

TONGOGARA: BATTLEKAT [THE BIOGRAPHY]

Born on the 9th of January 1981 in *Vereeniging, Tongogara Ntlokoa* began his early childhood years living with his maternal family in *Sharpeville* situated in *the Vaal Triangle / Sedibeng Region* (South of Gauteng in South Africa).

His interest in music developed in the mid/late 1980s when he relocated with his Mother to *Kagiso* in *the West Rand* (West of Gauteng) to live with his Father who was a *Guitarist* and a *Political Activist during the Apartheid Era*.

During the early 1990s, the emerging *Hip Hop Culture* in South Africa became *Tongogara's* medium of *Self-Expression and Identity* in his adolescent years when he used to live with his aunt (Father's Sister) in *Meadowlands* (Soweto; South West of Gauteng) to attend school in the City; *Johannesburg*.

It was only around *the late 1990s* when *Tongogara* had returned to *the Vaal Triangle* to complete High School that being a *Hip Hop Enthusiast* known by the alias ***BattleKat***, he became an aspiring *Hip Hop Producer / Rap Artist* which led to him becoming a member of a *Hip Hop assemblage* from the region affectionately known as ***Optical Illusion*** which was officially formed in 1998, and included four other members; *Keabetswe Modiko* alias "*Logic*", *Tumelo Ruele* alias "*Geno*", *Stephen Mokoena* alias "*Golden Shovel*" and the late *Kabelo Mokoena* alias "*Highpriest*".

In 1999, *Tongogara* enrolled to study *Sound Engineering* with *Allenby Campus* in *Bramley Johannesburg* (now *Damelin*), where he was class-mates with South Africa's renowned *Kwaito Maestro*; *DJ Cleo* and the critically acclaimed *Jazz Guitarist* and *House Music Producer* *Gaopalelwe "Jerah" Mothusi* (who was *Tongogara's* music production mentor during college years).

To supplement his studies, *Tongogara* volunteered to work part-time as an *Audio Technician* at *Joint Centre for Political and Economic Studies* (where his father was officially employed) assisting to produce educational programs on cassette; in the process he was allowed *Studio-Time* to produce and record *Optical Illusion's* first project titled "*Thoughts Illustrated*" which was exclusively released on *Cassette* in 2001, and was *sold hand to hand* by the group members where ever *Hip Hop Parties, Gatherings or Shows* were being held in townships, towns and cities in *Gauteng* and other provinces in *South Africa*.

Optical Illusion's "*Thoughts Illustrated*" project had guest appearances of *Rap Artists*; *Mohase Mohase* alias "*Mad Scientist*" and the late *Nkuli Habedi* alias "*Flabba*" (of *Skwatta Kamp*) who became friends with *Tongogara* in *College* (*Allenby Campus, Bramley*); as a trade for *Flabba's* verse, *BattleKat* produced a song for him titled "*Accelerate*" which was featured on *Skwatta Kamp's* album; "*Khut and Joyn*" released in 2002.

After attaining a *Diploma in Sound Engineering* and a *Certificate of Proficiency in Advanced Sound Engineering*; Tongogara began his professional career as a *Music Producer and Audio Engineer* in 2002 as a contracted employee of ***Black Rage Productions / Outrageous Records***.

Working for the *Multi-Media House* which doubled as an *Independent Hip Hop Record label*, Tongogara/Battlekat had the opportunity to produce radio hits for Hip Hop artists such as *H2O, Zubz, Proverb and Pebbles* who were signed to the label at the time (2003 to 2006).

Aside from the work he rendered for *Outrageous Records*, *Battlekat* and members of his group *Optical illusion* registered a company called *Broken Rhythm* trading as ***Catalyst 5 Records*** which had a *Print and Distribution* deal signed with *Cool Spot Distribution* to nationally release their official debut album; *“Definitive”* (2003).

As his pseudonym *Battlekat* gained recognition in the music industry and networks made through *Outrageous Records*, Tongogara got the opportunity to co-produce songs with South Africa’s Greats such as *Pops Mohammed* and worked with other artists such as *Lebo Mashile*, the critically acclaimed Hip Hop artists *Tumi* (now known as *Stogie T*), *HHP* and many other South African Urban Music Artists.

In 2004, *Outrageous Records* granted Tongogara the opportunity to produce a song featuring the legendary *Hugh Masekela* in collaboration with *Zubz* and *Rasekgantsho Matsabu* (of the Contemporary-Traditional Sesotho Band; *Ntjapedi*), and another song featuring the afro-soul songstress *Simphiwe Dana* in collaboration with *Ernie* (of *Mood Phase 5*) for the *Coca Cola Collab project*.

Tongogara’s career took a turn towards *Television* since 2005 when *Black RAGE productions* got commissioned by the SABC to produce the Urban Culture and Lifestyle Show, *“Street Journal.”*

Gaining much interest in Audio and Music Production for Television, Tongogara began networking with various *Media Companies* to provide music and technical audio production as a freelancer and short contract employee.

In 2006 Tongogara registered a company called ***Beats Against the Beast*** through which he released a project titled *BEATS AGAINST THE BEAST VOL.1: THE RE-GENESIS 2006*, which was musically directed, coordinated and produced by *BattleKat* and had guest features from among the highly commended artists of South African Hip Hop in the early 2000s; *Optical Illusion, Zubz, Tumi, Golden Shovel, Proverb, Mawe-2, Xrate, Mr.Beef, Reason, Instro, Wizardry, Nthabi, Mr.C, Prokid, Maggz, Explicit and Parable*.

