

# SWEET + SOUR

VOL.2

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HARDWELL

MARTIN JENSEN

ANFISA LETYAGO

LOST FREQUENCIES

ÖWNBOSSE & SELVA

AVAION

DARUDE

FERRY CORSTEN

5 DAY FORECAST

ARMIN VAN BUUREN

INNA

NINA KRAVITZ

GIANCA

AND MORE

DANCE MUSIC IS

# WILD

# RIGHT NOW

## FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR DJs

GROOVE ARCHITECT: ALEX GAUDINO

THE TOP 5  
GLOBAL MUSIC FESTIVALS OF 2023

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH **Hardwell**





# EDITOR'S NOTE

SWEET N SOUR MAGAZINE  
VOL.2

Dear Dancefloor Denizens,

As the pulses of electronic beats reverberate across the globe, the world of electronic music continues to expand, encompassing new sounds, novel trends, and unique voices that echo in the hearts of every enthusiast. At SweetNSour Magazine, we are delighted to present yet another issue that champions the essence of this dynamic world.

**Meet the Dancefloor Dreamer.** That enigmatic spirit that finds solace in the thumping beats and swirling lights, the individual who sees not just a crowd, but a community; a collective conscious moving in unison. This edition aims to delve into the psyche of this dreamer, understanding the passions and motivations that drive them to the dancefloor, night after night.

Our segment, '**Know Your Music Maker**', peels back the layers of the industry, offering a rare glimpse into the minds of the creators behind the decks and studios. It's an intimate journey into the realm of these sonic architects, understanding their inspirations, challenges, and the magic they conjure with every track.

I must express my immense gratitude to our hard-working team, especially *Angelika David*, our steadfast Head of Publicity, and *Carla Dengiz*, our brilliant Lead Writer and Editor. Their dedication and zeal have been the driving force behind this magazine's continued success.

**Special accolades are due to Raffi Keuhnelian and Anto Dotcom of MPT Agency.** Their unwavering belief in the "dream of dancefloor astronauts" has been a cornerstone of our journey. Their support and commitment have not only fortified our mission but have also amplified the voice of *SweetNSour Magazine – truly the resonant voice of electronic music.*

As you flip through these pages, remember that each article, interview, and feature is a testament to the love and labor of countless individuals, all united by the rhythm of electronic music. We hope our stories inspire, inform, and instill in you the same fervor for electronic music that we hold dear.

Stay electrified,

*Arty Cohen*

Chief Editor

SWEET N SOUR MAGAZINE



EDITOR'S NOTE
TABLE OF CONTENTS
THE TOP 5 GLOBAL MUSIC FESTIVALS OF 2023
ADVERTISING
INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN JENSEN
KASKADE EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
INTERVIEW WITH AVAION
INTERVIEW WITH ANFISA LETYAGO
Q&A WITH HARDWELL
ADVERTISING
MOOG SYNTHESIZER
Q&A WITH ÖWNBOSSE AND SELVA
GRIFF GALEXXZEE EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
PEGGY GOU EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
ADVERTISING
INTERVIEW WITH LOST FREQUENCIES
ARMADA LABEL'S EVOLUTION AND ENDURING LEGACY IN DANCE MUSIC
Q&A WITH RIDLEY BRONSON
Q&A WITH ALEX GAUDINO
THE FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR DJs
THE FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR ARTISTS
MAU5TRAP EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
Q&A WITH NU ASPECT
NINA KRAVITZ EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
ADVERTISING
Q&A WITH DARUDE
Q&A WITH FERRY CORSTEN
HARDWELL EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
GIANCA EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
Q&A WITH INNA
Q&A WITH RESTRICTED
Q&A WITH ARMIN VAN BUUREN
5 DAY FORECAST EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
LEE FOSS EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE
THE WORLD OF TECHNO MUSIC



**THE TOP 5  
GLOBAL MUSIC FESTIVALS OF  
2023**

**A JOURNEY  
THROUGH SOUND AND SENSATION**





### 1. EDC LAS VEGAS, USA - THE FANS AGREE AN EXTRA DAY MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

The sun dips below the horizon and darkness envelops the vast Nevada desert, the Electric Daisy Carnival in Las Vegas begins its luminous transformation.

**This isn't just a festival – it's a dreamscape.** In 2023, EDC not only offered a vast line-up of the globe's best electronic maestros but created an otherworldly universe of visual wonders. Picture this: a myriad of carnival rides spinning amidst a sea of neon, their lights reflecting in the awestruck eyes of attendees, all while heart-pounding beats serve as the pulsating heartbeat of this nocturnal extravaganza.

As the Electric Daisy Carnival welcomed eager attendees, the atmosphere resembled kids unwrapping Christmas gifts, with grand pyrotechnics tinting the sky in brilliant hues. The diverse crowd resembled a vibrant finger painting, bringing color and life to the festival. Among the sensory delights were the Pixel Forest and marriage ceremonies at the Chapel of Technology. Meanwhile, a pregnant Allison Wonderland took to the stage, and the festival pulsed to the beats of world-renowned DJs, making it an unforgettable musical buffet.

#### TOP 5 PERFORMANCES:

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. Tiësto     | 4. Alison Wonderland |
| 2. Marshmello | 5. Black Tiger Sex   |
| 3. Subtronics | Machine              |



### 2. TOMORROWLAND, BELGIUM, STILL THE BEST VISUALS IN FESTIVAL MAKING

Back in the early 2000s, I was a dancer lost in the euphoria of underground raves. Those were days of innocence, where neon lights and echoey beats wrapped around us like a warm blanket on cold nights. Dancing was not just movement, but an expression, a way to communicate without words, amidst the golden glow of dim rooms and the soft hum of vinyl records.

Fast-forward two decades, and the world has evolved, but the essence remains the same. Tomorrowland has emerged as a beacon of hope for souls like mine. Learning that it was voted the **World's No. 1 Festival in DJ Mag's Top 100 Festivals poll of 2023 brought a nostalgic smile to my face.**

This year's Adscendo event felt like a homecoming. A family reunion of 400,000 kindred spirits, all swaying to the harmonious tunes of over 750 artists. The 16 brilliantly crafted stages shone like constellations in the Tomorrowland universe.

Tomorrowland was no ordinary festival; it was an experience, a warm embrace for every wandering soul. Manu and Michiel Beers echoed this sentiment in their heartfelt words, painting Tomorrowland as a vivid dream turned reality, powered by a community bound by music and love. As I look forward to the 20th-anniversary and the magic of Brazil, I feel the excitement of those early days once again. Here's to more nights of radiant memories and warm beats.



### 3. COACHELLA VALLEY MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL, USA

Amidst the sand-kissed landscapes of California, the Coachella Valley becomes an oasis of sound and color every spring. Coachella 2023 was no mere festival; it was a symphony of experiences. Attendees, with golden desert dust on their boots, danced beneath the watchful eyes of colossal art installations that dotted the festival grounds. As the sun painted the skies with hues of crimson and amber, the air was thick with melodies from genres diverse, catering to every auditory palate. From indie whispers to electronic roars, Coachella was a harmonious cacophony.

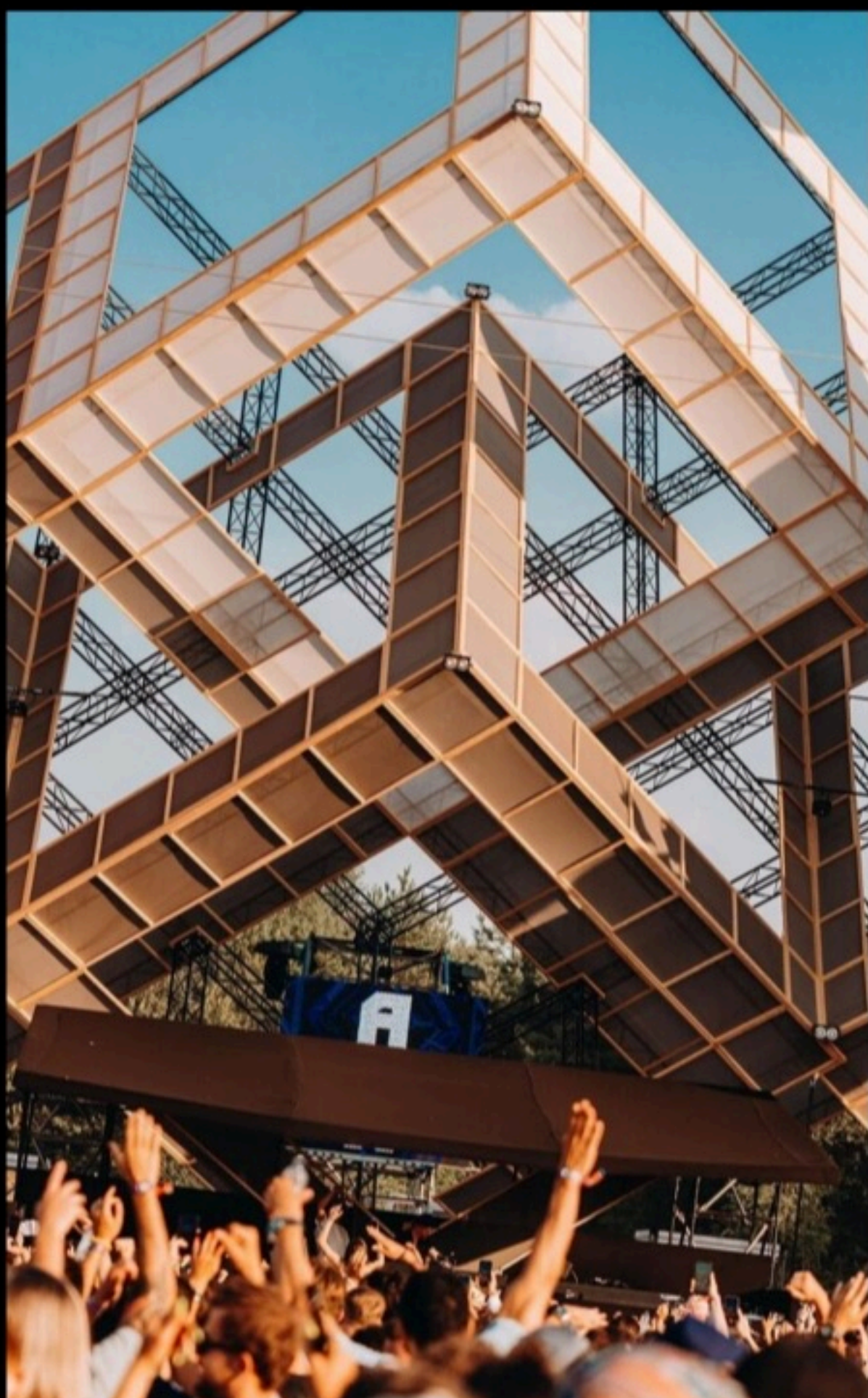
Well, folks, let me weave you a tale of a desert turned into a technicolored dreamscape, **a land where the air is dense with beats and the sands dance to the rhythm of the bass—yes, I'm talking about the utopia of sound waves and color palettes, Coachella 2023!** A space where iconic punk rock sensations like Blink-182 reunite to strum the strings of nostalgia, and where eclectic artists such as Billie Eilish and Labrinth create symphonies that resonate with the soul.

Oh, and did I mention the impromptu duets and eclectic collaborations? Imagine Metro Boomin' sharing his sonic canvas with stars like The Weeknd and John Legend, painting the auditory space with a fusion of harmonies, or the delightful mishmash of genres with Becky G and Natti Natasha adding spice to the sonic concoction! It was a place where artists like Debbie Harry became luminous entities, reflecting not just light but also the multifaceted nature of art itself, and where giant installations whispered secrets of color and form to those who listened.

In this musical kaleidoscope, Rosalía and her troop of helmeted dancers were like visual poets narrating tales in motion, and Björk in her spiky attire was the embodiment of avant-garde elegance. Let's not forget, Coachella is where the unexpected is the norm; where Calvin Harris and Ellie Goulding rile up the crowd with their harmonious surprises, and where the fusion of genres creates a new musical dialect understood by all.

Here, every beat is a pulse of diverse cultures and every tune, a thread weaving through the fabric of global community. So, dive deep into the visual odyssey of Coachella 2023, for it was not just a festival, it was a symphonic canvas where art and humanity painted in tunes and hues, telling tales of unity in diversity, creating a masterpiece to be remembered.





#### 4. AWAKENINGS | HILVARENBEEK, NETHERLANDS

Stepping into Awakenings Festival 2023 was akin to stepping into a realm where techno beats merged with a kaleidoscope of visuals, creating a symphony of experiences for the senses. The festival, revered as a techno holiday, unspooled its magic in the quaint town of Hilvarenbeek, featuring stunning lakes and whimsical woods, enhancing the enigmatic vibes. This year, the festival's dedication to the underground vibe was palpable, with each stage pulsating with the energy of techno gods and goddesses like ANNA and Ben Böhmer, their music weaving through the air, creating electrifying rhythms that resonated with the soul. The visual enchantment was undeniable, with stages like Area W illuminating the sky with fireworks, and Area Y enveloping the crowd in a symphony of lasers. However, a noticeable shift in the crowd's dynamics hinted at the evolution of Awakenings; the seasoned festival veterans could sense a departure from the intimate, underground vibes of yesteryears, a subtle reminder of the changing tides of the electronic music landscape.

Yet, Awakenings wasn't just a mesmerizing blend of sound and visuals; it was a canvas painted with commitment to sustainability, diversity, and accessibility. The festival was a vegetarian haven, with each bite echoing Awakenings' dedication to ecological balance.

The Social Safety Hub and Low Stimulus Space were sanctuaries within the festival, whispering tales of inclusivity and care, ensuring every attendee felt the embrace of the Awakenings family. The festival's spirit was imbued with a sense of unity, with each stage, each beat, and each visual element echoing the diverse, vibrant tapestry of the global techno scene. Although the festival had to curtain its magic prematurely due to the whims of the weather gods, the essence of Awakenings—its symphony of underground vibes, its dance of lights, and its whisper of inclusivity—lingered in the air, a reminder of the transformative power of music and art. As the echoes of the festival fade, the anticipation for the next edition dances in the air, whispering promises of more enchanting nights under the techno sky.



#### 5. ULTRA MUSIC FESTIVAL, USA

Miami, a city known for its vibrant nightlife and sun-kissed beaches, plays host to Ultra – the electronic titan of festivals. In 2023, as beats echoed off the shimmering waters of Biscayne Bay, the Miami skyline played the perfect backdrop to a festival pushing boundaries. Beyond the hypnotic lasers and mind-bending stage setups, Ultra made a poignant statement this year about its commitment to the planet. With every bass drop and synchronized light show, attendees were reminded that true celebration acknowledges its responsibility to the world it revels in.

In the electrifying soul of Miami, Ultra Music Festival unfolds as a symphonic oasis of sound and color, a fusion of wild liberation and sophisticated allure. It's more than a festival; it's a journey through diverse sonic landscapes, a dance between structured brilliance and spontaneous ecstasy.

Here, each beat reverberates with the city's heartbeat, and each light is a beacon in this vivid symphony of experiences, a balance between the meticulous and the untamed. It's where commercial magnificence and raw, unbridled energy coalesce, creating harmonious contrasts, resonating with the human spirit's intrinsic rhythms.

Miami, with its radiant charm, conducts this harmonious dance of US rave freedom, a convergence of the high life and unbound revelry, making Ultra a transcendent exploration, a place where the soul dances freely in the boundless realms of musical euphoria.







**ICELANDIC SUPERIOR BLENDED WHISKEY  
AGED 12 YEARS**

WAX SEALED EXTRA FINE LIMITED BATCH





**SPENDING  
A LOT  
MORE  
TIME** IN THE  
STUDIO  
IS MY  
PRIORITY.





WRITTEN BY  
DILLON DIATLO

M

artin Jensen is a force to be reckoned with. The Danish, multi-platinum DJ and record producer has been enchanting audiences worldwide – most recently with his performance at Tomorrowland. Leaving a lasting impression, Jensen described Tomorrowland as “one of those events that, as an artist, I just can’t wait to return to.” And after bringing a mixture of styles, insane mash-ups, and audience exclusives to the stage, one can only hope “return to” Tomorrowland Jensen does. Martin Jensen’s journey as an artist has been nothing short of remarkable. Since his first single, “Sí,” which drew inspiration from Cristiano Ronaldo’s celebration at the 2014 FIFA Ballon d’Or, Jensen describes himself as having gone through both personal and musical changes.

