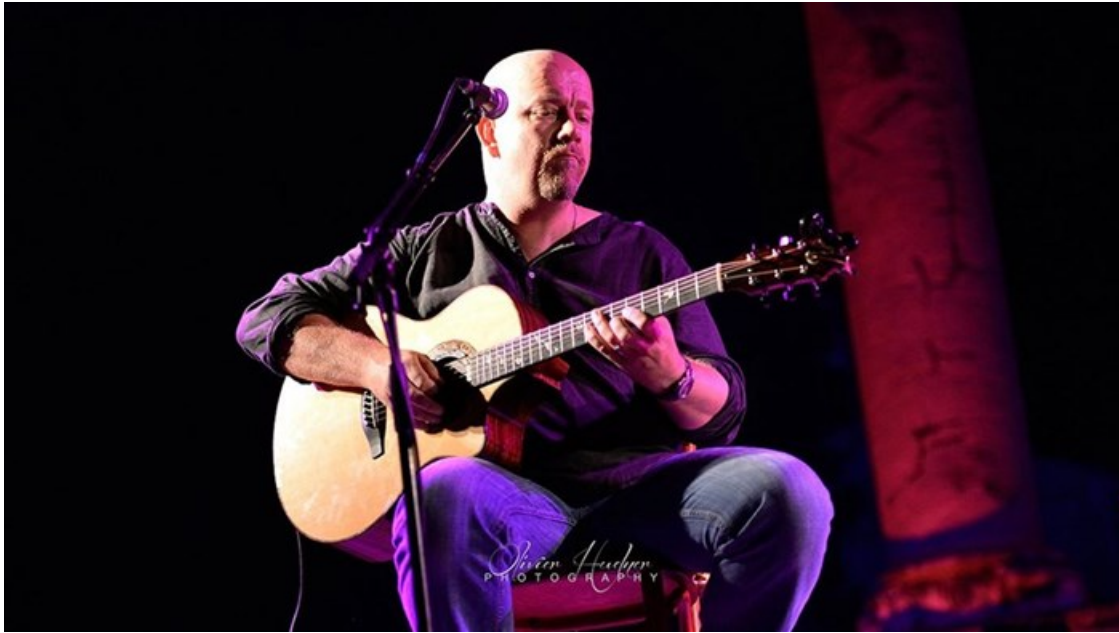


Andy Innes brings 'Under African Skies' show to Suidoosterfees 2023

 By [Martin Myers](#)

