wearing camera-masks bounce into the arena... Into the song 'iMumbo Jumbo'.)*

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera, I mean to say  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

NICHOLAS: Can you hear the voices - imumbo jumbo

Rejoicing from the Heavens - imumbo jumbo

ANGELS: Welcome Gcaleka! - imumbo jumbo  
Gonna find what you're after - imumbo jumbo

NICHOLAS: I'm not here for a holiday - imumbo jumbo  
Or a free education - imumbo jumbo  
The spirits have invited me - imumbo jumbo  
To find the head of my relation - imumbo jumbo  
Spirits gonna guide me - imumbo jumbo  
To the right location - *culani!*

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

REVEREND: (*with angelic choral harmonised backing*)  
Hey! I see a lot of doves, I see a lot of doves, flying in the sky! hey!  
Flying in the millions, hey!  
There is no voice, what is the meaning of this vision?  
What is the meaning of this vision?  
Jesus! Jesus!

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

NICHOLAS: Jumbo jets are flying - imumbo jumbo  
From country to country - imumbo jumbo  
World is getting smaller - imumbo jumbo  
Spirit's getting bigger - imumbo jumbo  
Jumbo jets and angels - imumbo jumbo  
Country to country - imumbo jumbo  
The white and the black tribes - imumbo jumbo  
Making love together - imumbo jumbo

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

JOURNALIST: (*speaking into a BBC microphone*)  
South Africa's most famous witchdoctor arrived at Heathrow today  
claiming to be on a sacred mission to bring peace to his country.  
He wore a short skirt in an ethnic cotton print,  
a nylon leopard skin vest, a beaded dreadlock wig,  
and carried a fashionable wildebees tail accessory.

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

*(Ring ring of NICHOLAS's cell phone. President Nelson MANDELA and QUEEN Elizabeth – clutching a porcelain corgi – have taken up positions on up-turned crates on either side of the arena. )*

NICHOLAS: Ssshhhh! The spirits are calling me, *makhosi*. Hello?

MANDELA: Hello.

NICHOLAS: Hello, *makhosi*!

MANDELA: Hello, is that Mr Gcaleka?

NICHOLAS: Hey? Oh, it's Mr Mandela, yes, how you Mr Mandela, *thyini*?

MANDELA: No, fine. How're you?

NICHOLAS: *Ja, hayibo, Makhosi, camagu* Mr Mandela, eh I'm here in the airport at London.

MANDELA: You know, we all black people, more especially the Xhosa, we are behind you.

We give you our thanks, and we give you our blessing.

May God and the ancestors be with you on your trip.

*(Ring ring – another cell phone. NICHOLAS holds one phone to each ear.)*

NICHOLAS: Eh hello?

QUEEN: Hello, is that Chief Gcaleka?

NICHOLAS: Who's this?

QUEEN: This is Queen Elizabeth 2 of England

NICHOLAS: *Yoh, yoh, yoh!* Ho, Queen, hi!

QUEEN: Hi!

NICHOLAS: Yes, how are you, Queen?

QUEEN: No fine.

NICHOLAS: Eh.

QUEEN: And you?

NICHOLAS: *Hayi, hayi, camagu, camagu.*

MANDELA: Hello!

NICHOLAS: Just hold on Queen, I'm busy.

MANDELA: Hello?

NICHOLAS: The spirits are welcoming me, Mr Madiba.

QUEEN: I'm also busy, Gcaleka!

MANDELA: I'm very sorry that I couldn't assist you with the money, but next time maybe I will, I give you my word.

NICHOLAS: Thankyou very much Mr Madiba, *camagu!*

QUEEN: Gcaleka! Gcaleka!

MANDELA: May you bring that skull back so that our culture can come together: we are counting on you.

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi!*  
Hello? Hello, Queen?

MANDELA: Are you still there?

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi!*

MANDELA: May God and the ancestors be with you forever, *camagu, inkosi yam,* amen!

NICHOLAS: Hello!

QUEEN: Hello?

