



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **POPSTARS Launches**

**TX: Saturday 4 September at 6.05PM**

e.tv viewers can look forward to singing skills like no other with the launch of the hottest, freshest reality talent search, POPSTARS, on Saturday 4 September at 6.05PM.

POPSTARS invites wannabe's to audition with the judges PJ Powers, Zwai Bala and Azania Ndoró, who will put them thoroughly through their paces at the auditions. The aspiring stars who impress our judges with their vocal performances a second time, are sent through to the next round.

The launch episode called **POPSTARS Preview**, kicks off with the host, Martin Phike, taking viewers through the POPSTARS legacy and how this show has become such a powerhouse in the world of entertainment television. The episode will feature international POPSTARS winners and will take a look back at the unprecedented success of POPSTARS East Africa.

The show is spread across fourteen inserts of non-stop excitement as hopefuls are given the chance of a lifetime, a chance at superstardom. POPSTARS viewers can look forward to POPSTARS runner-up group Jamali putting a sassy spin on things where they spend time behind the cameras as part of the production team called Mzansi Crew productions.

### **POPSTARS Extra**

This year, POPSTARS adds that something special in the form of POPSTARS Extra, the weekly highlights package airing every Wednesday as of 15 September. POPSTARS Extra delves into the personalities of those people that make POPSTARS great: the contestants, the production team and the judges as the show travels across the country. Viewers can look forward to impromptu interviews with contestants, sneak-peaks at what the judges are up to behind the scenes and the toils that the crew need to go through to organise such an awesome production such as POPSTARS.

The POPSTARS judges, PJ Powers, Zwai Bala and Azania Ndoró are no strangers to POPSTARS and will definitely be keeping contestants on their toes throughout their journey. PJ Powers is one of South Africa's best performing artists and has been rocking audiences since the age of 19. Her solo career launched in 1987 and has been at the forefront of music in the country. PJ, nicknamed "Thandeka", shot to stardom when she collaborated with Ladysmith Black Mambazo on "World in Union", the theme-song of the 1995 World Cup.

Zwai Bala has been involved in music since an early age and has since his Drakensberg Boys Choir days, been living the music dream. This musical director, composer, singer, songwriter, arranger, teacher and public speaker has come a long way since his TKZee days. Zwai has worked on previous seasons of POPSTARS, including POPSTARS East Africa.

Azania Ndoró, popular radio DJ, presenter and MC, is no stranger to POPSTARS. Azania, who was a judge on POPSTARS on previous seasons started her career co-hosting "The Joint", a popular TV programme and has since been extensively involved with television and radio production.

Our sexy host is Martin Phike, former member of POPSTARS winning group Ghetto Lingo. Martin has been performing since the age of 16 where he started in musicals and plays at school. Martin was exposed to the professional industry of music when he formed part of pop groups Max Cui as well as

Inadiflo. Martin's brother, Given, encouraged him to audition for POPSTARS in 2004. A very unprepared Martin took the plunge and came out on top, forming part of the band named Ghetto Lingo who later released two albums. While working on the Ghetto Lingo albums, producer D'Rex interested Martin in a solo album and as they say, the rest is history. Martin is an accomplished singer, actor, performer and song-writer and even had a solo album nominated for a SAMA Award in 2008. Martin's roots are firmly planted in gospel and church and says all his accomplishments are thanks to God.

Some interesting facts about Martin Phike:

- Martin's favourite food is 'mdogo', a traditional kind of bread and also Italian food, especially pasta
- His hobbies are keeping fit and spending time in the gym, song-writing and spending time with his 4-month-old baby girl
- Martin isn't exempt from embarrassing moments. He recently performed on stage at a church event and pulled a signature spin and flip and tore his pants from top to bottom. Martin then bowed and 'moon-walked' off Michael Jackson-style trying to avoid the audience seeing his ripped pants
- Martin's first POPSTARS audition didn't go according to plan, much because of a party and night-on-the-town the evening before the auditions. Martin was shocked to hear the quality of the contestants and realised that he had to up his game if he wanted to take any more part in POPSTARS
- The workshop week that took place during POPSTARS in 2004 was highlighted for Martin by two significant incidents: the rest of the contestants making fun of his weird hairdo as well as the nerve-wrecking "Green Mile", where contestants need to walk down a long passageway to the judges for them to decide their fate on whether they stay or go home

Says Martin Phike: "It is such a blessing for me to be the host of a production as awesome as POPSTARS. It really is a great step up for me in terms of my career and I look forward to hosting POPSTARS in the most unique and freshest way possible. Contestants should look out for my hand-held camera that I have with me all the time!"

### **Auditions Dates**

We're looking for the most phenomenal talent that the country has to offer. If you think you've got the style and voice, check out the audition dates and venues below:

<b>DURBAN</b>	21 and 22 August	Gateway Theatre of Shopping (Ster-Kinekor)
<b>CAPE TOWN</b>	28 and 29 August	Tyger Valley Centre (Ster-Kinekor)
<b>JOHANNESBURG</b>	4 and 5 September	Maonya Mall (Ster-Kinekor)
<b>PRETORIA</b>	11 and 12 September	Centurion Mall (Ster-Kinekor)

POPSTARS is pulling out all the stops to bring viewers the show-stopper of the year. The search is on only on e.

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