

MEDU ART ENSEMBLE STATEMENT

9TH AUGUST: SOUTH AFRICA'S WOMEN'S DAY

25TH ANNIVERSARY

Today the 9th August mark the 25th anniversary of the South Africa's Women's Day. This day, indeed an important event in the history of the oppressed majority in South Africa is commemorated by the progressive mankind the world-over.

It is in the same spirit of solidarity that has been shown by Organisations like the United Nations, Organisation of African Unity and the Front-line States that Medu Art Ensemble deemed it fit to join hands in this great event.

This day is known the world-over as a day when our sisters and mothers marched through Pretoria to the Union Buildings to petition Strjdom, the then fascist prime minister, against the introduction of pass laws for women.

What our women took to the streets during that event was a show-piece of a militant struggle against fascist rule in South Africa. This was the dawn of a new bright era and an epoch of mass resistance by all sections of the community.

The introduction of pass laws for women was yet another ploy by the colonialists and the racists to strategically intensify their repressive and oppressive laws for the maintenance of apartheid. The total rejection of pass laws by our people exposed the abhorrence of such draconia laws.

It is characteristic of all oppressors to keep the oppressed in bondage, however human it might seem. Here one is tempted to quote the President of Mozambique, Samora Machel when he said:

"there is no democratic and human colonialism, whether British, Belgian, French, American or Portuguese...."

Culture of a people is a corner-stone of love, peace, happiness and prosperity. We who know this gesture cannot allow the oppressor to continue with his unprecedented plunder of our cultural heritage. Thus the birth of Medu Art Ensemble was a historical necessity. The group was born of events affecting all peoples of this volatile region - Southern Africa. Especially with an aggressor south of the river Limpopo.

This day, August 9th cannot be commemorated outside of what Medu stands for. This stands to reason because whatever clauses are being added daily to the Statute Books, that alone has cultural implications.

The laws that are actually being passed daily in the white parliament have virtually denied the vast majority of the population of all rights of a civilised people.

The imposition of all draconian laws by the regime has even more consequential cultural bearings: they affect people as a nation, affect people with a culture, and lastly affect people fighting for self-determination and national democracy.

Medu Art Ensemble, an organisation of cultural activists, has throughout its short momentous history of existence attempted to articulate the needs and aspirations of the people and at the same time adhered steadfastly to the principle of ANTI-RACISM.

The primary aim of the organisation is to work with the people, to understand the people and to be part of the people.

Medu has become a model for transformation of individual expertise to collective professionalism. Whatever products come out of Medu, these become the pride of the whole group.

It is with this prevalent spirit within Medu and the spirit that prevailed during the HEROIC march of our women, that we conclude by saying: UNITED WE STAND, UNITED WE TRIUMPH.

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