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Visions of a New World Survivor

An interview and evening with Johnny Clegg.

by **Robin France Watson**

They love him in England and Germany and the French call him “*Le Zoulou Blanc*,” the white Zulu. He’s got a committed North American fan base too, but perhaps you had to grow up in South Africa under apartheid to really appreciate the musical and social significance of Johnny Clegg. In the early days of the 1970s Clegg, a white, secular Jewish immigrant and anthropology student joined with the black migrant laborer and traditional farmer Sipho Mchunu and forming *Juluka*, they began playing and dancing together, throwing down a cultural challenge to the white establishment. Ever since, Clegg has seen, represented and spoken to what could be possible for the country. Even in 1976, during the uprising that followed the terrible Sharpeville massacre, their multi-racial and multi-ethnic unity, and obvious friendship gave the lie to the official policies of segregation and suppression.

Seeing them on stage, you knew apartheid was just plain wrong. When you were a part of the crowd at their shows, the truth was evident before your eyes. The joy and energy of the music was infectious. People got arrested at their concerts, the events and songs got banned. These 'African ideas' were a threat to the white regime. The songs & the society that developed around them bridged cultural and racial divides. Color, language and ideas melted together in a synergy that was instrumental in the genesis of post-apartheid South Africa's 'human rainbow'.

The last time I was lucky enough to catch Johnny Clegg and Mandisa Dlanga on stage together, I was a freelance journalist writing in Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela had been out of prison just one month. It was March of 1990 and the State of Emergency that had seared South Africa since 1986 was still in full force, detention without charge or trial for 180 days was still 'normal.' The anti-apartheid struggle was reaching its zenith on the streets and close to 100 000 people gathered under the banner of the United Democratic Front (UDF) for the *Human Rainbow Concert* at *Ellis Park* rugby stadium in Johannesburg. Mr. Mandela himself was promised to be there for this concert in his honor.

I remember still the crowds, riot police patrolling among them, snarling dogs tightly leashed. Despite the 'security presence' there was a sense of destiny in the air. The multiracial crowd shared food and jokes, the only hostility I could sense was toward the cops but even that was subdued. *Madiba* Mandela was out of prison and with him free at last, one knew that the rest of the country could not be far behind. Mixed in with the heady scents of sweat and foods and sweet smoke, I could smell the change wafting across the nation that day.

A whole lot of water, clear and muddy, has passed under the bridge in the last fourteen years. Today South Africa offers proof that a divided nation can come together and make change work. The country stands as a model for conflict resolution and peaceful change, a challenged yet vibrant and powerful emerging democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. In a short ten years, a nation of activists and their old enemies have had to come together, confess, forgive and learn to become nation builders. Despite the daunting obstacles of AIDS, massive unemployment, rampant crime and a still massive gap between rich and poor, South Africans remain remarkably upbeat, positively willing to give the fledgling democracy every chance to succeed.

The country has now seen three successive, fully democratic and peaceful elections, a successful transfer of the presidency from Mandela to Thabo Mbeki and despite the myriad issues facing the nation including a 40% unemployment rate, more than 80 % of eligible voters show up on polling day. Look at the 97% of the electorate, some of whom stood in line for days to vote in the first fully democratic election in 1994, and consider the potency of democracy next time you are sitting at home on Election Day, wondering about the value of your vote.

Remember that scene in *Rainman* where Dustin Hoffman & Tom Cruise are driving across the south western desert past all those spinning wind turbines? Listen carefully to the music in the background. Clegg's song *Scatterlings* plays:

*"We are the Scatterlings of Africa, both you and I,
on the road to Pelamanga, beneath the copper sky."*

In Ann Arbor this July to see *The Johnny Clegg Band* at *The Ark*, I catch him in the wings at the side of the stage before the sound check.

"The last time I saw you was at Ellis Park," I say by way of introduction, my South African accent thickening up a little, years of linguistic habit picked up in New York and Detroit falling away as I feel again, quite suddenly, home.

Clegg looks at me closely, "For the concert that was banned?"

"Yeah," I give him a long look back.

"Geez, that was a long time ago."

