



## Press Release

### **YOU BE THE JUDGE!** **THE BACKSTAGE EMI SUPERSTAR SEARCH** **Sunday October 2 @ 6.05pm**

One talented person will soon be breaking into the South African music industry - courtesy of the Backstage EMI Superstar Search - on screen every Sunday at 6.05pm. And the judges of this exciting talent search will have an important role to play in making somebody's wildest dream come true.

**Judging criteria:** The judges will base their decisions on the following: overall performance; vocal range and quality; song interpretation; choice of song; versatility; movement; image (or the potential for a great make-over); personality; media friendliness; performance under pressure; Superstar quality.

**And the judges are:** Kwaito star Arthur; Grace Mahlaba as Ipeleng Theledi (In character as the principal of Backstage); Malebo Phage (Head of Local Productions, e.tv) and Mike Maswanganye (Marketing and Promotions Director EMI/CCP).

Viewers are the "5th" judge", participating via SMS, directly after watching each of the nine regional shows, as well as the semi-finals and finals of the competition.

#### **A bit of background on our judges:**

**Arthur** Mafokate is a musician, producer, sound engineer, performer, songwriter, talent scout, television personality and entrepreneur. When he first came to public attention in the late 1980s, he was not a singer but a dancer who'd won the Dance categories at a number of different competitions - including the Shell Road To Fame Talent Search and the Town Talk Pantsula Dance competition. He also made his mark on the modelling world having taken the Mr Soweto title and achieved runner-up status in the Mr South Africa beauty pageant. Arthur has been dubbed the King of Kwaito. He has also had an impact on the international market with performances in Spain and London. As a talent scout he's showcased his broad range of talents by discovering artists such as: Abashante, Zombo, Purity, Lira, Addie, M'zet, Power, Iyaya, Nestum, New School, Chiskop, Papa Jeff (i.e. Jeff Maluleke), Mandoza, Boom Shaka, Mageu, Twins, Chax and the late Makhendlas. He is a multi-talented individual who is dedicated to 999, the company he established in 1992, which has been recognised as one of the most prolific forces in the SA music industry during the past 10 years.

**Malebo Phage** is a professional broadcaster, who has been in the TV industry for more than 20 years. He is Head Of Local Productions at e.tv, and his passion is to develop and nurture homegrown talent. He enjoys working with the cast and technical members of Scandal, Backstage and e.tv's news and current affairs department. His hobbies are music, sport,

touring and golf. What will Malebo be looking out for? "That rare spark...and passion and commitment. Of course there will be a few clowns and chance takers, but, hey, it takes all sorts of people to make the world, otherwise human nature would be boring."

**Grace Mahlaba** was born in Alexandra, near Johannesburg, Grace holds a diploma in Drama. She has experience in film, television, commercial theatre and industrial theatre. In 1985 Grace was a finalist in the Shell Road to Fame - as a singer. She was also invited by the Vancouver Children's Festival in April 1992 to be part of The Seattle Children's Festival playing at The World Trade Centre. Her hobbies are gym and running and she enjoys stand-up comedy. The people she admires most are her children, Naledi and Palesa, and she takes her hat off to the people who look after them while she's on the Backstage set 12 hours a day - or with events like the Superstar Search competition. Grace's idea of a perfect weekend is one spent with her daughters eating out and shopping. She also likes to spend time in the bush where she can get away from the bustle of the city. Grace joined Backstage because she can relate to the storylines. "The Arts have always been my passion and helping people discover themselves is very fulfilling work."

**Mike Maswanganye** has, over the past 15 years, carved a niche for himself as one of the most in touch, devoted and capable individuals working in the South African music scene. "Bra Mike" as he's affectionately known, first joined the RPM Record Company in October 1990, working as a rep before moving to the marketing department. Mike's talents soon earned him the attention of the Gallo Record Company and in the mid-90s he was appointed the company's Promotions Manager. During his time at GRC, Mike worked with the likes of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Lucky Dube, Mahlathini and the Mohotella Queens and Stimela, overseeing the publicity of these iconic artists with great success.

In 1998 Mike moved over to EMI South Africa, working at CCP Record Companies, which has always dominated the South African music scene in genres like Gospel, Kwaito and Afro-Pop. Over the past seven years, Mike has become an indispensable part of the CCP team, working with Brenda Fassie, Mandoza and Ringo. Currently Marketing & Promotions Director at CCP Record Company, Mike's vision for the artists signed to the label and the albums that they record, has ensured that CCP has maintained its position as a force to be reckoned with in the South African music industry.

**Let The Judging Begin!**  
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**Sunday October 2 @ 6.05pm**

For more information and photos of the judges, please contact:

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