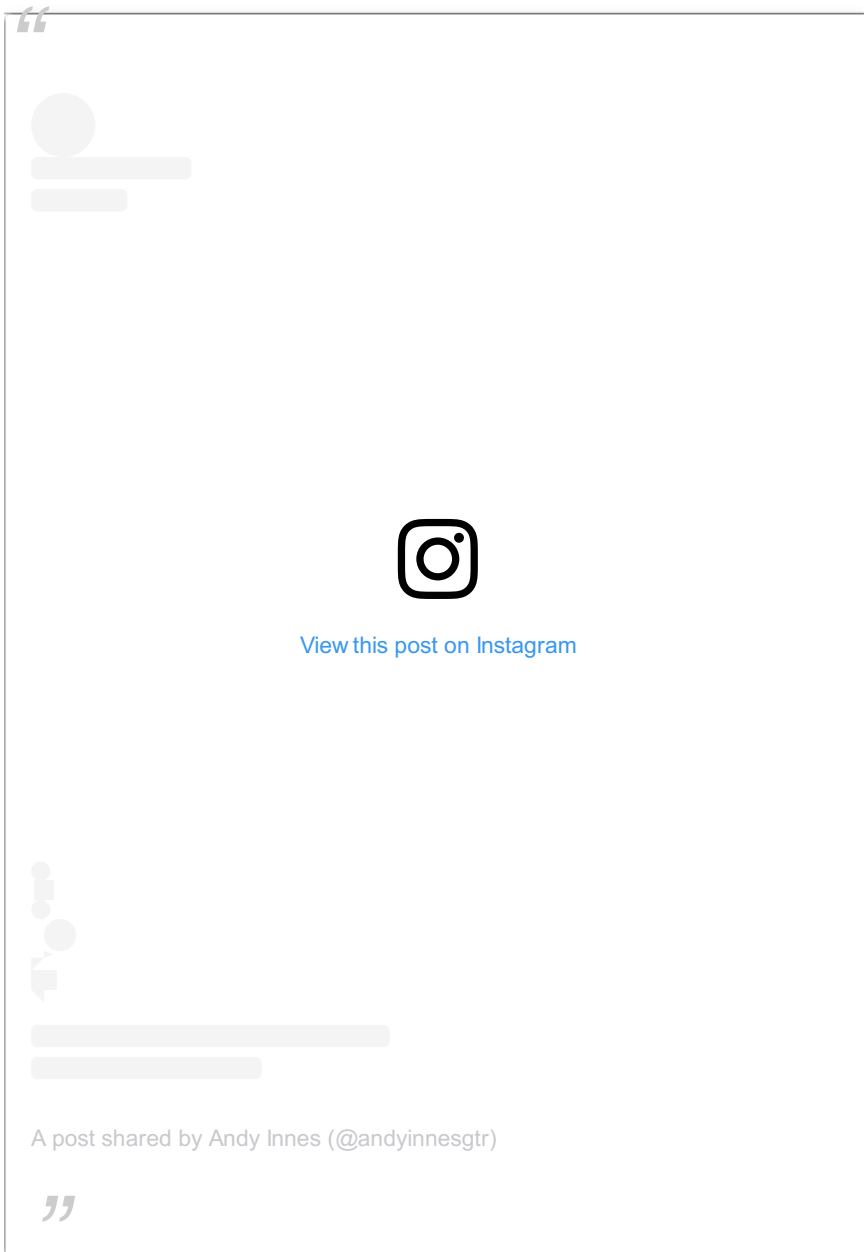
12 Apr 2023

Andy Innes is a musical director who also plays guitar, mandolin and sings. He joined Johnny Clegg and Savuka in 1992 and toured with Johnny ever since to more than 200 cities in 28 countries.



Innes has worked as a session musician, in addition to the six albums he has recorded on for the late Johnny Clegg. He has also worked with Jackson Browne, Dave Stewart, Peter Gabriel.

Now Innes is bringing members of the Johnny Clegg band back together under the name "Zasha!" Mandisa Dlanga (vocals), Andy on (guitar), Barry Van Zyl (drums) and Dan Shout (sax/piano) will come together for a one-off show in Cape Town called 'Under African Skies', featuring popular South African hits, at the Artscape Opera House on 29 April 2023 as part of the Suidoosterfees programme.



I chatted to Andy ahead of the show.

▣ ***What is your purpose?***

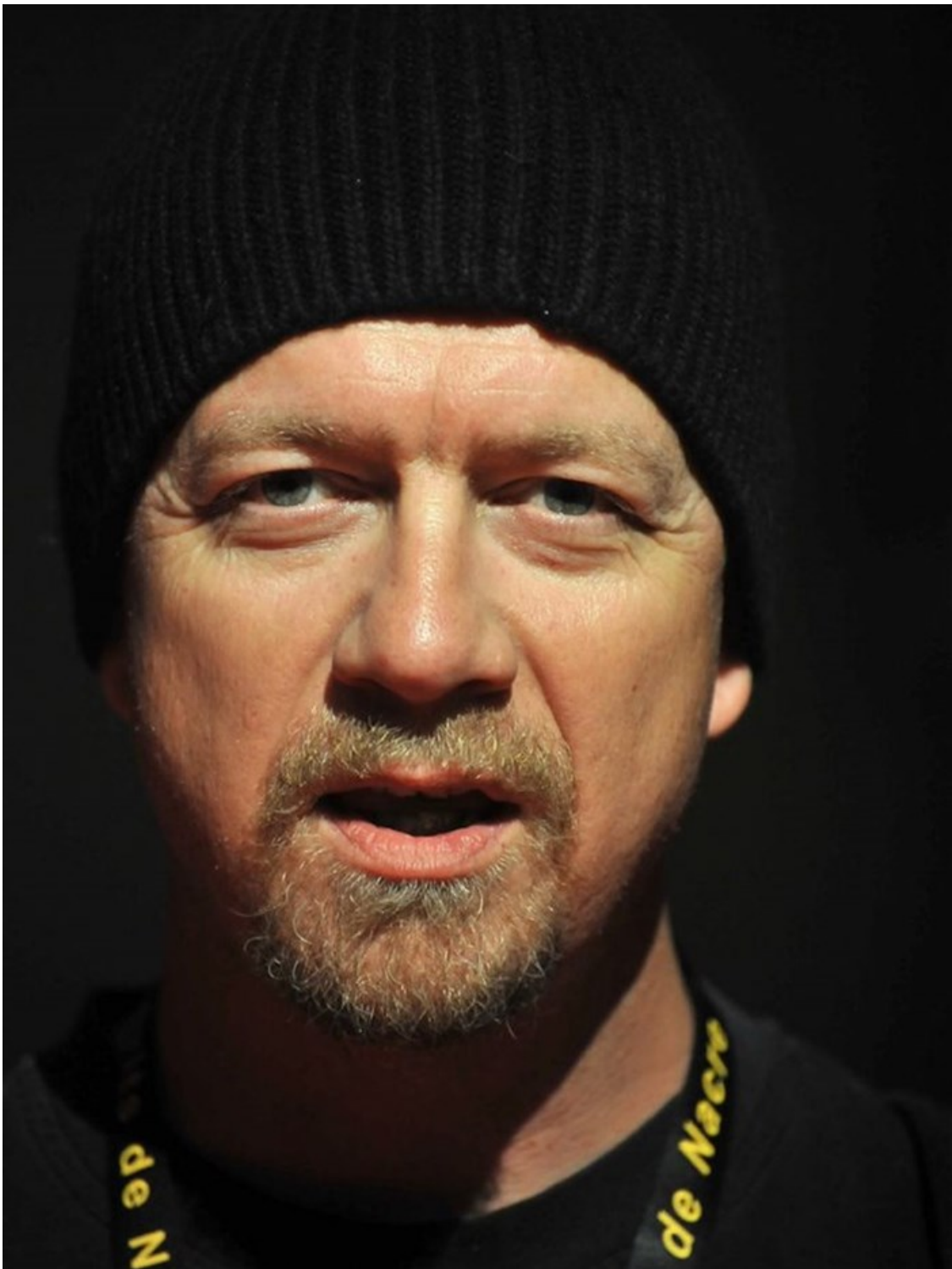
To do more good than harm in the world and make great music along the way.