Reflecting, he shared, “I’ve allowed myself to explore a lot more of a deeper, tech sound.” This openness to exploration may be just the thing fueling the buzz around his recent audio-visual concept, “The Ordinary Mix Vol. 3 - Martin Jensen.” This project invites fans into Jensen’s world and showcases the beauty of Denmark. “Volume 3 that is out now,” Jensen explains, “is an exploration aboard the Molslinjen, the fastest vessel in the [Denmark] region, that I merged with some of the biggest tech house tracks of the moment.” As the music festival season gains momentum, Jensen continues to delight fans with his electrifying performances. And while he expressed his excitement about returning to the stage in the Autumn season, he made sure to qualify his excitement with some exclusive insider info. “I’m spending a lot more time in the studio, which is my priority.”

In addition to his musical journey, Martin Jensen’s experience as a former X Factor judge offered unique insights into the man behind the music. He described the challenges and rewards of the role, saying, “it was a lot more difficult than it looks.” One of the biggest shows both globally and within Denmark, Martin explained that while he enjoyed his time on the show he believes “people don’t realize how much goes into the show behind the scenes.” In the ever-evolving music scene, Jensen positions himself as an artist unafraid to take risks. Confident in his beliefs and the music he wants to make, there is no doubt Martin Jensen will continue to make waves and prove he’s a Danish dynamo bringing the beat to the world.



# KASKADE

## REDUX 006

For most tuned into the EDM world, Kaskade is an artist who needs no introduction. Active since 1995, Ryan Gary Raddon, better known by his stage name Kaskade, is an American DJ, music producer, remixer and innovator. Named number one DJ by both the DJ Times, and Pioneer DJ, Kaskade has so far released ten studio albums (eleven including Kaskade Christmas), scored nine Top 10 hits on Billboard's Hot Dance Airplay Chart, and received seven Grammy nominations as a result. He has also appeared at every major summer festival, and has performed between 150, and 200 headlining shows a year for over ten years. Through his work, he has managed to drum up an impressive list of equally impressive musical collaborations, proving himself to be one of the most successful Progressive House DJs in North America.

Alongside his regular studio recordings, Kaskade has also spent over a decade working on his REDUX brand. Wanting to offset the bigger, more theatrical EDM shows being put on and played at the time of its inception, Kaskade's fan-favorite REDUX is a slightly lesser known, house-inclined musical event. According to the artist, the ongoing project aims to focus on the balance between melodic and dynamic house music, and brings along corresponding EPs, all of which is meant to evoke quieter sounds, and a slightly more subdued, and intimate atmosphere. Now, finally, after a two-year wait, Kaskade is back with REDUX 006; arguably one of his best EP offerings to date with seven entrancing tracks for eager EDM audiophiles to thoroughly enjoy.

Kicking off this sixth installment is 'Brighter', a collaboration with Emmit Fenn that includes haunting vocals, dramatic flair, goosebump-inducing synths, and a slow-burning energy for a perfect introduction; setting the stage for the remainder of the EP as REDUX 006 proceeds to take its audiophiles on a trip through multiple EDM genres, all of which exemplify and solidify the sound designer's music production mastery.

Next up is "Save Me," a four-minute long collaboration with English producer Lauren L'aimant that comes together with calm yet catchy beats, an airy, mystical energy, mesmerizing dulcet vocals and swirling synths that expertly leads listeners up to the clouds and sets them up for more easy listening.





ARTICLE WRITTEN BY

**Gabrielle Cormier**

## 06 EP

Sitting at number three on the EP; "About Us," doesn't credit its female vocalist, but nonetheless does a phenomenal job following-up on, "Save Me," by bringing in bouncy basslines, and an entrancing topline that engages and demonstrates Kaskade's signature deep house grooves with some UK garage-inspired melodies mixed in.

"Meaning of Love," is a six-minute-long collaboration with duo Digital Youth that sits at the EP's halfway mark. Taking a slightly different turn, it weaves lo-fi melodies, airy soundscapes, along with synths and sensations for a loungey experience some fans might favorably compare to Heatbeat's 2012 Armada Nights Latin America.

Coming in at number five is, "It's Gone," a collaboration with Crayskool, and a more upbeat track that brings along with it, exuberant melodies, consistent basslines, and ambient synths that lead to both a strong finish, and track number six, accurately titled "Turn You Up" featuring Winn Winn. Clocking in at 3:49 minutes, the track masterfully incorporates sultry, spoken-word vocals over Kaskade's deep production style for a winning club mix most fans are sure to thoroughly appreciate; warming things up for what could perhaps be the EP's most crowd-pleasing record, "On My Way," which features a deep, driving bassline, a cinematic crescendo, and plenty of groovy beats that do a great job of looping the EP back around to; "Brighter," for a repeat, if not countless more, listening experience.

It's been over a decade since REDUX's inception but Kaskade has yet to lose his step; hitting the mark with REDUX 006, and continuing to set the standard for reputable house music everywhere.

This new iteration goes at lengths to keep demonstrating how the award-winning sound designer and DJ is not about to stop heating up dancefloors across the globe anytime soon, which is sure to please both tried-and-true fans of the long-standing artist and series, and draw in listeners looking for a fresh spin on long-lasting favorite.



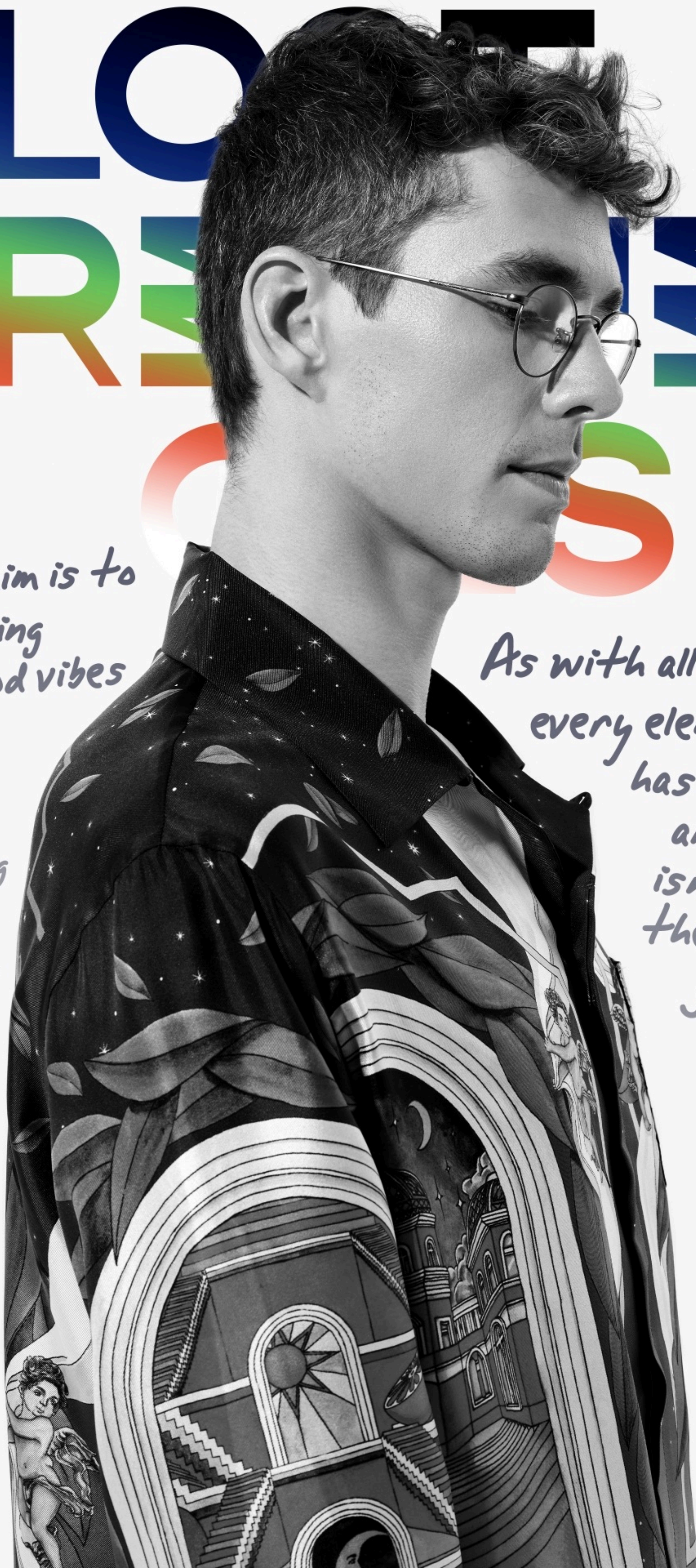


# LOVE FREEDOM SIN

*My main aim is to  
always bring  
feel-good vibes*

*I do and  
hopefully  
to everything  
people  
connect  
with it!*

*As with all of my songs,  
every element  
has its own place  
and  
isn't  
there  
just because  
it can be.*







**W**hat was it like performing at Tomorrowland? Are there any upcoming festivals that you're eagerly looking forward to?

*Tomorrowland is always a combination of the biggest event of the year, but also something of a homecoming for me, being a Belgian artist. I've been super close to the Tomorrowland team and playing the event for many years now, from the mainstage over to hosting my own 'Lost Frequencies & Friends' arena, every year gets bigger and better with more surprises!*

You also surprised your fans by sharing the stage with Orelsan and adding your distinctive style into "Jour Meilleur." What do you have to say about that exciting experience? Can we maybe expect new collaborations in the future?

*I'm a big fan of his music and when I found out we were playing the same event in France recently, I knew I wanted to connect with him in some way. I messaged his producer through his DM's and asked if I could make a special remix of his for the show, we chatted and I made my edit of 'Jour Meilleur' that we also managed to perform on stage together! I wanted my edit to be a little more club and party-ready, rather than something more commercial, just to bring it a bit more into my world as a producer. It was an amazing moment!*

"Are You with Me," "Reality," ft. Janieck Devy, and "Where Are You Now" with Calum Scott have undoubtedly been some of your most significant hits. What do you believe made these releases connect so strongly with the audience and set them apart from your other singles?

*Well, if you look at when those were released, the three releases you mentioned aren't condensed in one certain time together, they are all across my career, which I hope shows I'm still on the right track,*

*haha! The fans are also so amazing and I wouldn't be here without their support, that's for sure, so whilst I don't think there is one magic formula for a "successful" release, I like the idea of the audience connecting through something they hear or feel in my songs. From vulnerabilities, to emotions or even just a story that intrigues them, connection through music is something we can all access and relate to.*

Your latest track, "The Feeling," blends country-infused and electronic elements. What inspired this unique fusion of genres, and how does it showcase a new side of your sound?

*I have always said that my music is something that belongs almost in this mixture of "indie-dance", sometimes I can lean into one side of that, such as other genres not strictly in dance music, other times I can fully take the route of the rave or the club. On 'The Feeling', I wanted to showcase a fresh take on those genres but show a more laid-back house side to it. My new single 'Dive' follows a similar path but I think is the perfect song to close out summer with a key-heavy melody and a sunshine house sound!*

Tell us about the music video for "The Feeling." How did you come up with the narrative and contribute to the visual storytelling process?

*My team and I wanted to create a visual that aligned with the song's country tones but with pastel, summer hues and then following the journey of my cowboy hat as a visual story. I particularly liked the diverse and varied images of individuals representing their different cultures, in different cities, that was presented in this almost hazy, vintage-looking, film camera style to really make it original. It is a story of how our feelings can transport us anywhere.*

The single incorporates percussive interjections, a standout guitar line, and entrancing chords. Can you take us through your approach in

integrating these elements into the song and explain how they enhance the overall vibe?

*As with all of my songs, every element has its own place and isn't there just because it can be.*

*The guitar line I wanted to take center stage and the percussion adds another depth of element to the production, alongside this. Every element I wanted to shine on its own but also work in tandem, to really make the track flow as a whole release that hopefully my fans will enjoy!*

With "The Feeling," you mentioned your ability to transport listeners to a place of sunshine and good times. How do you consistently achieve a sense of escapism through your music?

*I try to create that feeling but ultimately, it is up to the listener how they want to receive it. Some of my fans may use 'The Feeling' for those feelings of escapism, others may feel a sense of relating to the track's message and others might get lost in the journey of the music.*

*My main aim is to always bring feel-good vibes I do and hopefully to everything people connect with it!*

*That is also what I'm trying to create not only on my new single 'Dive' but also across my new album that I'm putting my final touches to right now. It will show a full spectrum of the Lost Frequencies sound across a range of genres, but my hope is that it brings my audience together in however they find meaning through my music.*



# Avaion

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## I HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF A TOXIC RELATIONSHIP

where the other person was struggling to show their true emotions then I was struggling to show mine, and ultimately, we were hiding from our feelings.

If we'd both had more open communication then things would be easier, I guess.

## WHAT'S YOUR VISION FOR THE AVAION NAME OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

I think to reach as many people as possible and make it as big as possible. When I release my album, I should have enough songs to release a show of all my own songs and I want to do live shows. This makes me so happy just thinking of it. I hope the album will be finished soon so I can drop it next year and a new chapter will start.





***We're glad to have you with us again AVAION!***

***First of all, in this moment you are a few days out from your impromptu pop-up show where you rented out a local store with fellow DJ/producer BUNT and hosted your own party. How did this go down & where did the idea come from?***

We both hosted our own parties before, me in my hometown and BUNT in his hometown of Hamburg. We connected at a festival, became good friends and thought why don't we throw a party like this together. He had the idea of renting a small 24-hour convenience store for a super small space that fits around 30 to 40 people. We posted it on our Instagram stories and TikTok accounts telling people what we were doing, inviting them down for a free party with free food and drinks as well. A lot of people turned up and we could only let in around 30 people at a time as it was really hot and at full capacity. So, every 30 minutes, we swapped the crowds over to allow people waiting outside to come in and have a shot. We played lots of new music, classic tracks and just had a lot of fun. This full pop-up party was recorded so it will be out on YouTube soon.

***"Hiding" presents a more stripped-back approach compared to your previous productions. How did you decide to take this direction for the song, and how do you feel it enhances the emotional connection between you and your audience?***

I think the production on 'Hiding' and the whole concept of the song was a bit different than my usual sound. It was more like a ballad. More melancholic and more vibey with the vocals. I just felt it on that day, I was sitting there, playing the chords thinking to myself, I could make this more of an EDM track, or I could go down a kind of pop-ballad with a dark vibe and I went with the latter. I sent it to my A&R and he was like "yeah that's something special," so I kept working on the song, added in the drum pads so it's still a little bit dancey.

I'm really happy with the final song.



## **In "Hiding," you mention processing the escape from feelings and inner struggles.**

**Could you delve deeper into the journey that inspired the lyrics and how you channeled those emotions into the music's composition and production?**

All of my songs are stories or experiences that I've been through myself. I had the experience of a toxic relationship where the other person was struggling to show their true emotions then I was struggling to show mine, and ultimately, we were hiding from our feelings. If we'd both had more open communication then things would be easier, I guess. There's something in this new era of time, where people think that showing your full emotions is a bad thing or a weakness, and I just wanted to put this into a song and remind people that it's okay to go through times of feeling really down and talk openly about it with the people around you.

***TikTok and Instagram Reels have greatly boosted your music's visibility. How do you effectively use these platforms to connect with your audience and craft content that helps your musical narrative?***

It's super powerful. Especially in the modern music industry. I'm not the kind of TikTok music guy who posts two or three times a day about songs, or posts dancing videos, but I understand that it has a lot of affection and a lot of

power in the scene. I try to keep it as cool as possible in the videos and stay authentic in the content that I post.

I know it's affected my music a lot, especially 'Pieces' because when that song went super viral it was also with Instagram reels and TikTok.

With a lot of people using the song it reached a lot of new listeners. I try to take social media content into my routine as an artist.

I produce, I write songs, I sing, and I also promote it with my video content. It can be a lot of fun if you get creative with it.

***With your diverse fanbase, how does it feel to know that your songs transcend cultural and geographical boundaries, connecting with people from different parts of the world?***

It's the most beautiful thing. I'm so grateful that my music has travelled around the globe and that I have so many people writing to me from different parts of the world telling me that my songs are helping them through a difficult time. For me, it's the most beautiful thing to experience.

***As a multi-instrumentalist, you infuse self-played elements into your tracks. How do these additions elevate your creative expression, and could you share a favorite instrument that imparts a distinctive touch to your compositions?***

As an artist I think it's always great to get as many skills into the composition as it raises the confidence you feel when you bring out the song because you gave 100%. I always want to give my all when I release a song.

Also, the analogue and instrumental parts are a big part of this. I have some synthesizers, where you can tweak and warp to make different sounds and record straight into the project - I use them a lot. In the studio where I live, in the basement, we have a super nice grand piano sitting in the middle of the hall and sometimes I go down there and record some chords for a song.

I also have this recorder, it looks like a handy recorder, you can keep it in your hand and record atmospheric stuff like street noise, people's voices around you, anything, and you can sample them and out them in your song. I do this a lot. I try to include as many different parts of my life as possible in my soundscapes.

