



Tshwane University
of Technology
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20
YEARS
2004-2024

WOUTER KELLERMAN



COMMENDATIO

Wouter Kellerman

Doctor of Art and Design (Honoris Causa)
17 October 2024

Wouter Kellerman is a luminary in the realm of contemporary music, transcending boundaries through his multifaceted talents as a flautist, composer, producer and philanthropist. His career is marked by extraordinary achievements that highlight his artistic prowess, as Kellerman has consistently pushed the limits of musical expression.

Kellerman, a double GRAMMY® Award-winning performing artist, has built a remarkable legacy in the music industry.

He received his first GRAMMY® Award for his album *Winds of Samsara* in 2014.

This exceptional album not only topped the US Billboard Charts but also reached the pinnacle of the Zone Music Reporter Top 100 International Radio Airplay Chart.

Following this resounding success, Kellerman released his next album, *Love Language*, which not only received a GRAMMY® nomination for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album but also debuted at the No. 1 spot on the Billboard World Music charts within its first week of release.

In 2021, Kellerman's album *Pangaea* was nominated for Best New Age Album at the 64th GRAMMY® Awards.

In 2022, he received his fourth GRAMMY® nomination for his captivating song *Bayethe*, a collaboration with Nomcebo Zikode and Zakes Bantwini, in the Best Global Music Performance category.

In 2023, Kellerman celebrated his second GRAMMY® Award win for the aforementioned song, marking another pinnacle in his illustrious career, making him the only individual in South Africa to have won two GRAMMYs.

Kellerman excels at experimenting with the nuances of the flute, including its shades, textures and colours, skillfully blending them with other instruments and vocal sounds. Over the course of nine albums, he has consistently built upon the rigorous classical training he received in his youth, crafting a distinctive sound that has garnered critical acclaim and numerous awards.

He has secured a total of nine South African Music Awards (SAMAs) from 13 nominations, solidifying his status as one of South Africa's premier musicians.

Kellerman has showcased his talent on a global stage, performing in cities such as Berlin, Shanghai, Delhi and Sydney. Notably, he has held three sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall in New York.

In 2010, he had the honour of performing at the FIFA Soccer World Cup closing ceremony, captivating a worldwide audience of 700 million viewers. A memorable moment in 2016 was his performance in Johannesburg for the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, which garnered a television audience exceeding 200 million.

In August 2023, Kellerman delivered an intimate hour-long concert exclusively for nine people, including distinguished guests such as the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa; the President of China, Xi Jinping; the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi; and the President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. He also graced the stage at the BRICS Gala Dinner, attended by over 200 heads of state.

Another notable achievement includes being featured on the cover of Forbes magazine in October 2023.

Kellerman composed the solo flute piece *The Long Road* in honour of Nelson Mandela, which received the 2016 Global Peace Song Award in the Acoustic/Contemporary Music category.

Additionally, his composition *Soweto Travels* won first prize in the instrumental category at the 2018 USA Songwriting Competition.

In 2018, Kellerman collaborated with the Ndlovu Youth Choir, a rural choir based in Moutse, Limpopo, South Africa. Together, they created a South African adaptation of Ed Sheeran's *Shape of You*, which became an internet sensation, amassing tens of millions of views and earning accolades such as the Hollywood Music in Media Award (HMMA) for Best Independent Music Video.

This exposure catapulted the Ndlovu Youth Choir into the international limelight, ultimately leading them to the finals of America's Got Talent in 2019. Kellerman employed the same successful approach with the Mzansi Youth Choir, which also achieved similar success on America's Got Talent.

Driven by a passion for teaching and empowering young individuals, Kellerman has provided financial support for the living expenses of ten children in the SOS Children's Village in Ennerdale, South Africa, for the past 24 years.

Furthermore, he has funded the construction of a house in the SOS Children's Village in Rustenburg, South Africa. In recognition of his ongoing commitment to improving the lives of these children, Kellerman received a nomination from the SOS Children's Villages for the Inyathelo Special Recognition Award for Philanthropy.

It is with immense pride and admiration that the Tshwane University of Technology confers upon Wouter Kellerman the degree of Doctor of Art and Design (Honoris Causa) in the Faculty of Arts and Design for his contributions to our nation's musical heritage, exceptional talent and achievements, profound impact on the global stage and the inspiration he provides to established and aspiring artists through the universal language of music.

Celebrating 20 years of empowering people