

Media Advisory

Unisa to showcase 2nd African Music Festival

Approved for Public Release

Tuesday, 11 August 2026

The University of South Africa (Unisa)'s Music Foundation is set to showcase the **2nd Unisa African Music Festival** to be held on 21-22 August 2026 at the university's Muckleneuk campus in Pretoria.

This year's festival features the iconic **Freshlyground** and **Louis Mhlanga**, who will perform together with musicians playing the mbira, marimba, bow, and percussion instruments that are core to the indigenous musical heritage of southern Africa. The festival celebrates the vitality and versatility of these instruments in their traditional ensemble and solo settings, as well as in fusion with contemporary jazz and popular music.

World-renowned African guitarist, **Louis Mhlanga**, is scheduled to headline the opening concert on 21 August 2026. Mhlanga pioneered a picking style of guitar rooted in southern African indigenous traditions, including the mbira. He has worked with legends of the past three decades and has achieved global recognition for his albums *Shamwari*, *World Traveller*, and others. Also featured on the day will be mbira performances by two Zimbabwean master musicians, **Solomon Mudavanhu** and **Laina Gumboreshumba**, who will teach and perform during the festival. Virtuoso percussionist **Mike Sibanda** will lead the **Totem Marimba Band** in a range of African and contemporary classics. He and the internationally acclaimed mbira artist, **Othnell 'Mangoma' Moyo**, will collaborate with Louis Mhlanga and his band during the final set of the evening.

The Gala evening is on Saturday 22 August at 18.00 and headlining it will be the hugely popular legends of Afrofusion pop, **Freshlyground**. Blending a wide range of popular and indigenous elements from across southern Africa, Freshlyground will perform new music from their latest album, *Take Me Home*, and other fan favourites. The evening will open with a drumming ensemble, **Uhuru**, whose set, 'West Africa Meets South Africa,' creates a vibrant dialogue through the percussive drums and beats of these two powerhouse musical regions.

Celebrating the centrality of the ancient gourd bow, **Nomastile Nyiki** will perform on vocals and uhadi, highlighting a rich vein of Xhosa indigenous music together with an intimate percussion ensemble. **Othnell 'Mangoma' Moyo** returns to present a showcase of eleven different mbira instruments. He will play alongside the extraordinary **Mudavanhu Magaya**, as one of the most respected mbira lineages in Africa. The evening will also feature a set by **RUmband**, an award-winning marimba and African percussion ensemble from Makhanda.

Attendees will experience an unforgettable festival of African music which presents a window to the soul of the mbira and other indigenous African instruments, as well as popular and contemporary bands of the best.

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the festival as follows:



Date: Friday, 21 August 2026 and Saturday, 22 August 2026

Time: 18:00

Venue: ZK Matthews Great Hall, UNISA Muckleneuk Campus, Pretoria

Tickets for the general public are available at [Quicket](#)

- **Block A (White):** R250
- **Block B (Pink):** R200
- **Block C (Green):** R150
- **Block D (Yellow):** R100

Ends/.

For RSVP's and interviews requests, please contact Unisa Senior Media Officers: Mr Tommy Huma on 072 218 6197 / 012 429 3981 / humartm@unisa.ac.za OR Mr Edgar Rathelele on 063 731 5456 / 012 429 3981 / ratheme@unisa.ac.za

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