

PROGRAM DATE: 2017-06-15

PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: MS NHLANHLA NCIZA – MULTI AWARD WINNING AFRO POP MUSICIAN

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
DR. MALKA	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity – Women in Unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African Women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA	Joining us on the line today from Johannesburg, South Africa is multi-award winning Afro Pop musician Ms Nhlanhla Nciza from Mafikizolo which was formed in 1997, nearly celebrating 20 years in the industry. In 2014 they won eight South African music awards which included Best Pop, Best Collaboration, Best Duo Group of The Year, Best Downloads and in 2016 their work was showcased in the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles. Nhlanhla's artistic talents have also extended to the fashion industry with her NN Vintage line of boutique clothing. Welcome to the show!
MS NCIZA	Thank you so much, thank you.
DR. MALKA	In one of your interviews for your previous album Six Mabone you said that it's a kind of album that when you put it into your sound system you will never want to take it out and some of the critics have said that Six Mabone will definitely cement Mafikizolo's status as one of the most sensational singing groups in South Africa and a musical phenomenon in the entire African continent. Now over the years you've built a successful music career, you've been nominated and won various awards and graced the covers and magazines of many South African magazines; can you please share with us a few of the landmarks in your career and when you understood that music was going to be such a big part of your destiny?
MS NCIZA	I think, I think you know people need to know that I've loved music since I was very little you know for since I remember I've loved music and I think that's because also I come from a very musical family. My dad used to be in a boy band you know back in the day and my mum also sang in the church choir and also as a young girl growing up we used to sit around....my dad had an organ so we used to sit around you know in the afternoon's on Sundays and we just sat around the piano and the organ and we'd just sing, you know sing hymns and that was you know that's how growing you know up we used to spend our Sunday afternoons which was amazing and that's when I got to...my dad got to teach me a little bit you know a little bit of piano and you know since then I've been I mean I've been doing music ever since from my primary school right up until my high school and I also joined my church choir, so for me music has really been you know a part of my life, a big part of my life and ja and you know I remember when I spoke to my dad about doing music he wasn't...he was just like any other parent especially back then in the 1990's like you know our parents saw music as like...they didn't see it as a career, you know, and I mean also myself at that time I thought this, you know, it was something that I would love to do but it was something just on the side that I would like to do, something you know that was fun to do until I think when we recorded our first album, you know, and I remember that was in '97 and we went to our record company which hadn't signed us then, back in '97, and when I got to the studio I saw, you know, all these musicians that I used

	<p>to look up to, I mean I saw the guys from Bongonasi and I saw the guys from Boomshaka and you know and for me it was amazing because these are the people, you know growing up seeing people on TV and all of a sudden you're in the same room with them, all of a sudden they're you know they're saying no, come in, come into the studio and you listen to what they're doing, to you know what they're recording and I think you know that back then when I really you know told myself that this is something that I wanted to do and I went back home and spoke to my family, you know, but I mean my dad always wanted me to be a lawyer, you know, or to get into...do something that is law related and...but he could see you know the love that I had for music and he said okay you know I don't want a child who does not have a diploma or a degree so if music is what you want to do then you will go to school and study music so I enrolled with Wits University and I studied music, you know, and ja and I mean when we recorded our first album it was I think....because it was our first experience going to the studio we weren't sure about the kind of sound that we wanted to do and as a result our first few albums didn't do that well but when we recorded the Ambanawe and we started getting bookings from all over the African continent and we were invited as ambassadors for the 466664 and we travelled, you know, we travelled the world sharing stage with big names, I think that's when you know, that album that had been done, Ambanawe, was our fourth album so we had a struggle, you know, doing the first album which didn't break into the market, second album didn't break into the market but our biggest break and a point where I thought wow, actually you know, this is what I was meant to do was when we recorded our album The Ambanawe and you know meeting our former president and becoming the ambassador for the 466664 and travelling with our former president Mr. Nelson Mandela and just meeting him as well but travelling you know travelling and doing all of those shows around the world, I think for me you know, that's when I really said this is it, you know, this is it for me.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Well it sounds like an incredible experience and that music is very much in your family DNA and it's really interesting that your dad and your mom, despite being involved in music and singing, were inclined to not let you pursue that direction.</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>I think it was...it was because they were protective and I mean obviously the industry then wasn't as stable as it is now and it was you know they felt that it was only a few people that actually made it, you know, and that would make a career out of music and I mean like every parent you know you become protective of your child and you want the best or your child and back then the best for your child was education, you know, whether your child becomes a teacher or....but you know that they've got something stable so music was something that you know there were uncertainties you know in the music industry at the time and I guess what, you know, as much as they knew that I loved that and they supported me but they wanted me to have like you know a stable...a stable career, you know, something that they know tomorrow I will be able to provide for myself and provide for my family and back in the day you know they didn't think that music was the right path but you know having said that, they...I mean they were very supportive.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're right parents are always protective and they do support children in their respective endeavours and you spoke about education and doing your studies at Wits and I think that's also of the fundamentals in terms of being able to establish yourself and to pursue an interest and define that expertise because that</p>

