

## **Chairman's Address – The late Dr Leonard Martin delivered by his brother and Working Committee Member of the DMLD Kevin Martin**

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I stand in place of my brother Dr. Leonard Martin, Chairman of the Don Mattera Legacy Foundation, who regrettably cannot honor this occasion due to his ill health.

I will endeavor to deliver his brief welcome speech as **HE** would have done.

In honoring Dr. Donato Omarudin Don Materra

I Hereby WISH TO WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGE former 1<sup>st</sup> lady Mrs. Zanele Mbeki,

Former President Mr. Kgalema Motlante and 1<sup>st</sup> lady Mrs. Gugu Motlante,

The Consul General of Italy, Emanuela Curnis,

The Director General for sports, arts and culture: Mr. Vusumusi Mkize,

The event also acknowledges all representatives of government present.

All PROTOCOL OBSERVED....

**I welcome you all to this auspicious occasion.**

**As the Don Materra Legacy Foundation, we wish to dispel any doubt, that in honoring our communities by honoring Dr. Don Mattera, we are in fact, also honoring all those heroes who have consciously sustained the struggle for the entrenchment of the anti-colonial and multicultural paradigm.**

Why is this critical issue being raised in the historical context of honoring Don Mattera?

All Don Mattera's writing are a continuity against the frame of the Western trans-oppressive imposition of the colonial paradigm.

He has challenged the brute force of this paradigm in their prisons and made it very clear that our narrative has never been the acceptance of the European assertion of "Terra Nullius" - that this was vacant land for them to possess.

Thru his writings in Azanian Love songs and Memory is the Weapon he lamented the dispossession of our land and the oppression of its' peoples.

The Apartheid state did not listen when he **shouted!**

**We were here!!!**

**You found us here!!!**

**We are here!!!**

**We belong here!!!**

Don Mattera will fearlessly, stress over and over in the inclusive poetics of his literature, that our ancestors are entrenched in the future of a land whose multicultural future can never be **discounted!**

As the icon of **that** multicultural future, Don Mattera's love and dedication to his community, his people, and this land, makes it impossible to count the many races that exist on the surface of our beautiful land.

It is with **this** great hope that all binary irrationality of identity is rejected and that all communities embrace his legacy.

Thru the years we have learned that Don lives and breathes - the creed and mantra of **Compassion.**

In his journey from our dusty streets and alleyways to apartheids prisons, to pensive prose, to grubby community work, to editing rooms and to the global stage and accolades - he has always championed the cause of the downtrodden and forgotten.

Don Mattera has valiantly and selflessly upheld the struggle of the self, of humanity, to show **his compassion** to fellow human beings.

**It is** in recognition of these virtues and the generosity of his spirit, that we gather here today to celebrate and honor his life, and his lifes' work.

The mission statement of the Don Mattera Legacy Foundation is to preserve for posterity, this treasure trove of his artistic literary and social contribution to our culture in its various forms; be it his poetry, his journalism, his playwriting, his community activism, or thru his social work – the list is endless.

In this context, I think it would be appropriate to briefly state our vision as The Don Materra Legacy Foundation:

### **Who Are We?**

As a non profit organization, The Don Mattera Legacy Foundation, is driven by a single goal; and that is to ensure that we preserve the literary work and memory of this legendary South African poet, wordsmith, journalist, public speaker, political activist, peace crusader and raconteur.

We want to ensure that the rich legacy of Dr. Mattera stays intact and integral for future generations to recognize and appreciate the immense sacrifice and contribution that he has made on behalf of all South Africans in the realm of, arts, literature, journalism and the liberation of South Africa.

Our activities are aimed at the development of transformative youth education and empowerment schemes, as well as the development of a firm social and cultural base across our communities.

We also envisage an annual Don Materra lecture, to be graced by progressive intellectuals and scholars, who will assist in implementing our vision of the Don Materra legacy Foundation.

In recognition of the above, **our** aim as the Foundation, is to bequeath Dons' history and legacy to our youth and our communities, as an empowerment manuscript.

His life is a glowing beacon in the dark night, for us to steer towards.

Don's life and influence is big and wide as the universe – it truly is without compare.

So, I don't think it would be misplaced to ask **you** the audience to **rise** and applaud the sterling contribution Dr. Don Omaruddin Muhammad Mattera has made to **this South Africa, our beloved land**.

**Toppie! take a bow.**

**We see you!**

**We hear you!**

**We love you!**

Thank you and welcome.