NICHOLAS: Is that the queen of England?

QUEEN: Yes, it's me.

NICHOLAS: Yes, I'm in London, in your country.

QUEEN: Ah

NICHOLAS: We are here for the remains of King Hintsa who was beheaded by your warriors on 12 May 1836 on the order of Sir Harry Smith.  
We have had no king for 161 years!  
I've come to fetch the skull because there's a lot of violence in South Africa, you must help me Queen, please.

QUEEN: I am willing.

NICHOLAS: Yes, please, with your support I can convince the people.

QUEEN: Oh.

NICHOLAS: All we want is for you to pay back ten cattles, not money, we need cattles, yes please.

QUEEN: !

NICHOLAS: The spirits are very hungry, *makhosi!*

QUEEN: And what more do you want?

NICHOLAS: *Amakhosi* - I want... I want everything that you can give me *makhosi!*

QUEEN: !

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi*, you can just give me the cattles, *makhosi!*

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day.

NICHOLAS: Listen now, I have a question for you: I see in my dream there's a hand writing with a red ball point, writing on the wall: 'Welcome to Invernessa'. Is there a place in here in London called Invernessa?

ALL: Yes, Yes.

NICHOLAS: Where is it, this place?

ALL: In Scotland.

NICHOLAS: Well, my friends, the head is not here then, the head is in Scotland!

ALL: Yeah!

*(GCALEKA butts in and breaks up the scene, to the outrage of BUNFIGHT.)*

GCALECKA: *Yimani*, Bunfight, I want to say something to the people: one day when I went to parliament I meet one chap there, this chap come from the U.K. I ask him a question: 'Who was the first writer in the world! Who introduced everything must be writing down?' He say: 'The Chinese.' I ask him: 'If our policy is not to write, our policy is to dream, what you say?' He said, this man: 'Look here, everybody dreams.' I ask him: 'If I dream, how can I make you understand that I dream?' He said this man, 'Look here my friend, everybody must have a vision.' He asked me: 'Do you know anything about a vision?' I say: 'Yes, I'm a vision man.' He say to me: 'Everybody must have a vision of Africa.'  
*(to a spectator in the front row)* What is your vision of Africa?  
Do you know what's my vision of Africa? It's that everybody must follow his spirit.

## **TONGO LAM (my Spirit)**

*(The three BUNFIGHT women, in short bright skirts and beaded bras, burst into this funky song, while the men dance in the arena.)*

WOMEN: I have a dream/ all people worshipping/ spirit in my dream/ hey *tongo lam*  
And in my dream/ spirit is returning/ spirit in my dream/ hey *tongo lam*...

*(While the drums keep up the rhythm, GCALEKA herds his SANGOMAS into the arena on their knees, forcing them to bounce on their knees to the frantic rhythm. The BUNFIGHT team moves off to change costumes.)*

GCALEKA: The Spirit is strong!

## **THE DREAM**

*(GCALEKA and his SANGOMAS leave the stage, the lights become vivid and dream, and we hear a shrill whistling sound. NICHOLAS and the HURRICANE SPIRIT are revealed centre-stage in a starry landscape. NICHOLAS' voice is amplified and slightly, hauntingly, distorted...)*

NICHOLAS: When I dream my spirit flies.  
When I dream I hear the spirit speaking to me, when I'm sleeping -  
The Hurricane Spirit, at my ear.

HURRICANE SNAKE: *(sings)* Hey *majola*, hey *majola*...  
There was a river, and in the middle of the river there was a hole where all the water ran out - only the rocks talk now, only the rocks talk now. Deep inside us something is missing, something was taken away... Hey *majola*, hey *majola*...

NICHOLAS: I lift up, lift up from my hotel bed, and fly out of the window,  
flying out over England,  
flying, flying, flying...

