

"Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens" to perform at UCSD's Price Center Ballroom on February 10 in celebration of Black History Month

January 21, 1992

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"MAHLATHINI AND THE MAHOTELLA QUEENS" TO PERFORM AT UCSD FEB. 10

"Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens," a musical group from South Africa, will perform at 8 p.m. Feb. 10 in the Price Center Ballroom at the University of California, San Diego, as a part of UCSD's celebration of Black History Month.

Tickets are \$12 for general admission and \$9 for students, and may be purchased at the UCSD Price Center Box Office or from TicketMaster outlets.

"Mahlathini" performs a popular mixture of African rhythms and sounds, referred to by South Africans as "mbacianga," or "poor man's stew." The melodies and rhythms are taken from so-called street music, wedding music, traditional sounds and international pop.

"Mahlathini" spun out of the South African group "Makgona Tsohle Band," in the mid-sixties. Mahlathini was discovered by the Makgona Tsohle Band while performing at a wedding. He was added to the group, and then three female singers, Hilda Tloubatla, Mildred Mangxola and Nobesuthu Shawe joined the group, performing under their present name.

From the mid-sixties on, "Mahlathini" and "Makgona" are credited for revolutionizing the South African pop scene. For 25 years, the group sold an average of one to two million copies of each album they produced.

When Paul Simon opened the frontier for African music to reach North American shores, the group became known. The band consists of two electric guitars, an electric bass, drums, synthesizer and a saxophone. The group wears brightly colored dress and produces a high energy performance.

The late Leadman Sambalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo had said of the group, "Mbaqanga is the rhythm music of South Africa, and Mahlathini does it the best. From a long time ago in the sixties, they are my favorite group. That gruff voice! (Mahlathini) He's just got something unique."

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