



Dominoes: Unbreakable Spirit - The Somizi Mhlongo Story

Somizi Mhlongo , Lesley Mofokeng

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The story of Somizi Mhlongo is one of breaking down walls and triumphantly demolishing the hurdles and curveballs thrown his way. Born of acting royalty, his father Ndaba "Mshefane" Mhlongo was an incomparable comedy genius and his mother Mary Twala is a revered performer who is still active in the industry to this day. Even at his poorest, Somizi was rich. His life filled with magical stardust moments. One too many times he emerged from the dark valley of sorrows only more energised and revitalised to tackle this thing called life again. In this biography he opens up about his childhood of deprivation and how his destiny was in the arts. He became a performer at a young age and expanded his horizons as he traveled the country with his parents. The original child star, Somizi was on TV while still at school. He couldn't escape the clutches of the stage and cameras. What awaited him was a charmed life as a Sarafina! star touring the world until tragedy struck when his father passed away and he returned home. Somizi speaks frankly about discovering his sexuality and coming to terms with it. His chutzpah and never-say-die attitude saw him look bravely in the eye of chauvinism and prejudice to change attitudes. Immerse yourself in a story of survival and the ABCs of beating the odds. For each time he was down and out, Somizi came back stronger than before. Today he nibbles on the uppercrust of South African entertainment as a million rand empire. He is a radio personality, Idols SA judge, a much sought-after MC and a dependable face as an ambassador of several campaigns and products. But it was not always that way, until he pushed down the walls and they fell like dominoes.

Dominoes: Unbreakable Spirit - The Somizi Mhlongo Story Details

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Lorraine says

Why do I hurt myself like this? I have experienced Lesley Mofokeng a few years ago and vowed "Never again", but here I am, like a book addict that I am, back again...

I was looking forward to a raw and candid story and all I got served was a watered down, whitewashed version of "Living The Dream", Somizi's reality show.

Somizi and Lesley held back. It felt like Somizi was not ready to tell all. The whole book came across like an overview. A skeletal-draft. "The Book" is a little over 100 pages. A "touch and go" situation. Was it even edited????????????????????? Felt like a rushed project! Basesana Khumalo wrote the foreword. Enuff said.

The book starts with his home life. He comes from a merged family. A very big one. As much as there was happiness all around, he could have shared his thoughts about the set up. Living in such close proximity with neighbours and being so close to the Soweto uprisings, surely he had some feelings, retrospectively, about it all. He could've juxtaposed it with his current life, moreover, he could have shed some light on how that was different to what his daughter is experiencing now. Working overseas for 2 years without his parents' permission. There was so much he could have said about that time. A missed opportunity. He could have gotten his mother's thoughts on that and how it impacted the family as a whole.

There are no sacred cows in a tell all. His journey into finding himself, having a child as a gay man, then and now, navigating the intersectionality of all those realities, so much could have been shared.

Christianity and ancestors. As a child growing up in the 80's in Soweto, I know for a fact that sangomas had a bad reputation. They were associated with witchcraft and sorcery. Merging these two beliefs couldn't have been a seamless process especially if these were not normal practices from home. We take so much from our parents' houses into our own homes. I was expecting him to share about his journey of "unlearning" and embracing the two forces. Nothing much is said about the development of his relationship with Palessa and Bahumi. As an absent father, how did this impact on Bahumi's development? On him as a man, a black man, a gay black man.

We don't live our lives in a vacuum. We are all connected to people and places and feelings, no matter how good or bad. I guess we all have a right to rewrite our own histories. Own stories.

I am bitterly disappointed. I gave it two stars for the lit cover and the watermarked pictures inside the book.???????

Come on men, respect your readers!!!

Patricia says

I really enjoyed the simplicity and honesty inside these pages.

Recato Cristiano Eberwein says

A complete waste of my time and money. Clearly no proper editing was done. Somizi it turns out was 13 years of age for at least 3 years... ?

