

CHUBBY FLY – BIO

Auckland-based rapper Chubby Fly is cut from the same lavish cloth as Hip-Hop superstars like Heavy D, Rick Ross and DJ Khaled. A heavyweight in presence and ambition, Chubby (born Yusuf Sterras) is one of New Zealand's most exciting artists. He's also a self-made entrepreneur, with a thriving business portfolio.

Chubby is a well-known fixture of Aotearoa's rap scene, first as part of Hip-Hop group EMG and from 2018, as a solo act. He's opened for international acts like Nelly, Tha Dogg Pound and Bow Wow and headlined his own independent tour, honing his live presence and growing his loyal fanbase. Chubby's debut EP, *All Praise To The Most Fly*, dropped late last year, with a deluxe version featuring remixes and new tracks releasing June 2020.

Born and raised in Cape Town, South Africa until the age of 12, Chubby's stage name is a nod to triumphing over tragedy.

"Making myself fly wasn't always about being cool, it was a defense mechanism," Chubby says. "As a teenager, I was overweight. I would hide my insecurities behind expensive fashion, like limited edition Air Force 1s that matched one-off BAPE hoodies. Being fly gave me the confidence I needed, and has stuck with me ever since."

Chubby's parents were part of Capetown's booming karaoke scene. He developed an ear for smooth melodies by listening to R&B and soul music, acts like George Benson, Kenny G and The Temptations. Moving to Auckland, Chubby quickly became inspired by local success stories, in particular Dawn Raid Entertainment.

"[Dawn Raid co-founder] Andy Murnane has been instrumental in the establishment of almost every urban act from New Zealand in the last 20 years. I'm very interested in the business side of music, and have been fortunate to have conversations with Andy. He helped me set up my record label, Million Entertainment, and gave me valuable lessons when I started my solo career.

"As an artist, Savage is a rapper I draw a lot of inspiration from. From number one hits to international features and having his music in Hollywood films, he showed that being from here doesn't mean you can't hold your own on the world stage."

In addition to his burgeoning rap career and running his record label, Chubby owns a barbershop and is managing director for a labour hire company. An astute businessman, he completes his daily grind by recording music at his own studio.

“Music motivates me in these tough times,” Chubby says. “When I’m in my studio and the doors are closed, I can escape from what’s going on outside. I have the belief that if I just stay active and work hard, eventually something has to give.”