



Kay Faith has not only taken the South African hip hop scene by storm with her mad sound-engineering skills, but she's been featured in the Apple 'New Artist Spotlight' and gained international recognition for her own music. Seems pretty legit – because a few seconds into one of her tracks, you'll be bobbing your head to her epic beats.

TO BE RECKONED WITH

Layout by: **Asanda Buzani**

As a white Afrikaans woman from the town of Knysna in the Western Cape, Karien Barnard, aka Kay Faith, is not what you'd expect when you hear 'hip hop producer'. But not only does she break the mould with exceptional skill, she also has a real raw talent and feel for what she does. Kay's a hip hop audio engineer and producer who has been

living and working in Cape Town for the past couple of years. She engineers and produces top-quality, home-grown hip hop and in 2017, she released her debut EP, *In Good Faith*, featuring big names such as Uno July, Dope Saint Jude, YoungstaCPT, Patty Monroe and DJ Ready D. We caught up with her to get the low-down.

HOW DID YOU FIND MUSIC/MUSIC FIND YOU?

I've loved music since I was young. My family had a lot of musicians in it. I went to study sound engineering at the Cape Audio College. There, I experimented with a lot of different audio avenues. I did some post production, some theatre sound and even some live sound. At the end, music was the thing that grabbed me the most and I started doing it full time.

HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

After school I had to make the decision of what I was going to study. At the time, my dream was to do a degree in Fine Arts, but because of a failed application process, I ended up enrolling into a sound-engineering college in Cape Town. I did sound engineering for two years and thereafter started interning at multiple companies. One night, I found myself in studio with Mos Def. It was so inspiring at the time to be working with such a great artist. It made me realise that music was something I wanted to do. After that, I started doing full-time hip hop engineering and that led to me working with quite a few known Cape Town-based artists. From there onwards I just kept working hard, and one achievement followed on the other. Eventually, about two years ago, I made the choice to start producing on top of my engineering and I released my first body of work about a year ago (*In Good Faith*). And things have just been going from strength to strength ever since.

IF YOU COULD COLLABORATE WITH ANY HIP HOP ARTIST, WHO WOULD IT BE?

I would love to work with Bishop Briggs, Jessie Reyez, Scott Storch, Tumi Molekane and Khuli Chana.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH IN 2019? ALSO, HOW DO YOU SEE THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIP HOP INDUSTRY EVOLVING IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

In 2019, I just want to continue putting out great music. I'm currently working with so many amazing artists in such a great company that it really is looking like 2019 will be very exciting. I feel as though South African hip hop is at a revolutionary stage right now. The world is seeing that South Africa has a lot of talent and they are trying to jump on to our market and get involved with the sound that's coming out of our country. X

FAST FACTS

DOB: During the mid '90s

POB: Knysna

Favourite international hip hop legend:

J Dilla

Favourite local legend:

Brenda Fassie

Best place to eat in Cape Town:

Raptor Room in Roeland Street

Pet peeves: Producers who send me work that's been exported incorrectly.

Something you can't live without:

My best friend, Saya.

She means the world to me and has supported me through a lot.

Favourite song of 2018?:

Do U Digg – Nasty C

TEXT: LAUREN ENDRODY; PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY IMAGES



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KAY FAITH