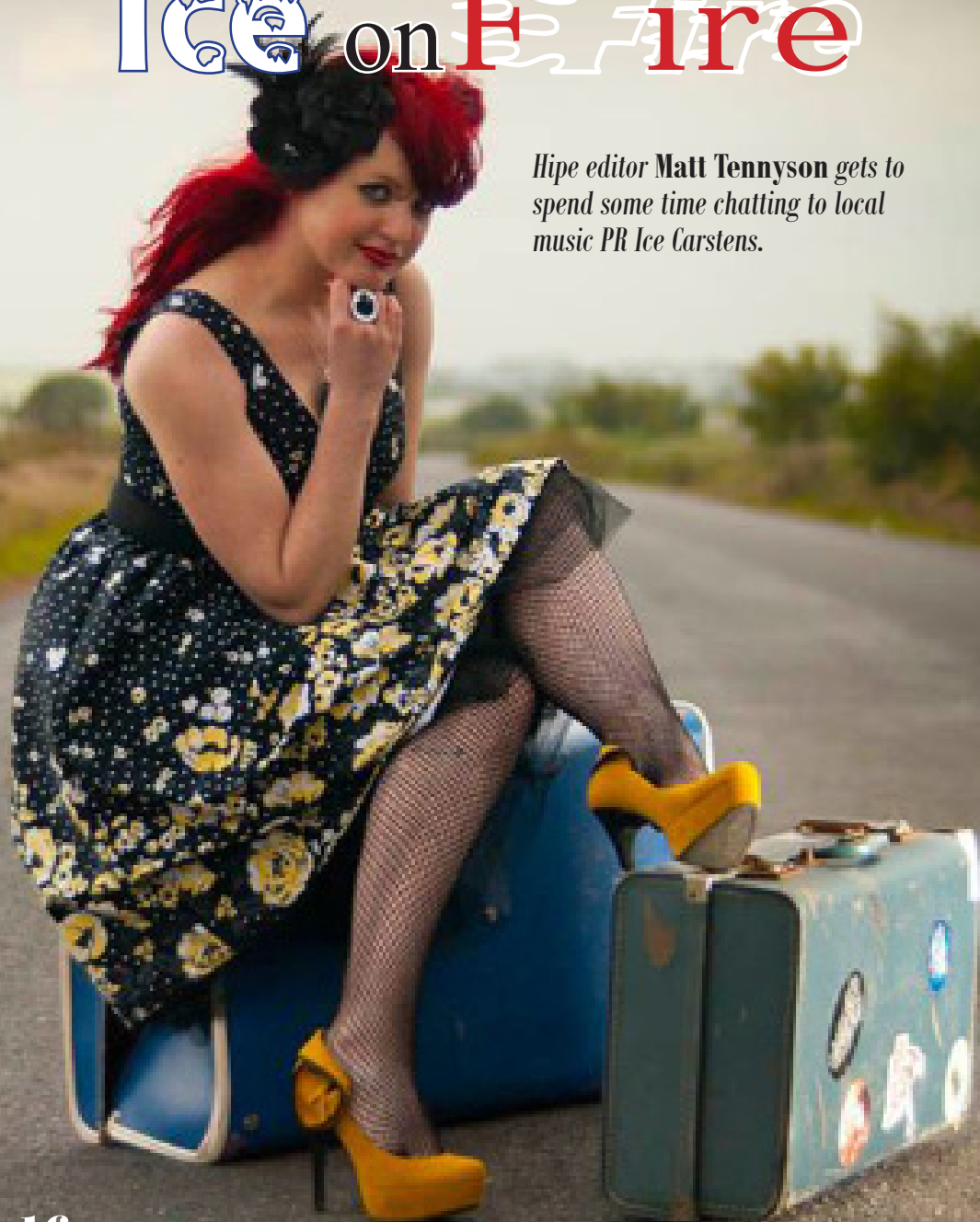


Ice on Fire

Hipe editor Matt Tennyson gets to spend some time chatting to local music PR Ice Carstens.



Bugsy Malone was a movie released way back in 1976. It was unique in a number of aspects. First of all it was a musical, and secondly all the roles in the movie were played by kids, including a very young Jodie Foster.

