

# Maya Spector



By [Martin Myers](#)

4 Jul 2017

Maya Elizabeth Spector is a rising talent in the South African music and theatre world. Coming from a culturally diverse, musical family, she grew up in Japan, Swaziland, America and South Africa.

She graduated in 2009 from the University of KwaZulu-Natal with a Bachelor of Music degree, majoring in jazz performance and music education. Maya has appeared on stages around South Africa in international and South African musicals and she has also been a lead vocalist and back-up singer with many different music groups. Her voice has a texture that might be best described as an old soul, weathered by life and schooled by adversity, yet still so alive in vocal tone and bubbly in its expression.

Having recently finished her long-awaited EP, Maya is now writing new material and performing gigs in and around Cape Town and beyond.



## **What does music mean to you?**

Music to me is best summed up in a little personal quote I use, "I don't live for music, I live because of it."

■ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

I'm a super clumsy person and I've tripped (and sometimes fallen) on stage more times than I can count, especially when I'm in heels. I'm sure some of my friends take bets as to if I'm gonna make it through the gig without tripping.

■ ***Your heroes?***

My mother, Ruth Jacobs-Spector and my father Brooks Spector as they have both overcome great hardships in their lives and have made it possible for me the live and have the life I have today. As well as all the people that protect our earth's wildlife.



■ ***It's your round, what are you drinking?***

Unfortunately, I have a little to no alcohol tolerance, so I tend to stay away from alcoholic drinks, especially at gigs. However, if all the stars were aligned in my favour and if I was feeling like really letting go (and of course had someone to drive me home after I make a complete fool of myself), I would have a gin and tonic.

■ ***The songs you wished you wrote?***

*Crazy* – Gnarl's Barkley

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

I think that what makes me stand out is my ability to adapt to new environments and situations fast. Sometimes I feel a little like a chameleon that initially blends in, but eventually stands out.

In terms of music, what makes me stand out is my ability to tell my stories honestly and authentically through my songs. I write about the relationships I have and have had with people and how I grew from the experiences.

▣ **Any nicknames?**

Maya-Papaya, Maya the Bee, Airport (because all I do is, “com-plane, com-plane, com-plane”), Myrtle the Turtle (because I used to have green glasses as a kid and I guess I looked like a turtle), My-My (maybe Maya isn’t short enough for some people) and my mother calls me Malala (because she is always making everyone’s names into a baby sound).

▣ **If you were not a musician what would you do?**

I would be an interior decorator, a veterinarian, a professional scuba diver or in advertising, where I would be on the creative team that comes up with the storylines of commercials.

▣ **Pick five words to describe yourself?**

Emotional, indecisive, loyal, empathetic and hungry.

▣ **Five desert island discs?**

1. Jill Scott – ‘Live in Paris’
2. Paul Simon – ‘Anthology’
3. Erykah Badu – ‘Live’
4. Gretchen Parlato – ‘In a Dream’
5. Disney - Little Mermaid Soundtrack

▣ **Greatest movie ever made?**

*Beetlejuice*

▣ **Favourite fashion garment?**

High waisted shirt and sunglasses.

▣ **What do you complain about most often?**

I complain about sleep and food all the time. I need at least 9 hours of sleep to feel alive and ready to face the world and I am a mess when I’m hungry.

▣ **What is your fear?**

To be stuck behind a desk for the rest of my life and not being able to create and perform on stage.



■ ***Happiness is?***

Happiness to me is going to bed late, waking up late, sleeping with lots of blankets on the bed, eating Japanese food every day, sitting in the sun, cuddling my kitties, helping animals, putting things in alphabetical and colour order (I'm slightly OCD) and having conversations with random strangers.

■ ***On stage I tend to?***

On stage I tend to tell the back stories to what inspired all my songs and how I've met the band members that I'm playing with, no matter how embarrassing the stories are for me or the band. Also, I tell a lot of jokes and I'm not really as funny as I think I am (I've been told).

■ ***If you are walking on stage for a keynote speech, what song would you use and why?***

*Don't Worry, Be Happy* – Bobby McFerrin. I would use that because that is my theme song, my ringtone and motto. It just makes me feel good and it seems to make everyone that hears it snap into a good positive space.

■ ***What are you doing next?***

I've had a lot going on in my personal life lately, which has inspired me to do a lot of song writing, so now I'm taking some of those ideas and am excited to be back in studio. This time I'm working alongside the amazingly talented and skilled producer, Graham Ward. Keep your ears to the ground to hear what we're coming out with!

As for live performances, I am always doing some jazzy gigs around the city with some hip Cape Town jazz musos (check me out on social media to see where I'm at). For the past year I've been involved in a super hip gig that I do in my lounge as a part of the tourism company's Coffeebeans Routes, Jazz Safari Tour, run by Iain Harris. Check it out and maybe I'll see you in my lounge, just remember seating is limited, lol!

Lastly, I am in the process of organising an online-based platform for local musicians of all genres to use as a way of expanding South African music with various local artists. Keep a lookout for 'Carissa Sessions'.

## Social Media

Maya's Twitter: [@mayaSpector](#)

Maya's Facebook [page](#)

## ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

Co-owner at Triple M Entertainment, founder Music Exchange, manager Sipho Hotstix Mabuse

- How can I better my songwriting? - 15 Apr 2024
- Trevor Jones turns 75 - 25 Mar 2024
- #MusicExchange: Lynelle Kenned joins *Finding the Light* cast - 28 Feb 2024
- #MusicExchange: Brandon Grant releases new single, 'With You' - 21 Feb 2024
- #MusicExchange: Victor Sibusiso Masedo's time is now with jazz album, *As Promised* - 15 Feb 2024

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>