	<p>is what stands you in good ground. Can you tell us a little bit more about your music and the persistence because that was one of the clear messages that I took out, the first album didn't do so well, the second album not so well, but through your persistence, that resilience to continue in this direction so if you can tell us a little bit more about the music and the styles and what inspired you musically when you were growing up?</p>
<p>MS NCIZA</p>	<p>When we were growing up, you know, back in the townships like each and every household a Sunday was known that this is a day to relax and every household will play the music high like, you know, it was like it was crazy but every Sunday, you know, every household you'd hear music blast so my home was not different, you know, when it comes to that. They played, I mean my dad had records and records of both South African and international artists and...but amongst them I mean he used to playhe would playhe would play Mama Mirium Makeba, he would play Joan Armatrading so growing up you know that's the kind of sound that I used to listen to because that's what my father had and of course you know like every household back in the '90's you know every household had Brenda Fassie you know in all of this music that was being played at home I was drawn more to Brenda Fassie, I think because she was Pop Culture. She spoke to me at the time you know and she loved kids and I mean even in our music videos there were songs like (music lyrics) you know which the video had kids and she loved it I mean Brenda Fassie loved children and I think that's why she had you know fans from a very young age group up until you know older people listening to her and loving her music because in her music videos you would get that and even when you see her on the TV during the music videos she would go around and hug kids so there was something about her that just you know drew me to her, you know, if we wanted to know what's going to be the stylish fashion item for that particular year, you know, during December because our parents used to buy us clothes during December time for the festive so we'd watch out what is Brenda Fassie wearing you know and what is the latest style, we would get all of that from her so I think she was one musician that really I was drawn into, obviously her music was amazing, obviously her voice was phenomenal but I'd say for me she stood out from the rest and from that young age I just wanted to be Brenda Fassie, I wanted to be like her, I wanted to dress like her, I wanted to sing like her you know so she was one musician that really I would say was one, you know, one of my influences when it comes to music because of all of those elements ja.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Artists definitely have an impact on other people's lives, you've just relayed your experiences and how you connected and resonated with Brenda Fassie and in many ways today you've now become that role model and you've proved and provided evidence to many women and girls both in South Africa and on the continent that through hard work and personal sacrifice anything can be achieved. You've spoken about the influences that Brenda Fassie had injected into your career, can you tell us a bit more about your song writing and what influences you in song writing.</p>
<p>MS NCIZA</p>	<p>I am mostly influenced by my community, what goes around in my community, you know, I'm influenced by life in general, I'm influenced by my country, for instance there's a song that I wrote where, you know, at that point in my life I felt that you know people had lost hope during the recession, obviously me being a young woman and understanding what recession is all about but then during the time where also I was recording my solo album and you know just trying to find myself as well as a solo</p>

	<p>artist and I was, I mean I was influenced by what people were going through at the time and people had lost hope, people were losing their homes, their cars and you know it was just bad in South Africa at the time and I wrote this song that says (.....) meaning the hardship will come to an end, it's an inspirational song that basically says you know I'm trying to give people hope and to say do not, you know, do not lose hope things will get better so I'm influenced by things around me. Sometimes it's not something I'm going through personally, sometimes it's something that somebody else around me is going through or people around me or my community or something I've seen you know around my community, that's what influences me but also I do write about my own personal experiences, you know, I..when I'm in a good space and I'm surrounded by love, you know, I write about love, so I think it's all of those different elements but also you know sometimes as song writers we go into the studio without knowing what we're going to write about on the day, we go into the studio, we listen to the music and the music sometimes writes you, when you listen to the music it drives you to write about you know a certain issue, you know, it could be just a fun song you know, depending what you feel when you're listening to the beat, so that's really what influences me as a songwriter, ja.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>It sounds as though you're incredibly sensitive to what happens around you and being able to detect that through your own personal experiences as well as in the community.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Today we're talking to multi-award winning South African Afro Pop Musician Nhlanhla Nciza from Mafikizolo.</p>
	<p>AD BREAK</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You are listening to "Womanity – Women in Unity" on Channel Africa, the voice of the African Renaissance, on frequency 9625 KHz on the 31 meter band, also available on DSTV Channel 802. Today we're talking to multi-award winning South African Afro Pop Musician Nhlanhla Nciza from Mafikizolo. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>In the previous segment Nhlanhla shared with us how music is in her DNA from her upbringing with her family, particularly listening to music in the influence on Sundays and one of the strongest influences in her space has been Brenda Fassie. We spoke about the influences in her song writing ranging from personal experiences through to the effects on her community and society at large.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Now Nhlanhla this programme "Womanity – Women in Unity" is all about gender equality which is increasingly a global focus and as such building female leadership is important for the future of women, not only in our country but across the rest of the world; how do you see female leadership whether it's in the music space, parliament, business or any other field for that matter?</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>I definitely believe that we have come a long way you know, we have come a long way and as our history has shown in South Africa that women have played, you know, a very big role in making South Africa what it is today and it shows that women are strong you know, women have a strong character, women when they stand together, you know, they are a force and you know I do believe that we've got, especially in South Africa we are so lucky that we've got that rich history where we're seeing you know women fighting for not only women's rights but fighting for the rights of South Africans and we are so lucky that we, you know, we grew up in a country where we are able to see that you know even women make such a difference and they play such an important role, not only in politics but</p>

