

5 things to know about Schalk Bezuidenhout - this week's star in *Trippin With Skhumba*

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In the third episode of the Showmax Original, *Trippin With Skhumba*, the 2018 DStv Viewers' Choice Award: Favourite Comedian winner and 2017 Comics' Choice Comic of the Year, roadtrips with Schalk Bezuidenhout to where the Afrikaans comedian grew up: Kempton Park in Gauteng.



Here are five things you should know about the two-time Comics' Choice winner, who also won a SAFTA for his supporting role in the kykNET comedy, *Hotel*, and has been getting rave reviews recently for his lead role in the multi-award-winning film, *Kanarie*.

#1. Schalk is scared of children in school uniforms

Schalk takes Skhumba back to where he went to school: Hoërskool Jeugland in Kempton Park. He admits he's feeling nervous before going on stage. "I was bullied in school, so when I see a child in a school uniform, I'm immediately nervous. You know like when you're in grade eight and the matrics look at you and you look down? Even now, I'm 26, but when a matric in a school uniform looks at me, I'm still like, 'Sorry, sorry.'"

#2. Schalk's dad was his teacher at school

Schalk's father, Schalk, was one of his teachers at Hoërskool Jeugland. Schalk has the students in hysterics with a story about getting a hiding at school from his father for bunking, while looking up at his own baby picture on the wall of his dad's office. "At home he couldn't hit me because my mom said, 'You don't hit him.' But now it's at the school - it's a free-for-all. It was the first time since I was in school that he could hit me. But now it wasn't just for bunking - it was for all the other stuff from home that had built up over months. That prepared me for life. Because nothing in my life has been worse than that. Now I'm not scared for anything."

#3. Schalk's first paying comedy gig was at a strip club

Schalk takes Skhumba back to Rock Paradise Strip Club in Kempton Park, where he did his first paying gig, after eight months of open mic nights. "Tony De King used to run a gig here. He called me one day and said could I come do a comedy spot for four-thousand rand..." As though performing at age 19 for strippers and their patrons at two in the afternoon.

wasn't stressful enough, his dad decided to come along too...

#4. Schalk's mom has a shrine to his career at her house

Schalk takes Skhumba back to his parent's house in Kempton Park for a braai. He starts the visit by showing Skhumba his mom's museum about his career - a room with 12 show posters, a statue of Schalk, a painting of Schalk, and the Golden Horn he won for his role as Danny in *Hotel*. "I'm first going to show you the room of the proudest mother in the world," Schalk says. "If you look quickly, you'll think I had a stalker."

#5: Schalk is "the one white comedian loved by black people"

Skhumba calls Schalk "the one white comedian loved by black people", and asks him why he thinks he's crossed over so well. Schalk says it's a hard question, but if he had to guess, it's because, "I am the stereotype but I'm not the stereotype. I'm not a khaki-wearing, big-beard rugby player. But at the same time it's clear that English is my second language and though I'm not racist I am in many ways still ignorant."



In a wide-ranging episode, Skhumba and Schalk talk about the first black person Schalk got to know, whether white or black comedians have more opportunities in South Africa, Schalk's mum's vibrating bed, and how Schalk wanted to be an actor before he wanted to be a comedian.

Schalk also takes Skhumba for waffles and a burger in Kempton Park.

"I'm disappointed," Skhumba says afterwards, to which Schalk replies, "A lot of people are disappointed by Kempton Park wanted to give you that experience..."

New episodes weekly, only on Showmax

Trippin With Skhumba, Showmax's first vernacular Original and first Original reality series, releases new episodes every Thursday. The first episode focused on 2016 Comics' Choice Native Tongue winner, Mashabela Galane, visiting his home Moletjje, Limpopo. Last week, Skhumba headed to Motherwell township in Port Elizabeth with 2018 Comics' Choice Native Tongue winner Siya Seya. Subsequent episodes will focus on Celeste Ntuli (Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal), who was the most nominated comedian with Skhumba going into the 2018 Comics' Choice Awards; 2017 Native Tongue winner Salesman (Pretoria); and 2016 Comic of the Year winner Tumi Morake (Bloemfontein).

Book your tickets now for the comedy special that ends the season

The first season will end with an hour-long stand-up special, featuring Skhumba and his guests, as well as one new comedian from each hometown visited. Ticket sales are now open for *Trippin With Skhumba: The Live Comedy Show*, which will be held on 23 March 2019 at 1 Fox Junction in Newtown, with the show starting at 8pm. Early bird tickets cost R250, with the price going up to R320 soon. Limited tickets for the live taping are available, so book fast. For more information, visit <https://www.webtickets.co.za/event.aspx?itemid=1489207399>.

Watch the first three episodes of *Trippin With Skhumba* first and only on Showmax:
<https://www.showmax.com/eng/tvseries/n0rcixt9-trippin-with-skhumba>.

About *Trippin With Skhumba*

In each 30-minute episode, Skhumba will drive a fellow South African comedian back to their hometown, exploring places that won't make any tourism brochures and stories that would be edited out of any authorised biographies.

Trippin With Skhumba is directed by Vincent Moloi, who won the 2019 Best Director: TV Drama SAFTA last weekend for *Tjovitjo*. The series is being produced for Showmax by Diprente (the production company behind this year's box office hit *Matwetwe Catching Feelings*, and the International Emmy-nominated *Late Nite News With Loyiso Gola*), which is co-own by 2018 Comics' Choice Comic's Pen winner Kagiso Lediga, and is also producing Netflix's first African Original series, *Queen Sono*.

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About Skhumba

Skhumbuzo "Skhumba" Hlophe is a Tembisa-born comic who first graced the comedy scene over 10 years ago, thrilling audiences and critics alike with his larger-than-life comedy, which has his crowd in stitches every time he appears on stage.

Skhumba's career has soared over the past five years, but his feet are still firmly on the ground. 2018 proved to be his best year yet, with 22 out of 24 shows sold out around the country.

About Diprente

Founded in 2009, Diprente is an independent production house making original narrative content for the world from Johannesburg, South Africa. It has garnered awards and audience acclaim across the full range of its productions, including television, film, short form, animated and kids content.

Past projects include the feature films *Blitz Patrollie*, *Catching Feelings* and *Matwetwe*, as well as the two-time Emmy-nominated satirical news series, *The Late Nite News with Loyiso Gola*, and the first African Netflix Original series, *Queer Sono*.

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