***Your music boasts remarkable streaming figures and international chart success. Could you pinpoint a specific career moment or turning point that you think contributed to your widespread acclaim?***

I would say the biggest turning point was when I quit my 'normal job.' When I released 'Pieces' and had my first platinum award, I still had a full-time job working day and night shifts, it was a pretty exhausting job. I would always be so excited to talk about my music and I'd say that one day I was going to quit and become a musician and some people were like 'yeah, yeah... sure.' Then, the day came. I went to the boss' office, and they saw me walking in and were like 'is today the day? On that day AVAION was fully born because since then it has allowed me to become AVAION the artist 24/7.



# 20 YEARS STRONG

One of the largest independent powerhouses in the world of electronic music, Armada Music, emerges as a celestial force transcending time and space over two resounding decades.

Established by luminaries Armin van Buuren, Maykel Piron, and David Lewis, this Dutch record label stands as the foremost global entity in the genre, cultivating an extensive catalog boasting over 40,000 tracks, reflecting its relentless commitment to excellence.

Representing a constellation of talent, Armada Music shines with artists such as



ARTY



LOUD LUXURY

MORGAN PAGE

each a pioneer in their own right, revolutionizing the scene with their unparalleled vision and approach.



Armin van Buuren needs no introduction as he has intricately threaded his sonic legacy into the fabric of dance music history. His Grammy-nominated track "This Is What It Feels Like" and a lineage of chart-toppers emphasize his steadfast devotion to creativity, solidifying his position as a guiding light within the Armada universe.



LOUD LUXURY

Loud Luxury, the dynamic duo of Andrew Fedyk and Joe De Pace, embarked on an extraordinary journey following their smash hit "Body." With platinum-selling acclaim and anthem tracks, their meteoric rise in the dance music scene illuminates the vigor and vibrancy they infuse into every beat.



ARTY

ARTY, an enigmatic figure, continues to bewitch the dance community with his electrifying performances and remixes that pulse through the veins of festivals like Ultra, Tomorrowland, and Creamfields. His prolific beats and collaborations with industry stalwarts, cement him as an artist of exceptional consistency and resonance.



MORGAN PAGE

Morgan Page, a groundbreaking influence in electronic music, delves into the genre with a trail of festival favorites and multiple Billboard #1s. His live performances, spanning Coachella to Ultra Music Festival, underscore his prowess in creating global bangers that reverberate across continents.



Cedric Gervais, a name synonymous with popular hits and Grammy accolades, embodies the essence of electronic music. His journey from Billboard to BBC Radio One Essential Mixes, blockbuster film appearances, and global residencies reaffirm his stature as a sought-after maestro within the electronic music diaspora.

As Armada Music celebrates its 20th anniversary, a symphony of festivities unfolds. The 'Armada Music 20 Years Classics' documentary series casts a spotlight on seminal artists and hits that have etched themselves into the annals of dance music history. Episodes delve deep into the creation and legacy of tracks like Joe Smooth's "Promised Land," breathing life into the narratives that birthed entire genres.

Maykel Piron, the CEO of Armada Music, reflects on the label's mission, emphasizing their commitment to nurturing global artists and presenting the rich tapestry of dance music to new audiences. From fan-voted Top 100 lists to revisiting and remixing classics, the anniversary celebrations resound with a harmonious blend of nostalgia and innovation.

*Armada Music's 20-year journey echoes its dedication to the art of dance music.*

With a commitment to amplifying the voices of artists and illuminating the genre's storied past, the label continues to chart new territories in the ever-expansive universe of electronic soundscapes.





# RIDLEY BRONSON

**Q:** The lyrics of "Blue Skies Aren't Gray" convey a message of positivity and change. What inspired these meaningful lyrics, and how important is it for you to convey a deeper message through your music?

**A:** I have a glass-half-full type of mindset and it is important for me to incorporate positivity into my music. Either through uplifting chord progressions or lyrics like in "Blue Skies Aren't Gray."

**Q:** Having previously released hit singles like "Fool" and "Flex My Drip," how do you feel your music has evolved over time, and what unique elements do you believe set "Blue Skies Aren't Gray" apart from your previous work?

**A:** Blending electronic sounds and synthesizers with real instruments is something I am starting to explore, and my sound is starting to evolve because of this. Expect more tech house bangers though, I am just releasing more out-of-the-box productions to keep things fresh. "Blue Skies Aren't Gray" differs from my other tunes because it's more in the disco world than my typical tech house sound.

**Q:** In your statement, you mention, "I don't do it for the fame and money, I do it for the music." Can you elaborate on your love for music and the motives that drive your creative process?

**A:** I couldn't care less about the fame and fortune that comes with being a successful DJ/Producer. I just want to make music and connect with people. My dream is to be able to tour the world, play shows, and create music that makes a positive impact on people.

**Q:** As a DJ/Producer, how do you perceive the current state of the electronic dance industry?

**A:** I think techno is next up.

**Q:** Is there a particular artist or group you dream of collaborating with?

**A:** ANOTR... if you guys are reading this reach out. I have some great ideas.

**Q:** Are there any specific festivals or events that you aspire to be a part of, and what kind of experience would you like to create for your audience in a live setting?

**A:** I would love to play on Perry's stage at Lollapalooza. I saw my first electronic show at this stage and have dreamed of playing there ever since. It would be an absolute rager of a show with people dancing in the front row all the way to the back in the porta-potty line.

**Q:** With the success of your recent releases, including "Blue Skies Aren't Gray," what can fans and the industry expect from Ridley Bronson in the near future? Are there any upcoming projects or collaborations you're excited about?

**A:** My new single, "LVL UP," will be released in January 2024. Also, I am moving to London from Denver and will be playing shows there. Hit me up and show me around the city.





# SWAN + SINGER

**ANFISA LETYAGO**

*Exclusive interview*





**I**n the heart of Naples Italy, amidst the vibrant story of its brick walls, a rhythm toles bare and the electronic music scene is graced by the skill of a true master. Anfisa Letyago emerged as a beacon of innovation, captivating audiences with her groundbreaking sound and undeniable talent.

She has rooted her artistic tapestry in Naples, and made the narrow cobblestone roads a breeding ground for fans of the dark beat. Anfisa has become a symbol of the fusion of diverse cultures, shaping a unique musical identity.

Anfisa's journey in the world of music is nothing short of extraordinary. With her hard-hitting, innovative compositions, she has not only earned the admiration of industry giants like Carl Cox but has also graced the stages of renowned festivals, including the illustrious Ultra Music Festival. Her remix of Swedish House Mafia's "Ray Of Solar" showcased her prowess, adding a powerful techno interpretation to the band's remix.

Carl Cox, her mentor through these many years, recognized Anfisa's raw talent, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. Building atop his label's success, taking her under his wing became the project that CC was hoping for.

Letyago exemplifies the pure essence of techno music, imbuing her performances with a soulful depth that captivates audiences far and wide. Anfisa's determination not only fuels her musical innovation but also inspired her to launch her own imprint, NSDA. With a discography that ranges from techno to house music, the artist's compositions strike a chord with listeners, channeling an intensity that blurs the lines between genres and offers universal relatability.

Throughout her interview one thing kept coming up, amidst her rigorous global touring schedule, Anfisa finds solace and inspiration in nature, often seeking refuge by the sea. This connection with the natural world grounds her in the midst of the chaotic techno beats, infusing her music with a profound sense of harmony and balance.

The multi-talented DJ and producer has brought her vibrant energy to some of the biggest festival stages, leaving a trail of remarkable shows behind her. Looking back on her journey so far, she shares:

*"Every festival is different, the atmosphere is always magical, and there's space for everyone as the audience gathers individuals from all over the world."*

Her experiences at Ultra Music Festival, Time Warp, Awakenings, and Tomorrowland have etched unforgettable memories in her heart, marking significant milestones in her career.

Anfisa's latest EP, "Babylonia," represents a pivotal moment in her creative odyssey. Collaborating with ParteNope, the EP showcases her evolving artistic direction, garnering positive feedback from listeners and critics alike. As she continues to experiment with different sounds and genres, Anfisa remains committed to breaking free from preexisting musical constraints.

*"Experimentation and collaborations with different artists are the two main ingredients that fuel my creative process and help me get in the game and challenge myself,"* she reveals.

Working alongside icons such as Carl Cox, Moby, and Swedish House Mafia, and earning their recognition has been an enriching and humbling highlight for Anfisa.

*"They are all colleagues, I respect them a lot, and I feel grateful and proud for their reciprocated support,"* she acknowledges.

Their encouragement has not only bolstered her confidence but has also influenced her artistic choices, inspiring her to push the boundaries of her creativity further.

When asked about her creative process, Anfisa shares,

*"I don't have any specific rituals or habits. It all really depends on my instinct."*

Her spontaneity and intuition guide her as she crafts each track, allowing her music to flow organically and authentically.

As Anfisa embarks on new projects, she radiates confidence,

*"I don't need to demonstrate anything. I am working on some big projects right now, which came up after years of hard work, and I am sure there are still many to come in the future."*



# Hardwell

**REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE**  
**REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE**  
**REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE** **REBELS NEVER DIE**

Q

You've been on a summer tour recently. What has your experience been like? Are there any unforgettable moments you would like to share with us?

A

Incredible! I really enjoyed being back on the road and just getting to connect with the fans and share all this new music I've got, and have been releasing. Seeing the reaction from the crowd these past few months has really inspired me and my music. I recently went back to North America for a run of tour dates and one of the highlights was bringing my show to The Brooklyn Mirage. It was an insane party!

The festival season is such a highlight of the tour calendar, playing Ultra Europe, Parookaville, Tomorrowland, Mysteryland, and so many other festivals, including being back in my home town of Breda for Breda Live. To see all these amazing parties thriving again, it makes me so happy.

Q

Congratulations on "Anybody Out There"! The track brilliantly fuses your edgy production style from REBELS NEVER DIE with a more vocal-driven sound. Could you share some insights into your approach when combining these elements?


A

Thank you. I wanted to do a track that retained all the elements of my new sound, but which also leans into a big vocal. The goal was to create a track that wouldn't look out of place in my sets, but also give me that overreach to radio, without losing any of the toughness of my current style.

REBELS NEVER DIE is a special body of work, but realistically it's only a small amount of the volume of music I've made over the last few years. Everything I'm putting into my sets needs to be a cohesive fit that blends with the direction of the music I'm creating and playing.







The collaboration with Azteck and Alex Hepburn on "Anybody Out There" brings together different talents and styles. How did the three of you work together and ensure that your contributions complemented each other within the track?

Azteck and I have worked in the studio on ideas together previously so we're familiar with each other. I was looking for a track that would really stand out on its own in my sets with this big anthem vibe, and a huge vocal. Alex is a singer/songwriter with a great talent and has this superb raspy voice that was a perfect fit for the track. I'm super happy with how the project came together and the response on the track has been amazing.

"Anybody Out There" is set to light up both dancefloors and airwaves this summer. How do you approach crafting a song that not only resonates with festival crowds but also finds its place in mainstream radio and listeners' playlists worldwide?

The goal was to create a track which sits in both lanes. My style these days is not so radio friendly, but I've not forgotten my big room & electro roots. I spent a long time trying to find the perfect synergy between the Hardwell 2.0 style of today, and my older sound.

I feel 'Anybody Out There' strikes the perfect balance between both these worlds.

Your philanthropic efforts through the United We Are Foundation have changed the lives of thousands of children. What drove you to start this initiative, and how has it influenced your perspective as an artist?

I want to use my platform to make a social change. I'm not seeking to be a celebrity or high-profile person, but either way, I've got a platform where I can make a difference. So, I want to use that in whatever way I can to lift others.

With your long-standing presence in the electronic scene, you've witnessed its evolution over the years first-hand. What excites you the most about its potential and how do you see its future?

Dance music is wild right now. We've got all these crazy new sounds bursting through, with exciting new artists leading the charge. The rise of all this HYPER-trance/techno has really caught fire and is exploding everywhere. The fans are so open to harder sounds, faster pace and just rave energy. It's invigorating to see the musical landscape changing so rapidly.

Vocal-based electronic music holds a special place for you, as it creates magical dancefloor moments. What sets "Anybody Out There" apart from other tracks, and what emotions were you aiming to evoke with this song?

I'm always looking to create those big memories on the dancefloor, and it's tracks like 'Anybody Out There' that I feel always connect the best with festival crowds, because you're trying to reach everyone from the front all the way to the back of the crowd.

Big vocal, catchy melodies and lots of energy are just some of the key ingredients of a huge party track.

The live streaming landscape has been a significant aspect of your career, with record-breaking records at major events. How has its rise impacted your connection with fans and the way you approach performances?

Live streaming has played a significant role in my career. From my 2012 livestream for Ultra Music Festival, where we burnt out the servers because we were trending so hard, to the later live streams for festivals like Tomorrowland. The online connection with fans has always been phenomenal. It's given me a chance to connect with fans who can't make the shows but want to be a part of the show and passionately enjoy the sets.

You've played on some of the world's biggest stages, from Coachella to Tomorrowland. Could you share a standout memory or experience from one of these festivals that left a lasting impression on you?

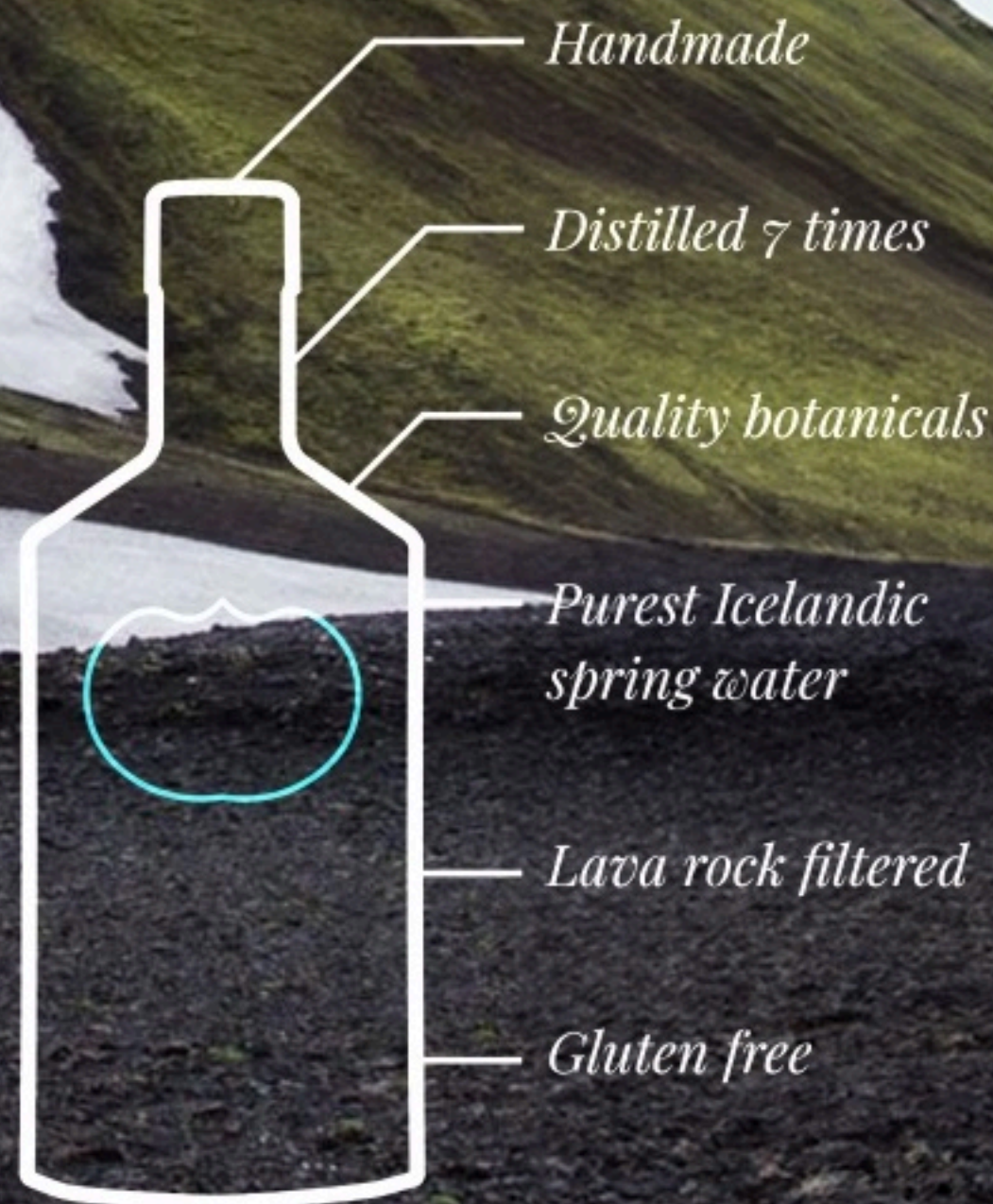
I keep coming back to this one, but my return show at Ultra Music Festival in Miami last year was a really surreal moment. To be out of the game for so long and to come back with not just a new show but an entirely new sound, was daunting. I was super nervous, but the emotion of that show was like anything I've experienced before as a dj. I loved it!!

