

The rich heritage behind DNA Brand Architect's senior creative Bafana Mthembu

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Bafana Mthembu a senior creative for DNA Brand Architects is a man of many talents.



Picture Supplied.

Inspired by his heritage

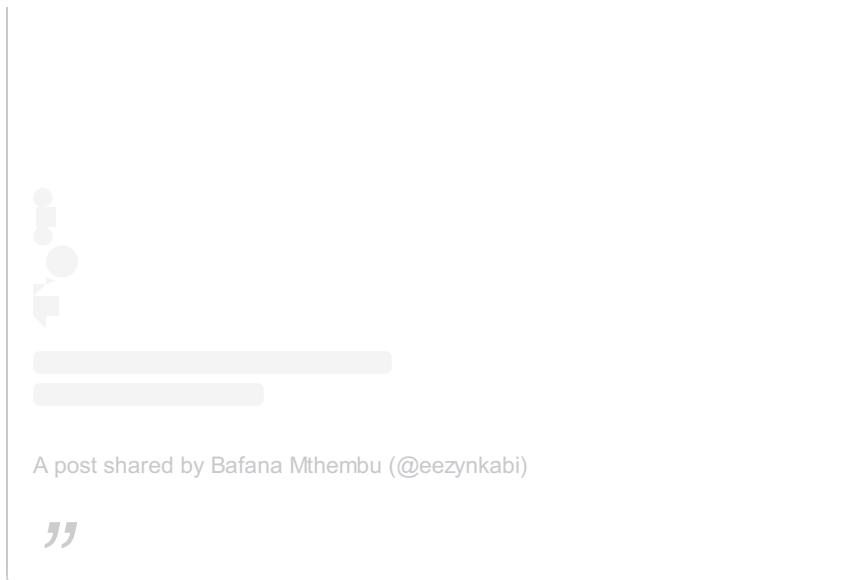
An award-winning creative he is also the creator of *Asgqoke*, a social media series where he uses influences of the *Amabhinca* culture and his Zulu heritage to create fashion content that airs every Sunday.

“I was inspired by all the get ready with me (GRWM) videos trending on social media, then I saw that no one was showcasing South African sub-cultures when getting dressed and I felt the *Bhinca* subculture has more range than any subculture in Mzansi, that’s just my opinion,” he says.

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An accountant by profession, Mthembu - also known as Eezy Nkabi - always wanted to get into fashion, but did not realise the many other career possibilities available, such as working for an agency as a creative.

“I went to a school in Soweto so I did not know about these opportunities - that I could study to be a strategist or to be a photographer. Being in the creative space was something that was very far out of my sight, which is why I studied accounting,” he says.

Getting into an agency

After not making the cut to join DNA Brand Architects in early 2018 he started helping the agency out with getting engagement for campaigns on social media.

“There was a programme called DNA for Madiba, I saw a post online and I went to that programme. Unfortunately, I didn’t make the cut of individuals who were selected to work at the agency. So I befriended a few people in the agency and every time there was an opportunity, they would tell me to apply. I kept applying until I got an interview and bang I got the job,” he says.

Mthembu landed a job as a community manager in 2019 and after a while decided to ask for a more fulfilling role as a creative thinker.

“I started as a community manager and I didn’t [originally] know what that was but I would respond to people’s questions on social media, and then I got bored and told them I wanted a change, and because it’s a very open agency they gave me the platform to do that,” says Mthembu.



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He quickly rose up the ranks and became a senior creative who has worked with brands such as Tastic, Bathu, Fattis and Monis, Netflix, Telkom and musician Thandiswa Mazwai.

"Working in a small agency helped me see quickly how things come alive and the work that goes behind that," he says.

Content that just lands

Mthembu says he was not expecting the level of engagement he has had with his series but it's affirming that he is on the right path. He is now also not only a Prism award winning creative but a South African Traditional Music Awards nominated content creator.

"When I started *Asgqoke* it was for representation for South African subcultures, I just wanted to create content for fun and for jokes. The first day I started I posted two videos of a taxi driver look and a *pantsula* look. The reception was great. I really didn't expect the content to blow up like it did. I think what makes people interested is its authenticity," says Mthembu.

Looking towards the future the creative says he wants to see himself in a creative director role.

"I want to be a creative director at some point, but have not set in stone what agency I want to work for. In my opinion an agency is not supposed to make you feel like you made it, it's more important to work for the title and have a voice that people feel that they can listen to," he says.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

Karabo Ledwaba is a Marketing and Media Editor at Bizcommunity and award-winning journalist. Before joining the publication she worked at Sowetan as a content producer and reporter. She was also responsible for the leadership page at SiMags, Sowetan's lifestyle magazine. Contact her at karabo@bizcommunity.com

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