Now you're probably wondering what this has to do with this month's Hipe interview. Well one of the songs in the movies had the lyrics, "we could have been anything that we wanted to be, with all the talent we had..." And this line makes me think about Ice Carstens.

I have no doubt that Ice could have been anything she wanted to be, with all the talents she has. She has qualifications in sound engineering, radio broadcasting and journalism. Yet she has turned her talents into promoting local music and musicians.

During the past year I've had a fair amount of contact with Ice when Hipe has approached her to do interviews with some of the artists that she promotes. This includes people such as Natasha Meister, Lucy Kruger, Gerald Clark and Freddie Van Dango.

If only all PR people were as helpful and professional as Ice my job as a journalist would be so much easier. Nothing is too much trouble for her and she goes out of her way to help.

Although I had spoken to Ice on a number of occasion, I had only met her once. This was at the release of Lucy Kruger's debut album. It had been a very brief meeting because both of us were busy with other things.

So I decided that it was time to find out more about Ice Carstens. Time to sit down for a one-on-one session. During the year we had done a number of interviews with local musicians, so who better to interview for our December issue that the person behind many of these musicians.

Ice grew up on a farm near Paarl in the Western Cape. She later attended high school at the famous Paarl Gymnasium where she became a boarder. While she loved the farm, it was rather isolated. So living in the school hostel was a new experience.

After leaving school Ice decided to study sound engineering. She admits that the course was very technical and not what she had been expecting. She was one of 20, from an original group of 80, that finished and passed the course. The fact that she stuck it out tells you a lot about her character.

After completing her studies Ice took a job at Mercury Live, a popular Cape Town club that always featured a variety of live local music. She spent five years working behind the bar, but it was time well spent. Her position meant that she came into contact with many local bands and musicians. She was already taking her first tentative steps into the South African music industry.

Ice then did a short course in radio broadcasting. After this she found employment at another club but soon realised that she needed to find something more challenging.

Ice has always had a love for read-

ing and writing, so she considered journalism as a possible career.

Ice did a two year journalism diploma and then sought work. She contacted Liny Kruger, a dynamic PR that has been involved in the music industry for a number of years. As fate would have it Liny's assistant had just quit and Ice was offered an internship with Liny.

Ice completed a three month internship and, after it was completed, she was hired the very next day on a full-time basis.

Ice had the opportunity to work with many bands as well as arrange and co-ordinate festivals such as the popular Ramfest.

In 2011 Ice took the plunge and decided to go out on her own. To go out on your own and start your own business you either have to be very brave or very stupid. And let me assure you that Ice is not in the least bit stupid. Quite the opposite in fact.

Since then she has been going from strength to strength and she now promotes a number of bands and artists.

There are a number of reasons why Ice is successful at what she does. First of all, she loves what she does. Secondly she has the most incredible work ethic. She also has an obvious passion for what she does and it comes through when you spend some time with her.

I must say that it came as a bit of a surprise to learn that Ice is actually quite a shy person. She is far more an introvert than an extrovert. Although when you speak to her you would

never guess it in a million years.

In my position as editor of Hipe magazine I get to deal with numerous PR people, media liaison officers, press departments and so on. Often it is a frustrating process. Mainly because so many of them have no idea of how to deal with the media. They make promises that they never keep and often don't even remember making. I am happy to say that Ice Carstens is an exception to this rule.

Currently Ice is hard at work putting the final preparations together for the Rock the River SA Festival at the end of this month. This is the second Rock the River that she has been involved with and, if it's as good as the last one, it's going to be a blast.

And she will have no sooner put Rock the River to bed when she will start working on the 2013 Ramfest in conjunction with Liny Kruger.

In this article I've talked about Ice's hard work ethic, passion for what she does, dedication and professionalism. There is, however, one thing I've neglected to mention. Ice Carstens is also one of the nicest and most genuine people that I've had the pleasure of meeting in a long time.

Artists and musicians often put in a lot of time, effort and dedication to earn their place in the spotlight. And it is often a place well deserved. But don't ever forget those people that have put in just as much hard work to get the artists into the spotlight in the first place. People like Ice Carstens.