REBELS NEVER DIE ushered in a new era for your music, blending early hard trance elements with your signature big room sound. What led you to explore this fusion of styles, and what can fans expect from your upcoming releases?

I just went back to my roots and rediscovered all the sounds that first got me hooked on electronic music. After digging through my music collection, it all started to blend together and before long I was back in studio with all these fresh ideas. Right now, I'm just enjoying the creative freedom and not being tied down to any specific genre. What comes next I honestly don't know because I'm working on so many different ideas and just seeing what comes out the other side.



The gin smells  
pure, a bit earthy  
with a mix of unique  
regional herbs.



Discover a soft,  
natural vodka with a  
fiery note and a  
full-bodied  
character.







In June this year, Moog was bought by InMusic, a large, American company that owns a bunch of other brands like Denon, Akai, Numark, and M-Audio. At the time, Moog was independent and employee-owned, and built all of its products in Asheville, North Carolina.

When it bought Moog, InMusic said nothing would change. Moog would be supported but left to do things the way it always had. Then came layoffs, and in September news broke that Moog had eliminated more than half its existing jobs, including most of the manufacturing positions. From now on, most Moog synths will be made in factories overseas.

**Does this matter? Maybe not...** Moog synths built in Asia will probably sound identical to those that were built in the States and they may get a little cheaper, meaning more musicians could afford them. But what does it say about the state of the synth market and the direction it may be headed? For that... a little history.

**The first commercial synthesizers were built in the '60s by small companies in the United States, England and, a little later, in Italy.** England really just had one company, the pioneering brand Electronic Music Studios (EMS), which built amazing, expensive boxes such as the **VCS3** and the Synthesi A, which looked like props from Doctor Who and sounded like alien transmissions. They were used by many prog bands, perhaps most famously by Pink Floyd – check “On The Run” from The Dark Side of the Moon.

Around the same time, the US was quickly establishing itself as the center of the world for synth design. Companies like ARP, Oberheim, Moog and Buchla were all up and running by the end of the '60s and would go on to define and dominate the nascent synth market. Moog did more than any other company in this regard, most notably when it brought out one of the first small, portable synths that was simple to program and use – the Minimoog, which debuted in 1970 and stayed in production until 1981.

**Another US brand, Sequential Circuits, entered the scene in 1974** and found enormous success with the release of the Prophet 5 in 1978, the first major synth to have pre-set sounds you could store and then call up by hitting a button.

Throughout the '70s, synths made their mark on jazz, funk, soul, disco and even classical music. By the end of the decade, they had begun to create a genre all their own, as bands such as Kraftwerk, Tangerine Dream and Yellow Magic Orchestra put synthesizers at the heart of their sound.

Critical mass was achieved in the early '80s, with UK post-punk and new wave bands creating synth pop music that reached the top of the charts and spurred US producers in Chicago, Detroit and New York to invent the genres that continue to define electronic music – techno, electro and house.

But despite this explosion of demand for electronic sounds, by the late-1980s, all the large US synth companies were out of business. ARP, the maker of titanic modular monsters such as the 2600 as well as popular, punk, portable synths like the Odyssey, had bet the farm on a synth you could play using a guitar – the ARP Avatar. The project was so costly and unpopular that the company collapsed in 1981.

**Oberheim, the maker of the first polyphonic synth** (the Four-Voice System in 1975), brought out a string of iconic products in the early '80s, including big, brassy beasts such as the OB-Xa (the synth used on Van Halen's “Jump”), and the **DMX drum machine** that created the iconic rhythm for New Order's “Blue Monday” and the beats to many of the first hip-hop tracks. This did not save the company, which folded in 1985.

Sequential Circuits limped on, shifting to digital synths and continuing to create some pioneering music technology before closing its doors in 1987. And Moog, the company that had started it all, now burdened with debt and struggling for relevance, declared bankruptcy the same year. Every US synth company had gone dark.

**Why did all these brands go out of business when synthesizers had never been more popular?** Largely it was the shift from analog to digital synthesis. When things had been analog (physical oscillators vibrating to make soundwaves), the technology had been relatively basic and this suited ingenious, creative American engineers. As digital technology became mainstream in the '80s, larger, Japanese companies like Yamaha, Korg and Roland were able to produce much more versatile synths and drum machines for half the cost of their American rivals. The American brands lacked the size and resources to build reliable digital instruments that could compete.

**For 20 years, that's how things stayed.** Japanese synth companies dominated, while a few boutique brands in Europe and the States squeaked along. But then a beautiful thing happened... Fans of electronic music dug into its past and started to search out the original instruments that had created its earliest sounds. Vintage synthesizers – big,

hulking, unreliable analog synths and drum machines – became sought-after and celebrated. A huge revival of interest in the original analog synth companies caused a rebirth. Modular exploded in popularity and people were once again interested in the most basic form of synthesis – taking oscillators, running them through filters and envelopes and seeing what came out.

Suddenly, those old synth companies that had gone out of business in the '80s were back in demand. **The man behind Sequential Circuits, Dave Smith, re-entered the synth market**, eventually being handed back the name of his company from Yamaha, which had purchased the rights. ARP began production again, reissuing many of its classic, old instruments – albeit via Korg, the Japanese firm that now owns the brand. Tom Oberheim regained the rights to his name in 2021 and released the first Oberheim synth in decades just last year – the OB-X8, an updated version of the same synth used on “Jump.”

**And Moog?** After a protracted legal battle for the brand, Dr. Bob Moog, the founder of the company, was able to begin producing synthesizers under his own name again in the early 2000s. The company set up shop in North Carolina and went back to the drawing board, creating a string of highly popular and celebrated modern analog synths that both draw from the heritage of the brand and expand on it. The Grandmother, the Mother 32, the DFAM, the Subharmonicon, all the way up to the Mavis, the \$300 kit synth that Moog brought out last year.

And so we come to 2023. Many of the old brands are back. Interest in vintage synths has never been higher. The German company Behringer has become enormously successful selling cheap (but pretty good-sounding) imitations of classic vintage gear. But despite the interest and the rampant market both for vintage synthesizers and modern recreations, Moog was unable, once again, to make it work. Just as before, despite some brilliant designs and the huge renown of its brand, the company could not continue as an independent firm, manufacturing its instruments in the US.

Does this spell doom for independent synth designers? Will creativity and the dance floor suffer as market forces push instrument production to factories in the developing world? Certainly not. The synth landscape has always been a scrappy one where brands emerge and bootstrap their way to success on the power of their ideas and the hard work of their sales teams.



Article written by  
**Nick Taylor**

**Brands have always risen and fallen, been sold on to others or absorbed by larger firms.** In the case of Moog, this has literally happened numerous times before, and the brand is still strong and still making great instruments.

It doesn't matter whether a company is owned by its employees or a bunch of shareholders, if that company is making interesting stuff that people love to use it will probably be a success. If not... then someone else will come in and buy up the intellectual property and the warehouse full of spare parts and have a go at making things work.

**People don't get into the synth industry because they think it's an easy route to being rich.** People do it because they love music and synths, and they want to make something good. I think that Moog's products are great, and I think they'll continue to be good, no matter where they're made. I certainly hope that all the people who lost their jobs in Asheville got generous severance packages and are able to go on to even better things.

More than anything, I hope that these changes at Moog safeguard its future and allow the company to invest in new ideas that propel the scene forward. History has shown that if companies come up with amazing, fun, novel ways to create and manipulate sound, musicians will use them to forge new scenes and invent new genres, building marketplaces so everyone can thrive.





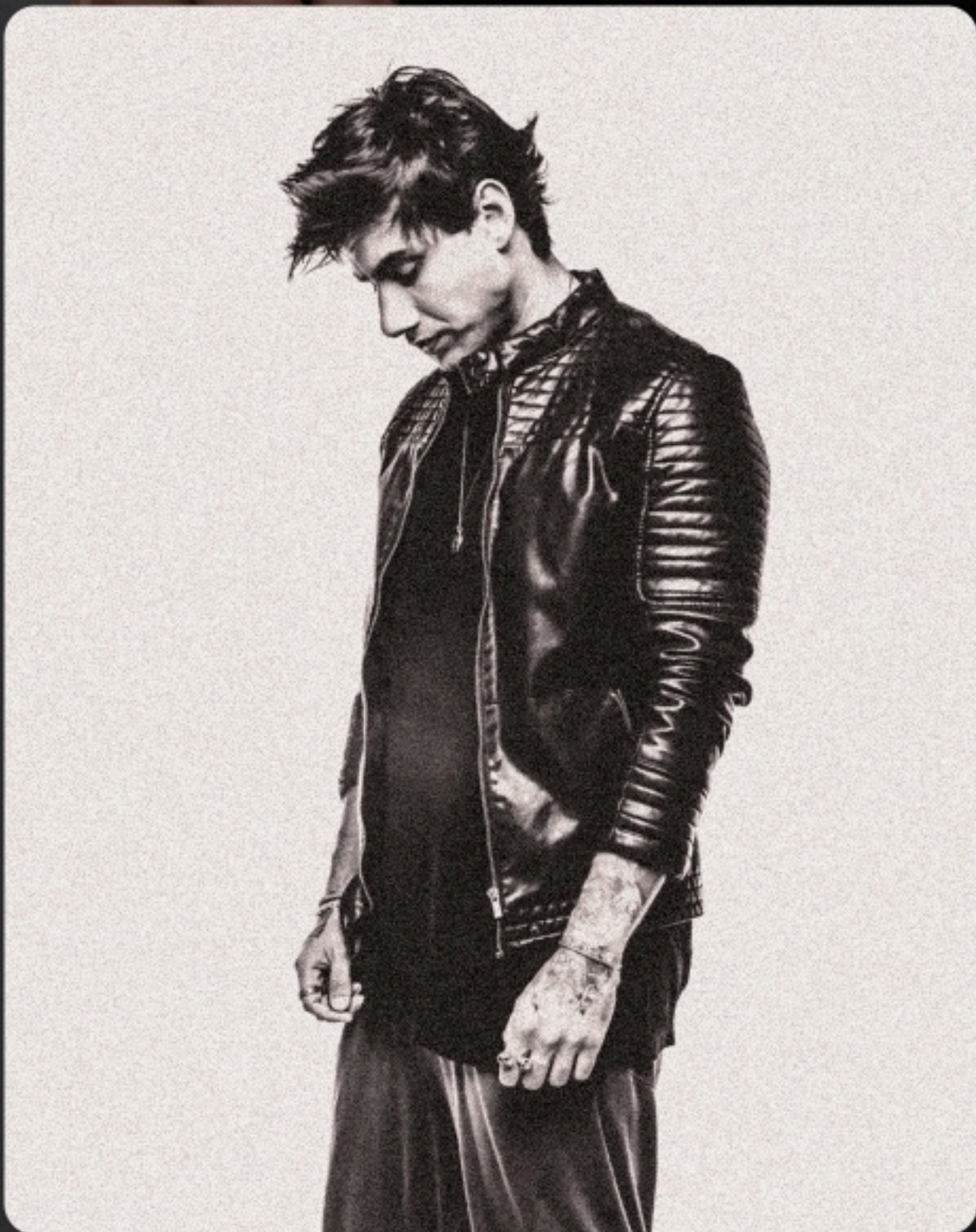
# ÖWNBROSS + SELVA

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Q Öwnboss, what does 'RIOT' mean to you?  
And how would you describe it to a new listener?

### ÖWNBLOSS

A It means fighting for a better world. It's an extremely energetic and catchy song, made for people to sing along. It's a track that we want to see playing all over the world to encourage everyone to battle for their dreams, to be heard, to be who they are and want to be. It has a different structure than the usual one, kind of rebellious, just what is needed to motivate change.



Q Selva, how did you and Öwnboss come to collaborate on 'RIOT'?

### SELVA

A Öwnboss and I have known each other for a while now, we met years ago when we shared a tour bus and a line-up together. We got closer around a year and a half ago when I started writing a couple of songs for him, and we ended up also collaborating as Öwnboss & Selva in remixes for Kungs, Joel Corry & Becky Hill. We were constantly talking about doing an original track together.

Him and I click a lot on a personal level, but also in the creative realm, so we trust each other's opinion very much and we're always sending each other demos and ideas just for feedback. One day, I sent him a message that said something like: "hey dude, I will send you an idea but please ignore the quality, this idea is quite complex to translate", and then I sent him a demo with the chorus of RIOT. Immediately he said this should be our song together, and he knew exactly where to take it.



## SELVA

As an artist, what have you personally learned from working on this track?

I learned quite a lot with this one. One of the things I definitely learned was to trust my instincts even more. I say this because Öwnboss was the O-N-L-Y one that believed in this song besides myself, no joke. To be fair, this is a hard song to translate in a demo before actually recording a choir, so we played it to a lot of people during the early stages of RIOT when the choir was recorded in my own voice as a placeholder and the answers were kind of "ah... cool... I don't know man..".

I believe I also learned how potent and strong an honest message can be.

You mentioned that having children sing on the track "would bring a whole different angle to the meaning of the lyrics."

Can you expand on this and explain the significance of their contribution to the track?

As far as I can remember, music always played a really important role in my personality and in my upbringing. I loved listening to all sorts of genres, but I had a very strong connection with songs that made me feel empowered, that carried a little "danger" and some kind of edge, even though it came from a naive perspective. I connected a lot to Punk Rock, Emocore and Nu Metal because they felt rebellious but still super well crafted.

As a songwriter, I always wanted to create something that could connect like that, and RIOT's lyrics are all about standing up for yourself and not accepting things as they are just because you are told to do so. It felt like a message that should be interpreted by the next generation, because it shifts the message to a realm of hope.

Selva, are there any plans for you & Öwnboss to further collaborate together again on future projects?

Absolutely. We're always doing stuff together. Stay tuned!

Right now, we are collaborating in a song in Portuguese, and I've been writing him some songs for his upcoming releases. I also had a lot of fun contributing to his Tomorrowland set recording the guitars and drums for a Metallica mashup.

And... We may or may not have a new chorus with a similar vibe to RIOT already written and recorded. Who knows!

I hope this song takes people to a happy place and reminds them to enjoy the moment !



## ÖWNBOS

Öwnboss, how does it feel to have "RIOT" debut on Rocket League, especially as part of its Brazilian-themed 11th season?

It's really cool to have 'RIOT' on Rocket League because it's a strong and young song that invites action, so I think it fits perfectly. This is a game that I knew because of the release with Monstercat, I confess, but as a game-lover it is always a pleasure to see my tracks in soundtracks, even more so in such a popular and well-liked game. I'm receiving a lot of videos from players all over the world, so I feel like our music has pushed all boundaries, you know? It reminds me of a lot of songs that marked me back when I used to play video games, and I hope that this audience can follow and grow with me over the years.

How do you think the fusion of electronic music and video games, like Rocket League, is influencing the current music scene?

In the same way that games in my time revolutionised and marked my generation - I still play mashups and versions of some of these classics in my shows nowadays and I always listen to these songs with a lot of nostalgia - I believe that having 'RIOT' in Rocket League will mark many people and help pulse our music. Brian and I wanted to purposely give this track an anthemic face, so I hope our release marks people as a timeless song. That, at the same time, gives the strength everyone needs to fight for their goals and hopefully, in a few years, bring positive feelings of a good phase in the lives of these players and listeners.

'RIOT' has been dubbed as tailor-made for festivals. Can you describe the kind of energy or atmosphere that the track has evoked from festival goers when you've played this live?

'RIOT' has dropped at just the right time as I'm in the middle of my 2023 world tour which means I've been to a lot of festivals which 'RIOT' is perfect for. It gave me the chance to play the track on various stages across the world before it was released and see how the crowd reacted live. I could definitely see the audience wanting to know the lyrics so that they could sing along at the top of their lungs.

'RIOT' has been described as a "rallying cry for the mainstage." What message or emotion do you hope listeners and festival-goers take away from the track?

Personally, 'RIOT' reminds me a lot of timeless artists like Pink Floyd and Queen, for example, and I believe in the track's potential to bring people together and make shows and festivals even more unforgettable. For me, it is a young anthem of acceptance, struggle and freedom, so that we can all make our lives better and that way create a consequently better world as well.





# Griff Galexxzee

The Harmonic Alchemist of  
Modern Melodies

Griff Galexxzee, emerging from Toronto's dynamic music scene, is a standout artist whose genre-defying style captivates audiences globally. His hit "You Right," produced with C.L. McCoy, *hit number 12 on the UK iTunes charts, showcasing his universal appeal.*

At just 16, Griff collaborated with Drake, setting the stage for his unique sound and rapid ascent in the music world. His debut album, "Facts Over Feelings," *with over 600,000 Spotify streams*, is a genre-blending journey, reflecting his ability to connect with listeners on an emotional level.

