

FRESHLYGROUND



ZOLANI MAHOLA LEAD VOCALS

JOSH HAWKS BASS GUITAR, VOCALS

SEREDEAL SCHEEPERS KEYBOARDS, PERCUSSION

KYLA-ROSE SMITH VIOLIN, VOCALS

SIMON ATTWELL FLUTE, MBIRA, HARMONICA, SAXOPHONE

JULIO SIGAUQUE ELECTRIC & ACOUSTIC GUITAR

PETER COHEN DRUMS

Freshlyground formed in early 2002, and is made up of seven talented and diverse musicians from South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Fronted by the diminutive but dynamic Zolani Mahola, the band exudes a live performance energy that has been the bedrock of their success. The experienced rhythm section of Peter Cohen (drums) & Josh Hawks (bass) is complimented by guitarist Julio Sigauque, keyboardist Seredeal Scheepers, Simon Attwell (flute, mbira, sax and harmonica) and violinist Kyla Rose Smith. Although hailing from diverse backgrounds, between them the band's members weave a musical magic that is highly infectious and undeniably groovy.

In 2003 Freshlyground launched their debut album, *Jika Jika* under their own Freeground Records label, the immediate success of which firmly cemented the band as one of South Africa's most successful young acts.

Freshlyground Biography

Freshlyground released their second studio album *Nomvula* in July 2004. *Nomvula* was recorded and produced by JB Arthur and Sibusiso Victor Masondo. The album sparked interest from Sony BMG Africa, who signed the band and released *Nomvula* in September that year. Radio quickly picked up on the single 'Doo Be Doo' and the catchy song went on to become a crossover favorite amongst a diverse spread of stations and their listeners. 'Doo Be Doo' was the most played song in South Africa in 2005. The major success of 'Doo Be Doo' was followed by the singles 'I'd Like', 'Zithande', 'Things Have Changed' and the title track of the album *Nomvula*.

The album sold 300 000 units in South Africa alone- earning it multi-platinum status. The success and broad appeal of the band was celebrated in November 2006 when Freshlyground won the MTV Europe Award in the category Best African Act. The award placed the band firmly on the international music map and earned them further recognition on home soil as significant South African cultural exports.

The success of *Nomvula* was followed by that of *Ma Cheri* - Freshlyground's third studio album, released in September 2007. The album's release was followed by a major South African tour attended by over 25 000 people across four cities. The tour was produced by Freshlyground and supported by Volkswagen South Africa. The tour successfully raised the performance and production standards of local touring, putting the band on par with international acts in terms of production scale and value. *Ma Cheri* sold multi platinum in South Africa and the single Pot Belly became another major crossover success.

In 2009 Freshlyground did 4 sold out tours in Europe. They also toured for the first time in China, the United States of America and Canada, making the band one of a handful of South African acts to have a successful and sustainable career both internationally and at home.

Six years on Freshlyground are a still a sensation. In South Africa audiences of every race cram in to see them. Old people get up and dance. Hip black teenagers sing to their lyrics. White kids emulate their moves. The very presence of this band in South Africa is a promise for a harmonious future. But they don't sit still for the picture.

Latest news (26. April 2010):

The song "Waka Waka" (This Time For Africa) by SHAKIRA featuring FRESHLYGROUND has been chosen as the official song of the Fifa World Cup 2010 in South Africa. Freshlyground will perform the song together with Shakira at the Closing Ceremony before the Fifa World Cup Final on July 11 in Johannesburg.

RELEASES:

- **JIKA JIKA**, released by Freeground Records, 2003
- **NOMVULA**, released by Freeground Records / Sony BMG, 2004
- **MA CHERI**, released by Freeground Records / Sony BMG, 2007
- **LIVE DVD**, released by Freeground Records / Sony BMG, 2008
- **JIKA JIKA**, re mastered and re mixed, released by Freeground Records and distributed by Sony BMG, 2008
- **Radio Africa**, released by Freeground Records / Sony BMG, 2010 May 10 in South Africa

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AWARDS :

- **SAMA AWARD** – Album of the Year , Freshlyground for Ma Cheri, May 2008
- **SAMA AWARD** - Best Duo/Group Freshlyground for Ma Cheri, May 2008
- **SAMA AWARD** - Best Adult Contemporary English Album for Ma Cheri, May 2008
- **SAMA AWARD** - Best Engineer for Ma Cheri, May 2008
- **MTV EUROPE AWARD** – Best African Act Freshlyground, November 2006
- **METRO FM AWARD**- Best Group, November 2007
- **METRO FM AWARD**- Best Album, November 2007
- **METRO FM AWARD**- Best African Pop Album, November 2007
- **METRO FM AWARD**- Best African Pop Album, November 2005
- **CHANNEL O AWARD** – Best African Band Freshlyground, 2008
- **O MUSIC VIDEO AWARDS NIGERIA** – African Video of the Year for Pot Belly, April 2008
- **GOOD HOPE FM SA** – Best performing Group Freshlyground, September 2008

