



# EDWARD PARSEEN

SAXOPHONIST, BANDLEADER AND FOUNDER OF DIFFERENT FACES BAND

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

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## BASED

Nairobi, Kenya

## FORMED

Nairobi, June 2008

## GENRE

Afro-jazz • Contemporary jazz • Jazz-funk

## BOOKINGS

[differentfaceskenya@gmail.com](mailto:differentfaceskenya@gmail.com)

# Biography

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## SHORT — 55 WORDS

Edward Parseen is a Nairobi-based saxophonist, trumpeter and vocalist, and the bandleader of Different Faces Band. A Kenyatta University-trained musician, he blends contemporary jazz with Afro-jazz, standards and pop-jazz to make music that is sophisticated without ever being distant.

## MEDIUM — 180 WORDS

Edward Parseen is a Nairobi-based saxophonist, trumpeter and vocalist, and the founder and bandleader of Different Faces Band. He took a Bachelor of Music in Performance at Kenyatta University in 2007 and formed the band in June 2008.

Built in Nairobi's clubs and lounges, the group earned a reputation for turning up prepared — and that reputation opened the door. In December 2015 they were selected as curtain-raisers for the Safaricom Jazz Lounge, opening for Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright and Norman Brown. International invitations followed, to Ethiopia's Selam Festival and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, both in 2016. In 2018 the band performed at Safaricom International Jazz Day on a bill headlined by Manu Dibango.

Parseen's playing draws on Hugh Masekela and Manu Dibango, on Miles Davis and John Coltrane, and on the fusion of BWB and Fourplay. His solos favour melody over abstraction, which is why audiences who do not think of themselves as jazz listeners stay until the end.

## FULL

Edward Parseen grew up in Narok County and came to music by way of formal study, earning a Bachelor of Music in Performance from Kenyatta University in 2007. He mastered saxophone and trumpet there, and began performing across Nairobi before he had finished his degree.

In June 2008 he founded Different Faces Band — named for the many faces of jazz the group intended to play, and for the different lives its members brought to the stand. The original trio formed with classmates Zach Amunga and Stanley Kyalo. By 2010 the group had settled around the quartet that still defines its sound.

The band's early years were built in Nairobi's clubs and lounges: residencies, festival support slots, and the slow accumulation of a reputation for turning up prepared. That reputation opened the door. In December 2015 they were selected as curtain-raisers for the Safaricom Jazz Lounge, opening for Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright and Norman Brown.

International invitations followed — Ethiopia's Selam Festival and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, both in 2016. In 2018 the band performed at Safaricom International Jazz Day on a bill headlined by Manu Dibango.

Parseen's playing draws equally on Hugh Masekela and Manu Dibango, on Miles Davis and John Coltrane, and on the fusion of BWB and Fourplay. His solos favour melody over abstraction — 'melodic lines, like in most African songs' — which is precisely why audiences who do not think of themselves as jazz listeners stay until the end.

The band released its debut EP, Breaking Ground, in 2022. Parseen continues to lead Different Faces Band across festivals, corporate stages and private events in Kenya and beyond.

*“Music has the power to unite us. Our job on any given night is to make that obvious.”*

EDWARD PARSEEN

# Different Faces Band

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A collective built on tight grooves and generous solo space. Arrangements are written jointly, and the setlist moves between Afro-jazz originals, standards and reimagined African songbook material.

## LINE-UP

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|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Edward<br>Parseen | Tenor saxophone, trumpet, vocals |
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| Moses<br>Njoroge | Keys, arrangements |
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| Isaac Kimetto | Bass |
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| Shabaan<br>Musyoka | Drums |
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Past and guest members include Zach Amunga, Stanley Kyalo, Etienne Mangala and Dotty Ngao.

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

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|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2007 | <b>Bachelor of Music, Performance</b><br>Graduates from Kenyatta University, having taken up both saxophone and trumpet. |
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| 2008 | <b>Different Faces Band formed</b><br>Founded in Nairobi in June with classmates Zach Amunga and Stanley Kyalo. |
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| 2012 | <b>Jazz Under the Stars</b><br>Performs at Windsor Golf Club alongside Isaiah Katumwa. |
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| 2013 | <b>Storymoja Hay Festival</b><br>Featured at the festival launch with Denise Gordon and James Gogo. |
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| 2014 | <b>International Jazz Day</b><br>Showcase performance at Tree House, Nairobi. |
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| 2015 | <b>Safaricom Jazz Lounge</b><br>Curtain-raiser for Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright and Norman Brown. |
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| 2016 | <b>First international festivals</b><br>Invited to Selam Festival in Ethiopia and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival. |
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| 2018 | <b>Safaricom International Jazz Day</b><br>Performs on a bill headlined by Manu Dibango. |
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2022

Breaking Ground EP

Debut EP released to streaming platforms.