Griff's collaborations, notably with producer C.L. McCoy, have helped shape his distinctive musical narrative, earning him recognition as more than an artist, but a pioneer in the music industry. Griff Galexxzee is not only on the rise; he's a trailblazer crafting a lasting legacy.



# PEGGY GOU 페기 구



C H A R T I N G A U N I Q U E P A T H T O T E C H N O S T A R D O M

Peggy Gou doesn't keep secrets. In fact, if her recent rise to fame is anything to go by, the only secret she's ever had is the magic formula for creating global dance hits.

At first glance, Peggy Gou's choices in fashion may seem eclectic, but her aesthetic, from Dior jackets to Ralph Lauren pants, mirrors her approach to music: deeply individualistic and marked by an international flair. This South Korean producer's tastes span across collecting vinyl records, sunglasses, art, and even indulging in a delightful faux Ferragamo fur and a Harley Davison — pronounced with a delightful touch of humor.

Her journey, particularly her recent ascent, has been anything but traditional. At the Lost Nomads festival outside Marrakesh, she teased her unreleased single, "(It Goes Like) Nanana," sending the crowd into a frenzy. A sunset TikTok clip from the event served as the catalyst for a viral sensation that transformed the track into Gou's mainstream breakthrough. Landing in Spotify's flagship playlist 'Today's Top Hits' is no mean feat, especially for a track from an independent label. Yet, "Nanana" achieved this, collecting millions of streams and drawing the attention of the music world.

Despite the stardom, Gou remains charmingly grounded. "I really did not expect this reaction," she confesses, having not even realized the chart impact of her song. The single's birth, inspired by a blend of '90s dance music and hip-hop, showcases Gou's adept ability to tap into nostalgic rhythms, while presenting them in a fresh, compelling way. Her musical inspirations, ranging from the iconic SNAP! to the German producer ATB, are evident in her sound.


While her previous hits like "Starry Night" and "It Makes You Forget (Itgehane)" exuded a rich Korean essence, "(It Goes Like) Nanana" took a different path. Initially sung in Korean, Gou decided an all-English approach better suited the track. The song's success on TikTok also spawned remixes, notably the viral mash-up of "Cola x Nanana" by DJ Ian Asher, blending Gou's hit with the 2017 CamelPhat track, "Cola."

But beyond the music, Gou's beauty and fashion choices are also turning heads. An ambassador for Authentic Beauty Concept, Gou's hair has traversed from tangerine bobs to expressive styles. Her appearance, whether it's a distinctive manicure or her signature makeup at shows, resonates with her dynamic personality. Ahead of a significant performance in London's Finsbury Park, Gou embraced her natural beauty, debuting voluminous curls, which hairstylist Said Rubaii describes as "authentically beautiful and laid-back, while still being refined."

What's clear is that Peggy Gou isn't merely a DJ and producer; she's a holistic artist, fusing her personal aesthetic with groundbreaking music. With her full-length debut expected in 2024, one thing is certain: Gou feels the pressure but thrives under it. As she succinctly puts it, "My mindset is always: I can do better."

For anyone looking to understand what makes Gou tick, perhaps her philosophy is embedded in her own words, "I collect records, I collect sunglasses, I collect shoes, and I collect art." Each collection, like every track she produces, tells a story – and the world is eagerly listening.



A man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a black suit jacket, stands against a vibrant blue background with light streaks. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the side.

I USUALLY  
KEEP THE NAME OF THE INGREDIENTS  
FOR MY CAKE SECRET

# QLEX GARDINO





**D**on't Talk To Me" is a departure from some of your earlier works. Can you delve into the instrumentation and production techniques you chose for this track?

***I don't think that "don't talk to me" is a departure, but the continuation of a project that in reality has never stopped and will never stop.***

From your early work with Flying Records and UMM to your current projects, you've showcased a range of styles. How do you believe the electronic music landscape has shifted during your career, and how have you adapted?

***I've been lucky enough to go through different periods in the history of dance music and obviously changes have occurred, as have society as a whole. When I started it was almost entirely artisanal I would say, we worked for a long time to produce a track and it wasn't so immediate to understand what the result could be. Today we still work a lot, but thanks to technology you can get fairly immediate feedback. I can't say if it's better or worse, it's certainly an evolution.***

"Destination Calabria" was a massive success with its unique fusion of Crystal Waters' vocals and the signature saxophone. With "Don't Talk To Me", did you experiment with any unconventional sounds or instruments to capture a similar magic?

***I usually start with an idea and then try to develop it depending on the direction it's going. However, I always try to find something magical.***

Rise Records, which you founded, became a source of several hits. Can you discuss a particular challenge you faced while managing the label and how it influenced your future work?

***During my time at Rise Records there were several artistically complicated moments to deal with but obviously very stimulating. However, I remember the difficulties in managing to have an official release for Black Legend You See The Trouble With Me, but with great satisfaction because we then reached number 1 in the UK Top 40 and it was one of the most played tracks in the world. And it still is.***

"Doctor Love" was a distinct narrative journey in 2013. How do you curate track lists for albums to ensure they resonate as a cohesive unit while each track stands out?

***I've always made dance music tracks and therefore, in my style, they don't always have a connection to each other. But I think we can now say that when you hear a new song you can comment, hey this is a new track by Alex Gaudino.***

You've worked with a diverse set of vocalists from Crystal Waters to Kelly Rowland. What's your process in selecting the right voice for a track, and how did you decide on the collaborations for your latest releases?

***When you choose a voice for your new song you try to understand what is the best option you can have. It's like choosing the right pair of shoes to match your dress. Not that simple obviously, but you get the idea.***

Given the rapid evolution of music production technology, are there any recent tools or software that played a significant role in crafting "Don't Talk To Me"?

***I usually keep the name of the ingredients for my cake a secret...***

As a visionary in the electronic music scene with a career spanning decades, if you could shape the future trajectory of the genre, what would be your most profound wish or aspiration for the evolution and impact of electronic music globally?

***I would like to go back to giving the right importance to music, to songs. Always looking at technology for the importance that it now has and will have. But putting more soul and passion into it.***

What was the creative process like when working with Mazzz and Dopamine on "Saturday"? How did your individual styles and ideas come together to shape the final track?

***Mazzz came to me with this idea which I found very interesting, we worked on it with my studio partner Jay Over and then we thought of Dopamine for the vocal version which in my opinion were perfect for our track Saturday. As indeed they are.***

Your career has spanned several years and included many successful releases. How do you feel "Saturday" fits into the evolution of your music and style as an artist?

***Saturday is a dance track that fits perfectly into my style and my recording career. It's what for me represents the ideal of a fresh, catchy song, impossible to stay still and not jump on the dancefloor.***

Looking ahead, are there any exciting projects or collaborations on the horizon that you can tease for your fans?

***I'm planning a series of new releases and collaborations that will see the light very soon. My team and I are focused on keeping the bar high and... you will hear and dance the rest very soon!!!***



# THE FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR DJs

The life of a DJ, whether performing at clubs, creating music, or building an independent brand, **presents unique financial challenges**. While the music industry has evolved with digital outlets, DJs still face uncertainties when it comes to generating a stable income.

**This guide explores the financial landscape for DJs in today's digital age and offers insights into navigating this dynamic industry.**

## THE STREAMING REALITY

Streaming music now constitutes over 60% of all music industry revenue.

However, for the average DJ, streaming income often falls below **\$1,000 annually**. Consider Spotify, the world's largest streaming platform, where a recent Forbes study revealed that only **28%** of artists received more than **\$10,000** from its **\$7 billion royalty payouts**. This 28% includes superstar artists, legacy musicians, and those with robust marketing teams.

Let's break down the numbers. With an average payout of **\$0.006325 per stream**, a DJ would need roughly **1.59 million streams** in their first year on Spotify to earn **\$10,000**. Advertising on Spotify can start at **\$250 per campaign**, and purchasing **10,000 views** through third-party providers can cost around **\$50**. Assuming a **30% viewership increase** due to ads, **130,000 views** would cost an average of **\$0.005769 per view**, yielding a profit of **\$72.25**. This equates to an average value of **\$0.000556 per stream**.

While paid advertising can boost visibility, the 8% margin, combined with risk, time, and market saturation, makes it an unsustainable business model.

## CREATIVE VS. MARKETING TIME

Streaming platforms like Spotify heavily rely on marketing and promotion for revenue. **About 57,000 of Spotify's nearly 10 million creators account for over 90% of its streams and, consequently, its royalty distribution.**

Professional artists typically allocate **50%** of their time to marketing and building their brand and the remaining **50%** to creating music. However, this division limits their ability to analyze and adapt their marketing strategy, learn from target markets, and engage with fans effectively. Music marketing is a complex landscape, and without professional help or digital literacy, artists often struggle to navigate it.

## FINANCIAL REALITIES

An annual income of **\$10,000 to \$30,000** might be comfortable in some parts of the world but falls short in major North American and European cities. With average rent ranging from **\$1,000 to \$1,800**, an income below **\$30,000** means over **50%** of earnings go toward basic housing costs, leaving little for food, taxes, and other necessities.

## TO STREAM OR NOT TO STREAM?

While streaming platforms are essential for visibility and fan convenience, DJs must weigh their options based on budget, time constraints, and algorithmic understanding. Paying for streams can be a part of a broader campaign, but it should not be the sole strategy for exposure.

Stay tuned for the next chapter of the Financial Guide for DJs, where we explore media outreach and composite campaigning strategies.





# THE FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR ARTISTS

## Part 2: Publicists and Outreach

The recording artist who can scratch out an album in a week and tour radio stations trading demo tapes for eight balls and a sparkly smile has gone the way of the dodo. Today's recording artist, when out of the studio, is fighting to gain status on platforathermore than podiums. This battle, like the wars of any age, is won in the public's perception, in the newspapers, in the information and story that surround the instance rather than the instance itself.

This is nothing new, but what has happened in the last 15 years with the advent of the digital age is the complete restructuring and reinvention of the tools that govern this outreach. For the musician, this means the dissemination of their message has 100 times the number of possible outlets to reach, making the path to success all the more murky. Has the quality of this press diluted, or are there just more people who are interested? Does the artist need to be eeverywhere, or can they focus on theirhoardl of fans? These are the questions that every would-be superstar asks themselves, and more often than not, they can only be answered by a professional, in this case a publicist.

### TRUST IN INDUSTRY, THE OFFER OF ACCOUNTABILITY:

Public relations, publicists, placement agencies—the industry of PR has a CAGR of 111.1%, according to today's market reports. They are, after all, the gatekeepers of media's accessibility, and as the business world is ever expanding, this middleman industry of storytellers is the judge, jury, and executioner for an outlet's legitimacy and authority. Unfortunately, there are only a handful of technological innovations that empirically evaluate and curate the legitimacy of these individuals or agencies. Word of mouth will always have its biases, and after all, no one campaign is the same. Deliverables, price tags, trust, and a short checklist should show you right off the bat if the person you are dealing with is both competent and worthy of your hard-earned dollars. Judging someone purely on previous results is also a hard sell. You, the artist, are probably not in the same position as the others that came before you. So how do you choose a publicist?

Professionalism is a question of organization and accountability; the PR firm selling you a package needs to have a plan that is traceable, strategically positioned, and realistic. artist, realistic. You can drop \$100,000. You should hire the best in the business, but know that even the best will be able to work with what they have. If your art is poorly fashioned and has no message too propel its reach, even the best in the business will pachelpage your vision so it fits in the market. Any professional PR will start by explaining how and what they will be doing for you; they will line up their efforts, because there are NO guarantees, in a ddocument, and then hand you a pen to sign on the dotted line.

A contract is essential, despite the modern industry's predominant handshake style of affair. It is imperative that as an artist you receive a detailed outline of the plan, that illustrates the channels and methods the agency will use, as well as the way you can trace the results; be it apps, reports with hotlinks, or a client portal.

Professional PR's will always offer a level of doubt in the plan, as the truth behind the growth and reach factors of an artist are based on scaled growth also-called promises instant fame is a fraud. Each tier of industry is important to cover, as one story will piggyback onto another until it reaches its target, the best PR's will always explain this first, and work with you to choose the proper outlets.

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### THE MARKET PRICE:

Start by first evaluating your budget, a publicist will, at the bare minimum, cost 1500USD per month. This will include the plan, the execution, and maybe a few "free" pieces of content. It is rare that a company will be able to include the leads and submissions to blogs in this price range. Content syndication for basic tiered outlets, with a viewership under 10k / week, will run between 50 - 100 USD / leed, which means should your new strategist find you a dozen blogs that want to feature your release, you still need another 600 - 1200 usd to have it onboarded.

Top tier syndications can grow to thousands of dollars per plug but the biggest ones are granted on merit. You can't pay your way into Rolling Stone, and their writers will either take the clandestine check or keep their integrity, a PR takes a gamble every time they try to "bribe" your way through. Creative services will come in at an average of

about 500 - 1000 USD for quality work that is crafted to fit the medium. For an artist dropping between 3 - 5k on PR is pricey, but at the end of the day, unless you happen to have the 40+ hours a week, to find, qualify and create catered content you will need to deal with these agencies to advance your career. Prepare your cards before you sit on the table.

### WHICH OUTLETS MATTER

Merit based outlets are of the highest accord, as they are usually the ones with a specific viewership that has actual market impacts. As a musician you need to take into account that there are thousands of songs released each day, which means tens of thousands of submissions. To stick out you need authority, you need a brand to vouch for you and you need a story that compels an audience and its funders. Your PR campaign should be able to offer you a scaled growth that begins most importantly at your level. For the most part, there's a certain logic to how the industry functions, a debut artist won't be able to be on every editorial 1 month into their first ever published song. But they will be able to have blogs and youtubers review their work and start the process of taking it up the chain. Don't believe any PR that promises otherwise. If the publicist is charging you for their strategic services and arrives with a plan that first and foremost underlines your character in its entirety as well as your objectives, you know you are in the hands of a relative professional. Lot's of artists have gotten scammed by the "ya-ya" publicists that take your cash and talk tall without any modus operandi.

Low hanging fruit in PR are blogs, reviews, and syndicated networks which are essentially collections of the latter. This type of PR can be a bear trap if purchased as a one off strategy, but is essentially the first step in any independent artist's career. It will give you some outreach but in the end with all the industry noise if you are not capable of compounding that viewership, your money was flushed and your investment will not pay off.

The DIY route, possibly the biggest phenomenon in the promotion or marketing industry, is the response of this gatekeeper culture. It forces artists to hunt themselves, but assumes they have the time and capabilities of a well trained agency, which sadly they don't.

Maybe one day there will be a magical SAAS that puts all these factors together to streamline the artist journey and give them access to this market imperative. Join me next time for the 3rd step in your promo career, the key element to bridge your outreach, Playlists.





# mau5trap

unveiling the electrifying beats  
and iconic artists behind deadmau5's  
musical empire.



## the genesis of mau5trap

Mau5trap, founded in 2007 by Joel Zimmerman, better known as Deadmau5, was conceived as a platform to showcase his own music and, in the process, provide a launching pad for emerging electronic music talent. The label's name, a clever fusion of "Mau5" (Deadmau5's iconic mouse-head logo) and "trap" (a nod to the trap music genre), reflects the diverse and boundary-pushing nature of the music that defines Mau5trap's catalogue.

The label's first release was Deadmau5's critically acclaimed album, "Random Album Title," which included the iconic hit "I Remember."

This groundbreaking album established Mau5trap as a force to be reckoned with in the electronic music scene, setting the stage for the label's future success.



## the artists of mau5trap

Mau5trap has become a breeding ground for some of the most avant-garde and boundary-pushing artists in electronic music.

With a focus on progressive house, techno, and various other subgenres, the label has consistently delivered a diverse and eclectic roster of talent. Let's take a closer look at some of the artists who have made Mau5trap their home.



### 1.rezz

One of the brightest stars on the Mau5trap roster is the Canadian DJ and producer Rezz, often referred to as the "Space Mom." Her unique brand of dark and hypnotic techno has captured the hearts of fans worldwide.

Under the guidance of Deadmau5, Rezz has risen to prominence, showcasing her exceptional skills and evolving into a genre-defining artist in her own right.



### 3.atlas

ATTLAS, a producer known for his ethereal and atmospheric soundscapes, is another jewel in Mau5trap's crown.

His cinematic approach to music production creates a mesmerizing auditory experience, taking listeners on a sonic journey through his unique compositions.

ATTLAS's signature style showcases the label's commitment to nurturing creativity and originality.



### 2.no mana

No Mana, a mysterious and enigmatic artist on the label, has developed a reputation for his complex and innovative sound design.

His tracks are a rollercoaster of emotions, weaving intricate melodies and basslines that captivate listeners.

No Mana's distinctive style is a testament to the artistic freedom that Mau5trap provides to its musicians.



### 4.i\_o

The late i\_o, a talented artist whose music seamlessly blended techno and progressive house, was a cherished member of the Mau5trap family. His untimely passing was a significant loss to the electronic music world, but his work and legacy continue to inspire future generations of artists.