INTERNATIONAL NOTEWORTHY PERFORMANCES :

*Listed chronologically

- **World Economic Forum**, Davos, Switzerland, January 2010
- **Jazz Music Festival**, Shanghai, The Republic of China, October 2009
- **Radio City Music Hall**, New York City, NY, USA, July 2009
- **Celebrate Brooklyn Festival**, Brooklyn, NY, USA, July 2009
- **Festival Nuits D' Afrique**, Montreal, Canada, July 2009
- **Hague Jazz Festival**, The Netherlands, May 2009
- **Rome Auditorium**, Rome, Italy, November 2008
- **AVO Sessions**, Basel, Switzerland, November 2008
- **Barbican Centre**, London, United Kingdom, November 2008

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- **Theatre Royal Carre**, The Netherlands, September 2008
- **Toast Festival**, Kensington, United Kingdom, September 2008
- **Arrezzowave Festival**, Livorno, Italy, July 2008
- **Zeltival**, Karlsruhe, Germany, July 2008
- **Kultursommer Festival**, Oldenburg, Germany, July 2008
- **Salisbury Festival**, United Kingdom, June 2008
- **Roots in Ooster Park**, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, June 2008
- **Lugano Festival De Jazz**, Mendrisio, Switzerland, June 2008
- **Masala Festival**, Hannover, Germany, June 2008
- **Mawazine Festival**, Rabat, Morocco, May 2008
- **Spring Festival**, Cairo, Egypt, May 2008
- **Harare International Festival**, Harare, Zimbabwe, May 2008
- **Lagos International Jazz Festival**, Lagos, Nigeria, April 2008
- **Maputo International Jazz Festival**, Maputo, Mozambique, April 2008
- **Jazz Café**, London, United Kingdom, July 2006
- **FIFA World Cup Handover Ceremony**, Berlin, Germany, June 2006
- **Branderburger Tor FIFA 04 event**, Berlin, Germany, June 2006
- **Cannes Film Festival, NFVF**, Cannes, France, May 2006
- **Aichi Expo**, Nagoya, Japan, March 2005
- **Pukkelpop Festival**, Belgium, August, 2005 Berlin, Germany 2004
- **National Theatre of the Arts**, Windhoek, Namibia, July 2004
- **Villa Celimontana Festival**, Rome, Italy, June 2004

SOUTH AFRICAN NOTEWORTHY PERFORMANCES

*Listed chronologically

- **FIFA World Cup 2010 Final Draw**, Cape Town, December 2009
- **HIV /AIDS Awareness Conference**, Durban, April 2009
- **Cape Town International Jazz Festival**, Cape Town, April 2009
- **Macufe Festival**, Bloemfontein, October 2005 and October 2008
- **Chris Burger Charity Fundraising Concert**, Cape Town, August 2008
- **Oppikoppi, Northam**, Pretoria, 08 August '04, August 2005 and August 2008
- **46664 Nelson Mandela HIV Fund**, Johannesburg, December 2007
- **Desmond Tutu HIV-Foundation Benefit Concert**, with Vusi Mahlasela, September 2005 and July 2006, with Siphon Hotstix August 2008,

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- **Grahamstown National Arts Festival**, Grahamstown, July 2005
- **Standard Bank Arena**, with Kenny Latimore and Chante Moore, September 2005
- **10 Years of Democracy Closing Celebration**, Athlone Stadium, Cape Town, February 2005
- **Standard Bank Jazzathon 2005, with Selaelo Selota**, Cape Town, January 2005
- **Reconciliation day Festival**, Cape Town, December 2004
- **Spier Arts Summer Season**, collaboration with Oliver Mtukudzi and Mahube, Stellenbosch, December 2004
- **Olympic Torch Ceremony**, Grand Parade, Cape Town, June 2004
- **North Sea Jazz Festival**, Cape Town, April 2004
- **Freedom Parade, 10 years of Human Rights**, Athlone Stadium, March 2004
- **The Design Indaba**, CTICC, Cape Town, February 2004 and February 2005
- **Celebration of 10 years of Democracy**, Green Market Square, Cape Town, February 2004
- **Kirstenbosch Summer Sunset Concert**, National Botanical Gardens, January 2004, March 2005, December 2006, December 2007, December 2008
- **Robben Island African Music Festival, Heritage Day**, with Oliver Mtukudzi, Jonathan Butler, Judith Sephuma, V&A. Waterfront and Robben Island, September 2003