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## Festival & stage appearances

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| 2019 | <b>Safaricom International Jazz Festival</b><br>Marcus Miller bill · Nairobi                     |
| 2018 | <b>Safaricom International Jazz Day</b><br>Headlined by Manu Dibango · Nairobi                   |
| 2016 | <b>Cape Town International Jazz Festival</b><br>Cape Town ICC · South Africa                     |
| 2016 | <b>Selam Festival</b><br>Selam · Addis Ababa, Ethiopia                                           |
| 2015 | <b>Safaricom Jazz Lounge</b><br>Opening for Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright, Norman Brown · Nairobi |
| 2014 | <b>International Jazz Day</b><br>Tree House · Nairobi                                            |
| 2013 | <b>Storymoja Hay Festival</b><br>Festival launch · Nairobi                                       |
| 2012 | <b>Jazz Under the Stars</b><br>Windsor Golf Club, with Isaiah Katumwa · Nairobi                  |

### SHARED STAGES

Kirk Whalum · Manu Dibango · Gerald Albright · Norman Brown · James Ingram · Joe Thomas · Isaiah Katumwa

## Corporate & private performance

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Trusted by festival promoters, corporate planners and private hosts across Kenya. Tell us about the occasion and we will come back to you with a tailored proposal.

CORPORATE GALA

Full ensemble for awards nights, launches and conferences. Set list tuned to the room, from arrival ambience through to the after-party.

- Full ensemble
- 2–3 sets of 45 minutes
- Technical and hospitality rider
- Sound liaison with your AV team

WEDDING CEREMONY

Ceremony, cocktail hour and reception. Solo saxophone for the aisle, quartet through dinner, full band when the floor opens.

- Flexible ensemble size
- Ceremony and reception sets
- First-dance arrangement on request
- Coordination with your planner

FESTIVAL & CLUB

Originals from Breaking Ground alongside Afro-jazz reworkings, built for a main stage and a listening crowd.

- Full ensemble
- 60–90 minute festival set
- Technical rider and stage plot
- Press and promo assets

