

Mandoza streams spike after launch of biopic

Only a handful of Kwaito musicians burst onto the music scene of the 2000s with the same level of impact as Mandoza. Although it wasn't his first foray into music-he had previously been a member of the group Chiskop and had released the album "9115 Zola South" a year prior- the arrival of *Nkalakatha* was nothing short of a spectacular event.



Wiseman Ncube plays Mandoza in the new biopic. Source: BET Africa.

The trend of uniquely South African genres like Gqom and Amapiano breaking through the barriers we see today started with Kwaito songs like *Nkalakatha* pre-streaming. While this trend is led by Gen Zs in the current streaming world, millennials and Gen Xs rode with Mandoza from stadium to stadium, and from one television show to another.

Biopic

Mandoza passed away in September 2016, a few years after releasing his last album, *Sgantsontso*, which would go on to be nominated in Best Kwaito Album category at the South African Music Awards. Two years later, Spotify launched in South Africa, completely transforming music listening.

Mandoza's biopic titled *Nkalakatha: The Life of Mandoza*, chronicling his ascent to the upper echelons of the music industry in South Africa was announced on 16th July, and began airing in August on BET. It feels like a full circle moment, as upon its release, *Nkalakatha* quickly travelled to Rugby and soccer matches nationwide while also dominating the airwaves and prominent lifestyle television shows like *Jam Alley*.



Rema's *Calm Down* with Selena Gomez hits 1bn Spotify streams, a first for African artist

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A look at Spotify data shows a streaming spike between that date to 28th August, with *Nkalakatha* leading as the most streamed song. It was also his all time top streamed song, since Spotify launched in South Africa. It is followed by *Respect Life*, taken from the Mandoza album released a few years following the *Nkalakatha* cultural phenomenon. *Indoda*, *Sgelekeqe - Mindlo Mix*, and *Tsotsi Yase Zola* tally in the top five most streamed songs.

This is not the first time the industry has paid homage to Mandoza. After his passing, *Back For More*, a single celebrating

his life, was released to celebrate his life and re-introduce his music to the public. It was available on Spotify from 2017, but his older millennials and Gen Z fan base were finally able to stream his music on Spotify from 2018.

Nkalakatha

“Technology advances within the audio space enables music released pre-streaming to be discovered which in turn aids the growth of the creator economy at large. Our intent is to further make the discovery on the platform more meaningful,” says Spotify’s Sub-Saharan lead, music strategy and operations, Warren Bokwe.

Nkalakatha, the album, is the top most streamed album and rounding up the top five albums are Mandoza, Tornado, Phunyuka Bamphethe, and Champion, all of which their positions remained pretty unchanged pre-and post-announcement of the biopic.

35 to 44 year old's lead the pack followed by 30 to 34 year old's when it comes to Mandoza’s listeners - little wonder as they grew up around the time when he was making his mark on the South African music industry. Unsurprisingly, Gen Zs, who were either young or not yet born when the top five songs and albums were released, are trailing behind.

Populous provinces like Gauteng which is home to different African ethnicities are often the main hubs of music culture, dating back to the 1990s when Kwaito’s dominance began. Kwaito was born out of Gauteng province with cities like Johannesburg and its surrounding townships mentioned constantly with the genre. Spotify pin-pointed Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town respectively, as the places where Mandoza’s music is streamed the most in South Africa. Gaborone in Botswana and Auckland in Australia led the cities outside South Africa. Interestingly, Auckland and Perth in Australia were among the top cities streaming Mandoza’s music 5 years ago, when Spotify launched.

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