

# Cape Town to host North Sea Jazz Festival

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**W**ORD is out, and it's official. Cape Town will again host the southern leg of the North Sea Jazz Festival as promised last year.

The chief organiser of last year's festival, famed photographer Rashid Lombard, recently broke the news at a gala cocktail at the Victoria Junction Hotel in Greenpoint.

The event, which last year lured legends like Abby Lincoln, Johnny Griffin and Herbie Hancock to our shores, will take place at the Good Hope Centre on March 30 and 31.

This time evergreen vocalist Randy Crawford and versatile jazzists Marcus Miller and Dewey Redman will travel from the United States.

The Piet Noordijk All Star Quintet will come from Europe.

From the local music stables, vocalist Sibongile Khumalo and Musa Manzini have confirmed, and the itinerant singing sensation Sathima Benjamin has been invited to perform in her hometown.

Festival directors Rashid Lombard and Clarence Ford are putting together this particular festival of jazz excellence with enhanced and additional sponsorship, most notably from the national Department of Arts and Culture, the Cape Town City Council, and P4 Radio.

The SABC will offer media sponsorship.

Financial services group African Harvest, having



## BackBeat with Cornelius Thomas



**FUNCTION AT VICTORIA JUNCTION: Local lead guitarist Anton Wynkwardt, right, with American saxophonist Kenny Garrett at the Victoria Junction Hotel during the 2000 North Sea Jazz Festival Cape Town. Next year's festival will once again be held in Cape Town.**

pledged R7 million over the next three years, becomes the principal sponsor.

Hence the festival will be known as the African Harvest North Sea Jazz Festival Cape Town.

The organisers envisage 33 acts on four stages.

Faced with a staggering wealth of jazz talent and

styles, Lombard and Ford are currently whittling their list down to manageable proportions and negotiating with some chosen artists.

Irrespective of whom they invite, the final list is sure to cater to every jazz taste.

To assist with the organisation, the Dutch jazz

fundi and brainfather of the original (The Hague) North Sea Jazz Festival, Theo van den Hoek, has already flown into the Mother City.

Van den Hoek recognises that Cape Town has the potential of becoming the jazz capital of the southern hemisphere.

"The first festival at The Hague in 1975 gathered 9 000 people, and last year 25 000; Cape Town captivated more than 16 000," he said.

An excited Van den Hoek also said: "Jazz is an international language and South Africans welcomed the festival with open hearts earlier this year."

The southern leg of this prestigious event last year turned out to be a national event, with, according to Lombard, up to 65% of festival goers coming from "the interior".

There is no reason why the 2001 festival will not be an even greater national success, and, to add flavour to the festivities, the organisers are throwing in a free gig by Cape jazz musicians on March 29.

Fans will be delighted to know that the prices remain R235 per day ticket or R360 for the two days of the festival.

Having covered the festival last year, I can assure jazz fans that the music will be worth every cent paid. As one Eastern Cape fan said last year, "I would have paid R235 for Tania Maria alone."