He is just off the phone to his son Jesse, so I enquire after his family. Still married to Jenny, Clegg's youngest child is now nine. Jesse is fifteen. Privately I wonder where all that time went. Johnny barely looks a year older than the last time I had seen him. The elemental vibrancy which saturates his sound keeps him young. I smile as we look at each other, remembering the anti-apartheid days, the lumps we'd all taken and how far we have all come. I'd arranged through his tour manager for an interview later but as he heads out to the bus, I ask,

"So where is *Pelamanga*?"

Clegg stares at me seriously, "It's at the end of illusion."

He slips away to prepare, so I wander back up to the stage where Brendan Ross (sax / keyboard) and Andy Innes (guitar) are trying to get a South African zip drive to work with American wiring. More on technology later. Concorde Nkabinde comes out laughing and smiling to check his bass sound, grinning from ear to ear I yell, "*Sawubona*, Concorde!"

"*Sawubona m'gani*," comes the friendly reply. Blacks and whites speaking each other's languages, offering understanding and acceptance, equality and dignity, that's the promise of the 'New South Africa'. That's why people are doing their best to make the country work. Right now, I'm just happy to be among my tribe again.

A soldering iron, an old adapter and some duct tape fix the problem with the wiring. They have an old Dutch saying in South Africa, "*n Boer maak 'n plan*." It means, "a farmer will come up with a solution." It's new world ingenuity at work. I find myself a strategic seat, save two more for friends I've bought tickets for, turn on my tape recorder and settle back to listen nostalgically to my first sound check with the band in about 15 years. Zulu guitar still moves the African in me as ever the bagpipes did the Scot and Johnny's sound encompasses both. From the traditional African influences of *Juluka*, to the Zulu / Celtic / Hindi mélange of *Savuka*'s later work and now the more rock-oriented strains of the new album *New World Survivor*, the music, like the man's message, crosses cultures and times, reminding us that deeper down we are all *Universal Men*.

The crowd rolls in, my friends among them. They're turned onto the music and it's their first show. We settle into our row, two back from the front, dead center. I give instructions on camera operation. As Abdel Wright comes on to begin the opening set, a hand rests on my shoulder and I look up at Greg Johnstone, tour manager extraordinaire,

"You wanted that interview right?" he asks dryly in his thick English accent. A competent tour manager is good shepherd, negotiator, dictator and mother hen all rolled into one. Greg's proved himself outstanding. I grab my recorder and notes and scurry after him, praying that my mates don't screw up and actually manage to get Abdel on video.

We jog out the back door and across the lot to Ashley Street. Locals are used to tour busses taking up the spots across from the *Fleetwood* on an evening. They complain about it, along with having to dodge the crowds lined up outside *The Ark*. The locals like to complain, I say, "Deal with it. It's part of being what Governor Granholm would call a *cool Michigan city*". Johnny's waiting at the bus.

"You're on in a half hour," Greg warns.

We settle onto a comfy built-in sofa up front, Johnny & I, stretched out facing each other, sitting down in Ann Arbor to tea and dreams. We figure out that we had lived about a mile apart in Johannesburg and talk about the old neighborhood. Get to know each other a bit. I set my recorder between us motioning, "Do you mind?" Clegg waves me on, "No, of course!"

JC: "So, where did we leave off?"

RFW: "We were talking about what has changed the most in South Africa, about how activists have had to become nation builders. How long will it take South Africa to become what everyone wants it to be? Is it going there? Can it get there?"

JC: "I think that we've achieved some major accomplishments in the last 10 years. Just from a political point of view, I think that being able to ease into a multi-racial, multi-cultural, unitary state after a period of fifty years of division and homelands and you know... all that stuff, has been a tremendous achievement."

Johnny takes his time. His face as expressive as Jim Carey's, he chews through the issues as he answers.

"I think that we have done extraordinarily well at the political level. I think that our real issue is economics."

He takes that thoughtful pause again.

