

Schalk Bezuidenhout



Schalk Bezuidenhout was born in Gauteng in the wonderful city of Johannesburg. Even though this sounds very contemporary, he grew up in a very Afrikaans, 'bring-terug-Apartheid' town right next to the airport.

In Kempton Park, young Schalkie grew up in a very traditional way. He went to an Afrikaans pre-primary, primary, and high school. The traditional Afrikaans way of living was a good life. Your mother's breast milk would be brannewyn en coke, you would walk kaalvoet toe school, and you'd hide your lunch money when a black man walked past. But by the age of 10, life started to become more and more difficult for poor old Schalkie.

His family and friends stood back as they watched Schalk evolve from an Afrikaans conservative caterpillar into a beautiful drama queen butterfly, complete with a moustache and furry afro. At first it was just doing cartwheels on the rugby field, and later more eccentric things like making friends with the neighbour's daughter... who was black! It was thus obvious to Schalk's parents that he would study drama, and to help numb the pain they sent him away to study at the University of Cape Town.

While studying in Cape Town Schalk slowly began to realise that there was so much more to life than boerewors and rugby. He quickly became conscious of the fact that he could still be a proud Afrikaans boy, whilst wearing skinny jeans. Schalk did not make it into the Theatre and Performance course at UCT and was forced to do a general BA with drama as a major. During

this 'gap year' of his all he had was a witty brain and a dream, so he did what any person in his situation would do. That's right, he went into comedy, in April 2011.

Schalk is not afraid to say it like it is and talks about how he perceives things through his De la Rey spectacles. On stage, he is fun and energetic and appeals to people of all kinds and colours (and yes, even black people. As a matter of fact, especially black people!).

Schalk has come a far way in the short amount of time that he has been doing comedy. He has had the privilege to perform at some great venues, alongside some even greater comedians. On his blog *Kill or be Killed*, Warren Robertson wrote the following:

"...I paid a lot of attention to Schalk's set. As it turned out this was a good thing, but not because I got to find and kill that joke thief. Schalk's material is very assuredly presented with some good original ideas and brave tricks included in the set. For instance, his opening joke is in a hurried Afrikaans, possibly with the intention that it be misunderstood and die on a Cape Town stage. This gives him a chance to establish a "fish-out-of-water" persona that must work nicely in the predominantly English venues he works down there. It's a very brave way to do it. Unfortunately, up at Emperor's this was not the case. When he came to the reveal bit and stammered to the crowd that "you're English aren't you?" a lot of them disagreed. Due to the nature of the gig the silences always seemed deafening. There just wasn't anyone in, and so Schalk will possibly feel he did worse than he wanted, but he shouldn't. There is a lot of promise in his stuff."

Recent performance highlights:

- Made it to the finals of the Graca Comedy Showdown in Johannesburg 2011.
- Performed in “Wildcard Weekend” at UCT’s Hiddingh Campus.
- 3 performances at National Arts Festival in Grahamstown at the Monastery with “Wildcard Comedy.”
- Performed on the Live @ 5 on 5fm.
- Performed in Johannesburg at the Comedy Underground @ Cool Runnings Melville, Parker’s Comedy & Jive @ Monte Casino, Carnival City and Emperor’s Palace, Wish in Melville, Tings ‘n Times in Pretoria, and Bubba J’s in Boksburg.
- Performed the New Year’s Eve show at Parker’s Comedy Club @ Monte Casino with Joe Parker, Al Proddgers and Darren Maule.
- Performed in “Gemengde Vrugte: Afrikaans stand-up komdie” at The Stage in Belville, Ou Meul Teater in Paarl, Die Skuur Teater in Hermanus.
- Performed various times all over Cape Town: Zula Bar, Purple Turtle, Ragazzi Aperitivo, Armchair Theatre, Chilli Bar, Pakololo, Bunker Bar as well as various other venues.
- Support Act at Jou Ma Se Comedy Club.
- Performed on Live @ Parker’s on Comedy Central with Barry Hilton.
- Winner of the Cape Town Graca Comedy Showdown 2012.
- Performed at the CT Nandos Comedy Festival @ The Artscape Opera House.
- Performed at Blacks Only, 27 July 2013.
- Performed in Cape Comedy at the National Arts Festival 2013.
- Nominee for the Comics Choice Awards 2013 in the Savanna Newcomer Category.
- Various corporate events such as formals of UCT residences and a UNISEF charity event.