

Born and raised in Zimbabwe, 19-year-old singer Donel has spent the last few years honing his unique pop vision, seamlessly blending Top 40 and R&B with the sounds he grew up listening to, like Afropop. The world first met Donel in 2018 on *The Voice*, when he won over the judges with his captivating vocals and charming personality. A self-taught dancer, he grooved his way to the finals, stealing hearts across the globe after sharing a dance with his grandmother on stage. That same year, Donel released his first hit, “Bang Like a Drum,” a misty party-starter that quickly garnered over 4 million streams. Soon after he released follow-up “Planets,” his mother suggested he finish school, and for months he kept a grueling schedule, waking up early for driving lessons, and riding a 2-hour evening train to London so he could record at night. Ever since, Donel has spent every second carving out his new sound. His heart-melting voice caught the ears of Walshy Fire and Mr. Eazi, and in 2020, he released the flirty “Wish You Well” on Eazi’s emPawa Africa label. Artistry Records CEO Max Gousse was so blown away by Donel’s talent that he and A&R Monica Payne quickly signed him to their Warner Records venture. On his upcoming EP, *African Boy Pt. I*, we get a taste of what’s to come: basslines that will make you move, drums that’ll loop in your head, and smooth lyrics tailor-made for swooning.