"I think our issue now is in finding a way to create employment - if we're really going to alleviate poverty - and to deal with the challenges of an emerging democratic culture. Also, what is our national character? How do we perceive ourselves as a nation? Can we be a nation? These are the issues that are now raising their heads. We've got 11 official languages. We are basically trying to find a place for everybody in the constitution and the country. There are certain minimal guarantees that have been offered out BUT, it is really up to South Africans to make it work. And my real concern, and I think most people's concern, is whether the country can survive and grow as an economic entity for ALL of its peoples!"

We have 40% unemployment which in a political scientist's terms is a revolutionary figure. That causes revolutions. But because there is such a huge promise still hanging in the air in terms of black empowerment and in terms of slightly ameliorating the conditions in the country, which has happened, there is an amazing willingness and desire among the people to give the country time to work. In the past decade we've also seen a massive exodus from the rural areas into the urban areas, which has exacerbated the urban problems. The petty crime is huge and these are all things which we're now going to have to deal with."

RFW: "How are conditions in the country now? Are people becoming conditioned to violence?"

JC: Ironically, "Ja, it seems everyone has had some experience of low level crime and danger. Political violence isn't such a factor anymore. But, look, you know, you survive, you adapt and move on. I think that there is, like in Brazil, an incredible affluence at the level of the elite of whatever race; white, black, coloured or Indian. And then you have this huge sea of people who are living in squatter camps and don't have fresh water, proper ablutions, none of the basic moderate infrastructure."

RFW: "Do you think this is something South Africans have to deal with themselves or do you think this is something that the outside world should be helping with? In other words, how, working here, can we be useful over there? Would you even like to see South Africa receiving more international assistance?"

JC: "I don't believe in aid."

RFW: "ok."

JC: "What I believe in is investment!" Clegg's emphatic and positive.

RFW: "Right."

JC: "Because investment means that South Africans have to get up and do something themselves! If you put out the begging bowl and get given something, it's only a temporary fix; the condition of poverty isn't ameliorated.

"Also there's a huge aid trap. I mean, most development theorists are against aid now. Because normally it comes with huge political strings attached to it and secondly, it often comes with outdated or unresearched models which are foreign to the country. Obviously each country's got its own specific ideas and experiences and culture. For example, when you want to implement birth control or a specialized farming model, it has to be researched and you have to find a way that it can be made to work for the local people that have to implement it."

"So, I think that what we need is investment. We need to build infrastructure. We need to get people to see that South Africa can be a springboard into the rest of Africa - a development platform. We have a very sophisticated economy, an excellent infrastructure, telecommunications, roads, transport and air travel. They're busy revamping the whole of TransNet, so the railway system is really quite something!"

RFW: "Are there parallels between where South Africa is now and where America was after the American Revolution? You know, a new country looking for its place on a continent?"

JC: "No. You know, the thing for me is that the American Revolution was really about colonists. Colonists revolting against their brethren. You know what I mean? South Africa was really a unique moment in that it was indigenous people fighting against a system imposed on them by the descendants of settlers, who are themselves Africans. They are white Africans and have a right to be there. They were born there, their fathers and their fathers' fathers were born there. They are now white Africans, and that is quite a novel situation."

"You know," Johnny laughs and leans in close, his voice low and conspiratorial, "What has been one of the most spectacular moments this year..." His voice trails off for a moment. "If you had *ever* said to me when I was in the

UDF back in 1986, that the old *National Party* (NP) would join, actually merge, with the *ANC*, I would have said, 'You're mad!'"

The *UDF* or *United Democratic Front* was an umbrella organization for the various anti-apartheid forces inside South Africa while the *African National Congress* was still banned.

RFW: "Yeah, I remember that time well. I went into the army in '86. I won't forget it."

JC: He sighs. "Ja, those were bad days, hey! But now that very thing is on the table. They want to disband the NP and join with the ANC!" There is incredulity in his voice. "Can you believe it? That is such an irony! And it is something which changes the whole base of where we've come from."

RFW: "Yeah, that entirely shifts the dynamic of power in the country, rearranges the balances."

JC: "Yes!"

RFW: "But I think that's a good thing! At least in terms of where I'd like to see the country head."

JC: "Yes! It's a great thing. It's incredible, in just ten years to have come so far!"

RFW: "Is there a downside?"