*(One of the BUNFIGHT team leaps softly into the arena beating two sticks together. He leads a snake of crouching children onto the stage; they bare the items of NICHOLAS' dream: a cardboard pony, house and tree. They position them on the floor and then hop off again as the BUNFIGHT players, in brown skirts, appear blowing flutes and dancing gently...)*

## **SKY**

*(All the BUNFIGHTers are grouped on stage. One of the women steps forward and addresses the audience.)*

WOMAN: Hello *ma-Africa*, are you enjoying the show? My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I come from \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm acting with BUNFIGHT. Ja, I'd like to thank Mr Gcaleka for giving us this opportunity for acting in this play – this is a great experience for us to be in your show, and we're glad to show the people the spirit of –

ALL: *Amakhosi!*

GCALKA: THIRD WORLD BUNFIGHT, ladies and gentlemen!

REPORTER: Now this scene we are calling SKY, because when Chief Gcaleka was in Scotland, everywhere he went Sky Television was there. You see, there in London he dreamed about a forest clearing, and a white pony, and a river and a house, and the Hurricane Snake saying:

HURRICANE SPIRIT: You will find the skull there, on that farm in Invernessa.

REPORTER: But when he arrives in Scotland, you know the white people love a program, they said he must go to the army base of the Scottish soldiers to see if the skull was there, then he must go to the museum, 'cos there's also a head there... He says:

NICHOLAS: Hey, my spirit is not working with a programme, my spirit wants to look for that farm.

REPORTER: No, Gcaleka, here in Scotland even the spirits must follow the programme. And everywhere they went, Sky Television was there...

*(SANGOMAS sing the song, 'Hey Majola', and the Scottish touring party sets off on it's adventure: NICHOLAS, BHALIZULU, REVEREND, a man with a SKY-TV camera-mask*

*on his head, and a microphone-wielding journalist, all lead by the HURRICANE SPIRIT. They move through the audience, and then back into the arena, as JESUS appears with outstretched arms and a crown of thorns on his head at the summit of the stairs. NICHOLAS and REVEREND approach respectfully; all gather around the stairs praying. JESUS wakes up, wiggles his fingers frantically and NICHOLAS bounds up the steps and plucks the nails from JESUS' hands. JESUS leads the party to where MR and MRS BROOKE stand in Scottish apparel with their children. Hopscotch, their white pony, played by another child, grazes nearby. NICHOLAS greets the BROOKES, and they produce a skull and hand it to him. The SANGOMAS end their song.)*

MRS BROOKE: Yes, I thought he was a Jehova's Witness when he popped up at the window.

MR BROOKE: I said to him that I was very delighted that coming all the way from Africa he has found what he was looking for.

MRS BROOKE: He wanted to know if I had felt any of the vibes. I told him that we have just felt very happy vibes cos we are a very happy family.

MR BROOKE: It certainly has a hole in its side. Whether or not it's a bullet hole I honestly can't say.

MRS BROOKE: He said he dreamed of our farm and also of our pony, Hopscotch. He said Hopscotch was a winged messenger.

MR BROOKE: Our family has a military background, you know. It's quite possible that one of my forefathers brought the skull back from Africa.

MRS BROOKE: She's such a little pony, you wouldn't believe that she had any vibes.

MR BROOKE: It's just one of those unusual objects, it's been in the family for years.

MR BROOKE: He was so happy, we just gave it to him, we didn't ask him a penny.

NICHOLAS: I can see you are excited - imumbo jumbo  
Your energy is rising - imumbo jumbo  
I'm talking 'bout fertility - imumbo jumbo  
And sexual appetizing - imumbo jumbo  
I'm talking on the satellite - imumbo jumbo  
I'm talking on the t.v. - imumbo jumbo  
I'm talking 'bout your fantasies - imumbo jumbo  
And still you don't believe me - imumbo jumbo

ALL: O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera I mean to say-  
O Gcaleka, will you smil-e for the camera and have a nice day

