

Monique Hellenberg on stepping into her dreams

 By [Martin Myers](#)

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Award-winning singer, Monique Hellenberg is the voice behind Goldfish's No 1 Hit, *This is how it goes* and was a contestant on *The Voice South Africa* in 2017. She is now a lecturer in Jazz & Contemporary Voice at Nelson Mandela University. Her latest single *Saw It, Wrote It, Got It* is now available on Spotify, iTunes and YouTube.



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This song is about stepping into the life one dreams of. Dream it, put into action and then get it. It's also about simply appreciating what we have around us and knowing we are all loved and supported. A portion of the proceeds will go to Rainbow of Hope Children's Home in Cape Town, for which she is an ambassador.

We recently chatted...

▣ ***What is your purpose?***

To inspire and uplift through music.

▣ ***What does music mean to you?***

Music can create vibrations that can literally change us.

▣ ***My music is about...***

Stepping into the life one dreams of. Dream it, put in the action and then get it!

▣ ***What is your motto?***

#AuntforLife!

▣ ***Fame is about...***

Being able to reach a larger audience than most have access to.

▣ ***Retirement will happen when...***

From music? Never!

▣ ***I don't do...***

Playing psychological games.

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

Bruno Mars, Daniela Andrade, Daniel Caesar, Jarrad Rickette, Emma Van Heyn, Tamia, Mariah Carey, Toni Braxton, Babyface, Mark Ronson, Laura Mvula, Tina Schouw or David Foster.

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

Usually home. Nowadays, I've been co-creating music through Circle songs with my Nelson Mandela University students. Who knows what that could lead to...?

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

There are so many enjoyable aspects, so here goes, dressing glamorously, performing live, meeting and connecting with wonderful people from all over the world and sharing our stories with one another.

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

Since I am living in a small city, most of the time I vary my repertoire and don't repeat the same repertoire very regularly – but in the past, my go-to songs would have been *Saving All My Love* by Whitney Houston and *Georgia* by Ray Charles.

■ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

There are so many! Shaun Johannes used to make me laugh at some of our gigs by making guiro sounds while I was singing.

■ ***My heroes are...***

Tina Schouw, Daniela Andrade, Mariah Carey, Tamia, Whitney Houston, Bruno Mars, Toni Braxton and Doja Cat.

■ ***My style icon is...***

Toni Braxton.

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

My parents. They have managed to achieve so much despite all odds since they grew up during the apartheid era.



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

My AKG40 microphone.

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

Tequila, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay OR Merlot wine.

■ ***Dream gig to do?***

Singing at the Grammy Awards.

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

I feel I am able to display a good balance between being a natural and trained musician. As you can tell by now, I also have a silly sense of humor that often comes out during live performances.

■ ***Any nicknames?***

Nique, Niquoid, Mo, Momo, Moniqua, The Monique Show...the list goes on.

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

I would lecture singing full-time; wait a minute...I'm already doing that!

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

Thoughtful; organised; determined, grateful and happy.

🎲 **5 must have songs on your Spotify playlist please**

Eyes for You - Maya Spector

So Into You - Tamia

Long As I Live - Toni Braxton

Lay with You - El De Barge ft. Faith Evans

Endless Lawns - Kurt Elling

🎲 **Greatest Movie Ever Made?**

The Matrix

🎲 **What book are you reading?**

The Story of South African Jazz: Volume 1 by Struan Douglas.

🎲 **What song changed your life?**

This is how it goes with Goldfish

▣ ***Who do you love?***

My family, friends, students and my audiences.

▣ ***What is your favorite word?***

Yes

▣ ***Top of your bucket list?***

Visit China again

▣ ***Your greatest achievement?***

Being hired as a full-time lecturer in Jazz & Contemporary Voice at Nelson Mandela University in 2023.

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

Inequality, greed and loadshedding.

▣ ***What is your biggest fear?***

I'd prefer not to say.

▣ ***Happiness is...***

Living life to the full.

▣ ***On stage, I tend to...***

Step into my diva persona.

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

The most important and challenging one is that, the only thing in life that is certain, is change.

▣ ***What has been your favorite journey so far?***

Living in China mid-2017 until the end of 2018; currently my new favorite journey is where I'm at right now.

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

I am an ambassador for Rainbow of Hope Children's Home based in Cape Town.

▣ ***Wishes and dreams?***

There are so many! Most of all, I wish everyone would be kinder to one another and to our beautiful planet. Life is meant to be wonderful – and it can be so, if we could simply be more considerate of those around us, especially our Mother Earth.

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