



BIRTHDAY GIRL: Sheree O'Brien blows out her birthday candle with the help of her son, Taylor

# Party fit for a queen

## O'Brien celebrates 30th at glamorous do

By SHANAAZ PRINCE

**E**AST London's queen of house music, Sheree O'Brien, came out in true red carpet fashion for her 30th birthday bash.

Close family and friends on Saturday joined O'Brien on the red carpet at the Buffalo Park presidential suite for a night of fancy dress and a whole lot of dancing.

Entertainers Mario Ogle, Mad-Fingers and DJ Giggs Superstar were among those in attendance.

Saturday's celebration was more than just an average birthday party – it was also an opportunity for those close to O'Brien to pay tribute to her hard work. She is not only the chief executive of Splakavellis Artist Management, but also a full-time mother to her and DJ Giggs Superstar's two-and-a-half-year-old son, Taylor.

"I cannot explain how blessed I feel to have so many loved ones, family and friends join me in celebrating my life. Some travelled from afar and sacrificed a lot to be here," she said.

"Hearing how proud my family are of me not just for the success in my career, but of me as a person really made me feel special and appreciated. Having Giggs Superstar, Ogle and Mad-Fingers performing live was also a huge highlight. They are far too underrated in South Africa."

In paying tribute to O'Brien, her loved ones played video playbacks as part of the birthday celebrations. Also, there were best wishes from the likes of J Something of Micasa, Ricardo da Costa, R J Benjamin, Lelethu Nkula and Lerato Kganyago of SABC1's *The Link*.

"The video clips were a surprise, and it touched me to see they [friends] love me enough to take the time to put something like that together for me," O'Brien said.

The entertainment bug first bit when she was a dancer for Mr Shakes and the Groove Masters. Instead of following her parents' wishes and studying towards a human resources qualification after matriculating, O'Brien pursued her own dreams. Though she did not fulfil their wish, her parents remain supportive of her chosen path.

After establishing herself as a talent manager, O'Brien was head-hunted by independent dance label Soul Candi Records, where she became a marketing manager. Not long after landing that post, she was given the reins of her own label, the Soul Candi Records artist development label.

Since then, O'Brien has helped shape the careers of artists such as the late DJ Brett Jackson, DJs Mbuso, Claude and China, Relo of Skwatta Kamp, Jub Jub, Pebbles and Noxolo Hlatshwayo. She currently manages Giggs Super-



CENTRE OF ATTENTION: House music entrepreneur Sheree O'Brien, right, enjoyed a great night out with her loving family, from left, sister Sherita, mother Shereen, brother Julian and father Victor (seated)

star and Benjamin. But that's not all, O'Brien also showed a flair for producing after being an executive producer and co-compiler of DJ Giggs Superstar's first solo project, *Sounds of a Superstar*, in 2009.

She did it again on his 2010 hit album *Deep House Chronicles 4: Sounds of a Superstar* and his latest offering *Sounds of a Superstar Vol 3*.

After enjoying some good food, old-school music by DJ Monty and blowing the birthday candle, O'Brien's night of celebration moved to Italianissimo for some after-party dancing.

Ogle, Mad-Fingers and Giggs Superstar performed some of their hits, celebrating into the early hours of the morning. In true O'Brien fashion, the night could not have ended without showcasing some upcoming talent – she introduced Mdantsane local Lush, who also performed.

On her future plans, she said: "Currently I'm busy with rounding up Benjamin's *Clash of the Choirs* show and I've just recently signed him onto *Idols* season 9."

"Soon I'll be pushing Giggs Superstar's new album and probably a new single he recorded with Ogle and Mad-Fingers. I am also co-writing Benjamin's autobiography, which we are aiming to release [next year]. I am also [determined to engage] the arts and culture department in the [province] to [develop] our local talent, as that needs to be done." — shanaazp@dispatch.co.za

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