JC: "Well, you know, there is in a way. We have children born after 1990 who don't remember the apartheid days. They cannot understand what life was like then and as a consequence, they are losing touch with some of the traditional elements of their culture. Their interests seem to tend towards hip hop nation, rather than traditional aspects of where they've come from. That's something of a universal problem, but I think that it would be a tremendous loss. And just like in other emerging cultures, upper class blacks in South Africa have lost all clue about traditional African tribal people and their lives."

RFW: "You had another child since I saw you last."

JC: "Ja. I talked to Jesse just before the concert. He was complaining about exams at school. It's hard for them. I am away from home for two months right now, which makes it tough on the family."

RFW: "Do you see parallels between your roles as a father raising kids in South Africa and your role as a spokesman for the change that is happening there?"

JC: "Seriously! Raising children is a highly specialized business!"

RFW: Laughing loud, "Oh yeah?!"

JC: "Because most families are inherently dysfunctional, I believe. I think that all families have a level of dysfunctionality because all human beings accumulate damage at some point; emotional and psychological traumas happen along the way. As a parent, that's why I believe people should have children when they're much older, because it enables you to realize where not to go, what not to say and also how to deal with certain things. And that for me has been a 'good mistake' I made because I had my first kid when I was 38."

RFW: "I fully agree. I'm 36, haven't had any yet."

Johnny smiles, his eyes show something somewhere between understanding and empathy.

RFW: "So, how's the view?" He looks at me quizzically, then nods.

JC: "From Pelamanga?" I smile as he thinks about his answer, glad we're on the same wavelength.

"It's a bit of a cold place, you know. When you come to the realization that what you have thought was true in the world, isn't. It's a hard understanding to come to, but it's an honest place. It is a place of self examination and new perspective. It can be the beginning of change or it can take you to despair. It will show you what you are made of."

I turn off the tape recorder and we chat privately about old times, friends in common, what happened to whom. Greg comes back hurried and insistent, "Come on Johnny, we've got to get on!" As Johnstone leads him away by the arm, Clegg looks back over his shoulder yelling "Robin, sorry man! We'll talk more later, ok?" I smile and wave, thinking to myself, "Of course it's ok, Johnny Clegg, you just made my summer!"

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I rejoin my friends inside the concert as Abdel finishes his last song and strategically place my sound gear near Clegg's main monitor, 'for the record.' The band steps out to raucous applause. As Johnny walks on, I hear calls in Zulu, Afrikaans, English and French and recognize that I'm standing again in the human rainbow, just like at all of his shows. He tinkers with his guitar as the crowd quiets, steps up to the mike and softly sings, "*Take my heart away...*"

The crowd erupts into rapturous applause and my own heart fills to bursting. There is something so much more intense about music you love when it's live and that close and it's been that long. I remember sending cassette tapes home from the army in '86 to my sweetheart in Johannesburg, I'd add some music at the beginning before my voiceover. More than one started with *Savuka's "Take my heart away."* I grab my camera and using the privileges of my well worn press pass, roam the Ark's cavern & capture the moment, wondering that this day the mountain had come to me. Live and immediate again, the music takes me across the miles and the years like nothing else has.

In this digital age of our teleconnected and ever shrinking planet, how do we define 'home'? I can pull out my cell phone any second, speak a name and be connected almost instantly to friends and family on several continents. Anytime of day and night, someone I love is awake, somewhere in the world. Many of them I haven't seen in years and yet we are still intimately engaged in each other's lives. While I also have family and roots here in Michigan, a part of me is endlessly somewhere else, yearning at a deep level for some atavistic tribal belonging. No matter how long I live away, a part of me will always be essentially African, and Clegg's music will always represent the country to me, will bring back in an instant the old days of protest and resistance, of pushing for the change which finally came. When I hear that music I remember that it is people that change the world.

It takes a while for the applause to die down at the end. Clegg yells over the noise. "Thank you and welcome!" "Sawubona, Johnny!" comes the call.

