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General Press Release

An awesome celebration of the arts in a magnificent corner of unspoiled heaven ...

THE FESTIVAL OF LIVING TREASURES

'Africa's Greatest Music Celebration'

Greater St Lucia Wetland Park : 15 & 16 December &

Shongweni Resources Reserve : 16, 17, 18 & 19 December

TICKETS THROUGH TICKETWEB

Music buffs are billing the **Festival of Living Treasures** as the most exciting, challenging and boundary-breaking music festival ever to be staged in our country.

The festival will be held concurrently in the **Greater St Lucia Wetland Park** on **December 15 & 16** and in the **Shongweni Resources Reserve** on **December 16, 17, 18 & 19**. The combined festivities will present around 80 performances in more than 60 hours of music and dance over five days.

The artist line-up showcases innovative music specialists from every part of the globe - many of whom are making their South African debut. The line up includes Ginger Baker (UK); Oliver Mtukudzi & Mahube (Zimbabwe / SA); Ginger Baker (UK); Yungchen Lhamo (Tibet); Sergio Dias (Brazil); Bob Brozman (USA); Joel Gonthier (France); Phil Manzanera (UK/ Cuba); Young Ba Cuba (Republic of Congo); Simba Morri (Kenya); Nestor Kornblum & Michele Averard with Patricia Almeyda (Spain / Peru); Lamine Konte (Senegal); Gito Baloi (Mozambique); Ray Phiri & Stimela; Jimmy Dlodlu; Mathew Van Der Want & Chris Letcher; Paul Hamner and McCoy Mrubata; Wendy Oldfield, Landscape Prayers and "Guitars For Africa" to name but a few.

Specially devised collaborations between international and local artists are a feature of this event. International maestros share the stage with South African musical heroes in what promises to be an awesome cultural crossover. Another watershed feature is the **uShaka Oratorio**, with the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra and a stellar cast of soloists and choirs.

The **Festival of Living Treasures** will be presented concurrently in two environmentally prestigious venues. These carefully chosen sites are the Shongweni Resources Reserve and the St Lucia Wetland Park. Conceived by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Southern Africa (WESSA) to celebrate our richly diverse cultures and environmental treasures, the festival is being presented in association with the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, the communities around the two reserves, as well as Msinsi Holdings and Umgeni Water. The festival's Artistic Directors are Dan Chiorboli (Shongweni) and Dave Marks (St Lucia).

"By uniting entertainment with eco-tourism in a common goal of highlighting the superb cultural and natural heritage of KwaZulu-Natal, the **Festival of Living Treasures** offers a unique opportunity to integrate the two major sectors of our local and international leisure market," said Barry Giesken of WESSA, speaking on behalf of the festival's steering committee. "In addition to the festival being a great music event, it is also the catalyst for WESSA's 'Sustainable Lifestyles' programme."

A large-scale arts and craft market is being organised for the festival in Shongweni as an example of the Sustainable Lifestyles philosophy, with craftspeople from the areas surrounding the reserve being encouraged to extend their skills and to link up in entrepreneurial schemes to market and sell their goods.

The **Festival of Living Treasures** is envisaged as becoming an annual event. With the commitment of its organisers and the endorsement of the Greater Durban Metro Council, the festival will boost both local and regional tourism, thus creating sustainable community employment and revenue earning opportunities.

The Festival is the first of the much-talked about KZN millennium events which will officially kick off the region's gigantic year-end holiday festivities.

Booking is through **TicketWeb** nationwide. There will be day-passes and season tickets available for both site events. Shongweni season ticket: R180 for four days or R65 for a day pass. St Lucia season ticket: R100 for a two day season ticket or R65 for a day pass. They have a variety of options for cash-paying and credit-card paying patrons, either on-line or cash transactions. Cash purchases can be made at selected Engen, Musica and Edgars stores and through Mr Delivery.

For more information on the festival, visit their website: www.livingtreasures.net or the city's millennium websites which give details for the whole Durban millennium season: www.durban2000.co.za or www.kzn2000.co.za. **TicketWeb's** call centre is on tel no: 0861 400500 or visit their website on <http://www.ticketweb.co.za>.

ENDS

Illa Thompson
15 Nov 99

If you need more info, biogs, pix or additional info - please call. They can be emailed to you.