

Music as healing with Urban van Halen

Urbano B Nobela, also known as Urban van Halen, is a self-taught lead guitarist and vocalist from Soweto.

 By [Martin Myers](#) 3 May 2022



Image supplied: Urban van Halen

He is one of the most in-demand players in SA and plays for both Lira and Siphon 'Hotstix' Mabuse.

Urban is also a regular contributor to the in-house bands for reality TV shows. On Freedom Day last week he was on stage with Zoe Modiga at the Lyric Theatre.

Come and see this magic player when he performs with Siphon Mabuse at the Daisy Jones bar in Stellenbosch on 15 May from 1pm.

I caught up with Urban in between rehearsals...

What is your job description?

I am a musician.

What does music mean to you?

Music means life and joy - it is spiritually a healer to me.

My music is about...

Connecting people from all over the world.

What is your motto?

Love what you do and do what you love.

‡ ***Fame is about...***

Having the opportunity to positively influence and shift people's mindsets.

‡ ***Retirement will happen when...***

Only and only when I die.

‡ ***I don't do...***

Negative energy and arrogant people.

‡ ***I would love to co-write with...***

Greg Howe and Quincy Jones

‡ ***Where do you go for inspiration to create?***

Different spaces where there is movement, Soweto and quiet spaces.

‡ ***What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?***

Performing with legends around the world and travelling.

‡ ***The song you must do during every show?***

Soweto and Tata Hotstix loves the solo I do during *Burnout*, a blessing indeed.

‡ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

My string broke during a show and I missed playing a melody - everyone laughed!

‡ ***My heroes are...***

My dad and all the silent givers.

‡ ***My style icon is...***

Tom Ford

‡ ***Which living person do you admire most and why?***

John Mayer, he modernised old guitar playing into new guitar playing.

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

My guitars.

‡ ***It's your round; what are you drinking?***

A cold beer.

‡ ***Dream gig to do?***

Sharing the stage with Greg Howe and George Benson at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

‡ ***What makes you stand out?***

My sound and tone.

‡ ***Any nicknames?***

Van Halen and Urbie Handcock.

‡ ***If you were not a musician, what would you do?***

I'd be a doctor healing is my passion.

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

Passionate, fun, enthusiastic, observant and crazy.

‡ ***What are you streaming?***

Podcast and chill

‡ ***Greatest movie ever made?***

Apocalypse Now

‡ ***What book are you reading?***

Act like a lady, think like a man by Steve Harvey

‡ ***What song changed your life?***

Samba Party by Carlos Santana

‡ ***Who do you love?***

My wife Nolwazi Ngidi

‡ ***What is your favourite word?***

Sbali

‡ ***Top of your bucket list?***

I want to do the *Naked and Afraid* show.

‡ ***Your greatest achievement?***

Sharing the stage with my dad

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

Bad sound at a gig.

‡ ***What is your biggest fear?***

God almighty

‡ ***Happiness is...***

Peace.

‡ ***On stage, I tend to...***

Smile a lot. I usually don't do that, but the stage is my happy place

‡ ***The best life lesson you have learned?***

Inner peace.

‡ ***What has been your favourite journey so far?***

Joining the Hotband with bra Hotstix.

‡ ***Do you do charity work, and if you do – what do you do?***

Not yet but I want to give back.

‡ ***Wishes and dreams?***

To be the best version of myself and have the best relationships with my friends.

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ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

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