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## BURNI AMAN ON SWEET SCIENCE, LIFE AFTER GODESSA & CAPE TOWN HIP HOP

February 25, 2015 By [Mary Honeychild](#)

### Burni Aman Interview – Sweet Science, life after Godessa & Cape Town Hip Hop

*Music is meant to be inspirational, to heal, to strengthen"*



Burni Aman, formerly of the female hip hop group Godessa, talks about her new album 'Sweet Science'. She chats to us about her most memorable experience as part of the ensemble, the work that has gone into the making of her debut solo

album, the value of Cape Town hip hop to the local scene, stereotyping, and more.

### How has living in Switzerland helped shape your perspective on life and music?

Burni Aman: It has helped enhance my work ethic, studio time is no longer just recording, just working until you find the right "take". Sometimes that means hours or days or weeks or even months of revisiting tracks to get the best possible sound and vocal/beat arrangements and emcee "takes". As an emcee who has been fortunate enough to work with some great recording equipment while in Switzerland, I finally understand the importance of using the right mic for your voice but also to use the right mic for the track you are recording. For each track we tried between three to four different mics at the start of the recording session before deciding which one would work best for that particular recording. Then I would invest time into finding the proper vocal tone. These things which seem minor can make a real difference to the song. We would discuss and have meetings about what most people might say are arbitrary things like snares or drums etc. but these things I now realise were what made this album so special. You don't have to be or do things perfectly but you do need to invest time in making your music.



### What has been a stand-out memory for you from the time you were a part of the widely loved and respected Godessa hip hop group?

Burni Aman: I will never forget our tours to other countries, it was such a special thing to be able to travel with the ladies to various places. One of the most exciting trips has been travelling to Cuba. It's just such an amazing country and so far removed from any place I would ever have imagined our music would take us to.

### Your debut album 'Sweet Science' features an impressive twenty tracks. How many did you record while working on this album and how did you go about selecting the final cuts?

Burni Aman: We really wanted to include all the songs because when I initially started to record I wasn't sure in which direction the album would go. I asked various producers I knew to send me beats and I just chose the ones I thought suited my mood or the mind state I was in at the moment, the ones which spoke to me the most is what I used. Because the tracks are so different from each other we really took a long time to figure out the proper running order, the wrong order can mess up the whole cd. Some weren't happy about using "Teik" as an intro track for the album but I fought for it because it's more of a reflection of my journey with the music. It's about finding my voice independent of the voice I had in Godessa. The message on "Teik" is about coming home and finally reaching something that you have wanted to for a long time. It's slow and unusual for a hip hop album to start in that way and it's the most perfect – imperfect selection or combination of things to start this album with. For me that is what Sweet Science is about, it's about fighting for what you want and we were like mad scientists creating something that was special for us and hoping that others might also like it.

### Please finish the sentence: "Music is meant to..."

Burni Aman: "Music is meant to be inspirational, to heal, to strengthen"

### .. and tell us why you think so.

Burni Aman: What I have learnt through my journey in life and not just music is that you have to make one of two choices, you either uplift and build or you destroy and break. I will always try to choose the first, to uplift and build.

### As a female spoken word artist/emcee, are there any internalised battles with honest self representation vs stereotyping that you still deal with? And, how do you overcome this?

Burni Aman: As individuals we know who and what we are. I understand myself to be a respectful, good natured, humorous, loving, kind person who is also a creatively talented artist. People will always have their ideas about what it is that you mean or represent to them but ultimately you decide who and what that is. I think the best way to overcome any challenge is to decide first what it is that you feel about a situation and then forget about the noise and distraction from the outside world. If it is useful to your growth take note but if it is distracting and harmful then block out the negativity and focus on what is truly important.

### In your opinion, what are some of the things that makes Cape Town hip hop a credit to the South African hip hop scene?

Burni Aman: It all started here with crews like POC (Prophets of the City) and Black Noise among some of the most stand-out hip hop artists and activists in South Africa and Africa. Wherever you go in hip hop communities throughout the world you will find that they know about these two crews. They built the foundation on which other hip hop artists like myself flourish on today.

### After the release of 'Sweet Science' what else can we be expecting from you this year and beyond?



Burni Aman: I will be touring and releasing a new album in Switzerland with a group called Greater Goodz during the first quarter of this year. It will be our first full length album together as a group. I have a track coming out this year, "Masters of the Humanverse" where I collaborate with Jean Grae for a Swiss producer, Meisterbeatz' album it also features various other international artists.

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About Mary Honeychild

Mary is a fusion queen, her love for music is defined by her roots of drums, saxophone and deep bass. She discovers the break and combination in genres and takes us on journeys into the origin and amalgamation of scenes such as Jazz, Hip Hop and electronic dance music.

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