

INDIVIDUAL

By Matters

PROSON

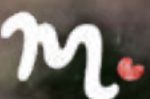
*From Zimbabwe to The Netherlands:
His music journey*

PHOTO REPORTAGE

King Kong Records

PHILIP NGUYEN

A passion for singing



Hey reader, welcome to **INDIVIDUAL**

By Matters

New faces to introduce with our final theme; welcome to another new week of INDIVIDUAL Magazine with a fresh theme and some recognizable yet unfamiliar faces to introduce.

Excited to introduce to you our cover interview for this week's issue: Proson A.K.A Sean Rapanganwa and you may ask yourself what he'll be talking about, but don't worry, you should be asking what he isn't talking about because he spills all the tea.

We also went out to one of Leeuwardens beloved record stores: King Kong Record's. We asked people what their favorite album is and asked various questions about it, check it out in our photo reportage.

To finish up this issue we have an interview with Philip, he is an international working student from NHL Stenden who likes to sing as a hobby, he tells you all about his experiences and how his journey started.

We welcome you to this last theme switch where lots of music will be discussed, enjoy!

MEET THE TEAM



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PHOTOGRAPHER



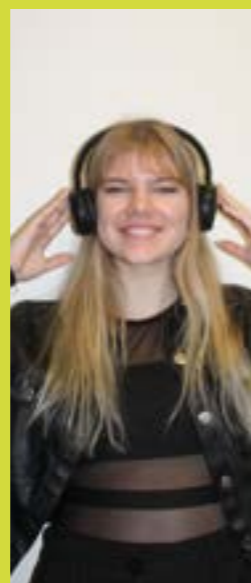
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ARTIST OF THE WEEK: PROSON

IT'S REAL LIFE

Proson is a rapper, songwriter and performer from Zimbabwe, who started studying Creative Business in the Netherlands at NHL Stenden. His real name is Sean Rapanganwa and he is 28 years old. For him music is all about creating vibes.

Why Proson?

Proson has a biblical meaning behind it. It comes from the book of Proverbs, in that book, there is a conversation between the father and the son. I took myself as one of the sons of the proverb because what they say in there can help you build your perspective towards life, how you should treat other people, how you should think of yourself, and your roles as a person. So I thought I am the proverb son. I'm going to use this type of teaching in life to rap about it.

**“ PROSON HAS
A BIBLICAL
MEANING
BEHIND IT. ”**

Which genre is your music? Why hip-hop?

I wouldn't say I just do hip-hop. I'm a songwriter. I write many songs, but I choose hip-hop because it mostly relates to what I'm trying to speak about. The style of storytelling in hip-hop is quite amazing. Looking at other people like Notorious BIG, and 2Pac to tell a story. I think hip-hop is one of the most powerful tools one can use to rap about something with emotions.

Would say you can relate the most to hip-hop artists?

Yeah, I can relate to most things they are rapping about, the way they tell their stories in the way of rapping is fascinating. You are literally listening to a conversation, which I find amazing.

What is the process you go through to create music?

One part of my creative process is that I get influenced by my environment and conversations I have with people. Where I come from there is a stigma within expressing yourself. As a man you are not able to show emotions. So for me I started writing music, because it was an escape for me, like therapeutic writing. I just get inspired by my everyday life events and events that are happening around me. When I'm in the studio it usually just flows by itself, sometimes I'm thinking about certain ideas or certain topics that are really interesting to me or something I want to sing or rap about.

What is the most important factor for making music?

Oh, you need to be yourself! You can be a good lyricist in writing, but when you rap something or sing something and people fail to resonate because you don't mean what you say or there is an element that is not you in the song. We can look at the lyrics, the songs that you are singing, what you do or how you live your life in general and you can actually tell it won't make as much of an impact, because there is nothing real about it. I think being yourself plays a major role, no one can tell the story you live. You are the one who knows how to say it. So even when you are saying a punch line, the way you say it where as someone else would say it is important, it is totally different because the other person can not relate.

How long does it take to make a song?

It depends on my mood. My producer can play me a beat today and I will tell him I'm not feeling it. He can play the same beat two months later and I get excited like first time hearing that kind of instrumental or that kind of sound. Usually it depends with what kind of sound is being produced that day. I can do trap, drill really easy, within 30-60 min because you don't have to necessarily stick to a certain topic, it is about saying whole punch lines, making it sound interesting, a dope beat to cover the most parts.

If it is a song, that I want to put a message out with, it can take up to 2-3 days. If it is a r&b song, something that needs vocals, it can even take months. I have songs that I worked on and people thought they were new, but I worked on that song for months. Stuff like going back to it or changing elements took a lot of time until I was like "ok let me release this song."



