

Public Oration for SuAndi, OBE
4th March 2015

Chancellor,

On behalf of the Senate, I here present unto you Susan Maria Andi, for conferral of the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.

SuAndi is a poet and performance artist of international stature, but she is also so much more than this. A jazz dance teacher, writer, librettist, creative arts administrator and teacher, the protean nature of her work as a professional artist is in many ways reflective of the content of that work itself; for she has consistently declined to be defined by the constraining categorisations of others. Deeply rooted in particularities, she refuses to be contained by them. A passionate Northerner, her work has been acclaimed not only beyond the North of England, but far outside the borders and shores of England itself. A consciously black writer, her work powerfully speaks to readers of all races. She has sought to provoke and challenge, not for its own sake, but with a view to inducing her hearers to see the world differently. To this end, she has sought to refigure the frames of reference through which the world appears to them. She has been widely acclaimed for her success in precisely these endeavours across many fields of creativity.

SuAndi was born in 1951 in Hulme, Manchester. Her mother was a Liverpudlian of Irish ancestry and her father a Nigerian sailor. This parentage was to loom large in much of her later writing, through which we learn that although they were soon divorced, they were nonetheless united in their joint