

## SPECIAL REPORT

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## Celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of Peace Boat's Visits to Cape Town

Current Voyage

Upcoming Voyages

Past Voyages

The Ship

Life Onboard



Guests take part in a ship tour

When Peace Boat visited Cape Town on February 17, it was a special occasion. The day marked the tenth time in ten years that Peace Boat has visited the South Africa port city. To celebrate the anniversary, Peace Boat held a reception onboard the Mona Lisa, welcoming local partners and community members it has worked with over the years on board the ship. The visitors joined Peace Boat participants for a ship tour, a short film acknowledging South Africa's triumph over apartheid, the experience of taiko (traditional Japanese drums), and an enjoyable hour of excellent Cape Town jazz courtesy of the talented Kyle Shepherd Band.



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To begin the evening, Cruise Director Inoue Nao told the audience about his experiences in South Africa. A dedicated taiko drummer, Mr Inoue has a passion for music he was able to share when he went to Soweto, South Africa, four years ago to donate instruments and play with residents there. He also laughingly told of his sleeping accommodations: sharing a single bed with three teenage boys, "a homestay experience I will never forget." But Mr Inoue was serious when it came to commending South Africa on its eradication of apartheid, the government system that stripped black South Africans of their citizenship and forced them onto subpar reservations. Speaking of the many people who helped the country break through apartheid, he said, "Peace Boat strongly believes in the power of the people and that one person can make a huge difference."



Peace Boat staff play taiko, traditional Japanese drums



Peace Boat's gospel choir sang the South African national anthem

Peace Boat's co-founder and director, Yoshioka Tatsuya, echoed the sentiments in a letter sent from Tokyo and read at the reception by International Director Watanabe Rika. "Since before the liberation of South Africa, Peace Boat has been committed to support for the anti-apartheid movement and the South African people's struggle for freedom and justice. We cannot tell you how much we admire you, and all the people of South Africa, for all that you have achieved in your struggle, and for your use of non-violent means." His words were followed by a short, original slideshow, in which scenes of South Africa in the grips of apartheid were shown along with messages of support: "Peace Boat keeps sailing to unite the world with the spirit of South Africa—from the rainbow nation to the 'Rainbow Planet.'"

The admiration and appreciation was mutual. One South African travel coordinator thanked Peace Boat for its support, saying, "Their money actually goes into different communities in South Africa," rather than just the tourist shopping centers. Guest educator and photojournalist Victor Matom concurred, noting all of the music instruments, bicycles, and other materials that Peace Boat has donated to South African communities. Both Jerry Matjila, the Deputy Director-General of South Africa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Molly Dhlamani, a participant in the onboard African Youth Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) Forum, thanked Peace Boat participants for their passion and support of South Africa's development. "We formed solidarity with the Japanese youth and 'honorary youth' onboard," said Ms Dhlamani.



Guest educator, photojournalist, and South African Victor Matom speaks



After a brief intermission of hors d' oeuvres and South Africa's famous wine, guests settled in for the main attraction of the night: "real Cape Town jazz" provided by the Kyle Shepherd Band. Before they played, a short history was given of Cape Town music. During slave times, hundreds of different cultures and nationalities gathered in South Africa, bringing with them all of their different types of folk music. Eventually, the types synthesized into the distinct style of Cape Town jazz played today. The young members of the band, led by composer, saxophonist, keyboardist, and percussionist Kyle Shepherd, are carrying on that tradition today. For the Peace Boat performance, they were joined for the

The Kyle Shepherd Band

first time by the alluring, talented young opera singer-in-training, Marce Underwood.

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Along with drummer Jonno Sweetman, double bass player Shane Cooper, and the impressive tenor saxophonist Buddy Wells, the band wove together intricate songs incorporating wooden percussion instruments, hand clapping, and Mr Shepherd's unique and attractive meandering, mumbling style of singing. The atmosphere of Cape Town seemed to settle over the ship's familiar auditorium as the band played with both humor and an obvious respect for each other. The last song, an original composition by Ms Underwood and Mr Shepherd, reminded the audience that despite the many triumphs over apartheid highlighted that night, there remained challenges. "This song is for all the people who are still stuck in the colored and black townships and all of those facing oppression still," said Mr Shepherd.



The Kyle Shepherd Band featuring Marce Underwood

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