

In Love & Memory of



Seba Limbiko Tembo

6198 May 3 - 6249 June 16

1958 May 3 - 2009 June 16



Given Life Forever and Ever



Nguzo Saba
The Seven Principles



Umoja
Unity



Kujichagulia
Self-Determination



Vjima
Collective Work and
Responsibility



Vjamaa
Cooperative Economics



Nia
Purpose



Kuumba
Creativity



Imani
Faith

Dr. Maulana Karenga
Creator of Kwanzaa



Limbiko receiving flowers of appreciation from the African American Cultural Center (Us)



Advocates of Us with international guests



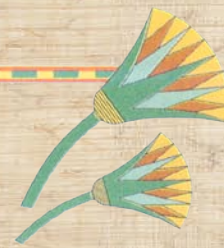
Limbiko with students, teachers and parents at the Limbiko Tembo Kawaida School of African American Culture



Limbiko and students at El Ricon Elementary School



IBADA
Order of Service



6249 Juni 26 ▲ 2009 June 26

Ngoma na Taamuli - Music and Meditation

Tambiko
Libation for the Ancestors

Seba Dr. Maulana Karenga
Officiant, Temple of Kawaïda-Maat

Kha-em-hotep
Rise up In Radiance and Peace

Seba Dr. Maulana Karenga

Makumbuko Mema - Good Memories

Masomo - Readings
The Sacred Husia
The Sacred Odu Ifa
The Sacred Husia

Seba Tiamoyo Karenga
Seba Tulivu Jadi
Seba Chimbuko Tembo

Mawazo - Reflections

Family, Advocates, Community

Tanzia - Obituary

Seba Tiamoyo Karenga
Sebati Mshinda Nyofu
Advocate, Thema Rikondja

Taswira ya Filamu
A Film Portrait

Advocates of Us

Taabini - Eulogy

Seba Dr. Maulana Karenga

Ahadi ya Kwisha
Closing Commitment

The Community

Ngoma na Chakumbusha - Music and Meal of Remembrance

Tanzia - Obituary

Limbiko Tembo, a highly respected educator, social activist and advocate of culturally-grounded education who dedicated thirty years of her life to the vocation of teaching and institution-building, was born in Watts, California, May 3, 1958 to Mr. & Mrs. Oscar and Arvinola Neal. Limbiko, whose birth name was Laurinda Neal, grew up in Compton, graduated from Gardena High School and went on to study at California State University, Long Beach. There she earned a B.A. in Liberal Arts with a Clear Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in 1981 and continued post-graduate specialization studies in social and cultural diversity in education.

At CSULB, Limbiko took a class with professor and then chair of the Department of Black Studies, Dr. Maulana Karenga, who is also the creator of Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba, The Seven Principles. Her continued study and work with him in the organization Us and its related institutions and the resultant development of their close friendship was, according to her conversations with her other friends and colleagues, a turning point and a deeply transformative experience in her life. Her name change to Limbiko Tembo reflected this transformation, a coming-into-consciousness and commitment to African ways of understanding and engaging the world.

Limbiko embraced Dr. Karenga's philosophy of Kawaïda and the Nguzo Saba which stressed recovery of the best of African culture for paradigms, perspectives and principles; the centrality of cultural grounding; social justice; social change; and striving constantly to bring forth "the best of what it means to be African and human in the world". Applying this to education, she stressed respect for the dignity, culture and potential of each student; intellectual excellence; positive value orientation; and the use of knowledge in the interest of community, society and the world. She applied these

principles and served for three decades at the Kawaïda School of African American Culture as teacher, vice-principal and principal, as well as in her public school instruction. Limbiko taught public school at Roosevelt Elementary in Compton and then at El Rincon Elementary in Culver City, earning praise from principals, fellow faculty, staff, students and parents as an excellent and dedicated teacher and a genuinely good and gentle person. She was especially praised for her ability to work with what was called



"difficult students" and was regularly assigned and also requested the most challenging students. In a letter of commendation from parents of one of her students to El Rincon and the Culver City School District, she is praised as "a remarkable teacher" who "has the ability to place herself in the role of her students, regardless of culture, academic ability or disability". Moreover, it says "she has helped students to succeed who have not been successful academically or behaviorally in other classrooms" and "transform(ed) students who were disruptive and not performing or on task" and "...it is unbelievable".

Deeply committed to continuously learning and sharing the richness, diversity and value of African culture and insights of Kawaïda philosophy, Limbiko studied Kawaïda; the African classical sacred texts, the *Husia* and *Odu Ifa*, translated and edited by Dr. Karenga; and became a *Seba*, a moral teacher in the Kawaïda-Maat tradition. She also took seminars at the Kawaïda Institute of Pan-African Studies, taught advocacy class for incoming members of Us and lectured at conferences and other forums on Kawaïda educational philosophy.

Moreover, Limbiko lectured and conducted community and educators' workshops on teaching and celebrating Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba at various venues. She taught cultural workshops for children at the Watts Summer Festival and organized and taught a major children's workshop on Kwanzaa at the U.S. Post Office's unveiling of the first Kwanzaa Stamp at the Museum of Natural History, the site of the unveiling.