Clegg grins, "Sawubona!" He holds up a replacement concertina hastily flown in just before the show. The band had equipment stolen on the Canadian leg of the 2004 tour and that had limited the set list for their previous concert in Montreal. They'd had to fly one in from South Africa because the western equivalent wouldn't do. He explains, "These instruments, the guitar and concertina, were often taken and reconfigured. So you would buy one for three or four hundred dollars, and then you would pay another fifty dollars for somebody in the migrant labor hostel to take it apart and change all the buttons around so it would play Zulu music! That man's job is a 'concertina button changer, that's how he pays his rent."

Clegg turns to the sound engineer as he motions at the concertina handle, "Dave, I think this is going to come off in a minute. D'you want to bring some more tape?" He turns back to the crowd, "Excuse us. We have had a few technical difficulties, as you can see." The crowd erupts as Dave Newton wraps the contraption in a little more duct tape.

Unlike the massive outdoor show earlier on the tour when the band played to 55 000 fans at the *Montreal Jazz Festival*, the small town feel of Ann Arbor and the intimacy of the *Ark* lend themselves more easily to conversation and tonight Johnny is open and chatty. At the Montreal show the band was a good 20 feet above and

15 feet from the audience with an enormous TV screen providing the best view. At the *Ark*, Clegg is 5 feet in front of me and just above eye level. He relaxes into his gig, tells stories around the songs, explaining the context, the times and the Zulu lines, reminiscing one moment, looking forward the next. There is something to be said for a smaller venue, the artist can get more intimate with the crowd. Songs roll into stories, back into songs.

No longer constrained by missing equipment, the band ranges far and wide across Clegg's song book. With two guitars, bass, drums, concertina, keyboard and sax on stage, there's plenty of music to pick from among Clegg's nineteen albums over the last three decades. He plays most of my favorites, many of them older songs, not the biggest hits, each in turn takes me back.

In every country that experienced some form of colonialism, the indigenous cultures would incorporate aspects of the colonial power's culture into their own, adapting styles of dress, cooking and music with a bit of local twisting. This hybrid becomes after a time a cross-over culture of its own. Clegg draws his musical tradition from those cross cultural roots. Zulu choruses, English verses and a blend of western rock with African melody speak to the multi-cultured world citizen in me.

*"I saw the Berlin Wall fall.
I saw Mandela walk free.
I saw a dream whose time has come.
Changed my history."*

The band breaks into *Gunship Ghetto* and closing my eyes, I'm back on the streets of Soweto watching soldiers patrol the townships in armored vehicles, protesters challenging them. There's a marked similarity between my mental images and the pictures coming out of Iraq right now, soldiers patrolling heated, dusty streets. Johnny's music holds up across cultures and times, speaking to universal challenges. It strikes me that he is just as relevant now as he was during the apartheid days, it's only the context and the players that have changed. For me the power in the sound comes from the courage to speak out and use the music for so much more than entertainment. It took courage to start *Julukha* in South Africa when Johnny and Sipho did. You probably saw them performing

traditional Zulu dances to the music on *The Tonight Show*, but realize that in South Africa a lot of their performances were actually illegal.

There was a lot less freedom under apartheid than there is in America, even in this post 9/11 age of terror threats and heightened security. Standing up and speaking out in that day and age took real balls. Much of music and many musicians seem to have lost the idea of music as social comment, forgotten the power of protest in song. It takes a courage that for the most part seems sorely absent from the current scene. I'm still on this train of thought when Clegg segues into *Africa (What Made You So Strong?)*

*"I light a candle for the innocent ones,
A candle for our love.
I say a prayer for some peace on earth,
For the daughters and the sons.
And while your life unfolds
Like a cheap street fight,
You're just smiling in the dark,
Oh, what made you so strong?"*

As the song ends, I yell out, "*Bullets for Bafazane*," my personal favorite. Johnny sneaks me a look and smiles.

"Ok," he tells the crowd, "This is the last story."

The place erupts in a chorus of "NO!" They're loving every word and would stay all night. Clegg tells the story of Bafazane, a proud Zulu warrior. '*Bafazane*' means "they spit at each other," it's a good warrior's name. The man is a long time personal friend of Clegg's and has been his production manager for close on 25 years. But he'd been a *shinga* (warrior) before that and when Johnny met him, was getting by making Zulu dancing shoes out of discarded truck tires for migrant laborers at a worker's hostel near Johannesburg.