PRESS COMMENTARY:

Time Magazine, April 2007

Alex Perry

"Freshlyground's music may sound like it was manufactured by Benetton mixing not only race and gender but also nationality, musical style, language, age and event height... However the mix was created it's one for which the world is developing a taste. Freshlyground's ambivalence about their diversity hasn't stopped others from seizing on them as the personification of the Rainbow Nation"

The Washington Post – December 2005

"Zanele Mazibuko has always hated the violin. And the flute? Forget it. For a child growing up in the black township of Soweto, she said, those instruments represented a distant world of white privilege, beyond a seemingly uncrossable racial divide. But last week, something began to change her mind. It was a live performance by Freshlyground, one of South Africa's hottest bands, which features both a violin and a flute -- not to mention five white members out of seven. The music, a fusion of rock, jazz and Afro-pop, sounded "black," Mazibuko said, delighted and amazed. "The music they play, it just goes together". "

Cape Argus , October 2007

"Freshlyground is probably going to become SA's most important band in the 21st century. I realised this when I watched them at Loftus Versfeld supporting Robbie Williams. Sixty thousand people sang along to their hits, with passion. And they're the biggest crossover group since Mandoza ..."

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Y Magazine, Aug/Sep 2006

Toast Coetzer

"Their music is easy to like, covering a feel-good spectrum of distinctly South African pop, led by Zolani's exuberant vocals, in English and Xhosa, and driven by an experienced and well-honed band. Mothers pushing prams in shaded parks will like it; sweaty people in *stampvol* taxis will like it, drunk students too. And it's also great when you are alone. It's bright and happy no matter whether your feet are plodding the grim streets of London or your head is stuck in a gnarly roll of post-breakup-chicken wire. Sure, you'll like it too."

Beeld, November 2004

Kobus Burger

"I've been a music journalist for the past ten years, but never before has a South African album blown me away like this. WOW! I can't stop listening to "Nomvula"... it is not very often that one (as a music journo) gets the feeling you need to go and stand on top of the nearest building and start promoting a particular CD. But with this one it feels that I am wasting my time keeping quiet and not telling EVERYONE to put this one on their Xmas list."

The Citizen, May 2004

Cathryn Pearman

"With all this under their belt and a following that grows almost daily, one can only think that this is a group that has the *voema* to take SA sounds to the rest of the world."

Cape Etc, April 2004

Justin Zehmke:

"Freshlyground is an almost textbook example of how well consensus can work. From their choice of band name, which was decided upon after having fans vote, from a variety of options, to their music which the band members describe as organically grown through a system of teamwork that distributes contributions fairly evenly between the seven members, they exemplify the joys of the new South Africa. Add to this their prestigious gig at the most recent opening of Parliament and their multiracial, multinational members and one can't help but think that this is the future of South African music. Judging by the cast amounts of critical and popular acclaim they have been generating it seems they are destined for greatness... I predict that soon Freshlyground will be as ubiquitous as the minibus taxi and just as popular. For now, make sure you catch them live while they are still playing small venues because this band is set to soar."

This Day, April 2004

Craig Canavan:

"Among the [RP Emerging Sounds] competition's many finds is one of the best new bands in the country, the aptly and wonderfully named Freshlyground. They are a conglomeration of seven musicians who create some of the freshest, funkier African pop since the heyday of Bright Blue and Mango Groove."

Mail and Guardian, April 2004

Miles Keylock:

"Unlike so many Cape Town bands, Freshlyground have managed to win more than a mere cult following...It's about the creative sparks that fly when cultures co-exist and collide...It's precisely this unpretentious blend of Mahola's classy multi-lingual vocals soars, Hawke's buoyant bass jams, Turest-Swartz's Pan African textures, and Simon Attwell and Smith's shimmering mbira-violin shades that make for an effervescent Afro-pop recipe that transcends any merely "eclectic" fusion."

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CLIPS AND VIDEOS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET:

Live performance November 2008

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fy6Ruj8rJMw>

Video from the Freshlyground South african tour 2007 (not available in all countries)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiuxJMKkBwg&feature=related>

Music video single Pot Belly, album Ma Cheri, (not available in all countries)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XPI6Pb8K4I>

Music video single Nomvula, album Nomvula, (not available in all countries)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGpRr0XlxkY>

Music video I'd Like, album Nomvula (not available in all countries)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-5GzjsxGU0>

Music video Doo Be Doo, album Nomvula

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLuSyqMlm_U

Music video Castles in the Sky, album Jika Jika (not available in all countries)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2ONKG2IH2U>

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