

PHFAT releases brand-new single, music video for "Whatever You Like"



By [Martin Myers](#)

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PHFAT, enfant terrible of South African electronic rap and stalwart in the local industry, has emerged from a pandemic-induced hiatus to release "Whatever You Like", the latest track in a series of anthological and in some cases autobiographical releases about love and human relationships.

The track also marks a collaborative first between PHFAT and friend and director Paul Ward, who conceptualised and directed the song's music video.

Looming, hopeful and darkly serenading, "Whatever You Like" is a rumination on the totality of falling in love, and its oscillations between bliss and apprehension, that feeling of "oh dear, this might be inconvenient at some point."

PHFAT (real name Mike Zietsman), laments on the track and its concept:

"I've found love at this stage of my life to land with a more complex set of emotions than some of the idealisation that characterised love in my early 20s. Love also arrives with a set of responsibilities, with sacrifice and compromise, with the possibility of devastating rejection and pain. Responsibly falling in love really does take a certain type of courage when the stakes are higher. I think the content and tone of the track manages to capture a lot of that, and I'm quite proud of it."

I chatted to Zietsman last week.



■ ***The new decade means:***

At first, it was just a couple weeks of getting the date wrong by accident and a couple of clever rhymed names like '20 plenty'. Now, it's just two extra annoying numbers I fill in on the date on contact tracing forms.

■ ***Fame is about:***

Avoiding the paparazzi.

■ ***Retirement will happen when:***

At some point between getting the paparazzi to pay attention to me and me telling them to please leave me alone.

■ ***Any funny moments on stage:***

I sent Graham Kennedy stage-diving at Oppikoppi one year. He looked so unhappy the whole time it was happening. And we couldn't stop laughing. He was wearing a poncho and it looked like he was drowning in people. The joke was on me. Just before the show, I had given him my phone to look after and while he was crowd-surfing someone nicked it out of his pocket.

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

One feeling that is indescribably magical is the moment during a writing session when things come together and a song starts to form. When a song is that young it just sounds better. You haven't learnt to hear the imperfections yet. All you hear is the essence of the song and somewhere in your head is the song it could become. Your brain fills in all the gaps and it's like a weird type of hyper exciting heaven, as far as I'm concerned. It's like the song is a cookie that's still hot and soft in the oven, and while you could never ship it out to the world like that, it will never taste better than while it is still a hot sticky un-formed mess. And then obviously a live show going well is one of the most amazing feelings in the world.

■ ***Your heroes:***

No heroes. At best they're a projection of your own ideals onto someone who has very few of those ideals. At worst they're just very shitty role models.

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

Beth Gibbons. She was the singer from Portishead. You should [google her interviews](#). Sorry. I mean interview. She only did one.

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

Roland Jupiter 8 (a synthesiser). They are super rare and mine has been used on most of my songs for the last 10 years.

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

Sparkling water.

■ ***Dream gig to do:***

I really wish it was safe and legal to throw really bougie house parties with very big sound systems. But like. Big ones.

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

I like to think it's my music and my sunshiny disposition.

▣ **Nicknames:**

Variations of the name Mike really. Mike, Mikey, Michael. I have two lovely friends who call me 'Mr fa-fat', which is fun.



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

I'd probably try my darndest to become a writer. At some point, I also wanna do a psych masters.

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

I really don't feel like the complexity of anyone's essence can be captured with five words. Everyone knows we use numbers for that - 8/10.

▣ **What is your favourite word?**

Pudding

▣ **Favourite fashion garment:**

The Puma suede will forever be important to me.

▣ ***Your greatest achievement:***

Finishing this interview. Good lord, there are a lot of questions.

▣ ***The best life lesson you have been taught:***

Persistence gets you there eventually.

▣ ***Do you get worked up whilst watching a sports game on TV?***

I really truly struggle to get myself to care about it, to be honest. My favourite thing about sports is that it usually means all my friends are in one place and I enjoy watching them enjoy it. Occasionally, I'll place a bet on one side so that I feel invested in the outcome. But I usually pick sides based on who my friends are supporting (I bet on the side they aren't supporting).

PHFAT "Whatever You Like" is now out across all [digital platforms](#).

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