

# Assessa unwraps SA hip hop

 By [Pasqua Heard](#)

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One of South Africa's top female rap artists, Assessa (Lindiwe Skhosana), shares her story on how she entered the SA hip hop scene, as well as her views on the representation of female rap artists in her industry.

It is no wonder that Assessa won Best Female at the 2015 South African Hip Hop Awards (SAHHA), as her music is catchy and she raps at an extraordinarily fast pace. While Assessa wishes to win more accolades, she also aims to use her talent to draw attention to various social issues that she has witnessed in South Africa.



## ■ ***Explain your background and how you got into rap.***

I grew up in the Northern Cape and then moved to Mpumalanga. That's where I started to fall in love with rap. I was inspired by Lil Kim and Foxy Brown. We used to rap in schools and in the streets. I started doing it for fun, but people said I was really good, so I decided to take it further.

## ■ ***If you weren't a rap artist, what would you be doing?***

I'd probably be a lawyer or an electrical engineer, as I have a diploma in electrical engineering.

## ■ ***Which other rap artists inspire you most?***

I'm inspired by the likes of K.O, AKA and Kanyo Mavi from Cape Town.



▣ ***What does hip hop mean to you?***

Hip hop is a way of life. It's my lifestyle. I get healed through hip hop.

▣ ***How did you get your stage name, Assessa?***

I got it from the streets. They used to tell me you need to take your music to another level and you need to have a name that goes with it. I chose Assessa, because I'm a vernacular rapper who raps in my own language, so I always assess things.

▣ ***Do you write your lyrics? If so, what inspires your lyrics?***

I'm inspired every day. I write my own lyrics and what I write about depends on what I do that day.

▣ ***Explain the story behind your recent tracks 'Music' and 'Ladies Night'.***

I wrote 'Music', because I wanted to show my appreciation of everyone making any kind of music in South Africa. It's not only about hip hop music. I also wanted to tell people that music is all about unity. Download 'Music' [here](#)

'Ladies Night' is a movement that I started two years ago. I rapped with eight women. It's a movement that encourages each and every woman in hip hop, especially underground MCs.

■ ***Do you find the South African hip hop scene to be male-dominated?***

It's a male sport, but I think now they're giving us a chance. I see a lot of female MCs in the industry now. I think maybe next year there'll be even more female MCs rapping. I think the time is coming...

■ ***How does your hip hop differ to others?***

I'm different, because not only am I a woman rap artist, but I have my own style which is tradi-trap. (This is a mix of traditional and trap music. Trap music includes singing instead of only rapping.)

It is also different, because I rap about stories that happen in South Africa. I talk about anything that's related to my hood, such as HIV, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse. I try to address everything that's happening in South Africa through the Nguni languages.



■ ***What advice do you have for aspiring rap artists?***

All I can say is they have to do what they love and they have to be talented. They also have to mix with people who know marketing, so they can get their name out there. That's very important.

### ▀ ***What are your plans for the future?***

I'm busy working on two Eps, which I'll be dropping in October. One is tradi-trap and the other is tradi-rap. Tradi-trap focuses on vocals/singing, while tradi-rap is all about rapping and dropping bars.

I hope to see myself performing in SAHHA and winning again. I also want to travel and perform in Africa.

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