

# Jazzman's finest delivery



## BackBeat

with Cornelius Thomas

Bailey Puzos  
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**A**FTER at least nine months of hard work and meticulous dedication, the jazzman, Albert Spaargaren (aka Sparkie), has over the past few weeks been bringing to fruition the Dyani Pukwana Jazz Foundation — a foundation dedicated to the development and appreciation of jazz.

In the process Spaargaren and fellow trustees of the Foundation are yet again declaring East London the jazz capital of the Eastern Cape (read old Eastern Province and Border), as it was in the days of Eric 'Bob Hope' Nomvete, the African Jazz Quavers, William Mbali, and saxman Willie "Kriek" Pretorius and the Cuban Stars.

Spaargaren has been close to jazz development in what is now Buffalo City — from setting up the import company Jazz for Africa and running the Jazz Inn, through being a founding member of the East London Jazz Society and helping Smokey Swallows get started to the launch tomorrow of the Foundation.

It is well known that Spaargaren earlier this year organised the benefit concert for the late Yiswa Komani at Duke's; what is not is that the Jazzman is working tirelessly to promote and support local jazz talents, be it to get the unpaid musicians of the Old Mutual Millennium Festival paid or winning gigs for groups like Ikhwezi, Another Level and Lulama Gawulana.

Quietly, the Jazzman also brought Andy Narrell to East London last year. And tomorrow night's Jimmy Dlodlu concert in the Orient Theatre has been almost wholly the result of his work.

But Spaargaren's finest jazz delivery must be co-ordinating the foundation and launch of the Foundation, the latter of which will take place at the Windsor Cabanas tomorrow afternoon.

The foundation honours two of the finest musical sons of the Eastern Cape ever — Johnny Dyani and Dudu Pukwana.

Johnny Dyani was born in Duncan Village where now, 15 years since his passing, local jazz enthusiasts are honouring him.

Dyani started off on the piano.



ALBERT SPAARGAREN

His mentor Tete Mbambisa was an established composer, arranger and piano player in 1950s East London.

Dyani loved singing, which he nurtured throughout his life.

However, once he took up the double bass, he became a robust, booming bassist.

He has a number of albums to his credit, including *Song for Biko*.

Dudu Pukwana died eleven years ago to the day. It is therefore apt that the launch of the Foundation should take place at this time.

Like Dyani, he started on the piano — with his father at the age of 10. Tete Mbambisa took the

young Dudu under his wing, when he joined Tete's Four Yanks in the 1950s.

The saxman Nick Moyake later became his mentor.

In exile in Europe, he teamed up with Dyani and became part of the progressive jazz scene.

Later Pukwana became a member of the Brotherhood of Breath, fusing township jive, kwela, and free music. He brought out his first solo album, *In the Townships*, with his own band, Spear.

Still in his prime, Pukwana succumbed to liver failure in 1990.

Tomorrow night at the Orient Theatre Jimmy Dlodlu, I am told, will play some of Dyani and Pukwana's compositions.