Honourable mentions go to the infamous Motley Crüe drummer, Tommy Lee, DJ Mord Fustang, and Matt Lange. These artists, among many others, highlight the rich tapestry of sounds that make Mau5trap such an influential and vibrant label.

## deadmau5: the driving force

**Joel Zimmerman, aka Deadmau5**, is more than just the founder of Mau5trap. He is the driving force behind the label's success and a guiding light for its artists. His distinctive style, characterized by intricate melodies, progressive structures, and experimental sound design, has not only defined Mau5trap's signature sound but also influenced a generation of electronic music producers.

Deadmau5's dedication to quality and creativity has set a high bar for Mau5trap's artists. He has created an environment where musicians are encouraged to push the boundaries of electronic music, explore new sonic territories, and evolve as artists. This philosophy is what sets Mau5trap apart from other labels in the industry.

The mentorship and collaboration Deadmau5 provides to Mau5trap artists are invaluable. He offers guidance, shares his production knowledge, and works closely with his label mates to bring their creative visions to life. This collaborative spirit has resulted in some of the most memorable and groundbreaking releases in electronic music history. He also makes it a point to release compilations of the biggest hits of each and every artist on his label in compilation albums for the public to appreciate at the click of a button on any streaming service.

Deadmau5's influence extends beyond the studio. His visually stunning live performances, complete with his iconic mouse-head helmet, have redefined the concert experience for electronic music fans. This level of showmanship has become a hallmark of Mau5trap artists as well, reflecting the label's commitment to providing a complete sensory experience for their audience.

## the mau5trap legacy

**Mau5trap is not just a record label; it's a testament to the transformative power of creative collaboration and visionary leadership.** With Deadmau5 at the helm, the label has consistently pushed the envelope, inspiring both its artists and fans alike. It has become a breeding ground for innovation, a sanctuary for sonic exploration, and a haven for emerging talents seeking to make their mark on the electronic music scene.

The influence of Deadmau5 and Mau5trap on the electronic music industry is immeasurable. Their commitment to artistic excellence and creative freedom has left an indelible mark on the genre, shaping its evolution and contributing to the global phenomenon of electronic dance music (EDM).

As Mau5trap continues to evolve and introduce new talents to the world, one thing remains certain: **the label's legacy, fueled by Deadmau5's visionary leadership and inventive spirit**, will continue to shape the future of electronic music for generations to come. The remarkable artists and the iconic founder have forged a lasting partnership, and together, they are writing the next chapter of electronic music history.

In the world of electronic music, Mau5trap stands as a testament to the power of visionary leadership, artistic freedom, and a commitment to pushing the boundaries of sonic exploration. With Deadmau5 and his remarkable artists leading the charge, the label's legacy is poised to thrive and continue shaping the future of electronic music for years to come.



article written by  
**saro hartounian**



# NU ASPECT

## I SPENT *THREE MONTHS* IN THE STUDIO

working on new projects and learning  
anything I could to up the level  
of my productions ...

**SWEET** EXCLU  
**+ SOUR** SIVE

**'Things I Said'** has a special place  
in my heart for sure. I made this  
on my gap year just **before University**  
and it was one of those tracks that  
just came together so quickly.

# NU ASPECT

## CAREE DIEM BEACH





**W**ith over three million listeners streaming “Sinner” since its June 30th release, could you share insights on the single’s creation, arrangements, and the emotions you aimed to convey?

***Thanks for having me! It’s really insane the reaction we’ve had to the record and exciting to see its connecting with people on this sort of level. Me and my friend Aiko who is an amazing songwriter wrote it together at a Selected songwriting camp about a year ago. We originally recorded the demo over a much slower tempo instrumental at like 120 bpm and I found it again a few months back, I sped up and found the catchy vocals really complemented the simpler faster paced instrumental well. So I did a little post on Tiktok and found that people really resonated with it. Lyrics wise I actually think it’s actually quite a sad song about not wanting to face the realities of life and wanting to drown out your worries with other things and the repercussions of that, but it’s definitely up for interpretation!***

Starting your musical journey at 12, how did those early experiences influence your approach to production and the development of your distinctive sound?

***Its been a while! I grew up in Bristol in the UK where the dubstep and bass music scene was massive, and so it always intrigued me into how these artists were making these crazy sounds I’d never heard before. So I downloaded the music making program Reason at the time and started dabbling in sound design (albeit very badly) and so now with the more housey stuff I’m making now I am always trying my best to include unique sounding elements into my tracks, whether it be bass or synth work. And hope it comes across in a coherent way.***

Your breakthrough came with the single “Things I Said,” influenced by the Future House sound of 2017. Could you share the story behind creating that track and how it laid the foundation for your music?

***Things I Said has a special place in my heart for sure. I made this on my gap year just before University and it was one of those tracks that just came together so quickly. At the time I had just had a remix I did of Chriss Gresswells Deep Love posted by the guys at Selected youtube channel, which in itself was absolutely crazy for me as I loved the channel. So when I sent them the Things I Said demo and they wanted to do a full release It really made me realize this crazy hobby of mine could potentially one day be something I could actually do as a job, which is still crazy to me!***

You’ve mentioned being inspired by artists like Tchami, Chris Lorenzo, and Gorgon City. How have they shaped your music, and what aspects of their styles do you incorporate into your own sound?

***Tchami, Chris Lorenzo and Gorgon City all simply legends at melding creative sound design with housey and melodic grooves, so I’m always super inspired to see how they go about this in a way that doesn’t overdo it or make it too extreme. As that’s always been a big goal of mine.***

Covering diverse genres, from trance-influenced dreamy house to rave-ready bass tracks, how do you manage working on different styles, and do you have a personal favorite among them?

***I think it’s sometimes hard to pick! I love trying to make different tracks every time and I have always been a massive fan of the ethereal reverb vocals from the 90’s trance tracks, and the bassline from the simpler housey cuts are just absolutely made for the dance floor. If I can get anything close to combining them in my own stuff I know I’ve done a good job.***

Juggling a full-time academic career at the University of Manchester alongside your music success is remarkable. How has this experience enhanced your career as a musician and producer?

***I think university really teaches you a lot about time management, deadlines and especially about how to recover from setbacks and unexpected situations. I think there is a lot of this in the music industry, and so being able to handle it and move forward has really helped me a lot. It also exposed me to so many other scenes and music types that I wasn’t aware of before as students come from all over the world. So being able to incorporate this into my music collection really expanded my musical knowledge. And it’s also just great fun!***

Are there any new music projects in the works, or upcoming releases that fans can look forward to?

***I just spent about 3 months in the studio working on new projects and learning anything I could to up the level of my productions, and having recently just come back from a Selected songwriting camp in Berlin with some of the most talented singers/songwriters I have ever worked with I can safely say some of the tracks that will be coming out in the next few months will be some of the best I have released.***

***I am also in the process of sorting out some live sets and so I won’t give away too much right now, but I will be posting a lot about the next couple of releases on my instagram in the next few weeks!***



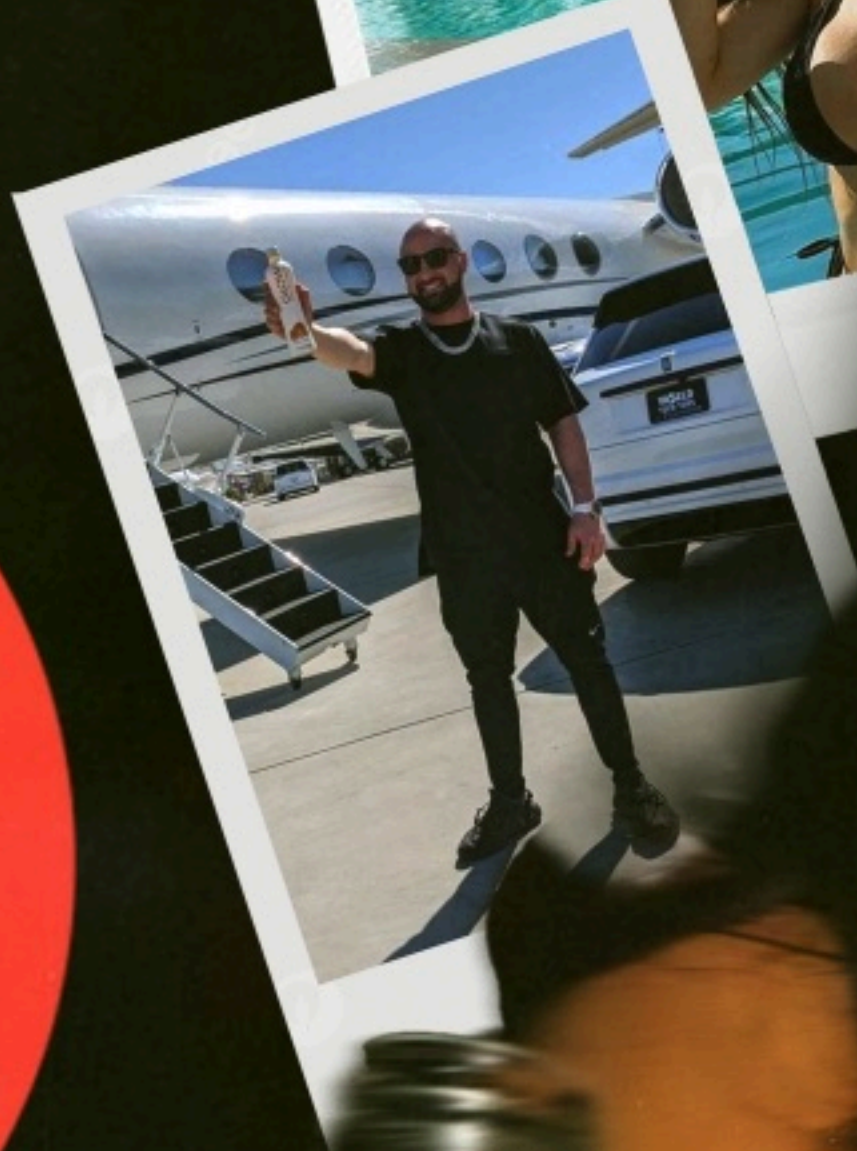
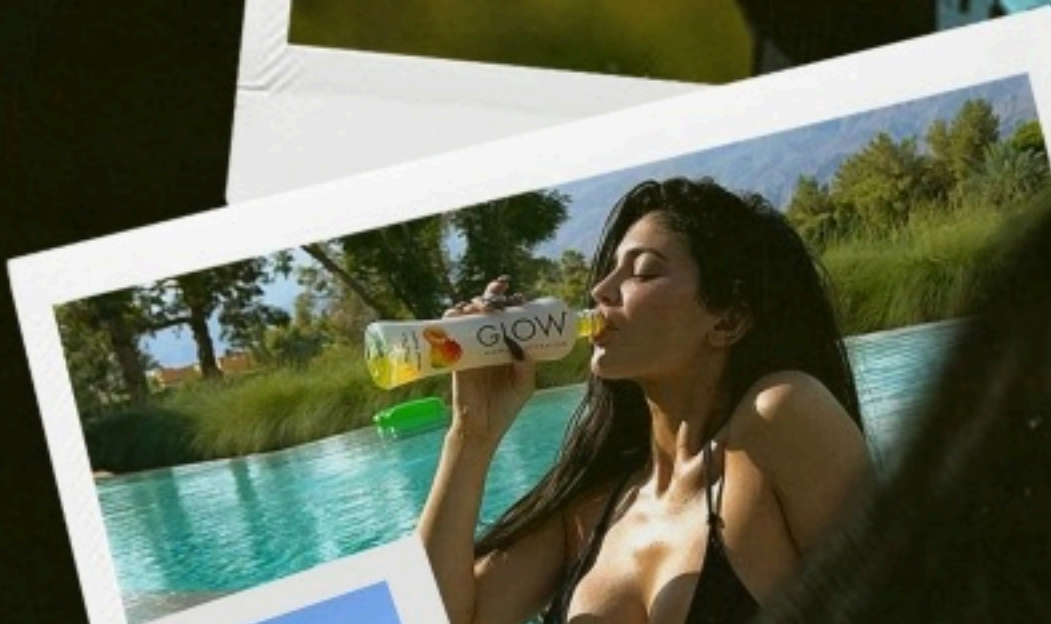
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THE UNSETTLING INTERSECTION OF ARTISTRY AND POLITICS

# The Case of ***NINA KRAVIZ***

Art has always been an intricate tapestry of creative expression, socio-cultural norms, and political sentiments. Throughout history, artists have often been at the forefront of political upheaval and change. Yet, the recent backlash against Nina Kraviz, a prominent Russian DJ, brings forth a pressing concern about the boundaries between an artist's political stance and their professional domain.

Nina Kraviz, a household name in the global electronic music industry, found herself amidst a storm of controversy following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Her past social media actions, perceived by many as supportive of **Vladimir Putin**, coupled with her silence on the issue, drew widespread criticism. Consequently, she was removed from line-ups of significant music festivals, and her ties with the Rotterdam music company, Clone Distribution, were severed.

Yet, what is particularly intriguing about Kraviz's predicament is the challenge it poses to the foundational ethos of artistry. Should artists be penalized professionally for their political views, or their decision to remain neutral?

Kraviz, in her defense, voiced her stand against all forms of violence and her agony at the loss of innocent lives. The gesture, albeit late, highlights a crucial facet of this debate – **the right of artists to a neutral stance.**

**NOT EVERY ARTIST FEELS COMPELLED OR EQUIPPED TO SPEAK OUT ON POLITICAL MATTERS, AND THEIR SILENCE SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE EQUATED WITH ENDORSEMENT OR SUPPORT. IN A POLARIZED WORLD, WHERE SIDES ARE QUICKLY TAKEN AND JUDGMENTS HASTILY PASSED, THE SPACE FOR NUANCED, MIDDLE-GROUND PERSPECTIVES IS RAPIDLY SHRINKING.**

**THIS BINARY OUTLOOK CAN BE DETRIMENTAL, PARTICULARLY FOR ARTISTS LIKE KRAVIZ WHO MIGHT FEEL CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.**

Moreover, Kraviz's portrayal with a cardboard cut-out of Putin at Coachella, which was supplied by the festival itself, further underscores the complexities surrounding her position. The act, which was perhaps done without deep political undertones, became a part of the rallying criticism against her. This incident serves as a stark reminder that, in today's digital age, nuances are often lost, and narratives are easily manipulated.

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's statement on the role of Russian artists in this political milieu emphasizes the need for them to voice their opinions.** However, it also inadvertently places an undue burden on artists, expecting them to serve as political spokespersons. Such expectations can stifle their creative freedom and push them into unwarranted controversies.

While cultural boycotts, like those witnessed against Russian artists post the Ukraine invasion, might be seen by some as acts of resistance or soft power, **they also raise concerns of McCarthyist nationalism.** Excluding artists based on their perceived political inclinations can be a slippery slope, potentially leading to a cultural echo chamber devoid of diverse voices.

Nina Kraviz's situation is emblematic of a larger, more complex conversation about the interplay of art, politics, and public expectations. It's essential to recognize that artists, like all individuals, possess the right to their beliefs, political affiliations, and the choice to vocalize them, or not. An artist's worth should ideally be gauged by their craft and the impact of their art, rather than their political utterances or silences. In an era where divisiveness is rampant, it is imperative to uphold the sanctity of art and its practitioners, allowing them the space to express, or remain neutral, without fear of unjust repercussions.



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Blue Mountains





# Sonic Revolution

**Breaking and Worlds** **Beats Bridging**

Growing up with the electronic pulsations of *New York's legendary clubs of the 2000s*, I've seen artists like Hardwell redefine the essence of electronic dance music, transforming underground movements into mainstream euphoria.

## A FUSION FÊTE

Hardwell's recent releases are a dance of diversified elements, notably **"Anybody Out There,"** a seamless symphony of edgy and vocal-driven sounds, creating anthems that traverse festival fields and radio realms. **"The goal was to create a track which sits in both lanes,"** he mentions, reflecting his evolution and his roots in big room & electro.

## SYMPHONY OF SOULS

This music maestro collaborates dynamically, as seen with Azteck and Alex Hepburn, creating tracks like powerful anthems. Hardwell's music resonates expansively, forming a harmonious connection with diverse audiences and ensuring his sound reverberates in the hearts of both the festival goers and the everyday listener.

## STREAMING THE BEAT

Hardwell has leveraged live streaming to connect the global fanbase, allowing the vibrant energy of his sets to create a unifying musical journey, **breaking records and transcending physical boundaries.**

## BEATS FOR CHANGE

Beyond the beats, Hardwell seeks to make a difference through the United We Are Foundation, utilizing his platform for social change and impacting thousands, emphasizing his desire to uplift rather than to simply be a high-profile icon.

