



Top musicians in concert at Wits

By Elliot Makhaya

"BLACK Is The Colour", a poetry with music concert by Sedibeng Theatre, moves to the Wits Great Hall, Johannesburg, on September 2 and 3.

"Black Is The Colour" is based on a black awareness theme with a slice of protest poetry. Zakes Mofokeng reads poems to the background of music by Pat Matshikiza on keyboards and Thomas Masemola on flutes.

The music is originally by Pat and Thomas and according to Zakes, "Black Is The Colour" may be recorded, should negotiations be completed with a record company.

Zakes reads poems by famous poets like Casey Mtsisi, Stanley Motjuwadi, Oswald Mtshali, Wally Se-

Thomas Masemola . . .
"Black Is The Colour"

rote and many others. Zakes is also a noted playwright. He penned masterpieces like "The Train" and "A Blue Note" which is being rehearsed in Soweto.

Pat Matshikiza is one of the best jazz pianists in the country and an established composer and arranger. He added another feather to his musical cap following the release of the LP "Tshona", which sold like hot cakes in the townships.

Thomas was a

founder member of the indigenous group, Batsumi, who have since disbanded.

The concert is organised in conjunction with the Black Students' Society. Tickets can be obtained from S Ramesh and Mahomed Bram at Wits and also from members of the students society.

The concert will move to Mamelodi Community Hall, on September 9 and Atteridgeville Community Hall on September 10.

the skill, raw feelings

ange, unsympathetic perfor-
three perfor-
ted by empty
the attention
all audience
isplay of skill,
bility and un-
nimity.

me is a fine-
ted, immacu-
ated whole.

with Pat Mat-
iano and Tom
a flute tenta-
g towards one
they converge
melodic unity
ntained until

akes Mofokeng
in hand, and
l — sometimes

JAZZ and POETRY

Rina Minervini
Black is the Colour
Wits Great Hall

in silence, sometimes with
the music cushioning or
emphasising his words.

In between poems the
music takes over again and
the reader steps back, main-
taining the taut triangular
group by his unobtrusive
presence.

It is all deceptively sim-
ple. No frills, no extro-
vert showmanship. It is a
memorable experience that

owes its high quality to
five ingredients: the re-
laxed expertise of the
musicians, the communica-
tive jazz they play, the
direct, almost sparse tech-
nique of the readers, the
content of the poems, and
the combination of these
four into one organic cre-
ation.

The content of the poems
gives the evening its over-
all meaning. I recognised
only one, Oswald Mtshali's
"The Detribalised," but
used as they are here the
selection forms a totality
which is an angry, but com-
passionate and even oc-
asionally humorous ex-
pression of black con-

sciousness.

The implications are of-
ten deeply disturbing to a
white listener. In fact, the
feelings expressed are
sometimes so raw as to
have defeated the poet's
attempt to cast them in
literary form.

But much of it is poetry
of a high order, and one
cannot in honesty reject
the emotional truth it
embodies.

Even if the second night
was better attended than
the first, "Black is the
Colour" deserves a wider
audience in Johannesburg
than these two perfor-
mances have given it.