

Preaching inclusivity - Q&A with Toya Delazy



By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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Multi-award-winning Afro-techno princess Latoya Nontokozo Buthelezi, aka Toya Delazy, chats to us this #YouthMonth about inclusivity, tolerance and her advice for aspiring young musicians.

■ *If you had to describe your style of music as an outfit what would it be?*

I would describe it as eclectic and currently leaning towards global tribal techno. As an outfit, it's a Tsonga xibelani skirt bold and bubbly ready for a good time.



■ *What are some of the main challenges of being a young, gay, black woman in today's world? What fundamentally still needs to change in the LGBTQ+ and #BlackLivesMatter space when it comes to tolerance and equality?*

I think most of the changes have to come from society - LGBTQ+ and black people can only just be themselves it's not a variable that can be changed, it's our whole life but with the way that this world is structured, it's definitely not an advantage to be gay, female and black. These three traits reflect some of the most marginalised people in society which get no support or visibility. Willful ignorance is the problem. The fact that people still think sexuality is binary ignoring centuries of history showing that we have always been a fluid people, people have had enough time to educate themselves but they choose to be ignorant about these matters and this means people like me spend a long time caught in a conflict between really wanting to be my authentic self and having to live in this forced reality we live in. People must be open to knowledge and respect our history, it didn't begin with slavery or apartheid, there is so much more to African history that we have overlooked and we have forgotten about the people we were before our cultures were erased and colonised, which has left us looking at history from a white narrative and perspective.

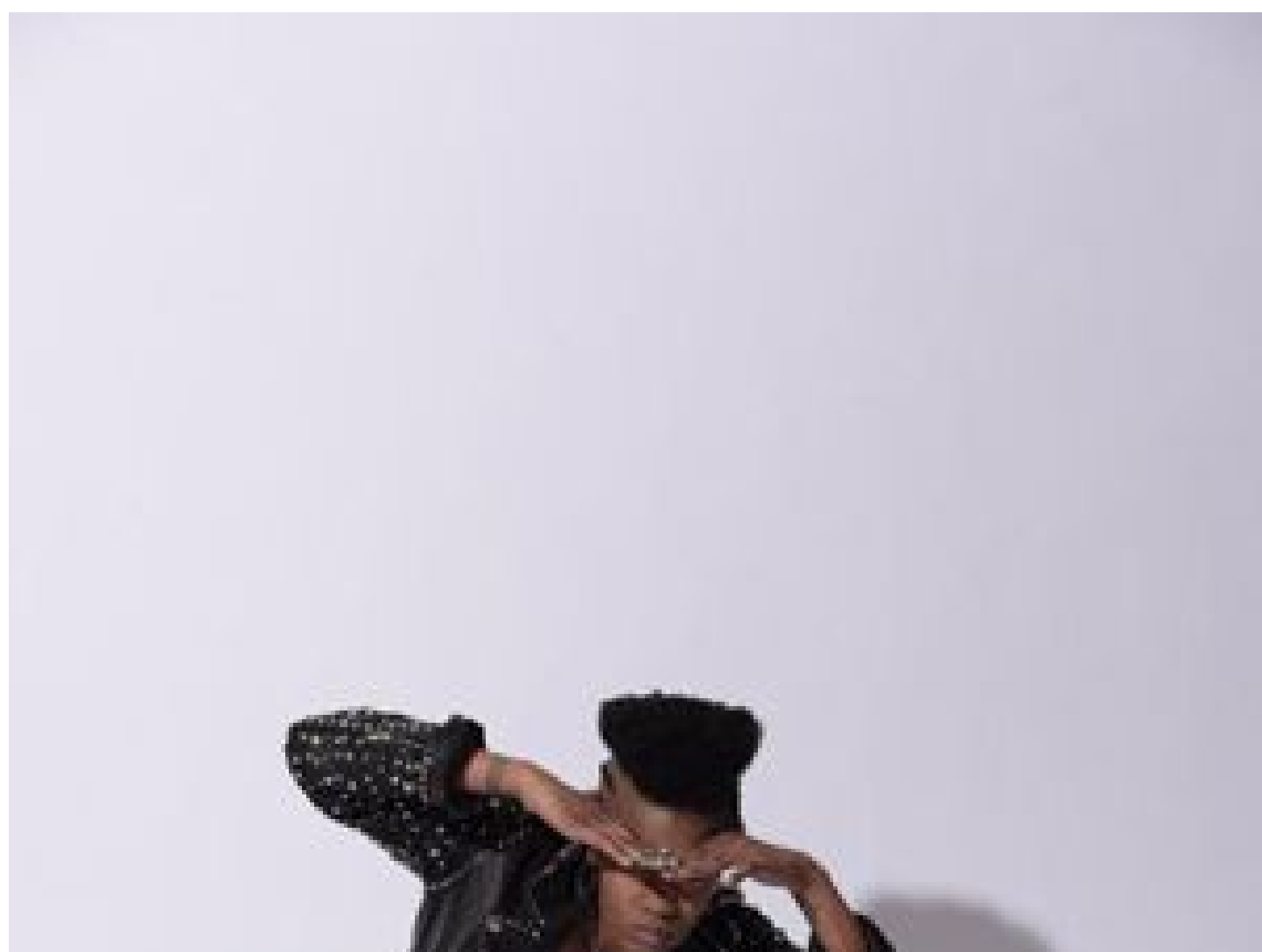
■ ***What is your advice for young aspiring musicians?***

Music is a vocation, not a job. If you going into it just for fame you will keep chasing all your life - it is also not a competition - it is a feeling and there is no wrong way to do it especially if you following your own melody as much as we all want to be relatable that need must not outweigh your originality and responsibility to reflect the times. Always work on your craft, it is an extension of your existence. Do you!

■ ***If you could travel back in time to give a message to your younger self what would it be?***

Don't be discouraged, press on you going the right way - keep following your heart and intuition.







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■ ***Which young South African artists do you think deserve more recognition?***

If you haven't heard of them please check out Maraza, Xisomisani and D.O.G. I collaborated with them on my "Funani" remix celebrating our African languages in Afro-rave and was just blown away by all the heat they brought into the genre and talent. There is so much power in collaboration and in our languages, it united us even though we are from different African cultures - dropping the remix soon be sure to check them out!

■ ***What have been some of your career highlights?***

BETs in Los Angeles 2013. I can never forget that experience, performing at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem. Winning three South African Music Awards and creating my own music label which houses my eclectic sound.

■ ***What are you currently listening to?***

On Spotify, I'm listening to Dave Pike Set.



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■ ***What do you think is the future of events and performers during and post-Covid-19?***

The future is in streaming and digital performances, you can be anywhere in the world and still deliver your show - so as an artist get your virtual show ready as all events seem to have digitised. Get familiar with connecting to stream keys, soundchecks online and upgrade to bomb Wi-Fi. We all figure it out on the fly, but the most important thing is to sort out your own personal setup, choose your broadcast software, customise it and connect to your peeps. There is a lot of opportunity for artists right now in virtual live performance. That said, anything can happen as well during an online event even after you have had the perfect soundcheck - this setup requires everyone involved to be on high alert and their toes from start to finish. Be open to learning and jump in!

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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