

# Monique Hellenberg



By [Martin Myers](#) 19 Nov 2019

Dynamic singer Monique Hellenberg is the voice behind Goldfish's mega-hit "This Is How It Goes". She has just returned from working in the Far East for the past few months.

Hellenberg has a show this weekend with her dear friend Maya Spector at the Raptor Room, 79 Roeland Street in Cape Town on Friday, 22 November from 7.30pm. A classy evening of jazz is to be expected.

I caught up with Hellenberg, last week.







▣ ***What does music mean to you?***

It helps me feel more connected to the deepest purest part of myself and have experiences that are beyond the limits of my ego.

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

I love singing songs I love. So often, it gives me energy and makes me feel happy.

▣ ***Are you famous?***

My voice is definitely famous. People I don't know have messaged me from all over SA and other countries too, saying they've heard my voice on Goldfish's number one hit song, "This Is How It Goes", on radio stations.

▣ ***What drives you: ego or humility?***

A bit of both for sure! I wish I could sing with utter and complete humility all the time I sing, but it's not always valued or required in the different jobs that I do. Ego is sometimes preferred, depending on the job at hand. If it were totally up to me, humility would always come first.

▣ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

The most memorably humorous moment happened when I sang with an amateur band at an outdoor function in Kuils River many years ago. The band was playing so terribly that it made the male vocalist stop singing because the discordant music led him to laugh uncontrollably.

So I decided to step in to finish the song ("More Than Words" by Extreme). Soon after joining in to sing with the band, I found myself wanting to laugh, so I thought to myself that I should add some R&B embellishments to try and disguise my "almost" giggles (which at that point had presented themselves not my voice via an unstable, shaky tone).

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

My father, Derek Adriaan Hellenberg. He is a coloured man who grew up in poverty as one of 13 children in his family during the apartheid era. They had the bare minimum to eat every day, and didn't even always have proper school shoes.

Yet, he managed to make a success of himself by being one of the first people of colour in Cape Town to study medicine the University of Cape Town, becoming a general practitioner and opening his own medical practice in a poor community (helping people who had grown up in similar conditions to him) and becoming an associate professor at the University of Cape Town.

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

My kettle and teabags.

☒ ***It's your round, what are you drinking?***

Shiraz/Chardonnay/Sauvignon Blanc/Tequila Sunrise/Amarula.

☒ ***Dream gig to do?***

It would be amazing to sing in a musical theatre production on Broadway in New York or the West End in London.

☒ ***What makes you stand out?***

I've just dyed my hair electric red and I sang the lead vocal part for the iconic South African movie, *Fiela Se Kind* (2019).

☒ ***Nicknames?***

Momo and Nique.

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

Open up my own tea shop, and hire live performers there.

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

- Petite
- Colourful
- Creative
- Nature-lover
- Friendly

☒ ***What song changed your life?***

"Time Is A Healer" by Eva Cassidy. It helped me during my grieving process after my twin sister had passed away.

☒ ***Favourite fashion garment:***

The ring I bought from Thailand earlier this year. It's pure silver in the shape of a star.

☒ ***On stage, I tend to:***

Enjoy going into the realm that music takes me to whilst singing.

☒ ***Your greatest achievement:***

Branching out, working and living overseas.

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

Poverty and crime in SA.

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

In a warm indoor Jacuzzi.

☒ ***Wishes and dreams:***

That we will all start treating each other with more love and respect.

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