

Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse shows no sign of slowing down at 71 years young

 By [Martin Myers](#)

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The sound of Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse has set the world alight with sonic vibrations that contributed to the cultural development of world music, afro-funk, Soweto soul, township pop and contemporary sounds over the years.

Added to this, his gifts of mentorship, advice, experience, and priceless lessons, are the ingredients that create a meaningful consciousness among young people entering the arts. The crucial social and political role that music has played in our history cannot be taken for granted. Beyond the pleasure that music and art, in general, elicits in people, it serves an even higher purpose – that of developing the consciousness of people and improving the social system.



Image by Peter Abrahams

“Hotstix” is a testament to the contribution to South Africa's music industry whose impact has been infused into the memory of a nation and whose creative passion evokes the emotions of history and the heart.

In 2018, “Hotstix” was honoured by President Ramaphosa and received a national order. The citation, Order of Ikhamanga in Silver, read, “for his contribution to the field of music and social cohesion. His spellbinding music has consistently captured the imagination of the nation.”

Former president Kgalema Motlanthe wrote on Mabuse's 70th birthday: "My brother Siphon, we have come a long way together, and through your 70 year-long pilgrimage to the highest echelons of social, cultural and artistic eminence, we remember the distinguished milestones of your life and honour this as a moment for all south Africans to consider your pioneering contribution to African music and a global movement of expression."



Siphon Hotstix Mabuse: A South African legend whose music spans generations

Gwen Ansell 5 Nov 2021



Over three decades ago, Mabuse's half-a-million-selling smash-hit single *Burnout* changed the face and shape of Afro-pop and township jive like no other song in the South African pop music history.

I recently caught up with Mabuse...

■ ***When are you happiest?***

When children call me daddy, especially in Soweto.

■ ***What does music mean to you?***

It means a life of fulfilment.

■ ***Do you have any funny moments on stage?***

When I forget the lyrics to a song.

■ ***Who are your heroes?***

All the honest living people.

■ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

An old South African rand (the R1 notes) signed by the late Nelson Mandela on his release from prison.

▣ ***It's your round what are you drinking?***

Martini and Lemonade.

▣ ***The song you wished you wrote?***

Yesterday by the Beatles.



Image by Peter Abrahams

▣ ***What's your dream gig to do?***

Any desert festival.

▣ ***If you were not a musician what would you do?***

A student of anthropology.

▣ ***Pick five words to describe yourself?***

Insecure. Purposeful. Magnanimous. Amorous. Loving. Sensitive.

▣ ***Name your 5 favourite Desert Island Discs?***

These are songs that have influenced my thinking and what I do as an artist..

Beatles – *Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)*. This was the first song I learnt to play in my first band, The Beaters.

Bob Marley and the Wailers – *Jonny Was*

Babsy Mlangeni – *Sala Emma*

Johnny Clegg – *Scatterlings of Africa*

West Nkosi – *Two Mabone*. This is the song that inspired me to create *Jive Soweto* and *Shikisha*.

▣ ***What song changed your life?***

Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown) and *Burnout*. *Burnout* has given me a life one can only dream of. This song is bigger than me. South Africa love it and it is so humbling.

▣ ***What's at the top of your bucket list?***

I would love to go to Cuba and play a show.

▣ ***What's your greatest achievement?***

Passing matric at the age of 60.

▣ ***What do you complain about most often?***

Unreliable partnerships and apathy.

▣ ***Happiness is...***

Sharing and caring with others.

▣ ***On stage I tend to?***

Get nervous and intense.



Image by Peter Abrahams

▣ ***What is the best life lesson you have been taught?***

Listen. Be respectful and humble.

▣ ***Where would you like to be right now?***

Somewhere over the rainbow.

ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

Co-owner at Triple M Entertainment, founder Music Exchange, manager Siphon Hotstix Mabuse

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