

Transcript of Nduduzo Siba's Audio Recording

__My name is Nduduzo Siba. I am a South African multidisciplinary artist, entrepreneur, and creative practitioner. My work spans dance, photography, performance, music, and storytelling. I am also a human rights activist and a survivor of the Brazilian prison system.

__I was born into Zulu culture, and even after living in Brazil for 13 years, this identity continues to shape the way I create and exist. For me, the traditional Zulu garment is not a costume—it is memory, language, and presence. I grew up understanding that what we wear communicates even before words do.

__In Zulu culture, especially through the art of beadwork, clothing becomes a form of visual language. It expresses identity, emotion, and social

relationships. Zulu culture is based on seven fundamental colors, which form this system of communication. These colors acquire meaning through their combinations, creating messages that can be read and understood within the community. Patterns also communicate. Certain designs are associated with femininity, prayer, and emotional expression. Others are associated with masculinity, conveying a more direct and structured language. Through color and form, we are able to understand what a garment is saying. Historically, this was an essential means of communication, especially for women.

__Beadwork allows feelings and intentions to be expressed symbolically, transforming clothing into a living language. There is also a spiritual dimension. When I wear a traditional Zulu garment, I am not simply representing a culture—I

am connecting with my ancestors. These garments carry memory and presence. They connect me to my lineage, to the land, and to the natural elements, bringing a sense of protection and alignment.

__Traditional Zulu garment is often misunderstood through a Western perspective. What may appear to be nudity is not about exposure, but about authenticity. For us, the body is an integral part of culture and spirituality. As someone who lives between South Africa and Brazil, I feel a responsibility to preserve this language without distortion. To adapt it too much is to risk losing its meaning. My work is to honor this language as it is, to wear these garments authentically, to educate, and to affirm a living identity. In this way, the past, the present, and the future remain connected.