

ZAKWE SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Who Is ZAKWE?

Not just a rapper but a leader, events planner, businessman from the controversial streets of *Kwa Mashu*, with rural roots of *Umsinga*, far-north of KZN. Staying true to his roots, this musician has made his mark with his a strong voice, ethnic sounds, rooted kasi stories and black consciousness Hip Hop music. Zakwe started his rap career back in 2002, at *Brettonwood High School (Durban)*, where he matriculated in 2005. He then studied a diploma in 'Information Technology' at *Durban University Of Technology (DUT)* where his love for music grew tremendously, after participating in almost all underground Hip Hop movements all of SA. In 2008, he released his first studio project, '*HEADLINES*' which received a stamp of approval in the streets, selling more than 3000 copies. 2009 he released his 2nd project, '*THE RED TAPE*', which saw him get signed by the biggest independent record label in SA at that time, '*NATIVE RHYTHMS*' releasing under 'SONY MUSIC'. In 2010 he released his first commercial single 'Bathi Ngiyachoma' and for the first time in music history, a hip hop song was on UKHOZI FM'S song of the year TOP 10, reaching no 4. He released 2 albums with 'Native Rhythms' ('ZAKWE' & 'IMPANDE') which both sold GOLD (over 25 000 copies). Later signed to 'MABALA BOISE/UNIVERSAL MUSIC (2016), releasing only one project 'CEBISA' in 2018, that album also reached a GOLD status in 2019.

• 2012

- **SAMA Awards** [Best Male, Best Artist, Best Rap Album, Best Album, Best Newcomer Nominee]
- **SATMA Awards Nominee** [Best Vernacular Rapper]
- **S.A Hip Hop Awards** [Best Lyricist]

• 2013

- '**ZAKWE**' debut album sells GOLD
- **METROM FM** [Best Hip Hop Album]
- **SAHHA** [Milestone Achievement Award]

• 2015

- '**IMPANDE**' 2nd commercial album
- **SATMA AWARDS** [Best Vernacular Nominee]
- '**IMPANDE**' sells GOLD

• 2018

- '**CEBISA**' 3rd commercial album
- **SAMA AWARDS** [Best Remix Song]
- **SAHHA** [Best Remix Song]

• 2019

- **'CEBISA'** sells GOLD
- **VOICEOVER ARTIST** [The voice of Gagasi FM]

- **2020**

- **'ZAKWE and DUNCAN'** - 4th commercial album

Zakwe has worked with artists all over S.A and has performed with international acts such as Kanye West & Kendrick Lamar. He also went to USA in 2024, after being chosen to represent South Africa at the *'USA Hip Hop Alumni Programme'*. He has worked with many powerful artists the likes of: *The Soil, Dj Tira, Khaya Mthethwa, Lvovo, Big Nuz, Professor, TKZee, Zola 7, Big Zulu, Sjava, Kelly Khumalo, Mondli Ngcobo* to mention a few.

Zakwe has also started a Non-Profit Organization, *'Rap iFact'* which assists a lot KZN Hip Hop artists with stage performances, recording, masterclasses etc for FREE. Rap iFact also hosts the biggest Hip Hop movement in SA – *'HOOD vs HOOD'*, which is a competition that happens in KZN (The Bat Centre) throughout the year, since 2023, where the winner takes home R40 000 and a sheep, all self funded. Zakwe also hosts his own homecoming event, *'ZAKWE HOMECOMING PICNIC* in Kwa Mashu (Fan Park), every first Sunday of December since 2019.

This, is - **Zakwe**, from being signed to Native Rhythms, Sony Music, Mabala Noise/Universal Music to now being independent under his company – **Itsotsi By Nature**, since 2020.