



Photos: Rosalene Tetele, SPEAK

SPEAK went to visit Bob "The Jammer" Mabena at Radio Metro to find out who this famous DJ really is

Where were you born and where did you go to school?
In Atteridgeville, near Pretoria. I went to school there until matric.

Where do you live now?
In Midrand on my own.

What about your family?
If I bumped into my father, I'd tell him where I live. He left when I was young. My mother and one brother died. My other brother is married with three children. I'm the youngest.

How did your father's 'disappearance' influence you?
It has given me the strength and need to have my own family.

How did you become a DJ?
I auditioned three times and was turned down by the SABC. They said I was hopeless. The

Face to face with Bob Mabena

fourth time I auditioned with Radio Bop, I was successful.

Have you always wanted to be a DJ?
Yes, and nothing else.

What personal qualities helped you to become a DJ?
A knowledge of music.

And a good voice?
I don't know if I have a good voice.

Who was the person who influenced you most?
My grandmother. She's strong and sensible.

Are you like her?
No. I'm too soft, especially on

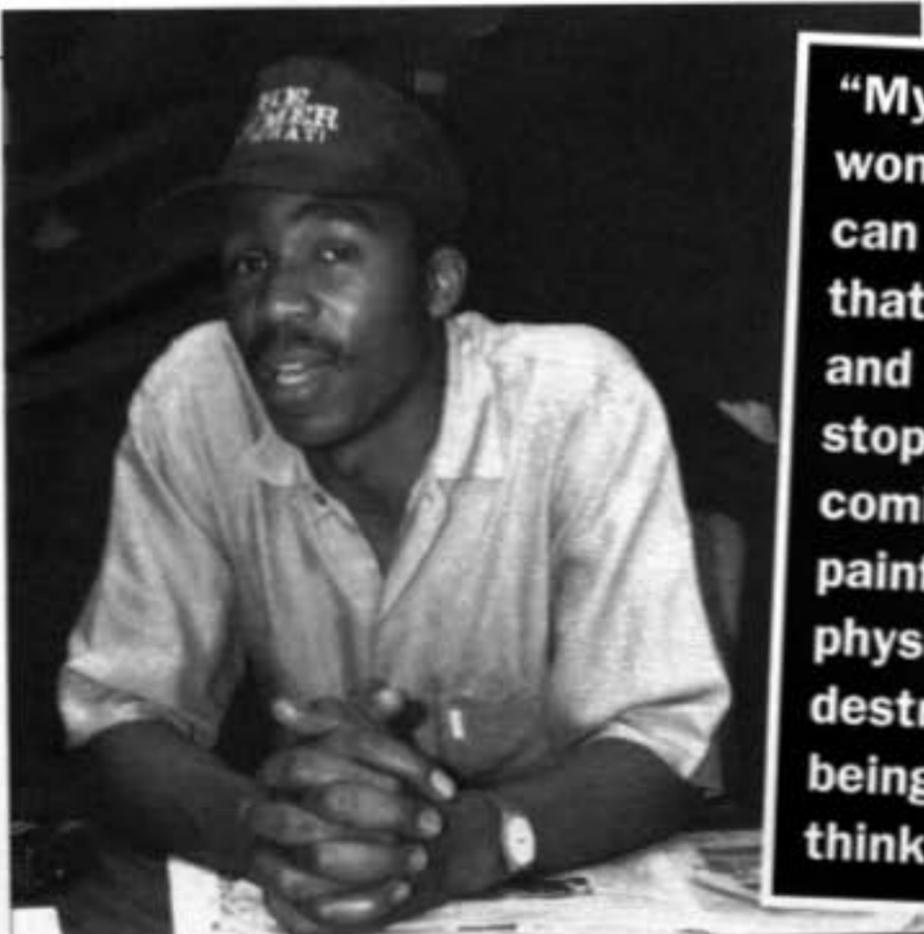
my children.

How many children do you have? Do they live with you?
Two, a four-year-old girl and an 18-month-old boy. I would like to live with them but their mothers will not have it.

Do you spend time with them?
I see them a lot.

How would you describe yourself?
Easy to get along with and patient.

Are you concerned about the position of women in society?



“My message to women is that if a guy can slap you once, that’s the beginning and it should be stopped. If you see it coming, get out. It’s painful to leave, but physical abuse can destroy you as a human being. It makes you think less of yourself.”

Yes, but I haven’t thought about it strongly.

What do you think of the term non-sexism?

I’m black, I’m traditional. The woman I expect to get married to must stay home and take care of the kids. That’s not sexism, it is the way I was brought up. I respect women. My hero is a woman, my grandmother.

What do you think of beauty competitions?

They are a white thing. They started in the black community because promoters want to make a lot of money. The only person we’ve seen go far is Jacqui Mofokeng.

What do you think about men beating their partners?

I saw it happen in my family. Every time it happened I prayed to God I wouldn’t become like that. I don’t think I will ever beat a woman, I saw my mother and my aunts being beaten up.

My message to women is that if a guy can slap you once, that’s the beginning and it should be stopped. If you see it

coming, get out. It’s painful to leave, but physical abuse can destroy you as a human being. It makes you think less of yourself.

A guy who beats up a woman doesn’t think much of himself. He doesn’t know how to direct his anger and frustrations.

What’s your favourite TV programme?

I don’t watch TV much. If I have time, I love watching Picket Fences. It’s crazy and funny.

Who is your favourite musician?

There are a number of them: Donny Heatherway, Roberta Flack, especially when they are together, Billy Joel, Foreigner, Keith Sweat, Silk.

What do you like most about yourself?

My patience. I take my time and that’s why, so far, I have not made a lot of mistakes in my life.

What do you like least about yourself?

My shoe size. It’s size eleven.

What do you think about being able to vote?

I have to take time and think about voting and which party to vote for. I want my vote to make a difference in this country.

What is your ideal relationship?

One based on understanding. There has to be mutual understanding.

If you were President for one day, what would you do?

I would never be a president because I’d have to answer questions like this.

Is there another job you would like to do?

Yes. I would love to stand in front of a class and teach English and History.

What do you think about homosexuality and lesbianism?

Well, we are all going for democracy so there should be freedom to choose how to behave and live for everyone. But if a homosexual made a pass at me, he might just get a bullet between his eyes.

Do you have any dreams?

I have a lot of dreams about this country. I want to be appreciated for what I am. Not as a black person, but as a person. Also, I want to own a record company. I want to live a happy life, be well off and have my kids living with me.

My immediate dream, which I must achieve by next year, is to have my own TV talk show. ☺