

Tumi and the Volume

biography

'Brothers and sisters we have just taken over your sound system' proclaims the boisterous quick tongued front man of the most unlikely combination to ever share a melody since free Mandela rallies. The music gushes in and I am left to mull over the groups make-up: Tiago a guitarist with more hair than face, Dave the consciously inconspicuous Jewish bassist, Paulo the vigorous face-contorting Mozambiquean drummer, and Tumi a roly-poly twang-festooned Muslim emcee. This ladies and gentlemen is Tumi and the Volume, arguably South Africa's most electric performers. In just over a year the group has managed to create a distinct musical accent that includes blends of samba, swing, hip hop, reggae and poetry that speaks to the unique reality of the South African experience and still relates to the world in that universal way that only beauty can. Created from a jam session that saw the poetic prowess of Tumi blend in perfectly with that of a boundary stretching new collective of musicians, the result was what we know today as the only reason to go out on a foggy winter night drizzling with acorn sized hail. The band has wowed audiences all over the country, impressed fellow musicians Blackalicious (U.S.A), Positive Black Souls (Senegal), Relax (the Netherlands) and has been frequent invitees to world class music festivals. The music is simple and unpretentious, the lyrics are inoffensively honest and I am singing along 'It don't take a rocket scientist to get to the moon/ Every man and woman got their own ten minute zoom/ People of the light generate a glow in the room/ I hear the wind whisper love I'll be coming home soon/' These are lyrics to the definitive track 'people of the light' on their debut album 'At the Bassline', released last year to an appreciated welcome by South Africa.

In 2002, their first year together, Tumi and the Volume performed at the elite jazz venue Bassline in Johannesburg, The Independent Armchair Theatre in Cape Town, the Oppikoppi festival in Pretoria, the Flux Festival in Durban, Eargasm's Mkonto, the TV programmes The Phat Joe Show and Castle Loud, and were asked to perform at the 2002 Metro Music Awards.

2003 saw them perform at the Tuks Rag Show, The Metro FM New World Music Festival, on the drama series Backstage, interviewed on ETV's Nightlife and Heita and supporting international acts Relax from Holland, Positive Black Soul from Senegal and Blackalicious from USA. The biggest highlight of 2003 was getting invited to perform at the Quart Festival in Norway, alongside bands such as The Roots, Coldplay, Massive Attack and The Cardigans, and then toured Mozambique at the end of the year to rave responses.

2004 has already seen them perform at the internationally acclaimed North Sea Jazz Festival in Cape Town and their music included in a Ballet production. The first single 76 from their debut album "At The Bassline", is playlisted on YFM, Metro FM, Tuks FM and Kaya FM. The album has been nominated for three South African Music Awards (SAMA's) for 2004, under categories Best Group, Best Packaging and Best Rap Album. It is now also available in Canada and Germany.

In 2005 the band toured Canada twice in February and in September, the band performed in the following cities across Canada (Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary and Ottawa) and saw the production of the band's critically acclaimed self titled album. This is the bands first studio album and features the likes of Bra Willie Keorapetsi Kgosetsile, Kyla Rose Smith from Freshly Ground, Pedro da Silva Pinto from 340ml and Siya Makuzene.

2006 has seen the band tour Canada in July launching their album. It culminated in a performance at the Montreal Jazz Festival where the band performed for a crowd of around 15 000 people. They have also played the Sakifo Musik Festival in the Reunion Island in August.

www.thevolume.co.za

www.myspace.com/tumipoetmc

www.myspace.com/tumiandthevolume