The song was *Juluka's* first major hit in South Africa. It made it onto radio only because it was one of the few in the band's repertoire that was completely in English. Apartheid's segregation worked on two levels, both racial and cultural. Music broadcast by the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) had to be in only one language and got played on that language's own station. Cross-pollination wasn't merely frowned upon; it was actually outlawed as part of the apartheid government's policy of "divide & rule".

*"He's got iron in his soul; he's got a smile in his eyes,
He makes dancing shoes from old car tires,
And it's the sky up above that he loves."*

Johnny and Mandy dance, the band plays on, following *Bafazane* with the simple tribal melody of *African Sky Blue* and the colonial commentary of *Third World Child*. The evening begins to draw down. The show picks up that vibe that concerts can get sometimes when you realize that all beautiful things will have their end. Clegg launches into his last speech:

"This is a rare, more futuristic song; it's from the new album, *New World Survivor*."

"Yes!" comes an enthusiastic response.

"Somebody's heard of the new album, that's amazing!" More laughter, "I'm astonished!"

"Well, to bring it down to its bottom line, we're moving into an epoch that is being called *Post-Human*, or in its gentler form *Trans-Human*." Nervous laughter this time. Humanity doesn't sound like it's altogether ready for that.

"Essentially what they are arguing is that within thirty to forty years, human beings will have made a definite convergence with the technology we make. We'll be wired and micro chipped to death, so that your five senses will be able to extend beyond the organic base of the human body. This is a very important moment in the evolution of our species, and how we deal with it has major political and social implications. Spiritual too, I suppose."

"Anyway, your grandson, or your son in fact, when he is in his 40s or whatever, will no longer have to worry about it when someone breaks into his car, because the alarm will go off *inside* his body! He will *be* his cell phone!"

I hear the laughter of people recognizing their own behaviors.

"Convergence darling, that's what they call it! What we are converging to, I'm not entirely certain, and sometimes it's troubling because we trust what we know, we are afraid of what we don't know. Civilization is only nine or ten thousand years old. That is, groups of people living together under social laws and regulations, with farming and investing in the future with certain guarantees; the bargain that society creates for us. It's really very short, this social contract, only 10 000 years old at the end of the day. And now here we are in 2004, contemplating a whole new set of things."

"Now where does this come from? It comes from our imagination. It comes from the very genetic construction that we are going in and pulling out and looking at. We are now evolving and stretching ourselves into a completely new... This is hardly a bottom line hey!" The audience erupts again, loving him, lapping it up.

"Sorry, I feel quite passionate about this, please forgive me." They already had.

"So what do I feel? I feel good. I feel strong. Whatever comes, I feel that this is where we are supposed to go. I think that this is part of the natural evolution of homo sapiens, a species that has gotten so conscious, and has got such a powerful mind that it has gone inside its own body and pulled out and analyzed its genetic structure and is now deciding what to do with it. Which is an inevitable consequence of being Homo sapiens; and this is the new song, *Into the Picture*."

Barry van Zyl taps on a cymbal and the band breaks into Clegg's latest tune. Just like in 1990, I get chills down my spine and emotion wells up. Our world has changed so much these past years, sweeping us all along with it. Johnny's older, but the vibrancy and enthusiasm still ring out clarion clear. His engagement with life and his vision of the possible still have the power to move one, or many. At 53, the man, the music and the message still sound strong.

*"Do you see the picture?
Do you feel strong?
Can you see that river?
Flowing on and on."*

*... Blue electric oceans,
Information streams,
Webs and nets in motion,
Connecting you and me."*

His subject has become less political and more universal. The music always was. The revolution is now digital rather than South African but Clegg's still standing at the leading edge of change and speaking to our collective future. He's still conscious of the power of music to move people to politics. The concertina handle comes loose and Dave runs on stage with more duct tape. "And this is an extension of that sentiment..." Clegg jokes as the emergency solution gets applied to the problem one last time. They'll have it fixed properly tomorrow. You can bet on that.