So you would say it also depends on how comfortable you feel in the genre?

Yes definitely. Lately I have been experimenting with afropop/afrohouse, expanding my limits within music. It also depends on how inspired I am. If I feel the drive to write something I will complete it within one session, but if I feel like nothing good is coming out of it, I don't want to force it and I stop with that project.

What does music mean to you? Is there a certain goal you want to achieve with music?

I want to see people happy. There is a moment when I am performing and I look at the crowds reaction and they turn up to my song. In that moment I can see people are in that moment.

They are not thinking about anything else, they are just enjoying the music itself, not just me because I'm not bigger than music, music is bigger than me! Being able to evoke such a feeling for someone to be in a place whereby they feel like dancing, letting loose, turning up; let it be a moshpit, singing along, throwing water or whatever. If they feel a certain way while listening to my song, for me that's my greatest achievement. I have people dm'ing me, like bro I was contemplating suicide and then I listened to

your songs, that's the moment when I realized that this is something big! I have people getting tattoos of my "real life" movement, which I find really impactful because it shows me that people really get the message that I want to put out there. In the end I just want everyone to enjoy life, listen to my music and with that forget about the problems they suffer with. You don't have to have a certain amount of money or a certain type of lifestyle to enjoy music or even to

enjoy your own life. That's why I do music. It is something beyond music, impacting people's life in a positive way. I want the people to look at me and get inspired, there are certain things in music which are kind of misleading. For example, I never sold drugs and that's the thing with our generation or the one that is coming up, people are getting into the wrong things because they think the only way to have a rap career is to talk about drugs and guns. It is fun to use as metaphors, but after that there is a life from there. You don't need to be involved in those environments. For me it is just about creating good vibes.



“ YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY OR A CERTAIN TYPE OF LIFESTYLE

TO ENJOY MUSIC OR EVEN ENJOY YOUR OWN LIFE. ”



What is your favorite thing about music?

My favorite thing about music is when I am creating music. The entire creative process behind it is what makes it enjoyable for me. I even started vlogging. What is fascinating for me is that you can start from one small instrument to an entire song. I really enjoy the whole production process. The important thing to me is that I enjoyed myself throughout the production phase. If I didn't enjoy myself I won't put out the song. So for me it's really about building something from nothing!

What is portrayed in your music?

Emotions? Topics?

My music mainly covers motivation and inspiration. I don't want them to have the expectation of an unrealistic life. I want to speak to the ordinary people. I talk about the actual realities you face in your day to day life. This comes from me not having the space to speak about my emotions, rapping them out and seeing it work for myself. Maybe other people who are like me, who keep things inside will relate to me. My music is really about what I went through and the mindset I keep throughout hard times. Reflecting back to my past how those hardships influenced me and how it impacted me.

Why music?

Craziest part is that if I wouldn't be making music I would be writing books. When I used to be in primary school my mom used to get called by my teachers if anyone is writing my essays. My teachers did not believe that I was writing my own essays. So before music I started getting into poetry. The first time I started recording music was back in 2014/15. I just used to write music, but never put it out. I was really in love with writing poetry. One day I just started rapping the verses out and realized that it worked. Throughout that process I gained confidence to write my own music and actually get into the studio. My friends made a major influence on me because they produced music and were involved into music.



What's your inspiration?

Meek Mill was one of my inspirations. His way of approaching music is similar to the way I approach music. As well as a lot of east coast rappers like Fat Joe, BIG and Jadakiss. All of them had a major influence on me by the way they storytell.

What was the difference between back home and becoming an individual artist here in the Netherlands?

I started seeing a lot of growth within myself, back home I wasn't able to monetize my music. I was downloading beats of YouTube, uploading my songs on free websites like soundcloud. I didn't have a personal producer. When I wanted a beat I needed to buy the rights for it. I'm an independent artist so I had to afford everything on my own. Back home when you rap in English there are low chances of making it, you really need connections to dj's. Moving here was like a start over, looking at my analytics nowadays I have more listeners here in the Netherlands than back home in Zimbabwe when it should be the other way around. What I realized is that here in the Netherlands it works out for me in a bigger picture. In my rapper group back home I only used to have one verse, but I always felt like I could do more. So I started to put all my energy into myself, which made a great change to my career. The Netherlands also gives me so much influence, I am able to work with different talents like photographers and cinematographers which I was not able to back in Zimbabwe.

Which obstacles did you have to overcome and which achievements are you proud of?