The album was released in *December of 2006* on CD and was *exclusively free* to people who followed *“a specific procedure”* to attain a copy; the aim of the exercise was *“to cultivate a centralized communication stream”* for people who were already inclined with *BattleKat’s* work with *Outrageous Records*.

Since the 2006 offering, *Tongogara/Battlekat* has not released another Hip Hop album under his company until 2016; he had since been working under his company *Beats Against the Beast* just offering *music production and audio engineering services*.

He has provided library mood music, title sequence and final mixing services for major SABC drama series such as *Mtunzuni.com*, *Tshisa*, *Moferefere Lenyalong*, *Street of Manguang* etc. (working with an assemblage of Musicians whom he has been long-time friends with; *Zakhele Mabena* [keyboardist], *Thato Motaung* [Guitarist], *Kelvin Okpokojobi* [Bassist] and *Khoeti Maile* [Audio Technician] as a collective called ***Redefinition***.)

Apart from Television work, *Tongogara/Battlekat* has provided music production for the acclaimed South African Hip Hop Artist and long-time friend ***Reason*** on the albums *“the Reasoning”* (2009), *“Audio3D”* (2012), *“Audio High Definition”* (2014) and *“Audio Re-definition”* (2016).

On February 2017, *Tongogara/Battlekat* launched www.babinc.co.za a website for his company *Beats Against the Beast* (re-registered in 2015) which is trading under the imprint **BAB music** to promote official Hip Hop music releases (singles and albums) by him and artists he collaborates with; official releases planned for 2018.

Music Production Album Discography

Artist: **Optical Illusion**
Title: *“Thoughts Illustrated”*
Company: ©2001 Independently
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Skwatta Kamp**
Title: *“Khut and Joyn”*
Company: ©2002 Butta Bing
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: *Various Artists*
Title: *“Rage Compilation”*
Company: ©2002 Outrageous Records / Ghetto Ruff
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **Expressions** (Various Artists)
Title: *“Words Unlimited”*
Company: ©2003 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer / Project Coordinator

Artist: **Optical illusion**
Title: *"Definitive"*
Company: ©2003 Catalyst 5 Records/ Cool Spot Distribution
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **H2O**
Title: *Amanzi Mtoti*
Company: ©2003 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: (Various Artists)
Title: *"Coca Cola Collaboration"*
Company: ©2004 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **Zubz**
Title: *Listeners Digest*
Company: ©2004 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **Pebbles**
Title: *Playful Soul*
Company: ©2005 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **Optical illusion**
Title: *The Offering*
Company: ©2005 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **H2O**
Title: *Sheleni*
Company: © 2005 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Project Coordinator

Artist: **Proverb**
Title: *The Book of Proverb*
Company: ©2005 Outrageous Records/ EMI
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **HHP**
Title: *"YBA to NW"*
Company: ©2005 EMI
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Tongogara [Battlekat]**
Title: *"Beats Against the Beast Vol.1" (The Re-genesis 2006)*
Company: ©2006 Beats Against The Beast
Vocation: Music Production / Recording and Mixing Engineer

Artist: **Proverb**
Title: *"Manuscript"*
Company: ©2007 Gallo Records
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Reason**
Title: *"The Reasoning"*
Company: ©2009 Promise Land / Iris
Vocation: Music Production / Project Coordinator

Artist: **Ms.Nthabi**
Title: *"Welcome to Me"*
Company: ©2009 Promise Land / Iris
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Pebbles**
Title: *"Phenomenal"*
Company: ©2009 Sheer Sound / Iris Records
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Reason**
Title: *"Audio3D"*
Company: ©2012 Motif Records
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Reason**
Title: *"Audio High Definition"*
Company: ©2014 Motif Records
Vocation: Music Production

Artist: **Reason**
Title: *"Audio Re-Definition"*
Company: ©2016 Motif Records
Vocation: Music Production

Music/Audio Production for Television

Show Title: ***Street Journal*** (Magazine Show)
Broadcaster: SABC 1 (3 seasons: 2005 to 2009)
Company: Black Rage Productions
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music /

Show Title: *Ziyawa La* (Actuality Shows)
Broadcaster: SABC 2 (1 season - 2007)
Company: Touch Down Africa
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *I'spani* (Actuality Shows)
Broadcaster: SABC 2 (1 season - 2008)
Company: Touch Down Africa
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Members Only* (Kids Shows)
Broadcaster: SABC 3 (3rd season - 2008)
Company: Touch Down Africa
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Ba Kae* (Actuality Shows)
Broadcaster: SABC 1 (2 seasons – 2008 to 2009)
Company: Dzuguda Productions
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Mtuzini.com* (Drama Series)
Broadcaster: SABC 1 (1 season: 2006)
Company: Moja Movie Factory
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Tshisa* (Drama Series)
Broadcaster: SABC 1 (3 seasons: 2007 to 2010)
Company: Moja Movie Factory
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Moferefere Lenyalong* (Sitcom)
Broadcaster: SABC 2 (2 seasons: 2008 to 2012)
Company: Moja Movie Factory
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Streets of Mangaung* (Drama Series)
Broadcaster: SABC 2 (1 season: 2012)
Company: Moja Movie Factory
Vocation: Title Sequence Music / Library Mood Music

Show Title: *Art Lovers* (Lifestyle Show)
Broadcaster: SABC 1 (1 season: 2016)
Company: Cultured Concepts
Vocation: Final Mixing