



The journey to jazzahead! 2026 began months before the event as usual, but this time there was something different. It was important that we made sure that the Africa Jazz Stand in 2026 would be the best yet. The only way to do this, was to get as many representatives from the African continent, represented on the stand, ideally from all four corners. We succeeded in bringing onboard these notable entities;

Addis Jazz Festival, Ethiopia
Journey to Jazz Festival, South Africa
SB Joy Of Jazz Festival, South Africa
+233 Jazz Bar & Grill, Ghana

Ghana Jazz Foundation, Ghana
Zaria Music - Ghana
Music, Motivation, Management, U.K.
Mzantsi Jazz Awards, South Africa

Notable absentees were **BC Jazz Festival**, Kenya,
Jacaranda Jazz Festival, Zimbabwe & **AfroJazz Festival**, Nigeria



In addition to the regular participants;

PF Music, Nigeria
Cairo Jazz Festival, Egypt
DMX Festival, Senegal

Morestar Entertainment, South Africa
La Studio Bibliothèque, Senegal
Delicious Tunes, Germany

And our ever-present friend, Wolfgang Koenig of Radio XY, Germany

This also culminated in the first meeting of the Africa Jazz Network at the end of March, 2026. With business plan in hand and much discourse on the way forward, we prepared and headed to Bremen., with 3 new artists to represent our continent. For the first time, all 3 bands were based on the continent, and together with other African artists that showcased and performed at club nights, this was by far, the strongest representation of Africa over the last 3 years of support for the Africa Jazz Stand, by **jazzahead!/Goethe Institute**.

The notable performers from Africa included;

African Showcase artists:

Sydney Mavundla Quartet – South Africa; Manager, Mongezi Makhalima
 LINE-UP Sydney Mavundla (tpt, voc) · Afrika Mkhize (p) · Peter Auret (dr) · Dalisu Ndlazi (b)

Kossi Mawun Trio – Togo; Manager, Odette Bossa
 LINE-UP Kossi Mawun (dr) · Joakim Amouzou (p) · David Kokodoko (b)



SAHAD – Senegal; Manager; Saphia Arhzah

LINE-UP Rahad Sarr (lead voc, g) · Godpeace Symenouh (p) · Mildah Miambanzila (tpt) · Ripa Malongo (sax) · Jean-Isaac Degbey (dr) · Bocar Sy (b)



Sydney Mavundla Quartet



Kossi Mawun Trio



SAHAD

Other African Showcase artists:

Wajdi Riahi Trio - Belgium (Wajdi is from Tunisia)

LINE-UP Wajdi Riahi (p) · Basile Rahola (db) · Pierre Hurty (dr)

Malika Zarra Trio – US (Malika is from Morocco)

LINE-UP Malika Zarra (voc, percs) · Leonardo Montana (p) · Adhil Mirghani (percs)

Peter Somuah Group – Netherlands (Peter is from Ghana)

LINE-UP Peter Somuah (tpt) · Anton De Bruin (keys) · Marijn van der Ven (b) · Danny Rombout (percs) · Jens Meijer (dr)



Wajdi Riahi Trio



Malika Zarra



Peter Somuah

Club night performers

Sydney Mavundla Quartet – South Africa

TChad Jazz Education – Tchad - LINE-UP Djim Radé (g, voc, perc) · Djiraïngué Fidel (dr, perc) · Gatou Jean (p, perc) · Ramadji Makarios (b) · Dinguemnodji Bienvenu (g, perc) · Charles Dakéré (sax, perc) · Otombaye Benjamin (g, voc, perc)

There was also the official launch on the 1st day of the **Africa Jazz Network** on the stand with everyone showing the logo on sweatshirts, T-shirts, caps, buttons, and on our vertical banners, the message being, **"The Promotion and Advancement of jazz (and might I add, and jazz infrastructure) on the African continent"**. The engagement of the visitors on the Africa Jazz stand was remarkable considering that for many the notion of what is jazz from the continent was a new one. But more importantly, many artists (and other practitioners) expressed a desire to arrange touring and other engagements with the African Continent. We look forward to a most engaging future for the Africa Jazz Stand (and Africa Jazz Network) at jazzahead!.



Also on Thursday, there was the panel discussion “JAZZ WAS BORN IN AFRICA” featuring Sydney Mavundla & SAHAD, and moderated by Brenda Sisane. Jazzahead noted this statement from jazz great, Pharoah Sanders; “The ancestry of “Jazz from Africa“ is at least as diverse as its 55 countries, as complicated as its colonial history, brutally uprooted and resown on American soil” and from Brenda; “African jazz” is not a monolith. It is an ever-evolving, fluid art form that refuses to be boxed into a singular, neat definition”.

Our now traditional Africa Jazz dinner took place on Friday night at the Maharani Indian restaurant, with Lesley, Brenda, Stephanie, Dan (our friend from Jazz at Lincoln Center), Dudu, Pape & Peter attending... good food, spirited discussions, a great evening all round

There was also an AJN Team breakfast meeting on Saturday morning with Mongezi, Dudu, Stephanie, Lesley and Peter in attendance, to map the next steps for AJN. More information to follow.

We must as always thank the organizing team at jazzahead, in particular Team leader Sybille Kornawsky, Artistic Director Goetz Beuhler, Insa Stanke, Laura Hadrych & Nina Thomann (of German Jazz Expo) for the amazing work they do bringing this event together and for their amazing support for the Africa Jazz Stand, and Jakob Fraisse, who coordinated the showcase performances for Sydney Mavundla & Tchad Jazz Education. We must also thank team Goethe Institute, in particular Director Dr Reimar Volker and Dorothee Seeger, without whom the artists from the continent would not have been able to attend jazzahead!

Attendees on the Africa Jazz Stand;

Brenda Sisane
Mongezi Makhalima
Ossie Huggins
Katherine Kalarus

Leslie Wells
Peter Fisher
Wolfgang Koenig
Amro Salah

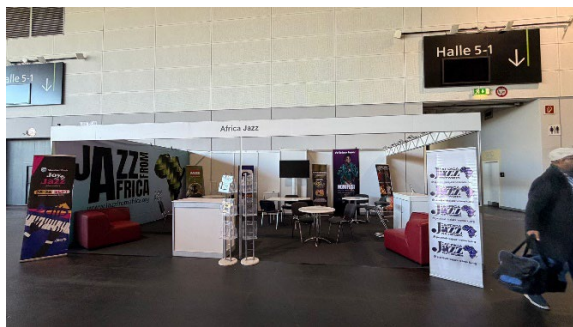
Dudu Sarr
Pape Armand Boye
Stephanie Schumann
Jonas Bibi Hammond

THANK YOU ALL!!



jazzahead! 2026 in pictures:

Wednesday 22nd April..



Thursday 23rd April:



Africa Jazz Network website: africajazznetwork.org





Friday 24th April:



Africa Jazz Network website: africajazznetwork.org



Saturday 25th April





Overview of the Trade Fair floor at jazzahead! 2026