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"Sometimes I feel that you really you know me"

Of all the reasons I give when asked why I choose to live in Ann Arbor, the city's ability to serendipitously deliver the occasional magical night is probably the truest. Don't let anyone kid you, it's a fairly small place, but with the intimacy, the city gets a big sprinkling of fairy dust over its nightlife. There was the late Saturday I walked out the backdoor of the *Earle* and summoned directly into the *Firefly Club*, got to watch Wynton Marsalis and his band trot out an easy going, intimate, post *Michigan Theatre* show jam session for a privileged hundred-odd lucky souls. And then there was that night Eminem showed up at *The Touchdown Cafe* with Obie Trice and played a couple of numbers. That stuff happens less in bigger cities. The odds aren't as favorable. I've always been a fan of Johnny Clegg, respected the man and resonated with the music, but this Saturday in Ann Arbor I got to make a friend of him. That's the beauty of this place. Those things happen here.

The show over, I head backstage, dispatching our group to latch onto various Africans as they dispersed around the neighborhood. The *Fleetwood* and *Old Town* refuse to feed our happy & hungry band of 18 at short notice, so Barry van Zyl, Mandy Dlanga and I negotiate with the large and jolly owner of the *Parthenon Greek Restaurant*

on Main at Liberty who kindly agrees to keep his kitchen open and sets us up outside on the patio on Main Street. I call down to my friends and use technology to do a body count and place entree orders before the kitchen closes.

A steady stream of stragglers show up by twos and threes, eventually Johnny and Andy arrive. Seeing me at the far end of the table curled up next to Mandy, Clegg exclaims, "Rob! I was wondering where you went! Was that you ordering me food?" I raise my phone and wave it at him. He smiles, satisfied. "Good work, young man!" "Young and not so young," I think quietly. "Thanks Johnny," I smile, then again quietly, "Anytime!"

As the food arrives I excuse myself to Mandy and Barry, wander down to the other end of our impromptu banquet table and squeeze in between my friends to talk one more time with the man whose music kept my chin up on some of the darkest of the old days. We get the occasional interruption from concert goers, but they're brief, stopping only to reflect the joy of the evening and thank the man for that beautiful music of his. We talk long and deep, anthropology (Clegg has a master's degree), sociology, genetics, South Africa, touring, the changes in the music industry and politics. Most of all we talk about people processing change. Midnight comes and goes, nobody notices. Clegg looks at our empty beer glasses and someone orders more Heinekens.

"Drink my beer in a state of fear," I joke, quoting his own words back at him. Johnny laughs and turns to Andy Innes. "He's quoting *Berlin Wall* now!" Clegg says, motioning at me and referencing an old anti-apartheid song. "That takes you back a while, hey!"

Clegg negotiates with the *Parthenon's* owner, seeking his customary triple espresso. We settle for sweet rich Greek coffees which disappear fast. Suddenly it's really late, the tour bus leaves promptly at two. Even the best of days must end. We settle on and around the bus on a beautiful, muggy summer night. It's almost 2am and still 70 degrees out. I laugh as Concorde, Barry and Dave compare the finer points of this year's tour bus over their past experiences; it's not the sort of conversation one hears every day around A2. The driver arrives and with the band's July 4th Milwaukee Summer Fest show waiting, we bid last farewells but few goodbyes. The show will go on. They'll be back in a year and until then we carry them with their music in our hearts.

*"I don't know where you are.
My eyes are fixed upon your star.
I know that at the journey's end,
I will see your face again."*

Hamba kahle, Johnny, m'gani. I'll see and hear you again.

THE END

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Glossary:	Say it like this:	Means:
Sawubona	- suh'woo'boh'nuh	- 'hello' or 'good to see you'
M'gani	- mm'gah'ni	- 'my friend'
Hamba Kahle	- huh'm'bah' kuh'shleh	- "fare well"
Ja	- yaah	- "yes" or "yeah"
<i>Juluka</i>	- Joo'loo'kuh	- "sweat"
UDF	- The United Democratic Front	(An umbrella organization for the various anti-apartheid forces while the African National Congress was still banned)
NP	- National Party	(The Party of Apartheid)
ANC	- African National Congress	