

Congo Cowboys



By [Martin Myers](#)

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Congo Cowboys is a band formed by Freshlyground members Simon Attwell (banjo), Julio Sigauque (bass) and Congolese lead singer Chris Bakalanga (guitar), together with South African drummer Unity Mzi.

The band presents music that draws on the foot-stomping qualities of bluegrass and country, reimagined through *kwassa kwassa* African rhythms and *soukous* guitar. The Congo meets the Deep South in a gritty exploration of Americana and ol' timey ditties. Banjo and bluesy bass lines from boys in boots.

The band recently launched their EP and I caught up with Attwell post-show.



■ When are you happiest?

When plucking a banjo, some distance from the possibility of traffic, after a double *klippies*.

■ What does music mean to you?

If listening, an opportunity to glimpse paradise. If performing, supper.

■ What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?

Recording new music and, occasionally, fresh sausage rolls backstage.

■ What drives you: ego or humility?

Both. Eggs and hummus for breakfast give you enough energy to be creative all day. Delicious with chilli and black coffee (the drink).

▣ ***Which living person do you admire most and why?***

Hulk Hogan! He made growing up in the '80s too good and formed a rock band called Ruckus!!

▣ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

My Texan cowboy hat.

▣ ***It's your round, what are you drinking?***

Is that an offer? Pint of IPA, please.

▣ ***Dream gig to do?***

Stagecoach Country Music Festival, California.

▣ ***What makes you stand out?***

Got to be the hats! Could be the attitude.



▣ ***What song changed your life?***

“Doo Be Doo”.

▣ ***If you were not a musician, what would you do?***

Drive a big bus with wings – an Airbus that is.

▣ ***Give us some real proper slang and what it means***

“Mushie Sterek” – pretty darn good.

▣ ***Top of your bucket list?***

Land a bush plane on a riverbed in the Zambezi Valley.

▣ ***Pick five words to describe yourself?***

Maybe nicer than you think.



▣ ***What do you complain about most often?***

People who complain often.

▣ ***Happiness is?***

Free apparently.

▣ ***On stage, I tend to?***

Care too much.

▣ ***Do you do charity work and, if you do, what do you do?***

We do at least one charity fundraiser every year.

▣ ***Wishes and dreams?***

A gig with Dolly Parton.

Social media links

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ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

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