As Limbiko helped expand the Kawaïda philosophy of education, she was also influenced by the writings of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, Dr. Anna Julia Cooper and similar African American educators. In a lecture on the role of education and the essentiality of women educators in the process, she stated "Mary McLeod Bethune said that 'Knowledge is the prime need of the hour' and Anna Julia Cooper said that 'women are vital to the regeneration and progress of the race'. And we, the women and educators of Us are still following them. We are still stressing the indispensability of quality education for a good life and a decent and dignity-affirming living. And we are still stressing the essentiality of women to our people's education and to our restoration and movement forward on the upward paths of our ancestors".

In her commitment to Movement activism for a just and good society and world, over the years, Limbiko assumed various roles and responsibilities. Those included her positions as: executive circle member of Us; and board member of the African American Cultural Center and the National Association of Kawaïda Organizations. Furthermore, Limbiko was a member of the NAACP, the Coalition in Support of Haiti, Committee for Equitable and Sustainable Development in Africa, and the International Black Coalition for Peace and Justice. She also participated in numerous other community and public projects and demonstrations for social justice and positive social change.

In addition, as an active advocate of women's rights, Limbiko was a founding member of the Senut Sisterhood, a Sisterhood of the World African Community; a teacher and mentor in its Majando (rites of passage) program for young girls, as well as a member of the International Black Women's Congress and the National Council of Negro women.

Finally, Limbiko was co-founder and co-publisher, with her sister and friend, Chimbuko Tembo, of the University of Sankore Press, an independent press committed to continuing the historical legacy of African scholarship and learning of its ancient namesake, publishing books on continental and diasporan African life, culture and history.

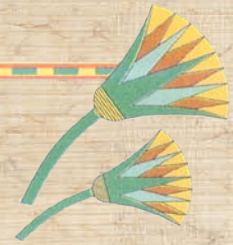
Some of Limbiko's favorite activities were reading, studying the Husia and Odu Ifa, going to the beach and marina, and enjoying the awesome sight, spray and spell of the sea, long conversations with family and friends, word games and game shows, dining at the finest restaurants and travelling abroad and in the U.S. including Egypt, Africa; Ixtapa Zihuatanejo, Mexico; Vancouver, Canada and Hawaii as well as regular trips to New York, San Francisco, San Diego and other resort cities.

Limbiko passed following a courageous struggle with ovarian cancer. She made her transition June 16 at home surrounded by members of her immediate extended family. She is survived by her parents, Oscar and Arvinola Neal; her sister Pam Neal-Robinson; her brothers Melvin and Anthony Sr. Neal; her niece, Ingrid Robinson; and her nephews Anthony II, Kristopher and Christian Neal; her uncle Ralph Smith Jr. and other uncles and aunts.

She also is survived by her immediate extended family, Dr. Maulana Karenga, Tiamoyo Karenga, Chimbuko Tembo and Thanayi Karenga, as well as her larger extended family, the advocates and members of Us: Sanifu Adetona, Thabiti Ambata, Sikivu Auston, Tulivu Jadi, Mpinduzi Khuthaza, Mshujaa Kumoyo, Mshinda Nyofu, Adili Rikondja, Kojo Rikondja, Thema Rikondja, Hasani Soto, Aminisha Tambuzi, Robert Tambuzi, Wasifu Tangulifu, Malaika Tawasufi, and Ujima Wema, and many loving friends.



In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the central focus of Limbiko's work, the Kawaïda School of African American Culture (SOPPAAC) which will be renamed The Limbiko Tembo Kawaïda School of African American Culture in memory and honor of her.



Libation for Limbiko Tembo: Praise-Song for an African Princess Dr. Maulana Karenga

This is a libation, sacred words and water, spoken and poured in remembrance and honor, in ever-growing gratitude, ever-enduring love and everlasting appreciation of you, Limbiko Tembo, our sister, special and beloved friend, partner and shareholder in things good and sacred, you who have passed in peace and have risen in radiance in the heavens. And it is also a praise-song for you, an African princess, whose royalty is rooted in her righteousness, and who is regal thru the good she gives and does in the world.

Let us stand up and say it now in the voice and vision of our ancestors. We must not be silent at the setting of this sun, the transformation and transition of this bright star into a special form of energy, light and life we call divine spirit. We must speak of the good she brought and will continue to bring into the world.

In the words of our ancestors: Bayede. Homage to you, royal one. Bayede wena omnyama. Homage to you beautiful Black one; Wena waphakhati, you in the center of our life and love; Wena wohlanga, you a descendent of the original ones. Bayede. We pay homage to you, royal and righteous one. Olungileyo akaqedwa. The good and righteous one is never defeated or undone, even by death.

We pay homage to you, Limbiko Tembo, you Kawaida woman, culturally rooted, ethically grounded and self-defining. You who cherished sisterhood, reinforced family and community, built a worthy man and woman partnership in love and struggle, and made social service and social action indispensable aspects of your self-understanding and self-assertion in the world.

