

4 easy ways to help your friendly neighbourhood musician survive Covid-19

By  Tecla Cioffi

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Here are a few ways you can put your hard-earned randelas to good use by helping your favourite musicians.

The feature picture of this article was taken of me last year at Up The Creek, which was subsequently the last festival I went to and incidentally the last time I can remember pre-pandemic where I had a really, really good time.



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And as the first phase of Covid-19 vaccines begins to be administered in this country, there appears to be a glimmer of hope on the horizon for South Africans who would like to get back to business.

One sector that's not getting back to business anytime soon though? Entertainment. I hate to paint a bleak picture here, heck, I work in this exact industry, but no one's rushing to start up live events in a hurry and the implications for our scene at large are devastating.

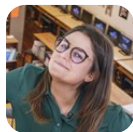
“ Entertainment employees everywhere are feeling the brunt of our multiple lockdowns, but spare a thought or two for your average musician. This pandemic really has drawn a line in the sand between musicians who make a decent-enough living through multiple streams of income to sustain themselves, and those that really solely upon live events. ”

Luckily, it's not all doom and gloom though. There are a few ways that you can make a difference and help support your local musicians by lending a hand.

Patreon

In my #BizTrends2021 piece, I wrote about a renewed focus on community through exclusive content and livestreaming,

which basically means that you are the only thing standing between your favourite artist and their extinction at the moment. Sound dramatic? Good, that's how this was intended to be received. Platforms like [Patreon](#) helps artists earn a monthly income by providing rewards and perks to their subscribers, just keep an eye on your favourite muso's socials to see if they've launched a profile or better yet, slide into their DMs to check their preferred platform of choice.



#BizTrends2021: A renewed focus on community through exclusive content and livestreaming

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Bandcamp Fridays

TGIF just took on a whole new meaning, with [Bandcamp](#) waiving its fees on the first Friday of every month to help support the many artists who've seen their livelihoods disrupted by the pandemic. This means that if you purchase anything off Bandcamp on these allocated days, the artist gets 100% of the revenue deposited into their account. These days have developed an almost cult following since March 2020, with fans waiting to specifically purchase music on these days. Take note of the next few Bandcamp Friday on 5 March, 2 April and 7 May.



SA's entertainment industry is finding novel ways to stay afloat amid the escalation of Covid-19

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Buy merch

So we've already established that you're buying your music on Bandcamp for the foreseeable future, but what about merchandise? Most smaller musicians don't have the luxury of starting their own online stores, so either they sell directly off their social media or they're stocked at smaller stores around the country. This is where [casualsex.store](#) comes in. They are SA's first online artist market that ships worldwide from the artist's front door to yours, and it's a game-changer in terms of how creatives run their businesses. Plus there's no exchange rate to take into consideration.

“



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Word of mouth

Okay so this one sounds a bit obvious but I swear, my heart skips a beat when I visit SurfaRosa and their playlist consists entirely of South African music. Or a random song goes viral on TikTok and it's by a small *amapiano* DJ who subsequently blows up. Your average musician is not okay right now and they need you to be their champion. So whether you're soundtracking your Insta Stories with PHFat or Lungelo Manzi, or sharing your Mzansi Indie Apple Music playlist, let's keep the focus on homegrown talent, shall we?

ABOUT TECLA CIOLFI

Tecla Ciolfi is founder and manager of music news website Texx and the City has been a part of the music industry in South Africa for the last 10 years in various capacities, namely journalism, radio presenting, event curation and artist management.

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