

# 6 things to know about Mashabela Galane

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The first episode of Showmax's third Original, *Trippin With Skhumba*, premieres this Thursday, 28 February 2019, building on the success of *Tali's Wedding Diary*, the most nominated comedy at this weekend's South African Film and Television Awards, and *The Girl From St Agnes*, which had more launch day views than any series on Showmax ever.



Image credit: Justin Dingwall

In the first episode of *Trippin With Skhumba*, the 2018 DStv Viewers' Choice Award: Favourite Comedian winner and 2017 Comics' Choice Comic of the Year will hit the road in a CaraCara with Mashabela Galane for a hilarious, heartbreaking and inspiring visit to the Sepedi comedian's hometown: Moletjie village in Limpopo.

Here are six things you should know about Mashabela:

## #1. He's a comedian from a village with no comedy clubs

It's hard to be what you can't see, so one of the first questions Skhumba asks Mashabela is: "How did you come across comedy, because I can tell you now, there's no comedy club here?"

Mashabela credits Thobela FM's Ben Maraka. "He used to do skits on radio, way back in the day," says Mashabela. "He had a cassette of jokes in Sepedi - and I thought I could do it too. But he didn't last because he was bewitched..."

## #2. Herding cows made Mashabela a better comedian

Mashabela spent much of his childhood on his dad's tractor (which features prominently in the episode) or herding cows. "It wasn't a piece of cake to look after those things," says Mashabela. "You let them roam but if you can't find them, you don't go home. That was the rule. If you can't find the cows, you have to stay there and look for them until you find them."

He thinks herding cows has helped his career. "If I can't come up with any jokes, I don't go on stage without a punchline,"



Mashabela Galane. Image credit: Justin Dingwall

says Mashabela. “But some people go on and embarrass themselves without punchlines. That’s how I can tell they never herded cows.”

### **#3. Mashabela and Skhumba go way back - to when vernacular comedy was a hard sell**

Skhumba and Mashabela have known each other for at least a decade. “He had long-ass dreads back then,” Skhumba remembers. They met when they were both known as “many more”.

“We were called ‘many more’ on a lineup with Chris Mapane, Eugene Khoza, Kedibone Mulaudzi, and ‘many more’,” says Skhumba.

Vernacular comedy was a much harder sell in those days. “They always said you and I wouldn’t make it because we didn’t sound a *certain* way,” Skhumba tells Mashabela in the episode. “And our comedy didn’t appeal to *certain* people.”

“We’ve come a long way,” says Mashabela. “Back in the day it wasn’t easy. You’d perform for R50 or a six-pack of Black Label. I used to walk from Carlton Centre to Melville and perform for a six-pack of Black Label [at Underground]...”

### **#4. Mashabela’s dad might be a bigger fan of Skhumba than his son**

Mashabela’s father might have been more excited to see Skhumba than Mashabela - he certainly quoted more of his shows. “I thought my dad was my biggest fan,” says Mashabela. “But since we got here, he hasn’t mentioned a single joke of mine but he knows Skhumba’s jokes.”

Mashabela’s mother doesn’t even try deny it. “He follows Skhumba more than you,” she admits.

### **#5. Mashabela is one of South Africa’s best comedians**

“I know the country loves him,” says Skhumba. “He’s one of the best guys; he can easily fill up any venue.”

Want proof? Mashabela won the Comics’ Choice Native Tongue Award in 2016, has over 300,000 followers on social media, and is the brains behind popular stand-up events like *Comedy Under The Sun* and *Rock My Mother Tongue*.

### **#6. Mashabela is a man of many talents**

More than just a comedian, Mashabela is a South African Music Awards nominee for best kwaito album and the inventor of Rare Moringa Gin, made by Old Packhouse Distillery, which won Double Gold at the 2018 Michelangelo International Wine and Spirits Awards.

In *Trippin With Skhumba*, Mashabela takes Skhumba to the distillery, in a Moringa plantation in Magoebaskloof. Skhumba teases his friend that the first time Mashabela manufactured the Moringa gin, “it was like balsamic vinegar and I had no idea what you were doing”.

“We didn’t know,” Mashabela admits. “All I knew was stand-up comedy.” He says the idea came to him when he was making Moringa juice the Pedi way in Limpopo. “When I was driving back to Jozi on the N1, it started to ferment and turn into alcohol. That’s when I thought of manufacturing alcohol. From there I tried out a beer and then the gin/vinegar story... I got the hang of it slowly but surely... I feel very proud; I still can’t believe it.”

**Premiering Thursday, 28 February - only on Showmax**

*Trippin With Skhumba*, Showmax's first vernacular Original and first Original reality series, will be coming first and only to the platform from this Thursday, 28 February 2019, with new episodes weekly. In the next episode, 2018 Native Tongue winner Siya Seya will take Skhumba home to Walmer Township in Port Elizabeth, to explore more places that won't make any tourism brochures and stories that would be edited out of any authorised biographies.

Subsequent episodes will focus on Celeste Ntuli (Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal), who was the most nominated comedian with Skhumba going into the 2018 Comics' Choice Awards; 2017 Native Tongue winner Salesman (Pretoria); 2016 Comic of the Year winner Tumi Morake (Bloemfontein); and 2015 Intermediate winner Schalk Bezuidenhout (Kempton Park, Gauteng). The first season will end with an hour-long stand-up special, featuring Skhumba and his guests, as well as one new comedian from each hometown visited.

*Trippin With Skhumba* is directed by Vincent Moloi, who helmed the 2018 Best Drama SAFTA winner, *Tjovitjo*, and also took home Best Documentary Director last year for *Skulls of My People*. The series is being produced for Showmax by Diprente (the production company behind this year's box office hit, *Matwetwe*; the Netflix film, *Catching Feelings*; and the International Emmy-nominated *Late Nite News With Loyiso Gola*), which is co-owned by 2018 Comics' Choice Comic's Pen winner Kagiso Lediga and is also producing Netflix's first African Original series *Queen Sono*.

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