

Zim Jazz Society readies vibrant International Jazz Day celebration

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Harare's jazz lovers are in for a richly textured musical experience this Thursday, April 30, as the Zimbabwe Jazz Community Trust marks International Jazz Day with a vibrant showcase at The Grub Restaurant in Harare. Curated by pianist, educator and performer Filbert Marova, the event promises an evening where rhythm, heritage and contemporary creativity converge.

Marova, who has long championed jazz education and performance in Zimbabwe, said the annual global celebration offers local artists an opportunity to connect with the world.

"International Jazz Day is an annual event celebrated all over the world every April 30, and as the Zimbabwe Jazz Community Trust, we saw it fit to celebrate jazz with the rest of the world," he said.



The showcase features a carefully selected line-up of acclaimed performers, including award-winning vocalists Fadz & Frenz, Agga Nyabinde and Prudence Katomeni Mbofana, alongside a broader ensemble of leading jazz talents.

Marova said selecting performers had not been easy given the depth of local talent.

"We have a close relationship with the majority of jazz musicians in the country. It is never easy to pick who to work with as there

are so many great musicians out there, but for this year we decided to focus on previous ZIMA Award winners.”

He said the choice of venue reflected a deliberate effort to blend accessibility with ambience.

“The Grub is a relatively central venue, with ample space and also serves good food and beverages. The combination of all these elements made it easy to decide on the venue,” Marova said.

Jazz continues to gain traction within Zimbabwe’s evolving music landscape. According to Marova, its appeal is widening each year.

“Jazz in Zimbabwe is a constantly growing genre. Each year there are more local celebrations of this day, and jazz is becoming quite popular these days, something we are very happy about.”

Audiences can expect a dynamic programme balancing technical brilliance with emotional depth.

“The audience can expect an electrifying set of performances. It’s hard to single out one artist – we are excited to host each and every one of them,” he said.

Established in 2011 by UNESCO, International Jazz Day promotes peace, dialogue and cultural exchange through music. Since its inception, it has grown into a worldwide phenomenon marked by concerts, workshops and educational initiatives across continents. Host cities such as Paris, Havana and Istanbul have underscored jazz’s universal language, while local celebrations like Harare’s continue to root the genre in diverse cultural contexts.

Marova emphasised jazz’s unique ability to bridge traditions.

“Jazz was born of a mix of musical styles, so it is inherently receptive to influences from other genres. In Zimbabwe, for instance, more and more musicians are fusing mbira with jazz.”

Thursday’s event will also spotlight collaboration through the All Star Jazz Band.

“The All Star Jazz Band is a collaboration of some of the country’s finest jazz musicians. I’d say that’s going to be the surprise,” Marova said.

Beyond entertainment, the initiative aims to nurture Zimbabwean talent.

"The event creates a platform for these musicians to be exposed to a discerning jazz audience, which will hopefully grow their following. We encourage them to push boundaries and create new music to keep audiences engaged," he said.

Jazz's historical roots in Zimbabwe remain significant, with pioneers such as August Musarurwa shaping township jazz and placing the country on the global map.

"Jazz is an integral part of Zimbabwe's cultural identity," Marova added.

He said sustaining the genre depends on public support.

"People's attendance at these live events is all we ask, as well as an open-mindedness to new and innovative interpretations of jazz."

Looking ahead, the Zimbabwe Jazz Community Trust has more events planned.

"We have several great events on the cards, beginning with the Back 2 Jazzics series. Next is the Zimbabwe Jazz Festival scheduled for September 11 and 12, 2026."

As the city prepares to mark International Jazz Day, Thursday's gathering at The Grub offers a rare celebration of identity, innovation and shared experience. Jazz enthusiasts and newcomers alike are invited to immerse themselves in an evening where Zimbabwean artistry meets a global rhythm.