## A RETURN TO REMEMBER

Performing on global stages **from Coachella to Tomorrowland, Hardwell's return show at Ultra Music Festival** in Miami was a mix of new sounds and high emotions, a memorable comeback marking his evolution and passion.

## VISIONARY VIBES

With his eyes on the future of dance music, Hardwell is excited about the explosive growth of innovative sounds and genres, painting a future filled with limitless sonic possibilities and harder, electrifying beats.

## EVOLUTIONARY ECHOES

**'Rebels Never Die'** symbolizes Hardwell's journey back to his roots, experimenting creatively and promising fans a variety of transformative sounds and innovative musical expressions.



# damian



## ALL FOCUS AND ENERGY HAS BEEN LEADING UP TO MY NEW ALBUM 'TOGETHER'

so now it's amazing to finally share it with everyone and take the it on the road. I've also just taken part in this year's Amsterdam Dance Event where I met a bunch of incredibly talented producers via my remix challenge in partnership with SAE Amsterdam.

We signed four remixes of my album track 'Closer Together' on the spot so now I'm looking forward to working with each producer on finalising their remix for release.

Overall, 2023 so far has been a year of getting new music out there and laying the foundations of the Vibing Out label vision. Bring on 2024!

It's a broad topic, but in a nutshell in addition to being the very much a drum machine like pattern based programmer and arpeggiator user, I've learned to play my keys enough to actually compose music, play my chords and melodies these days and I also work with other people a lot more these days, have co-writing sessions and send and receive song ideas with other writers, singers and producers and all that has broadened my sound palette from the initial almost all instrumental hard house and trance type stuff more vocal and organic sounds and genres, but it's still not a huge departure from my original vibes, I'd say.

I still love energetic emotional dance music made for the clubs and festivals and I think I can easily play my new and





**C**ould you share some memories with fans from the countries you've visited on tour this summer?

*This summer has been so much fun, I've played some amazing festivals and it's been great to see live crowd reactions to my new tracks. As far as memories go, I had a pretty special performance just recently at Weekend Festival in Helsinki, Finland, jumping on stage with my buddy Alan Walker and then later catching up with the ever-awesome Steve Aoki. Both guys are super talented and super chill and always great to catch up with!*

Tell us more about your release "Nobody Listens" which dropped in August and featured Gid Sedgwick. This is a super emotive single. What does it mean to you and how did the collaboration come about?

*Gid Sedgwick is someone who I've admired for a while now so to collaborate with him on 'Nobody Listens' was really special. His voice is super-charged with emotion from the get-go and that is exactly what this track needs. For me, 'Nobody Listens' is an uplifting dancefloor banger. I had actually been sitting on it for a couple of years, tweaking it every so often but never quite getting the effect that I wanted until Gid came onboard. Through the lyrics and the energy, I hope that this record reminds people to check in on others around them and to listen to them and that no matter what life throws your way, you can handle it.*

We've caught wind of a new album in the works. What details can you share at this moment in time on the album?

*Yes, my new album 'Together' is out now! I had a big bunch of tracks that I'd wanted to put out for a good while, and then the pandemic came and on one hand, threw a wrench into my plans, but on the other hand, gave me a good bit of time and plenty of perspective to both think about which particular tracks to put on the album and to re-work several of them as well. I wanted to create the type of tracks that could soundtrack those fleeting moments of pure euphoria on the dancefloor when you're surrounded by your friends. But, through my Vibia Out live streaming process I'd also realised that a remote partaking can be a very true collective experience and the music in that case can be a little different, too. That steered my production process and gave me an opportunity to make some tracks that are lower energy and flirt with genres and styles I haven't previously released.*

*The album is out on my Vibia Out label which means that I've had total creative freedom to bring together a tracklist that reflects the kind of sounds I'm into right now, as well as invite some really talented vocalists and fellow producers to shape it and*

*elevate it even further.*

*This album is for all of the amazing people who I've met through music, on and off the dancefloor. From those who have been with me on this wild journey from the start to those who have not long ago joined and are hyped for what the future holds*

How do you strike a balance between staying true to your sound and embracing growth, adapting to evolving music trends?

*I always start noodling around sort of organically, in my own way and that automatically brings some sort of connection to my roots, to my early sounds, or ethos of making music. I'm an active DJ so I listen to hundreds of tracks a month and select those relatively few I want to play in my DJ set. So, I automatically stay in touch with what's going on in my genres and a little bit outside, too, and all the good stuff I find and like somehow filters into what I do any given day as well. I think it's not like I purposely think "Hey, stay adapting, but true to your sound", but the development slowly happens and the legacy sounds and thought processes are in there somewhere at all times. I also look to other producers, young and more seasoned, and ask for and exchange writing and production tips and generally talk about the music and the scene pretty much daily.*

You've been live streaming your sets on social media through your admired Vibia Out series on Twitch. Do you believe this enhances the experience, making it accessible to a broader audience? What inspired its creation?

*Vibia Out was born during lockdown times as a way to stay connected with fans and for my own joy given that live touring ad come to a complete standstill. And put simply, since then the party has never stopped. Not playing to a dancefloor has allowed me to experiment me to experiment with some mellower sounds and we've built up a real community which I might've not come across outside of the digital world.*

*Even though touring is now back up and running, every Friday I still stream a live DJ set, unless I'm on the road, and we connect in the chat. There's a really cool crew of music lovers from across the world who continue to tune in and I love seeing regular names pop up on the stream. I may be biased...but my Vibia Out community, my Vibes and Darudians, really are the best!*

What is the story behind Vibia Out, your record label? How has this new venture contributed to your growth as an artist and what are your thoughts on the raw talent emerging from the scene?

*By starting my own label, I wanted to take the power back. The music industry and the pressures it brings can take away the space to experiment and I wanted to bring that creative*

*freedom back and make it a priority. I think this shows in the tracks I've released this year. I'm making the sounds that I want to hear, taking inspiration from some nostalgic rave and trance, but also keeping a (for lack of better word) modern edge and I've already had the pleasure of collaborating with artists such as Oskr, House Body, and Gid Sedgwick.*

*The label also takes its name and community ethos from my Vibia Out Twitch series. The inspiration here is that I want the label to become a hub for creativity not just for me, but for other artists and producers too who share my passion for making music and innovative technology as well.*

*Some DJ/producers that I'm vibing with right now include Lumisade and Orkidea, as well as Dan Stone, Ahmed Helmy, Roman Messer, Maor Levi and Leon Bolier, and the list goes on!*

How has your Finnish background influenced your approach to music? Are there any specific cultural elements or influences from Finland that you incorporate into your songs to add a distinctive touch?

*Before the late 90s and early 2000s we didn't have too many global successes and internationally touring DJs and bands, so maybe because of the quite long time period before that we had our own more closed language and cultural circles and our typical melancholic tones affecting the music collectively. We traditionally have had a good bunch of sad or bittersweet minor key songs which I think has had an effect and still does affect my music writing and productions. Although, I don't necessarily intentionally try to incorporate anything specific like that into my productions.*







**I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT  
TO NEVER LOSE YOUR  
IDENTITY AS AN ARTIST  
AND ALWAYS HAVE YOUR  
PASSION AS THE  
NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.**

*What are your plans between  
now and the end of 2023?*

The aim is to finish the new album by the end of the year of course. But I hope even sooner because I'm pumped to work on some new FERR material.

I've also got quite some exciting shows ahead of me in Asia which I'm really looking forward to, so plenty for me to do still this year!

**ferry  
corsten** 





**Y**ou've been on the road this year, performing at huge festivals and club shows. As well as the recent revival show of your New World Punx collective with Markus Schulz. Tell us some of your touring highlights of 2023 so far.

**The majority of the tour highlights definitely consist of What The F shows, in which I play an open to close set with only my own music or remixes. This world tour is special to me because I get to combine the old me with all my new music, packed into a 6+ hour set that takes the fans on a memorable trip. But besides these club shows I really had fun playing b2b with Markus at Project Glow festival in D.C, as well as our New World Punx re-debut at M2 Miami.**

Congratulations on the release of "Mind Trip." We're eager to know what significance this single holds for you. Could you shed some light on the inspiration behind the track?

**Thanks! With Mind Trip I actually experimented with the use of AI in a track. Not with the production itself, but I used ChatGPT as an aid for writing the lyrics of the spoken word. I think it turned out to be something really significant for the track so I'm curious to see how this will evolve in the future.**

We hear that you're working on a new Ferry Corsten album? We'd love to hear some exciting details and know more about the tracklist, themes and expected release date.

**I don't want to give away too much, but I think diversity is a word that would fit this new album perfectly. I've always been pushing myself to experiment with different genres and styles to keep things interesting for me, but also to challenge my fans. And I think this album will definitely have some unexpected twists for the listener. There's no expected release date yet, but we're aiming for next year.**

Ferry, your journey into music started as a hobby, and now it's become a successful profession. Could you share a pivotal moment or experience that made you realize music was your

true calling?

**I don't think there's a specific moment or experience that made me realize this. I don't even think I see music as my 'true calling'. Creating music is still my favourite hobby. I'm just lucky to be able to call my hobby my work, and my work my hobby.**

The ambient album, As Above So Below, under your FERR alias, showcases your love for orchestral music. What inspired you to explore this genre, and how was the creative process different from your dance-focused electronic music productions? And, what's in store for the FERR alias?

**In 2018 I was asked to create the film score for a movie called Don't Go, which came out in 2019. This was such an experience for me, always being intrigued by the music in movies and its composers. I started listening more and more to cinematic and neoclassical music and eventually tried to create it myself. I really discovered a new passion here and am really excited to work on some brand new FERR music once I've finished the new Ferry Corsten album.**

You're known for bringing together iconic trance acts for the greater cause. Can you tell us about a particularly memorable musical collaboration and what you gained from the experience?

**Actually one that comes to mind is a very recent collaboration. For creating the A State Of Trance 2023 Anthem I went into the studio with Armin van Buuren, Ruben de Ronde and Benno de Goeij (Rank 1).**

**For 3 days we locked ourselves up in the Armada studios and started creating the anthem, while on a livestream with the fans. It was so interesting to see all our different ways of producing come together and the amount of creativity in one room was just unreal.**

**We had so much fun because we all know each other for years and it really inspired and excited me to go back in the studio, working on my solo records.**

Given your diverse projects and exciting aliases, is there a specific one that has challenged you the most creatively, and how did you overcome any obstacles you faced?

**That would be Ferry Corsten itself. It's my main alias under which the discography is by far the most diverse. Gouryella, System F, etc all have a certain sound and feel to it, which in its own way is a challenge because you want every track to give listeners the exact same experience and emotion as the previous one. That's also why in recent years I did not release a lot of Gouryella music because I'm very picky on the sound and feel that project has. It has to fit perfectly.**

Having received numerous remix requests from prominent artists such as U2, Moby, Faithless, Duran Duran, and Public Enemy, is there a track that you've not yet remixed that you'd love to put the Ferry Corsten spin on in the future?

**That's a tough one. There's not one specific track that comes to mind, however if I could pick an artist I'd love to remix it would be Fred Again. I admire his unique melodies, they're special and distinctive. I think it would be interesting to see what I could do with one of his tracks.**

Reflecting on your journey, what do you consider to be the key factor behind your sustained longevity and ongoing success in the ever-changing music industry?

**I would say, very cliché, keeping it true to myself. I think it's important to never lose your identity as an artist and always have your passion as the number one priority. Create what you really want to create and the fans will follow.**

**Yes, I've lost a few fans over the years because my musical style and preference has somewhat changed in the past two decades. But 99.9% of my fans actually appreciate this because it also keeps them challenged to discover new music and broaden their horizons.**





# INNA

**SWEET+SOUR**

Q

Your recent visit to Armenia for your electrifying performance was truly memorable. Could you express your thoughts and emotions regarding the trip, and are there any upcoming shows or performances in your schedule?

A

It was my first performance in Armenia and I was super excited to receive so much love, support and appreciation. It was an amazing feeling and a great change of energy. I cannot wait to be back in Armenia.

For the moment, I don't have any upcoming shows there, but I hope I will be back soon! Armenia, wait for me!



What was it like collaborating with Tujamo and Azteck on "Freak"? Could you share how the three of you came together and describe the unique contributions each of you made to the track?

Tujamo's team reached out to my team and proposed the song "Freak" and because it sounded cool and I really liked it, I went to the studio and recorded it. We performed it for the first time at the Neversea Festival, in Romania before it was officially released and the audience loved it! I am super happy about this first collaboration with Tujamo and Azteck. To many more!

Your collaboration with Sean Paul on "Up" was quite notable. How did this opportunity come to be? Are there any other artists you're eager to team up with in the future?

Firstly, we released this song as a single and then my manager thought that Sean Paul would be a great fit. So, he talked to Sean's team and sent the song and he loved it and immediately jumped on it. It became massive and I am super grateful about this collaboration. Not to mention the huge support received on TikTok through the #upchallenge!

Regarding other artists I'd be eager to team up with, I would love a collaboration with David Guetta, P!nk or Rosalía.

Victoria's Secret showcased their Icon Collection with "VKTM." a song featuring you, Sickotoy, and TAG. Did this make you feel iconic? What, in your opinion, defines an icon, and how do you ensure you're comfortable in your own skin?

It was amazing to have my song included in the Victoria's Secret campaign. It's unbelievable! It's more than a dream! It's surreal! I will always be grateful for everything that happened in my career.

An icon is someone who inspires through what he/she does and being relevant for the masses. I am comfortable in my skin because I know myself very well, I choose what's important for me, what makes me happy and I get to do what I love every day: music and spread love through my work to the world.

And I have this unique change of energy with the fans at my shows which makes me even more happy.

You recently released a remix by 22Bullets for "Rock My Body," featuring R3HAB and Sash! What significance does this song hold for you, and how does it fit into your career path?

I love this collaboration and also the great feedback we got from our fans! The song is a remake of Sash!'s hit and R3HAB thought of releasing it and invited me to join him.

I am excited about all the love we received for this one from people in our shows and on the radio. It was one of the summer parties favourites and I am extremely grateful for all the support.

Are you planning to incorporate your Romanian roots into your next releases, given the current industry trend of embracing diverse cultural influences? How do you anticipate your blend of inspirations will be received by the public?

I've always released songs in Romanian as well, some of my fans learned Romanian because of my songs haha. I also have collaborations with Romanian artists. One of my Romanian songs "TU SI EU" was also released in English.

Whenever I feel inspired to bring more of my Romanian roots, I do it. It's more about a feeling for me than a trend.

Earlier this year you released the album Just Dance. What can you tell us about the record, and can you provide any insights into your current projects in the works?

It's already a tradition to end the year with a Dance Queen's House session which means 16 days, a lot of music, friends, colleagues, producers and songwriters from Global Records I'm sharing my passion for music with, a lot of surprises and 8 episodes on my YouTube channel with the entire experience. And of course, a new album with the songs produced and written in DQH. I'm happy I can do what I love and that I get to release an album every year. "Just Dance" is an album with an atypical, uptempo, energetic, bold sound, my fans enjoyed it and I was super thrilled about this new direction.

I'm working on new music, I will release another Spanish album soon written entirely by me, just like the previous one "YO". I am super excited and I cannot wait for this one to be released!







# RESTAURATED

Germany, the obscure root of industrial symphony, bleak in its grey factory walls, but an amazonian jungle between its 20' Funktion one's. Few performers have been able to puppeteer its fiery circle. Where the ghosts of history intertwine with the raw, unbridled energy of the now. Crafting a cacophonous ballet of discord and harmony.

*Here, an Australian maestro, a wanderer in this labyrinth of chaotic symphony, finds a discordant resonance, syncing his frenzied beats with the pulsating, anarchic spirit of the German abyss.*

In the aftermath of the global solitude, the enigmatic heart of club culture in Germany found its savage rhythm, evolving its discordant symphony by mingling with the unseen, unheard harmonies of the world, crafting musical tales of rebellion, a chaotic blend of the world's whispers, distinctly and defiantly German.





**H**ow did your EU/Asia tour go? Which countries pleasantly surprised you with their reactions, love, and support? Any places you'd love to revisit?

***There were so many beautiful places but Germany was incredible. The amount of support I received and the people that I met made it a really special place. Very lucky to be headed back there soon for some new shows.***

After you performed your final show in Australia, was it challenging to be away from home for an extended period?

***I don't find it challenging, but I do enjoy my routine. This was the longest I spent away from home, so it's tough to finish/work on music and train when you're constantly travelling. I'm always excited to get back home and get back into a routine.***

You seem thrilled about heading overseas to perform at festivals and club shows in Europe and Asia. Which event stands out the most for you?

***One of the longest and funniest tours I've ever done, every show was insane. But, Airbeat one was something special. I played on the first day in a campsite. It felt like out of nowhere there were 3000 people. The energy was wild and I'm so keen to be back in Germany soon @ Bootshaus.***

Could you share some insights about your recent collaboration with Topic on 'Sleepless', featuring GoldFord? How did that opportunity arise, and what was your experience like working on the project?