▣ ***What does music mean to you?***

Music is a way of expressing my feelings in a different language. One more suited to expression of feelings than words are, actually.

▣ ***My music is about...***

Joy, sorrow, history, groove.



■ ***What is your motto?***

Keep moving forward. Never look back.

■ ***Fame is about...***

Who knows? Fleeting at best.

■ ***Retirement will happen when...***

I'm dead.

■ ***I don't do...***

Spiders or banjos.

■ ***I would love to co-write with...***

Anyone who brings fresh ears and their unique vision.

■ ***Where do you go for inspiration to create?***

Nature, poetry, or my studio.

■ ***What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?***

Feeling a piece of music really working. It's especially enjoyable in a live environment when a really good show hangs together. There is beauty in a thing which exists only for the moment that it was created between the synergy of the performers and the audience, never to be repeated in quite the same way.

■ ***The song you must do during every show?***

The Crossing comes to mind. We've played it more times than some people have had breakfast. Always fresh.



Image by JustinAitken

■ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

Always! I recall on one French tour the stage manager left the cleaning brush in the sax player's tenor horn. It was only discovered when he stepped out to play his first solo for the night in front of a huge crowd.

■ ***My heroes are...***

People who quietly change society and the world for the better. The unsung heroes.

■ ***My style icon is...***

...not something I think about much.

■ ***Which living person do you admire most and why?***

Intiaz Sooliman. A person who puts the needs of other South Africans at the top of his agenda, saving lives and changing the world.

■ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

A bottle opener from the Warner Theatre in Washington DC. Embossed on top: "STOLEN FROM the Warner Theater". (It was given to us by hospitality at the theatre for our tour bus).

■ ***It's your round, what are you drinking?***

Water – on a health kick.

■ ***Dream gig to do?***

Royal Albert Hall, London.

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

Amplifiers.

■ ***Any nicknames?***

Magwaza.



Dan Shout and Andy Paleo festival

■ ***If you were not a musician, what would you do?***

Well... I worked as a cashier at the Hyperama when I was a student. Hein Kaiser worked at the photo counter. Maybe we could have started a juggling duo given time

■ **Pick five words to describe yourself?**

Loyal, skeptical, South African, persistent.

■ **Five must have songs on your Spotify playlist please**

The Ballad of Bill Hubbard, Elegy for Dunkirk, Holocene, Ivolovolo (Big Zulu), My Maserati Does 185.

■ **Greatest movie ever made?**

With all the budgets going into series now and the A-listers starring in them I'm going to expand your category and say *Breaking Bad* or *GOT S1* tied for first place.

■ **What book are you reading?**

There are usually a few at a time... right now: *Orientalism* – Edward Saïd and *The Better Angels of our Nature* – Steven Pinker

■ **What song changed your life?**

For the better: *San Jacinto* by Peter Gabriel – *Secret World Live*. Simply breathtaking.

For the worse: *Mediterranean Sundance* by Rio Ancho – Friday Night Live in San Francisco – Di Meola / De Lucia / McLaughlin. I gave up guitar for six months at the age of 14 when I heard it for the first time.

▣ ***Who do you love?***

My children.

▣ ***What is your favorite word?***

Lately: “polyculturalism” – a concept which describes people who hold multiple cultural orientations or frames of reference, but in the context of culture as a fluid and changing entity which interacts with its environment.

▣ ***Top of your bucket list?***

Japan in springtime.

▣ ***Your greatest achievement?***

My children.

▣ ***What do you complain about most often?***

Stage 6 load shedding.

▣ ***What is your biggest fear?***

That my inverter batteries will die halfway through a session

▣ ***Happiness is...***

Not for the faint-hearted.

▣ ***On stage, I tend to...***

Concentrate.

▣ ***The best life lesson you have learned?***

Less is more.

▣ ***What has been your favorite journey so far?***

A trip with Johnny Clegg to play in the Golden Triangle on the Thailand / Myanmar border. Proper adventure that one.

▣ ***Do you do charity work, and if you do – what do you do?***

Not formally, but I do some stuff with several young musicians talking to them about career strategies, music rights, contracts, royalties, streaming, etc. I also do some work as a volunteer researcher.

▣ ***Wishes and dreams?***

World peace and a slice of cheesecake (gave up sugar three months back).

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