## rites

*(As the BUNFIGHT crew leaves the arena, the thud of a sangoma drum commences, and the beautiful sad sangoma chant: 'Ndiyamzondwa bulala bawo'. NICHOLAS and the HURRICANE SPIRIT are joined on stage by the SANGOMAS. Candles are lit, tubs of fruit are brought on and blessed – children hand out the fruit to audience. The smoke of mphepo billows out, and blessings are offered to the skull, which NICHOLAS wraps in white cotton, and places in a chest brought on by the HURRICANE SPIRIT. One of the sangomas brings on a chicken, which is passed from sangoma to sangoma, and then to GCALEKA. He in turn passes it to NZULWANA, who has come into the arena with his CHOIR. They take the chicken up to the platform where they bless it with prayers before slaughtering it. NZULWANA makes blood crosses on the backdrop. Meanwhile GCALEKA and his SANGOMAS have formed up for a powerful 'mPondo dance to the shrill chant, 'Khawukangele!' At the end of this, the SANGOMAS head back to their mats, whilst the CHOIR lights huge altar candles on the raised platform, and sing a wailing hymn of thanks.)*

## THE RETURN

*(We hear again the music of 'Sad Times, Bad Times', and the CHIEFS enter again and form up on the central stairs. They are framed by two children them waving palm fronds, and they gaze at a cardboard television set held aloft by a third child.)*

KING: My fellow chiefs, *mamelani*, now Nicholas is bringing back *nyantsika*, this skull. So what do you think about it, hmm?

YOUNG BLOOD: Hing.

OLD BOYS: Hmm...

YOUNG BLOOD: Hing.

OLD BOYS: That's him! *(pointing at the tv)*

YOUNG BLOOD: Hing hing!

OLD BOYS: That's our king Hintsá - that's a real Xhosa skull, ne?

KING: Look, it has a hole right there behind the ear from the bullet, this is exactly what the historians say.

OLD BOYS: Now all our problems will be solved, it's a miracle.

YOUNG BLOOD: Hing! That skull must be examined by the scientists!

OLD BOYS: Scientists?

YOUNG BLOOD: The people who are dealing with technology, not with superstitions. If you were educated you would know.

KING: That's another thing.

OLD BOYS: Hing!

YOUNG BLOOD: How can you trust uGcaleka? He's a *tsotsi*, he's a businessman, he's a *sangoma*, he's a priest... This whole thing is a crazy show!

KING: That's another thing!

OLD BOYS: You don't give a man a chance.

YOUNG BLOOD: All he wants is power.

KING: Hing!

YOUNG BLOOD: He wants to become the king of the Xhosa Nation.

OLD BOYS: *Hawu 'madoda!*

KING: He is trying to overthrow me?!!

YOUNG BLOOD: Anybody with a matric can see that!

KING: HING!

*(Enter NICHOLAS, BHALIZULU and the HURRICANE SPIRIT, carrying the chest.)*

NICHOLAS: *Makhosi!*

SANGOMAS: *Makhosi!*

NICHOLAS: My chiefs, we have come all the way back from Scotland with the head of our nation!

YOUNG BLOOD: No, no, no, don't shout here, don't shout here!

BHALIZULU: Ah! Where must we sit gentlemen? You say we mustn't shout, but where must we sit?

YOUNG BLOOD: Sit there, sit there.

KING: Eh, Bhalizulu Mtlontlo, we want you must bring that skull in front of us.

BHALIZULU: Well, this is a big person. I want four people to help me to make some dignity for the head, help me carry it.

YOUNG BLOOD: No no no, carry it alone!

BHALIZULU: Yoh, yoh, yoh

KING: Call the doctors! Call the doctors!

YOUNG BLOOD: Put it down, put it down! Go sit down.

*(Enter the MEN IN WHITE COATS.)*

DOCTOR 1: *Bahlekazi!*

YOUNG BLOOD: *Molweni!*

DOCTOR 1: *(taking the skull)* Yes, yes, eh gentlemen, this is definitely a human skull. Um, I would say an endentulous human cranium with marked thickening of the maxillary alveolar ridge.

DOCTOR 2: Ja, ja, look: cranial sutures are largely closed ectocranially.