As an independent artist it is mainly the financial obstacle I had to overcome, I have to pay everything myself: a proper video, good pictures and good online campaigns. I am figuring out ways to solve that and what works best for me. The biggest achievement I am proud of is that I used to perform back home in Zimbabwe for a charity event called Steward Bank Autism Awareness Campaign.

I go to places where people don't know me or don't even know rap. Furthermore another blessing is me moving here to the Netherlands and having a personal producer I can work with. Being a student at NHL Stenden enabled me to shoot my own videos and rent equipment I need for my production.

How do you use social media for marketing purposes?

First good thing about social media is that it is for free. I can just promote my music on social media and in general just gain a lot of exposure. With 'My Ambition' I posted a reel and did a paid promotion to set it up for 30 days, each day paying 5 euros, to promote my single. Because of that I gained a lot of new followers and got exposed to people that didn't know me before.

“ STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF. ”

What are your next steps?

My next steps is helping other artist from Emmen. I want to give them guidance while giving them a platform to enable their full potential. In addition to that, I also want to perform more and have shows for myself. Another goal is definitely to grow as an artist in Leeuwarden and then taking over city by city, country by country.

What is your best advice to someone new to making music?

My Best advice is to stay true to yourself. You don't owe anybody and nobody owes you anything. If it works out it works out, if it doesn't work out it doesn't. Life happens. Just don't give up.

PHOTOREPORTAGE: KING KONG RECORDS



Voorstreek 11, 8911JH Leeuwarden



@recordstoredaynl



John (42), Dutch

What is your favorite album?
Guns N' Roses's Appetite for Destruction

What's your favorite song on it?
Too many, all of them are my favorite, but if I have to pick one it will be Paradise city.

Which one do you dislike (the most)? The song You're crazy, because of the guitar and the build-up.

Why is this your favorite album?
I was ten years old and for the first time, I listen to this song. My parents didn't own a tv so through the radio this was the first song I listen to the song and since then music was one of my passions.

Annett (62), Dutch

What is your favorite album?

My favorite album is A Bit of Previous by Belle and Sebastian.

What's your favorite song on it?

All the songs are beautiful, so I don't have a favorite song

Why is this your favorite album?

It reminds me of my daughter that also sings with friends. The voices are similar and they sing very nicely.





Usi (21), Spanish

What is your favorite album?

El Mar Querido by Rosalia

What's your favorite song on it?

Pienso en tu mira

Which one do you dislike (the most)?

I don't have one, I like them all.

Why is this your favorite album?

Rosalia started being known because of this album. This was her thesis and it is a beautiful mix of pop music and flamenco.



Henry (68), Dutch

What is your favorite album?

Whiskey for the Holy Ghost by Mark Lanegan

What's your favorite song on it?

I don't know.

Which one do you dislike (the most)?

Difficult question, I don't know.

Matthijs (45), Dutch

What is your favorite album?

At the moment the latest album by Porcupine Tree, Closure/Continuation is my favorite album. I love rock but I also like other types of music so maybe later my favorite album will change.

What's your favorite song on it?

Track number one, Harridan, is my favorite song.

Which one do you dislike (the most)?

The least of this album is difficult to say because all of them are great so I guess there is no least favorite.

Why is this your favorite album?

First of all the fact that it came out because the band officially quit in 2012-2014. Since their last album, I love their music so when they came back and I loved this brilliant album.



**“ SINGING KEEPS ME PRESENT
AND CREATIVE.**

”

Philip Nguyen is a 21-year-old Creative Business student from Germany. He works parttime in a restaurant and loves to sing in his free time.



When did you start singing?

I started singing when I was six years old and since then I have not stopped.

Why did you start singing?

I was influenced by my school and older sister to start singing when I was younger. Singing keeps me present and creative giving me a sense of the artist's beauty and he enjoys doing it.

What is your favorite genre?

I do not have a specific genre I like but some of my favorite music genres at the moment are pop, R&B, and soul music.

Who was your inspiration? Who is your favorite artist?

I can't remember who inspired me to start singing when I was younger but after going to the first and second concerts Shawn Mendes. I have so many artists I like but at the moment some of them are Shawn Mendes, Sam Smith, and Billie Eilish.

Favorite song to sing at the moment?

My favorite song to sing at the moment is Arcade by Duncan Laurence because it is challenging, it gives me the chills and it's a beautiful song overall.

What other hobbies do you have?

Other than singing some hobbies that I like are dancing, playing tennis, and volleyball, and meeting up with friends.

Do you see yourself in the music industry in the future?

I do not see myself in the music industry at the moment, it's more of a hobby than an actual career but if the opportunity comes up I will love it too.

**“ MUSIC
GETS
ME
THROUGH
EVERYTHING ”**

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