	<p>even in music, like I said you know growing up listening to , listening to Mama.....what they used to sing about back in the day you can see that you know they were brave women to be able to you know after being exiled because what they sing about and because of what they wanted to bring out to the world and the stories they wanted to tell about South Africa at the time and they still did that, they still went out and reported about our issues in the country as women, they went out and they still sacrificed so much to speak about you know the issues that were affecting us in our country, in South Africa, we're lucky that you know we've got such role models whereby you can see you know that growing up as a young woman they are showing you that you know you can gather that strength and you know you can, you can basically become anything that you want and even young girls today they've got people to look up to, people likeKhumalo, people like Thuli.....,people like Mama Zumu, you know Mama Nkosasana Zumu you know that they can look up to, I mean those are just some of the women that inspire us as young people that are saying you can become anything that you want to be as long as you focus, as long as you stay positive and but also they're showing us you know the character that they have that nothing comes easy and everything you know comes with a challenge but you need to be up for that challenge, you know, those are just some of the leaders that you know we look up to you know women that are making a positive difference in our country but also don't forget to look at women around you, around the community you know, I for one, I look at my mom and I see an amazing woman, I see the amazing women that brought me up you know, she was a working mum but also she was able to bring up a family with good values, you know, she was a working woman as much as she wasn't at home you know most of the time but when she did come back home you know she was able to make sure that she gives us the best you know, so don't forget as much as we're looking at these women that we're seeing on TV, don't forget to look at women around the community. There's women doctors around the community that are doing an amazing jobs, there's mothers that are taking care of orphans in our communities who are doing an amazing job, who are a positive influence in our lives, so you know growing up those are the women mostly that I used to look up to. Women around my community, women you know that even when you had problems and your mum was not around a woman that you were able to go to and they would provide help for you, in South Africa we do have those positive stories, you know, amazing stories that areI mean we can't forget about the big history of the important role that our women played in 1954 when they stood together and went to Pretoria and they marched against the use of apartheid, they marched against our previous government, the apartheid government so I would say you know women are strong and I think you know once you believe in yourself, once you, you know, go after what you want as well knowing also that it's not going to be easy it's going to be challenging and still going after it and still pursuing it, that's one character that we have as women.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>I think you're absolutely right and you've really demonstrated a little walk through South African history of our strong women, both past and also present, the importance of our singers as musicians in terms of storytelling and the platforms that they have to share those stories not just within the South African context but onto much, much broader platforms and one area that I'd like to look at is what do you think we need to build on to benefit women in the future?</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>I think focusing on building women leaders especially in the rural areas you know, I do believe that we are getting somewhere, we are getting there in</p>

