

Bra Hugh honoured at UKZN



BY DEGREES: Musician Hugh Masekela was honoured with an honorary doctorate for his life's work.

SIBONGISENI MAPHUMULO

"I AM HUMBLLED and honoured to share this day with you," world renowned jazz trumpeter Hugh Masekela, said when he was conferred with an honorary doctorate of music degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville campus yesterday.

Masekela, who refused to be called a legend during his acceptance speech, said the time for African heritage to be restored was upon us.

"The study of our mother tongues needs to be prioritised, the easiest gateway and hardest is through spo-

ken poetry," Masekela said.

"Our best traditional art, are they not worthy of study? African artisanship lies dormant and invisible. We need to restore the excellence of African heritage back into our lives without abandoning the best elements inherited from the Western world."

The Grammy award-winning artist said the true history of Africa needed to be also prioritised.

"Is our heritage really primitive, backward and barbaric? I humbly ask you to carry these thoughts with you as you go out into the world. Think about how humiliating it will be one

day, 20 years from today, when your children are asked who they are and they respond by saying we used to be African long ago. It will be because you speak European languages in your home," he said. A total 10 148 students, 62% of them women, will graduate from the UKZN from today. This was despite the #FeesMustFall protests that forced the closure of the institution more than twice last year.

"Many things need to fall in South Africa. We need to recapture what was fought for and so far we are in a state of disarray," Masekela said.

sibongisenim@thenewage.co.za