We praise you, Limbiko Tembo, in your self-naming in the context of your culture and the reinforcing embrace of your most precious relationships. Your name is an announcement of your coming-into-consciousness, an uplifting, life-changing awareness of your Africanness, a sign of your commitment to African ways of understanding and asserting yourself in the world.

African princess, Kawaida woman, with your self-naming, you called yourself into being again, into a new beginning in the world. You followed the advice and urging of the ancestors who say in the sacred teachings of the Odu Ifa, "Reconstruct yourself. If we are given birth, we must bring ourselves into being again".

Your name is Limbiko, signifying and affirming your self-understanding as a treasure trove of goodness, a goodness stored up and set aside for a special giving, keeper of a priceless good that promises to constantly increase even as it is shared in personal and collective ways. We praise you for your good, gentle and joy-bringing soul.

Your name Tembo signifies and affirms your membership in the ancient and noble House of Tembo Mkuu, The Great Elephant, Ndumahlezi, Thunder-While-Sitting; an ancient order of teachers of the clear and sacred word; reluctant, but ever-ready soldiers; keepers of the tradition with a long memory; and a quiet strength that stretches out constantly to gently guide, comfort, protect and care for others in the most loving, respectful and resourceful ways. You have honored well this ancient family, this brotherhood and sisterhood and most ancient order. We share the same name and commitment.



Limbiko Tembo, let us now raise up the seven royal and righteous names we your loved ones give you for the good you and we, the Odu Ifa tells us, have been divinely chosen to bring, increase and preserve in the world. These are names written in the hearts and minds of the people, virtues and values which will weigh well for you in the divine scales in the Hall of Maat.

We know and honor you first as *Mwalimu*, teacher, speaker of the clear and mind-opening word, instructor in lessons of life and living, careful cultivator of the love for learning; rightfully attentive to the culture, the dignity and respect-demands of everyone; daring to give special rank and relevance even to an infant; Seba, moral teacher of the sacred word, tireless teacher of the good, the right and the possible and continuous student of the ancient teachings for insight, inspiration and ever-deeper understandings.

Your name is also *Mpaji*, constant giver of the good. The Odu Ifa says of you, Mpaji, the constant giver, "Ofun, the giving one, is giving out goodness everywhere. And she does not make noise about it". You are, the ancestors taught, she who in wanting to do wonderful things, observed the ways of heaven, which gives good everywhere and for everyone.

We remember and raise your name as *Simba*, lion-spirited soldier who did not see herself as such, but entered the field of action in the defense and development of our people with a sense of destiny and duty worthy of praise and emulation; and who waged a life and death battle for four years against a deadly disease without complaint or concession. The lioness, *Sekhmet*, protector of the people and the culture which brings them into being and sustains them is your name also.

We call you too, *Jamala*, woman of infinite grace, elegance and poise, chooser of the right and refined word, attentive to the gentle, the soft and supple, the delicate and smooth, the tender and "too good to be true" without being weak, artificial or unreal.

*What Can I do to help?
Love and Work.*

Seba Limbiko Tembo

Your name too is *Balozi*, honored ambassador, refined representative of our interests, relation-builder, patient listener, speaker of words that reconcile, repair, rejoin and set things right. It is your heart and mind, the sacred *Husia* says, that cause you to advance; it was your character that kept you out front.

Nasiha, steadfast friend, wise and faithful counselor is how you have also defined yourself; a bringer of joy and a conversation of justice; talking and practicing love and struggle; finding solutions where they are incomplete or absent; wanting and working hard and happily for the good with and for the other always.



Limbiko Tembo, as we slowly lift ourselves up off the ground of our grief and stand up to go forward for and with you in your new and different presence in our lives and the world, we will look and listen for you everywhere and all the time. We will feel you in wind and rain; see your life in the legacy of work and memories you left us; and hear your voice in every value-orientation and conversation on African culture we encounter. Indeed, as I whispered in your ear before you were enveloped in that awesome flash of light and love, "We will always be together in this life and the next and surely we will see each other in the Africa of our ancestors. Tutaonana kwenye Afrika wa babu zetu."

Hotep. Asc. Heri.



A glorious spirit in heaven
A continuing powerful presence on earth
Justification in the Divine domain.
Resurrection after death.
These are the gifts of the righteous ones.
And righteous are those who receive them.
They will be counted among the ancestors.
Their name shall endure as a monument.
And what they've done on earth
shall never perish or pass away.



The Sacred Husia

"I give thanks for family and friends like you. Thank you for always being so thoughtful and kind. Your concern and support brighten my day and your acts and words of kindness brighten my life. For this, I give thanks."

- an unsent note by
Seba Limbiko Tembo

The Us family gratefully acknowledges the many comforting words and numerous acts of kindness expressed by family and friends.
Asante, asante nyingi na baada ya asante mchanga wa pwani ni haba.
Thanks, many thanks and compared to the many times we say thanks, the grains of sand on the seashore are few.

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"May the good Limbiko left, last forever"

