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es the "Sandstorm" memes but is still coming out with new music. **Courtesy of Urban Rebel**

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ke's on You — Darude's "Sandstorm" Is Still Cool

IA JEROME | AUGUST 22, 2018 | 9:02AM

Internet memes can change your life. One day you're working at Subway, arguing with customers about the actual length of a footlong, and the next you're a meme sensation. It only takes the right repost and a bit of Photoshop or video-editing skills to send you to superstardom. For Finnish DJ and producer Darude, the memes weren't exactly transformative, but they brought awareness to a single he almost didn't release.

If you're not engulfed in the raging world of dance music, you might not have heard of Darude's "Sandstorm" until the internet got ahold of it. The up-tempo trance single debuted in 1999. "Two years before I released the 'Sandstorm' track, I actually made the melody. You know, the *dun-dun-dun, din-din*," Darude told *Vice* last year. The record got off to a good start in clubs with the help of local DJs but didn't get traffic until the established producer JS16 added production. From there, the single surged on dance

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floors and workout playlists until it achieved impressive popularity.

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All music has its peak. Sometimes it's when the music is first released and listeners can't get the catchy melody out of their heads. Other times, the "memeification" of content allows it to live through the antics of online trolls. After the popular gamer Brian Wyllie, AKA TheOddOne, played "Sandstorm" online, the record gained traction as background music for the most ridiculous things. "The

song became more of a reentry in a way, like a re-awareness. Something started with eSports gamers that are close to dance music, and it became one of their anthems,” Darude says by phone.

Darude - Sandstorm



Memes have definitely played roles in musicians' careers. Because the internet is so widely accessible, a few clicks allow music to travel from Finland to the United States through a hashtag. While Darude's single was in heavy rotation in clubs, its memes brought new light to dance music and opened the door to several different audiences. “In the last two years, I’ve had such a burst in online

visibility and bookings. I've even fed some meme stuff and done pranks all in good fun," Darude says. Most observers would think he'd be annoyed by 14-year-olds' constant jokes and tagging, but he laughs along with them. "The joke's on you if you're still talking about my track after over 16 years."

TheOddOne Renekton Quadra Kill powered by Darude - Sa...



Keeping up with the trends in music allows longevity in a career, but Darude fans are still listening 20 years after his debut. "Honestly, I haven't tried to create music for my old fans. I wouldn't say I wasn't thinking about those people, because I do, but I make music I like," he says.

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If you listen closely, you'll notice his new music doesn't differ. One of his newer tracks, "Surrender," is still emotional and melodic. "I get great satisfaction sitting

in the music and just tinkering around. As a producer and writer, I develop various types of music," Darude says. Though artistry is Darude's strong point, his marketing skills, too, are on point. "I'm not dumb; this is my profession. There's a thinking and planning process with every release, but musically, it's natural. Working with new and young producers allows their sounds to make their way into my music. I guess that was part of the process of targeting a new crowd."

What's next? "I am working on a project that will have five to ten records on it, but there's no rush." He's most excited to try new things for new audiences. For his Fort Lauderdale show this weekend, he plans to play a set

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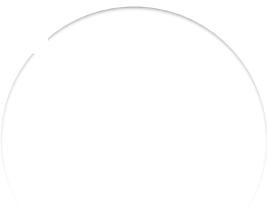
but this time around, I'm going to lower the bpm and have

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more of a groovy, house set,” Darude says.

There's no guarantee that memes won't emerge from this performance, but listeners are in for good music and a good joke.

Darude. *2 p.m. Sunday, August 26, at BalQony at Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort, 505 N. Fort Lauderdale Beach Blvd., Fort Lauderdale; 954-414-2222. Tickets cost \$10 via [eventbrite.com](#).*



Cristina Jerome is a freelance music writer and event producer based in South Florida. She spends her time listening to R&B and making purple flower crowns. Follow her work on [RnBae.com](#).

