

SA musicians scoop the Global Music Performance Grammy at the 65th annual Grammy Awards

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Proud moment as Zakes Bantwini, Nomcebo Zikode and Wouter Kellerman 'bring the Grammy home'



Wouter Kellerman, Nomcebo Zikode and Zakes Bantwini at 65th Grammy Awards. Image credit: Getty Images

Three local musicians scooped the award for the Best Global Music Performance at the 65th annual Grammy Awards ceremony which was held at The Crypto.com Arena (formerly the Staples Centre) in Los Angeles on Sunday, 5 February 2023. This year's award ceremony was hosted by our very own homegrown hero, comedian and TV host Trevor Noah, for the third year in a row.

The award is presented to recording artists who have demonstrated excellence in the burgeoning field of global music.

Zakes Bantwini, Nomcebo Zikode and Wouter Kellerman, who were nominated for their single, *Bayethe*, were blown away when they heard their names being read out and announced them as winners.

"I just want to say, we are coming from Africa, South Africa. And this moment right to anybody who's in Africa just proves and affirms that every dream is valid," says Osama hitmaker and SAMA award winner, Zakes Bantwini. "We were all beaming with pride when we walked up onto that stage. It's such an incredible accolade - not just for us, but also for South Africa. It is an important acknowledgement of the role that local indigenous music has to play on the global music stage."

Independent Media Group Africa (IMG) business partner and manager Sibho Mhlungu couldn't agree more. "*Bayethe* is a truly global record that speaks to the dynamism and undeniable talent of all three artists," he says. "We are proud and honoured but not surprised that they've been recognised for being at the cutting-edge of a genre of music that's set to define the 21st century."



Zakes Bantwini Accepts Grammy. Image credit: Getty Images

Zakes and his team from Grid Worldwide, a specialist agency that builds brands by giving them meaning, arrived in LA ahead of the awards ceremony and featured on the Global Music Panel Discussion held on Tuesday, 31 January.

Grid Worldwide and 608 Experiences CEO Adam Byars emphasised how important it is to build music brands through collaborations like the one that brought Bayethe to life.

“Global music is the music of our time,” he says, “and it’s a rush to see South African artists recognised for the authentic contribution they’re making to something so new and dynamic. Grid’s philosophy is, in fact, to ‘make it mean something’. It’s all about purpose and about collaboration through all channels of entertainment. The success Zakes has achieved is not only extraordinary in its own right, it demonstrates the value of collaborating across industries; about telling stories and about connecting with people.”

Nomcebo Zikode, the singer, songwriter who co-wrote the worldwide hit, *Jerusalema*, with Master KG in 2019, couldn’t contain her excitement.

“This is a career highlight for all of us,” she said. “And it just goes to show that South African talent can stand shoulder-to-shoulder with talent from all around the world.”

For multi-award-winning flautist, composer and producer, Wouter Kellerman, this wasn’t his first rodeo. Kellerman, who is known for bringing his extraordinary classical training to his exploration of World and Roots music, received a Grammy for his album, *Winds of Samsara*, in 2014 and was nominated for Grammys in both 2015 and 2021. He also has eight SAMA Awards to his credit.

“Collaborations like these bring out the best in all of the music traditions that bring so much richness to global music,” he says. “It’s an amazing adventure to be part of something so special.”

When the trio were nominated for the award, fans took to social media to congratulate them and to urge them to ‘bring the Grammy home’. And that’s exactly what they’re going to do!

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