	<p>South Africa as a country but I do believe there's still room you know to empower women and to create women leaders and like I said especially in rural areas where you find that you know women are still you know looked down upon where we find that women are still find difficulties in terms of being considered as you know as being leaders or as being given equal opportunities as males so I think if we can focus more on that, going back to the rural communities and just you know creating women empowerment programmes and just you know going back for seminars, going back and inviting you know women to go back, just to go back and give strength and you know give strength to the young women that are growing up in the rural areas and I think just sharing the light in rural areas you know about women empowerment and about creating leaders around those areas and also just you know I think not only speaking to women but speaking to men as well in the rural areas, you know, so that they also understand where we are as women you know at the moment so I think if we can create those kind of seminars, you know, inviting both women and men and speaking about you know, and just creating those women empowerment programmes, that would really make a difference. But having said that I mean we are coming okay I think as a country in general. Like I said earlier in the interview you know, the women that I've mentioned, women that are doing well in different sectors, in politics, in big companies, in corporates, in music you know industries as well. For instance I do not only sing for Mafikizolo but I can own a record company you know because I think that's also been one of my dreams and something that I saw later in the music industry that the music industry is still very much in the hands of males and you know I just wanted to also say that as women we do not only have to be a singer but you can actually own a record company, you can actually sign other artists, so I always as a young girl growing up and growing up in the music industry and in my journey in the music industry wanted to you know shed that light with the young girls that there's so many things that you can do in the music industry except for you know, what is deemed as the mainstream which is just becoming a female singer but you can become a sound engineer, that area as well you still have more males as male engineers because females believe no that's a job you know only for males but you can actually become a sound engineer, you can become a producer as a female, you can own a record company as a female, you can</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're totally right about being able to take greater ownership within the value chain, that it's not just limiting and restricting women to certain stereotypes of roles and positions. You mentioned that you've branched out not just from a singing point of view but being able to hold a record company, can you tell us a little bit about some of the gender challenges that you've experienced and how you've overcome them in your career?</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>First of all you know when we were growing up back in the late '90's when I got into the music industry first of all it was difficult for a female singer to be considered as a solo artist so when you go knock at the record companies, you know, local companies and international companies you will be turned back or they will tell you that no actually you will need to become a backing vocalist so a lot of women back then they were used as backing vocalists because the industry was very much male dominated, especially in South Africa, so you now back then that was one of the biggest challenges but obviously which have changed in time, but what personally I have experienced was you know this...especially in this industry I think that's one of the things my parents were trying to protect me against when they didn't want me to get into this industry was a lot of young women as a</p>

	<p>result, you know, of what I said earlier about women singers being overlooked was you would go there and people would, you know, would want favours, they would promise you things, if you do this I can, you know, I can secure one, two, three for you, so those are the challenges I that I faced personally as well in the music industry where people would say if you want things to happen, if you want your records to be played you know you need to do one, two, three, you know and you find that a lot of women fall into that trap whereby they're being tricked into doing things that they don't want to just because they want to get ahead and I think it happens also in other industries outside of the music industry but that's something that happened to me but I you know, I believe...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...so you had people trying to take advantage of you and not really being interested in your capabilities but more of what they can get out of you.</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>Yes, exactly and sometimes for you to get a record deal as a women they will say no we'll pair you up with a guy you know. I think sometimes it wasn't done intentionally but because record companies think oh, you know, males sell more records than females so if you're a good female singer and then they don't want to lose you they would rather pair you up and not sign you as a solo but they would pair you up with male singers and that's what used to happen a lot but you know like I said with time you know they started believing in the talent of women and believing that actually that women can sell records as well, women can make good music just on their own as well but ja, those I mean those are some of the challenges and I believe that you know I got through that because of my background and my upbringing where you know the first thing that my parents taught me was to respect yourself, you know, when you go into this industry Nhlanhla, first of all respect yourself, do not forget who you are, do not forget where you come from, do not forget the values that we instilled in you so that's what I took into the music industry and that's what protected me all of those years you know and so I fought for myself, I fought for myself and I told myself, you know, I will not lose who I am because I want to get ahead, I will you know push and I will believe in my talent and that's you know...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Values are critically important, that's your moral compass.</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>Ja.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>We are unfortunately coming to the end of this show, can I please ask you to use this platform to send a message of hope to all those women in Africa who are listening to us today that due to circumstances gender equality might not be first on their agenda but rather the daily struggle of taking care of their family, raising children and putting food on the table for them is a more pressurising reality?</p>
MS NCIZA	<p>I would say you know first of all you know when you look at our history in South Africa you see that when women stand together and support each other and it's about issues that concern them but doing it you know together and not doing it individually then the voice becomes stronger and that's what happened with us in South Africa. I think you know if women in the rest of the African continent they can look at that as an example and say you know let's stand together and let's keep fighting but let's do it together then you become a strong force and that's how really you get people to listen, when you come together, when you don't stand out as an individual but you know putting together your voices because you're fighting for the same thing, you know, I do believe they will be heard but they mustn't lose hope you know they mustn't lose hope, I do believe that we believe in the modern Africa where you can have all of this and still</p>

	become you know a good mother and still become a good wife, you know, and still you know get ahead in your workplace but if we stand together as women and support each other as women and talk about these issues as women, you know, the continent will listen, you know, our government will listen, our communities will listen if we stand together as women.
DR. MALKA	Thank you very much for that important message of solidarity and support for womanhood.
MS NCIZA	Ja.
DR. MALKA	It's been wonderful having you on our show today we really appreciate you taking the time.
MS NCIZA	Thank you so much for having me.
	PROGRAMME END