

Aron Halevi

 By [Martin Myers](#)

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Aron Halevi is a multi-award-winning musician in Cape Town, South Africa. He founded Freshlyground in 2002 and has just released his first solo album, Rise.

I caught up with him last week.



■ *When are you happiest?*

When I'm lost – either at the piano or in the mountains, or in New York.

■ *What does music mean to you?*

Music is my secret weapon. It's my happy pill. It's my hot water bottle. It's my therapist. It's my emergency exit.

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

I love the songwriting process, and being in studio – where anything is possible. Connecting with strangers is also pretty awesome (sometimes).

■ *Are you famous?*

Being famous just means lots of people know your face. It doesn't mean you're a good person, or even that you're particularly good at anything. I think fame is highly overrated. So no. I'm not. Thanks.

■ *What drives you: ego or humility?*

My ego wants to be humble, and I strive for humility. But it's not easy to be humble and, at the same time, believe in yourself. This is something I am constantly working on.

■ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

I remember an early Freshlyground gig on the beach at Mossel Bay. It was New Year's Eve and Zolani somehow managed to get the year wrong!

■ ***Your heroes?***

Ordinary people who have overcome adversity and still manage to live life with a positive attitude. And Bobby McFerrin – I love you!!!

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

My fingers. Honestly, I don't know what I would do without them!

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

I wish I had a really cool answer for this, but I'm probably drinking an Amarula Don Pedro. Blended, not stirred.

■ ***Dream gig to do?***

Well, the thing at the very top of my bucket list is to perform with a full symphony orchestra. So wherever that happens will be my dream gig! I'd also love to perform at Kirstenbosch Gardens again someday. It's one of the few things I miss about Freshlyground.



▣ ***What makes you stand out?***

Besides my baldhead, I think my ability to think out of the box – which goes hand in hand with the bald head.

▣ ***Nicknames:***

Arrow. Roro. Dad. Pa.

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

I would be a social innovator, coming up with new, creative ways to make a positive impact in the world.

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

Compulsive optimist. Obsessive percussive disorder.

▣ ***Five favourite SA albums of all time:***

Graceland – Paul Simon (I'm sorry, but that's an SA album!)

Urban Zulu – Busi Mhlongo

The Hanging Gardens of Beatenberg – Beatenberg

Nomvula – Freshlyground (I know that might seem a bit biased.)

Weekend Special – Brenda and the Big Dudes

■ ***What is your favourite word?***

Meraviglioso – which means ‘wonderful’ in Italian.

■ ***Favourite fashion garment:***

My Havaianas.

■ ***Give us some real proper slang and what it means:***

Chutzpahdik – pushing the envelope

■ ***Your greatest achievement?***

Well, personally being a dad is definitely my greatest achievement. But I suppose winning an MTV Award is one of my greatest career achievements.

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

People who complain a lot.

■ ***What is your fear?***

Having regrets.



■ **Happiness is:**

When the people I love are all healthy, and we're somewhere without Wi-Fi or cellphone reception.

■ **On stage, I tend to:**

Find one person in the crowd to connect with.

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

I think the answer for that will always be the same. Next to a mountain pool.

■ **Wishes and dreams?**

I have so many! They would never fit here. But one of them is to leave this place in a better condition that it was when I got here.

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