DOCTOR 1: Hmmm...

OLD BOYS: Hing!

DOCTOR 3: And, *hayibo!* The outer table of the calvaria is eroded and brittle, very brittle.

DOCTOR 2: Yoh, yoh, yoh.

DOCTOR 3: Presumably due to post-mortem disintegration.

DOCTOR 1: Or insects.

DOCTOR 2: Or rodents Dr Phillips.

DOCTOR 1: Rats, rats, rats!

DOCTOR 2: Eh-eh.

DOCTOR 3: Look! An irregular triangular defect on the right squamous temporal bone.

DOCTOR 2: But no radial fracture lines around it, Dr Tobias

DOCTOR 1: Ewe, and no inward bevelling of the inner table.

DOCTOR 2: And no features of a bullet exit defect!

OLD BOYS: *Thyini!* The bullet never came out!

DOCTOR 2: Caucasoid...

DOCTOR 3: Definitely, Doctor.

DOCTOR 2: European...

DOCTOR 3: Eh-eh.

DOCTOR 1: Female...

DOCTOR 3: The skull of a middle-aged Scottish nanny!

ALL CHIEFS: Hing!

DOCTOR 1: And, uh, according to the Human Tissues Act of 1956, only scientists may keep this, for reasons of curiosity.

DOCTOR 2: Eh, the skull, ladies and gentlemen, belongs to - us!

## **THE RAVING**

*(GCALEKA storms into the arena, interrupting and addressing the MEN IN WHITE COATS and then the CHIEFS, all of who freeze.)*

GCALEKA: I want to ask you a question: have you dreamed? Do you dreamed, huh? What is your clan? You cannot dream about Hintsá, he's not your clan. Only clan of Hintsá can dream of the skull. I've been dreaming five years about the skull. Skull has been here sixteen months, not one man in South Africa dreaming about the skull. They say skull is belong to white woman. Why you people not dreaming, only depending on writing? Who sent me to overseas to fetch the head? Is it the scientists or the spirit? If you got brains why you didn't fetch the head? I think you stupid because the head been overseas for 160 years, you don't even smell it, you can't even write it in one of your books! Why when the spirit send me to fetch that head, why you tell it not belong to Hintsá? You scientists think you God. Why don't you make the head talk if you are God? Why don't you make that head talk? Say, 'I'm not belong to Hintsá.' You scientists think

you God. You not God! Will you be glad if I take one of your scientists heads and keep it? Why you want to keep my grandfather's head? That body's got no head for 161 years, can I take your head? Won't take me five minutes. You're playing with his head, where is your respect? My spirit doesn't play! Why you think everything not come right in this country, how many people must die?

If this head not buried with Hintsas body nobody will follow your bloody Jesus Christ, that Jesus bloody Jesus nonsense - naa nee nee, naa nee nee nee, naa nee nee - *Voetsek!* - naa nee nee... anyone here can hold up his hand who sent me to overseas to get that head? I can challenge any man, any spirit! I can turn whole of South Africa upside down in five minutes if my spirit getting cross.

And you chiefs, you bloody bastards, you are nothing to the spirit, nothing, nothing, nothing! You don't worry about the kingdom of the Xhosa nation, you worry about your bloody wages. First you agree that the head must be buried, then you change your mind, you want the written proof, you want the books! You are powerless, you got no visions, you are puppets. There's gonna be a big calamity in this country gonna be your fault. The spirits of our forefathers are fighting. This is war! You are the enemies. I'm gonna fight for that skull, do my job, I'm fighting with the spirit!

*(ALL break into the powerful amamPondo sangoma song 'Camagweni sangoma'. The Hintsas masquerade re-enters scattering the scientists and chiefs. GCALEKA jousts with him, finally bringing him to submission and placing a skull-mask on his head. He is appeased. GCALEKA thanks everybody for attending, particularly )*

GCALEKA: [thanking, bidding farewell, sending the crowd out into the night with the Spirit...]

**END**