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Beyoncé's Professional Disappointment Birthed the Queen We Know Today

ALMEIDA | AUGUST 27, 2018 | 9:22AM

It might be hard for some to remember now, at a cultural moment when Beyoncé is infallible and the pope is not (John Lennon might have said, "Beysus is more popular than Jesus"), but just two album cycles ago, in 2011, Queen Bey experienced one of only a handful of public professional disappointments when her album *4* was met with mixed reviews from fans and critics alike. "Beyoncé's new album isn't bad," read a review in the *Guardian*.

The *Washington Post* called *4* "her fourth-best album, as in

her worst," arguing that Bey sounded "more precise and distant than ever." And fans didn't buy in as enthusiastically either. Though 4 went on to debut at number one on the *Billboard* charts, it represented a career low in first-week sales, which had been steadily increasing since her debut album, *Dangerously in Love*.

Though many of the songs on 4 aged better than initial reviews would have readers believe, and singles such as "End of Time," "Countdown," and "Love on Top" went on to become live staples and are now Beyhive Canon, schmaltzy ballads such as "Best Thing I Never Had" and the worst offender, "I Was Here," offered remnants of the artistic Achilles heel that plagued Beyoncé's discography until that point: an affinity for every(wo)man anthems that are vague enough to be widely relatable but anonymous enough to limit revealing intimate details of her intensely private personal life. 4 was not a double album in the vein of its predecessor, *I Am... Sasha Fierce*, but the split personality of its creator was still on full display. On one side was the prim and proper pageant queen who, since her early days in Destiny's Child, earned praise for being "the classy one" as her peers performed in **chaps** and **nude**

bodysuits. On the other side was Sasha Fierce, itching to squeeze into a gold-studded bodysuit to let her freak flag fly.

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Sasha and Beyoncé became one on the singer's first true masterpiece, her visual album *Beyoncé*, released as a surprise in December 2013 with zero promotion. The album is an unapologetic ode to female desire and sexual empowerment, with visual and auditory allusions to BDSM, marriage, orgasms, postpartum depression, miscarriages, and, yes, pre-*Lemonade*, jealousy and infidelity. This was Beyoncé speaking for herself rather than singing for others. Gone were self-consciously universal platitudes such as "*I miss you, like every day/Wanna be with you, but you're away... missing you insane.*"

In its place were the thinly veiled sentiments taken from her life as a married woman and new mother: "*Been having conversations about breakups and separations/I'm not feeling like myself since the baby/Are we gonna even make it?*"

APES**T - THE CARTERS



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The comparative disappointment of 4, coupled with newfound confidence in the wake of having given birth to her first daughter, appears to have

jolted Beyoncé into a realm of fearlessness that resulted in

her most daring work yet, a feat that would later be

her most daring work yet, a feat that would later be trounced creatively by her follow-up album and short film, *Lemonade*. "*I'm climbing up the walls 'cause all the shit I hear is boring/All the shit I do is boring/All these record labels boring/I don't trust these record labels, I'm torn,*" she sang on "Haunted." And when the well-known perfectionist tired of trying to please those outside forces, she wound up outpacing all creative, sales, and critical expectations and took a seat on the throne as the uncontested greatest living entertainer of the 21st Century.

During the *Lemonade* era, Yoncé further unspooled the respectability politics she'd ascribed to in the early days of her career. She'd already gotten political, offering her take on feminism on *Beyoncé*, but on its followup, she leaned into the racial politics of her experience as one of the most successful black women in history.

"The new Beyoncé wants to be seen as a black woman political activist first and foremost, entertainer and musician second," the insufferable Piers Morgan wrote as if that was somehow a bad thing. Unfazed by the criticism, she performed a second Super Bowl show that offered stylistic nods to the Black Panthers, and two years later, her

historic Coachella show paid tribute to HBCUs. Figures such as Morgan fail to understand what Beyoncé learned years ago: that cowering from criticism hinders artistry. Having experienced what was, by Beyoncé's standards, a commercial disappointment is precisely what allowed her the freedom to explore creatively and sing with conviction, for the first time, that she was flawless.

Jay-Z and Beyoncé On the Run II Tour. 7:30 p.m. Friday, August 31, at Hard Rock Stadium, 347 Don Shula Dr., Miami Gardens; 305-943-8000; hardrockstadium.com. Tickets cost \$54.50 to \$1,855 via ticketmaster.com.

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