Onkarabile Charles says

It's funny how I was all smiles through out the whole book. The book is not really "all that" but I loved it. Or maybe it's because I am a fan :)

Lebogang Madise says

I felt robbed, its overpriced for the content. Dominoes is well written for a sample of the book we have been waiting for. It qualifies as a great movie trailer for a long awaited movie. In the book Somizi mentions that he has been working on a book for ~5 years and that it was too dark hence it never came to be, this book came about what he now calls a "happy ending" to his life however there are too many gaps between the said dark place and his now happy place.

I believe when you write/co-author a your life story, it means you're ready to reveal pieces of your soul to the world, even the dark side... In Dominoes, Somizi played it safe.

Somizi has LIFE STORY to tell and I hope one day he'll allow an author to tell it like it is, that book will be thick, similar to that of Nelson Mandela's Long walk to Freedom.

Dominoes in my opinion was just a quick publicity stunt taking advantage of Somizi's fame.

Amo Ramela says

Interesting

Puleng Hopper says

After reading the book, I felt I had just gotten played. I was disappointed. My bookish friends and I had been looking forward to the memoir with great anticipation, given that in his forty four years, Somizi is living a colourful, interesting, and successful life. Whatever he has touched has resulted in ratings sky rocketing, and has turned to gold. Idols SA, Miss SA, The Confederations Cup, The World Cup, Sarafina, his reality, television, and radio shows. He has hobnobbed with Brenda Fassie, Lebo Mathosa, Lucky Dube, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Meriam Makeba, Lira and many more. A true entertainer in his own right. Being a gay guy

with a biological daughter would have been a cherry on top. Great experiences that would have led to a great quality book.

Unfortunately the offering does not meet standard literary rules. I felt like the aim was to entertain his traditional followers who love him purely for his celebrity status and entertainment skills. To capitalize on the hype at all cost, consciously or subconsciously, at the detriment and disregard of local African literature, especially it's professionals who are at war with challenges within the industry; given South Africa's legacy of the past.

The book is presented as a hundred and twelve pager, but in actual fact there are only seventy five written pages. The remainder of the pages are taken up by photos, and the introduction of chapters. Just to introduce eleven chapters twenty two pages were utilised. There is over paragraphing throughout which takes up more space. As per the rule of thumb and business imperatives memoirs should consist of a minimum of thirty thousand words or forty thousand words. The maximum being ninety thousand in what we term long memoirs. *Dominoes* does not meet this minimum criteria.

The editing is poor. Present and past tense are muddled up in the text. Punctuation is not on point. Numbers are mixed with words. There are basic grammar and language errors. It is not clear what value was added by the publisher (Brand Arc Media), and the author Lesley Mofokeng. The "publisher" appears to be a media marketing agency. It is disconcerting that Exclusive Books found it fitting to associate its reputation to such mediocrity. English is not the sole measure of intelligence and excellence, however basic rules should prevail in any language especially in a book.

Evidently a hurried project that had to be completed before the last instalment of his reality show, and before the beginning of *Idols SA* where Somizi is a judge. The book launch was on June 28th, the last show was on 7th July, and *Idols SA* began two days later.

To quote the co author " With Somizi we used a lot of technology, voice notes, . We dint spend a lot of time seated and talking , because of his busy schedule"

The book is lacking in content, feel, depth and substance. No meat, yet Somizi's life experiences can easily cover books. It is not adequately or sufficiently developed. It is not a tell all like a memoir should.

An unfortunate state of affairs. A mockery to literature. A bad name to celebrities that have respected the literary industry and have produced quality work. Definitely a casual read with no literary thirst to quench . His literary inclined fans will be left short charged.

In conclusion Black is allowed to critique Black. Mediocrity, incompetence and lack of adherence to standard industry specifications can not be made associated with our Blackness. If the book had to be written in vernacular, it would not be exempt from language rule.

Kanyisa says

The book was very interesting but to short , he needs a second book to elaborate more.
