

# 2020 Standard Bank Jazz Festival takes 'Jazz Reimagined' online

In 2020, for the first time in its 33 years, the Standard Bank Jazz Festival (SBJF) will take place entirely online. This year's event will take place from the from 25 June to 5 July 2020 and will bring musicians and art lovers together in a celebration and experience of Jazz Reimagined.

Traditionally, the festival takes place in the town of Makhanda (Grahamstown) for a gathering of what has been dubbed 11 Days of Amazing during the National Arts Festival. This year, the SBJF will reimagine what it means to keep the flame of culture and community, creativity and celebration alive during challenging times by embracing the requirement to be socially distanced, but culturally connected.



## Programme highlights revealed for 2020 Virtual National Arts Festival

17 Jun 2020



"2020 brought the biggest challenges faced by the world in a century with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nations around the globe had to literally shut down for months with devastating effects on industries. For an industry and an art form that depends, by its very nature, on human contact – between musicians improvising on stage, and by their interaction with their audience – this posed challenges not previously even contemplated, especially for a festival like ours in Makhanda, where we thrive on international collaboration, cramped venues and personal contact with hundreds of students gathered to learn about the art form they are passionate about," says festival executive director, Alan Webster.

“ Early bird ticket sales to the Virtual National Arts Festival are open! To celebrate, we're streaming a rooftop performance with [#SBYA2020](#) for jazz [@SisonkeXonti](#). Watch it live on our Facebook page and YouTube channel from 17:30 to 18:30 [#vNAF](#) [#JazzReimagined](#) [#ItCanBe](#) [pic.twitter.com/vGh1cugil7](https://pic.twitter.com/vGh1cugil7)— Standard Bank Arts (@StandardBankArt) [June 18, 2020](#) ”

## Sisonke Xonti showcases voice, vision

The festival will feature a lineup of jazz musicians inspired to beat the odds of isolation wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic with the power of their musical ingenuity. The highlights are led by this year's Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz – Sisonke Xonti who will showcase his vision and voice as composer and band leader.



## Meet the 2020 Standard Bank Young Artists

6 Nov 2019



Xonti is an heir to a rich saxophone lineage rooted both in the Kha-La-Gu-Nya (Khayelitsha; Langa; Gugulethu, Nyanga) region of Cape Town, and an international pedigree. Gifted with formidable jazz skills and vast experience that has seen him play with the likes of Jimmy Dludlu, Lira, Hugh Masekela, Judith Sephuma, Feya Faku, Freshlyground, Abdullah Ibrahim, Simphiwe Dana, Bombshelter Beast, and more. Xonti is a product of the festival's development programme too. He's been in both the Standard Bank Youth Jazz Band and the Standard Bank National Schools Big Band.

## The 2020 lineup will also include:

- Jacob Collier (UK)
  - Linda Sikhaakhane (SA)
  - Sakhile Simani (SA)
  - Mete Erker and Jeroen van Vliet (Netherlands)
  - Michael Bester (SA)
  - Thandiswa Mazwai (SA)
  - Ziza Muftic (SA)
  - Spha Mdlalose (SA)
  - Vuma Levin (SA)
  - Ami Faku (SA)
  - Ramon Alexander (SA)
  - Swing City (SA)
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- Micasa (SA)

“This year, we’ve had to balance our longstanding sponsorship and commitment to growing the creative industry, and the continued investment in the development of South African jazz with health and safety requirements occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic. This has meant finding a way to retain the best and most essential part of the festival whilst finding a new way to ensure we deliver on the promises of the festival to our clients and arts lovers in general,” says Desiree Poee, Standard Bank head of sponsorship and events.

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