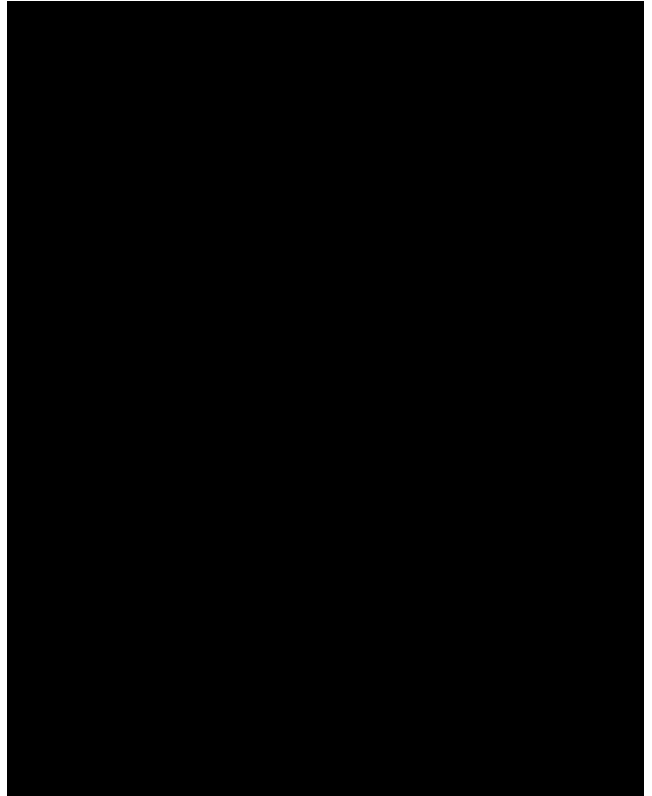
# Photography

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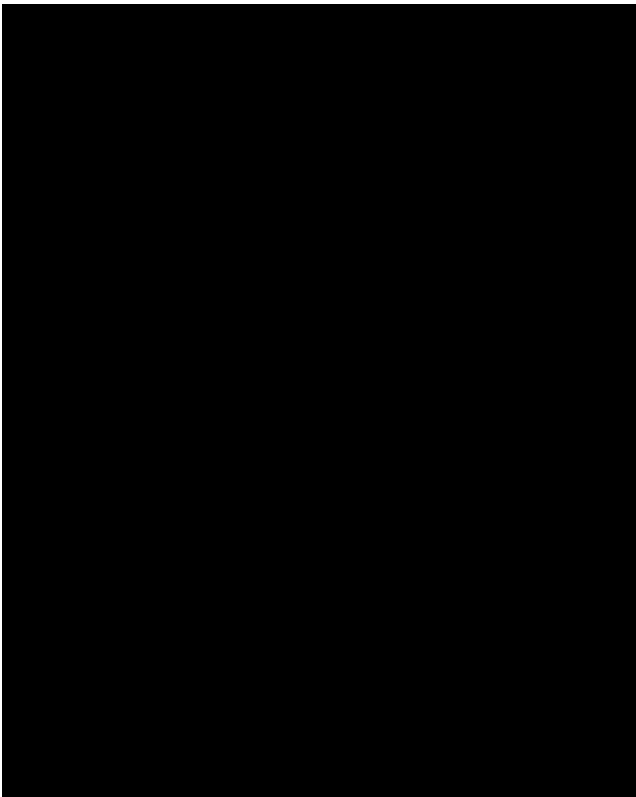
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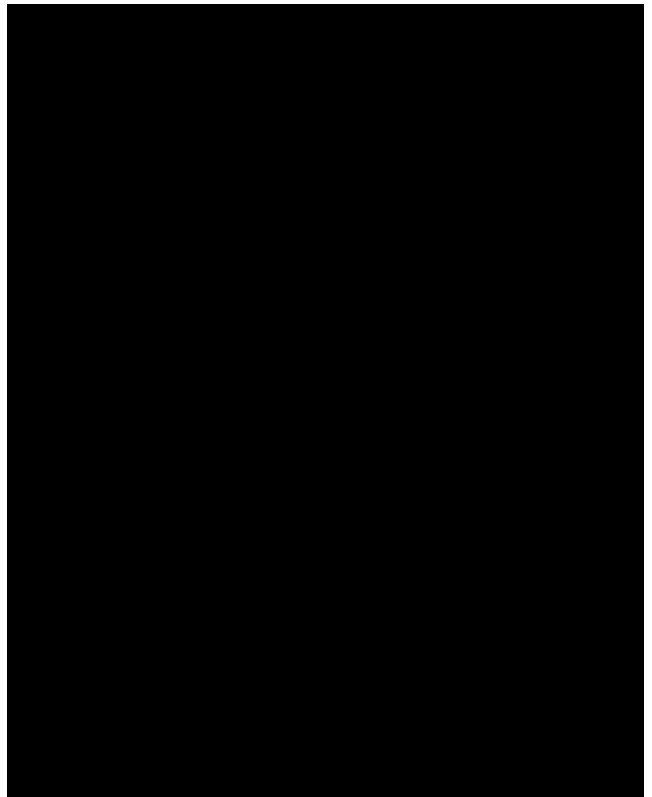
Edward Parseen, editorial portrait



Edward Parseen in the studio



Safaricom International Jazz Festival



Different Faces Band in performance

# Music

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BREAKING GROUND — EP, 2022

Years of live material distilled into a studio session — Afro-jazz originals built around a groove and a melody you can carry home.

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| 01 | <b>Funkie — 3:52</b><br>The tightest groove here, and the one that moves least. Bass and drums lock to a single level and hold it for the better part of four minutes while the horn works over the top — built for the hour when the room has stopped sitting down. |
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| 02 | <b>Loresho Rise — 4:05</b><br>Named for the Nairobi ridge. The widest dynamic range of the set: it opens low and unhurried, gathers through the middle, and leaves the band more room to build and recede than anything else on the record. |
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| 03 | <b>Reke Tumanwo — 3:48</b><br>The fullest sound of the four — the whole ensemble present at once, weighted low and warm, with the saxophone carrying the melody outright rather than decorating what the rhythm section is doing. |
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| 04 | <b>Sunshine — 3:39</b><br>The brightest balance of the four: lighter underneath, with the saxophone sitting well forward. The nearest thing here to a standard, and the easiest way into what this band does. |
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## LISTEN

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| YOUTUBE | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@parseen">https://www.youtube.com/@parseen</a> |
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| SOUNDCLOUD | <a href="https://soundcloud.com/edward-parseen">https://soundcloud.com/edward-parseen</a> |
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| APPLE MUSIC | <a href="https://music.apple.com/ke/artist/edward-parseen/1650375381">https://music.apple.com/ke/artist/edward-parseen/1650375381</a> |
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# Technical

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Technical Rider available upon request.

# Booking & contact

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| Brand | Parseen Music |
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| Artist | Edward Parseen |
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| Ensemble | Different Faces Band |
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Phone                   +254 723 815913

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Based                   Nairobi, Kenya

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Availability           Available worldwide

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Web                    parseenmusic.com

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*To uplift and unite audiences through world-class jazz that celebrates our African heritage.*