

HE'S A HIP HOP WONDER!

Zakwe sizzles with five Sama nominations under his belt

By SIBONAKALISO MSANE

Calling him a hard worker would be an understatement! Ntokozo Zakwe, known as Zakwe in music and hip hop circles, is one of Durban's hottest talents.

The KwaMashu-born singer got his big break when he signed with Native Rhythms in 2010.

His first album, *Zakwe*, has sold thousands of copies and he's been nominated in five categories at this year's Samas.

Zakwe (24) is co-owner of Isphethu Entertainment, which is collaborating with DJ Tira's Afrotainment on Duncan's single, featuring Danger of Big NUZ.

He is the proud owner of a clothing line, iTsotsi by Nature.

As if all that's not enough, he's a final-year IT student at the Durban University of Technology.

His music career began in high school in 2005.

By 2007 it was clear he loved what he did.

The hip hop star told *Daily Sun*: "My nomination for Best Newcomer, Best Album, Best Male, Best Hip Hop, and Best Remix was a shock more than anything for me.

"The nominee conference was held on my birthday, 8 March, so this was the best birthday present ever."

It humbles him each time he hears his songs getting air-play on radio stations across the country.

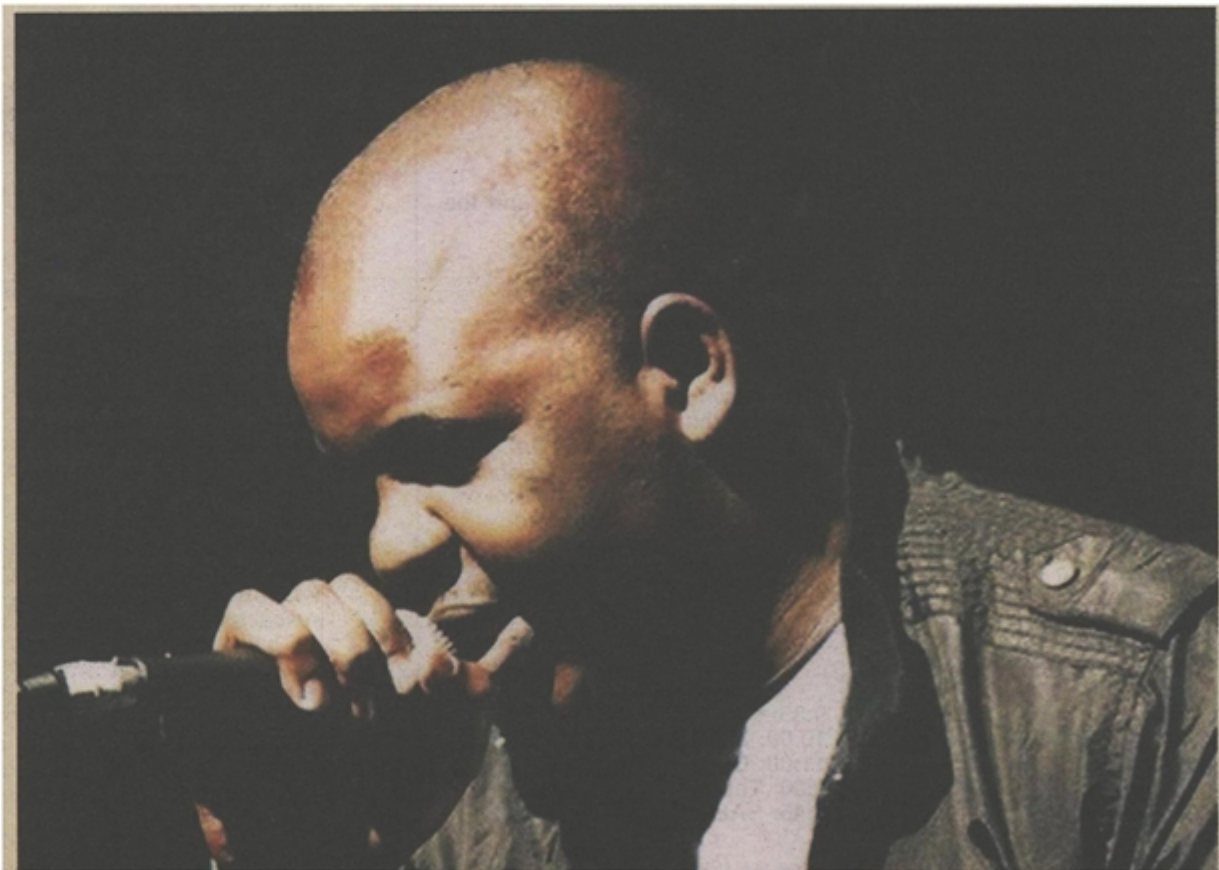
And what about being the first hip hop artist to make it to Ukhozi FM's top 20 list with the song *Bathi ngiyachoma*?

"It was amazing, I can't describe it," he said, shyly.

"I'm embarking on a national tour with AKA and Khuli Chana, to mention just a few.

"My goal is for my album to reach gold. I'm 8 000 copies away from achieving this milestone," he said.

Zakwe believes in selling what he does and not doing what sells. He encourages up-and-coming artists to be original.



Zakwe is one of Mzansi's finest hip hop talents.

Photo by Sibonakaliso Msane