***Topic was playing a show in Adelaide. We met at the show and he came to my studio that week. We started with the vocals and built the track around it. We were both super excited about it and so glad that it's now out.***

Your remix of Angus & Julia Stone's 'Big Jet Plane' left a significant impact. What drew you to the song, and how did you create its captivating beats?

***Post Malone played the original in a viral video to Lil Baby a while back, I always loved the track but it was super mellow. I added some techno sounds and re did the instruments while keeping the mood of the original. I Had no idea how well it would connect with people.***

How do you plan to bridge the gap between the underground and main stages, breaking barriers within the EDM sub-genre?

***Tik Tok has been instrumental in bringing new ears to EDM sub genres and Techno especially. Seeing Techno as the most played genre Tomorrowland shows its impact. It's really cool to see.***

With over 50 million streams and releases on labels like Spinnin' Records, Sony Music, and others, you've made a remarkable impact at a young age. Support from Alesso, Zedd, and Timmy Trumpet on international stages further highlights your achievements, including running your own clothing line. How has this influenced your industry approach, and what's the key to your success?

***Consistency is the key - doing something consistent over time in any aspect of life or work. It's so crazy to have the support from these huge labels and artists. But I just see myself as a normal kid. I work hard, enjoy it and stay consistent.***



# SVENET + SOR

I'M NOT ONE TO TAKE A LOT OF PRIDE IN  
MILESTONES OR HOLDING RECORDS PER SE,  
BUT THE WHOLE EVENT WAS AMAZING TO BE  
A PART OF.

**ARMIN**  
**VAN BUUREN**





Can you provide details about your Trance-Techno

collaboration with MADDIX? How do you feel about the final result?

**Maddix did a massive remix of my track 'Computers Take Over The World' and it's actually been about since mid-September. I'm really happy with how his remix turned out! It's a huge banger!**

Are there any genres you're interested in blending, perhaps even some unexpected combinations like Afrobeats and reggaeton, which are currently trending?

**I guess I'm interested in all genres, but there are some genres that are a lot harder to weave into my sound. It still has to be an Armin van Buuren track, so I might not explore Afrobeats or reggaeton until I'm absolutely sure it can be incorporated in a natural way.**

You recently released "Love Is A Drug," featuring Anne Gudrun, which gained rapid popularity following your performance at Ultra Miami. Can you share your thoughts on the track and your collaboration with this highly streamed Norwegian artist?

**'Love Is A Drug' is a track I loved making. It has the mainstage drive that's at the heart of my mainstage sets and Anne's vocal is so full of emotion. It was amazing working with her on this one and I think the end result shows just how well we connected in the studio.**

"Lose This Feeling," one of your recent club bangers celebrates the thrill of one's first festival, concert, or rave experience. Can you take us back to your very first festival as a fan and then share how you continue to keep that electrifying energy alive, now as a DJ and producer?

**The first time I went to a real rave was in 1993 to "the mega music dance experience" in the Netherlands. I think I was sixteen years old and it blew my mind. Before that, I only witnessed dance music through the radio, since there was no internet in those days. To see the DJs I mired up close was an amazing experience. I still try to listen to that young boy. That's where the true Armin sound is still. The older I get, the more I realize how important it is to stay true**

**to that voice.**

Ibiza holds a special place in your heart due to your longstanding presence on the island. Are there any other cities you feel a unique connection to, or are there still unexplored places where you'd like to perform?

**A profound yes to both. There are many countries and cities I loved performing in (and coming back to). Cluj-Napoca in Romania, where Untold is held, is a great example of course, but so are Miami in the United States and many other places in the world. In all honesty though, it's more the crowd and the people that I feel that strong connection to, more so than the city or country itself.**

And yes, I'm sure there are a lot of places I haven't yet been able to cross off of my performance bucket list. Who knows what the future will bring!

Recently, you partnered with the renowned UNTOLD festival for a remarkable performance atop the Burj Khalifa, achieving two world records: the highest performance on the tallest building and the largest LED screen for a show. How does it feel to have such significant milestones to your name?

**It surely was a great experience. I'm not one to take a lot of pride in milestones or holding records per se, but the whole event was amazing to be a part of.**

**I definitely made some amazing memories performing atop the Burj Khalifa.**

The set featured massive audio-reactive visuals across the entire building to promote UNTOLD's Middle East debut in Dubai in February 2024. With Alok, Alesso, and Martin Garrix on the lineup, what can fans anticipate at the festival, and can we expect to see you there in February?

**Yes, I'll definitely be playing there in February. I'm so excited! And with so many great artists and friends of mine there on the lineup, I'm sure it'll be a massive happening altogether!**



# GIANCA

## THE SYMPHONY OF

## A SECOND CHANCE

**I**n a tiny, dimly-lit studio, where the air hums with the potential of uncreated melodies, Gianca sits, lost in thought. The walls are adorned with remnants of a life spent chasing beats across continents - from the gritty underground clubs of Berlin to the euphoric summer nights at Eden Ibiza. These are not just memories; they're the building blocks of a journey that's about to take a new turn.

It was in the aftermath of a life-shaking event in August 2021 that Gianca - a name that would soon encapsulate a bold new project - was born. This wasn't just a rebranding; it was a rebirth. After dedicating a decade and a half to the industry, Gianca stood at a crossroads. The realization dawned that perhaps he hadn't pushed as hard as he could. The moment was ripe for change, a chance to infuse his music with a depth and intensity he'd never explored before.

Gianca's vision was clear - to create a tapestry of sound that narrated a story from one song to the next, a stark contrast to the industry's usual clamor for quantity over quality. In this new chapter, each track would be a brushstroke in a larger, more vibrant picture. The anticipation of the project's release hung in the air, a promise that when the music finally played, it would speak for itself.

At the heart of Gianca's inspiration is his family. Raised in a home steeped in Italian passion, where love was the language and music the medium, Gianca learned early the power of emotional expression. Now, as a husband and father, these values have taken on a new significance. His wife, ever-present in the front row of his life, dances to the rhythm of his dreams, while his daughter's laughter adds a layer of authenticity and drive to his work. They are the undercurrent to his music, the reason each beat resonates with more than just sound - it resonates with heart.

Gianca believes that the true essence of an artist lies in the ability to connect with the audience. It's about creating an experience that transcends the auditory, where the music, the artist, and the listener become one. This philosophy stems from his days touring as a DJ, where he discovered the magic of shared energy and the importance of a community that moves together.

As the landscape of electronic music continues to expand, Gianca finds excitement in its evolution. The rise of festivals in the United States, the blending of music and visuals, and the burgeoning confidence of performers all signify a golden era for electronic music. In this new world, Gianca sees endless possibilities to explore, to innovate, and to connect.

Now, as he readies to introduce Gianca to the world, there's a palpable sense of anticipation. This project isn't just a collection of tracks; it's a journey through the heart of an artist who has found his true calling. It's a testament to the power of second chances, to the beauty of music crafted with love, and to the endless possibilities that lie ahead.



PRODUCERS  
ELECTRONIC

# THE NEW VANGUARD

OF LIVE PERFORMANCES

MIAMI

5 DAY FORECAST

THE CASE OF  
SUNRISE AT CLUB SPACE

I

n recent years, the landscape of live music has witnessed a seismic shift, with electronic music producers emerging as the new front-runners of performance art. For the party peoples of Miami, this transition vanguard by veterans like DJ 5 Day Forecast, is redefining the scope of what the dance floor scene will be about. Out with the commercial - in with the originals.

**DJ 5 Day Forecast, originally from Philadelphia's vibrant music scene, has been orchestrating his takeover of Miami's electronic music landscape for the better part of the last decade.** Known for his eclectic mixes, he has steadily moved away from the "generalist" DJ persona, carving out a unique identity that blends innovative production with immersive live performances.

**His recent track, "Sunrise at Club Space," has set him up for proper recognition amongst his peers.** The song, inspired by the legendary Space Ibiza, is a nod to the past and that absolutely unique feeling one can only get after a long sweaty night, at first light. *It represents the new wave of electronic music, where the producer is both the creator and the performer, driving the narrative of the music rather than just curating it.*

This shift towards the spotlight is significant. **In the past, DJs were often seen as background figures, essential but not central to the live music experience.** Now, with artists like 5 Day Forecast at the helm, they are the main event. Their music is not just played; it's performed, often with a level of theatricality and engagement that rivals traditional live bands.

The rise of producers as center stage performers can be attributed to several factors. Technological advancements have played a key role, allowing for more creative and complex production techniques. Additionally, the growing appreciation for electronic music as a legitimate art form has elevated the status of these artists.

**His plans to conquer the Miami scene signify a broader trend: electronic music producers are no longer content to remain behind the scenes.** They are stepping into the limelight, commanding stages with their creative visions, and redefining what it means to be a live performer in the modern music industry.

The rise of artists like DJ 5 Day Forecast marks a new era in live performances. **It's a world where the electronic music producer is not just a part of the show; they are the show,** captivating audiences with their artistry and transforming the landscape of live music.





# LEE FOSS FOR SWEET & SOUR MAGAZINE



ARTICLE WRITTEN BY  
IGBOKWE NICK

Lee Foss has been at the forefront of modern house and techno music since he burst onto the scene in the mid-2000s. Alongside his partners at Hot Natured, Foss has taken the modern dance scene to newer heights. Foss has earned plaudits for his abilities as a DJ and music producer. DJ Mag hailed him as "one of the most talented new forces in modern dance music today." House Juggernauts Art Department was just as generous with their praise, as they stated that Foss is their favorite producer. So, who is Lee Foss, and why has he gotten so many plaudits from peers and critics? Well, you can keep reading to find out all about the iconic house, deep house, and techno proponent.

## WHO IS LEE FOSS?

Lee Foss is a producer and DJ from DeKalb, Illinois, United States. The versatile creative started his music career in 2001 at a time when house and techno weren't as popular as other electronic troupes.

According to Foss, he went to a lot of clubs and raves while growing up in Chicago. This experience piqued his interest in the subgenres of disco and house. He later began creating music on his own in Chicago, but in his own words, "*They weren't really getting very far, except for when I do edits which I would send to my friends who were bigger deejays, and they would love them.*"

Eventually, it was during a chance meeting in Ibiza with creative partner and future lifelong friend Jamie Jones that would change everything. This meeting would change the way Lee Foss saw music, and it would lay the blueprint for his future mainstream career. The pair hit it off instantly, and it paved the path for their Hot Creations label collaboration with Richy Ahmed and later their Hot Natured band project with Infinity Ink and also the iconic Paradise event brand.

## CAREER BREAKTHROUGH

**For most creatives, it is a daunting task to leave your hometown, friends, and family as you decide to pursue what's best for your career.**

Lee Foss faced the same dilemma in his early career, as he chose to uproot and set up in Los Angeles after spending close to a decade making a name for himself in Chicago. Thankfully, this turned out to be the best decision of his career to that point, as his talents were even more appreciated in the booming Los Angeles deejay scene. His move to LA saw him garner both local and international attention for both his deejay and production work. The big break came with the release of '**Grinding**' on Wolf+Lamb, a track that was picked up and played by DJs all over the States and abroad.

After this big hit, Lee Foss became a household name, going on to drop hits such as '**Equilibrium**' and '**U Got Me**.' Interestingly, he has achieved all these without the backing of a "big label," with the independent route being his choice of distribution. Furthermore, DJ Magazine voted '**U Got Me**' as their number 4 favorite record of 2010, having already appeared on their '**Stone Cold Killers**' section earlier in the year.

## LEGACY

Lee Foss has made a name for himself in the club circuits, and his reputation as a high-profile DJ is well-established. Foss has performed at high-profile settings including but not limited to The Fabric (London), The Warehouse Project (Manchester), Watergate (Berlin), The Standard Rooftop (Los Angeles), and Spybar (Chicago). He has garnered fans both in his native United States of America as well as overseas.

Lee Foss' success on the DJ scene has been fuelled by his versatility. The Chicago-born icon's sets are typically a rich blend of nu-school house and synth-heavy techno.

Aside from his work as a DJ, Foss has achieved popularity for his career as a music producer. Foss teamed up with iconic production guru MK for his Electricity EP drop on Hot Creations featuring Anabel Englund. The release was later named Pete Tong's Essential New Tune.

Furthermore, Foss is a founding member of the production group Hot Natured alongside Jamie Jones, Ali Love, and Luca C. The group hosted a sold-out world tour in 2013 that saw them perform at legendary venues such as Glastonbury, Sónar, and Bestival.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

As you would expect from a creative of Lee Foss' standing, the versatile DJ and producer has a string of upcoming events before the end of 2023.

The most recent of which is in Boston on October 31. The event is titled Claptone and presents The Masquerade: Claptone, Lee Foss & Tita Lau, and it promises to be a thrilling occasion.

Furthermore, Foss has a stacked late November in bookings. He will be performing at the "**Black Wednesday**" event on November 22 at the Spybar in his native Chicago. Then, three days later, on November 25, he will be headlining "**Repopulate Mars New York - Gray Area**" at Superior Ingredients, New York.

Lee Foss will also be performing in December as he rounds out the year in style at Repopulate Mars in a show aptly titled, "Repopulate Mars feat. Lee Foss with Max Styler - Austin". The show will be held in Austin, USA, and will go down on December 15, 2023.

## COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Lee Foss is a DJ's DJ, and he is a huge proponent of the collaboration culture in his profession. Foss has been part of iconic collaborative releases over the years, such as Hot Natured EPs and albums, and some high-charting singles as well.

The legendary artist seems hard at work on a brand new Hot Natured project, and he is rounding up his "**LEE FOSS FALL 2023 TOUR DIARY**" tour. The tour's last date is in New York on November 25, 2023, and it promises to be an enthralling affair.

## DISCOGRAPHY ALBUMS

2013: Hot Natured - Different Sides of the Sun (Hot Creations) 2017: Alchemy (Emerald City Music)

## EPS

2009 - Hot Natured - h.e.a.d.s. (Culprit)  
2009 - Lee Foss - The Edge (Culprit)  
2010 - Lee Foss - U Got Me (Hot Creations)  
2010 - Hot Natured - Equilibrium (Culprit)

2011 - Lee Foss - Starfruit (Hot Creations)  
2011 - Modern Amusement - Cold as Ice (No 19)  
2011 - Pteradactil Disco - Big Ass Biscuit (Hot Creations)

## REMIXES

2010 - Ali Love - Moscow Girl (Lee Foss Remix) (Back Yard)  
2010 - Marc Ashken - Just A Groove (Lee Foss Remix) (FVF) 2010  
2010 - Samantha James - Subconscious (Lee Foss Subconscious Strawberry Remix) (Om)  
2011 - Clockwork - It's You Again (Lee Foss meets Robert James in the Art Department Remix) (Hot Creations)  
2011 - DJ T feat James Teej - Sense (Lee Foss and Jamie Jones remix) 2011 - Lee Brinx - Kitchens and Bedrooms (Lee Foss Remix)





THE WORLD OF TECHNO MUSIC IS

# VAST AND GRAND

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o start with, there's always music festivals that celebrate lineups heavily stacked with new and mainstream EDM and techno artists. [The Road to Ultra](#) is gearing up for spots in Guatemala City, and Taiwan and Chile later in the year. Some of my personal favorites are attending including [Sasha and Digweed](#) and [Vintage Culture](#).

More artists are yet to be announced. For instance, in the Philippines, [Hydro Manila Music Festival](#) just made it's return this past August, and is known for it's waterworks, "splashmob" style in Pasay City.

There's also a plethora of great techno parties at clubs in the BGC area of Manila. Some of the freshest parties are thrown by [SadoMasoDisco](#), most recently hosted by [Seltsam](#) in Makati. Salarymanx4649 is a Japanese restaurant and club that hosts great late night raves in Forbestown. [ThatElephantParty](#) is a LGBTQ+ friendly bash that travels globally to host their own queer inclusive dance parties. Their next stop is in December in San Juan for the Pride celebration, Bayot Island rave event.

Southeast Asia is continuing to thrive, with thumping clubs like [BEAM](#) in Bangkok, with featured [DJ Hadassah](#) and hip-hopping [Suphawich Saeoung](#). Even in smaller markets like Vietnam, spots like [Savage](#) promise hours of fun.

Though Berlin is a hard city to avoid when discussing techno club hotspots, there are honorable mentions found in other European cities like Helsinki and Budapest. Some recommendations include [Aaniwalli](#), a dark club in an old factory that plays a variety of live techno. [SoundVault](#) is an underground rave organizer that hosts events around Helsinki that draws in crowds young and old. In Budapest, there is a venue made out of an old Ukranian ship called [A38 Ship](#), where many underground house music parties are hosted.

Techno is alive and breathing, and what you thought were the hottest spots for techno fans may soon change as these new emerging markets grow and thrive post-COVID-19.



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