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## WATCH: Q&A with Darude at Vega, Jan. 26

Ellis Clopton Jan 27, 2017 Updated Jan 27, 2017

Darude, a Finnish EDM DJ, is undoubtedly most famous for his 2000 hit, “Sandstorm.”

“Sandstorm” is almost 17 years old now, but is still played in clubs and at sporting events all across the world. Finland most recently played the song during their New Year’s celebration, just in time to celebrate the 100th year of Finnish independence. “Sandstorm” has also been the subject of many internet memes, most notably the popular YouTube video “Darude Dankstorm,” which has over 2 million views.

Darude used a “Sandstorm” as a launching pad for his career and has released four albums over the last 20 years.

Darude performed at Vega in Lincoln’s Haymarket on Jan. 26.

Right before he went on stage, The Daily Nebraskan talked with him about EDM, the music industry and his personal life.

**The Daily Nebraskan:** So you said that you’ve never been to Nebraska before?

**Darude:** Well, I’m about 95 percent sure I haven’t been to Nebraska before. I’m saying that because if I was it was early 2000s. I don’t remember the last 10 years at least that I would’ve been here.

**DN:** I guess it’s a kind of a new thing for you here. How’s the EDM, electronic music scene here?

**Darude:** Here? I’m gonna see! I have no idea. So I mean, in general, I think U.S. obviously has had a huge EDM explosion the last few years. I’m guessing it’s not that dissimilar here. But, like I said, I’m excited. It’s gonna be a new experience for me tonight, so I’ll tell you know afterwards.

**DN:** So you’ve been in electronic music for about a decade? Two decades?

**Darude:** 20 (years) here soon, making music. “Sandstorm” was my first official track, that came out in ‘99.

**DN:** How's the genre changed over the last 10 years or so?

**Darude:** Well, music's changed a lot of course music's evolved and branched. You know it's trance this, trance that and house this and that. We've got sort of new things, we've had dubstep along the way, you know all kinds of stuff. But at the same time, to me, clubs are still the same. People come out, some for the booze, some for the girls, some for everybody.

**DN:** Have the audiences changed a lot?

**Darude:** I think the audience has changed a little bit, especially in the U.S. in the way we have more regular people now. When I started it was more dedicated dance music fans and club goers. It was more underground then, and so now there's a lot of people that don't always necessarily know or come necessarily for the DJ only, so they go out and party. I kind of prefer both, it doesn't really matter to me. Usually a really mixed crowd with some educated people and some just party people, that creates the best party when you get them all going. I think that's the main thing, now we have electronic dance music on TV, movies, you know all the radios playing dance music. And the corporate has kinda taken it to themselves as well. It's just such a mainstream thing now and that means we have the market and the crowd is just exponential compared.

**DN:** Since it's more mainstream now, how have services like SoundCloud, where independent artists can submit their work, how does that change the market?

**Darude:** Something like SoundCloud and also before that YouTube and before that illegal download services, it's liberated the consumer's experience in getting the music. When I'm talking about dance music being mainstream, there's also about a gazillion sub genres that are not mainstream and they could be so far out left field that very few people that will ever get into that. At the same time, all the subgenres are the ones that will usually spawn something new. When the sort of weird or something different is married with something that is sort of familiar, then all of a sudden that is something that is mainstream next year. So SoundCloud and similar services where both professional people and amateurs can submit their stuff and have people listen to them for free as well, that opens the market so much more. It takes the control away from the old-school curators like radios and record companies.

**DN:** You were talking about sub genres, do you put your music in a certain genre? Do you like to dabble with other sub genres?

**Darude:** I don't put it in any genre. Look, I've been around for a long time I guess, but I still don't know the genres. I mean yeah, there's house and there's trance and whatnot, but there's a hundred different trance genres. Depending on who you talk to, this is psych and this is not and the next guy says it's the other way around. My music is dance music. It's dance floor-aimed, energetic, melodic, emotional dance music. My third album was called "Label This!" and the reason is that it had several different things and I've just sort of... Yeah you label this, I don't kinda know.

**DN:** How has your music changed over the years?

**Darude:** It's gotten more varied quite a lot. It all still goes under dance music, but my first album was more trance maybe, and it had less vocal. It was born in the same kinda box, I would say, from track to track. The second album had a little more vocal but it's still quite trance-y. The third album was more varied; I had punk, drums and guitar and a punk rocker actually singing some of the tracks. My fourth album, "Moments," that came out a year and a half ago. I think it's even more varied and even more vocal, like hook-based and sort of song-based. Several of the tracks we made with acoustic guitar or piano and just singing on top of that, and then afterwards was made to electronic dance music.

**DN:** Are there any groups or individuals that have influenced the different styles you put into play?

**Darude:** I mean, tons. Sometimes there's a single artist or single track that gives me inspiration and literally might influence the end result of a track of mine. But with that, I still have to clarify I'll never really try to copy off somebody's style or something like that. I have, over the years, listened to veterans like Ferry Corsten or Gareth Emery, but at the same time there's new guys. A couple of Finnish guys who I kind of work with on my album and also names like Ilan Bluestone or Luke Bond come to mind, who are something that I sometimes hear a track and I wish that was my track. That also means that something melodic, something emotional that I'm drawn to, but also production-wise, I would like to do something like that or I would like to achieve the crispness of the sound or the punch or whatever the mix thing is. I could name a thousand names, but I don't know if we have time for that.

**DN:** Are you working on anything right now? Just touring?

**Darude:** I've been working on an album directly, but I have at the moment, actually in the works, four collaborations. I have another list of ten collaborations that I wanna do sometime soon whenever sort of stars align with those people. Today I'm gonna play a new track of mine that I've only played out three or four times now, and today it's actually going to be a brand new mix of it that I just finished in my hotel studio.

**DN:** You sound like a busy guy.

**Darude:** Well, I'm trying. It kinda depends how you take it, like my third album and my fourth album. There was an eight-year gap there so I've been playing catch-up.

**DN:** Outside of the EDM scene and music, just to close things out, what else are you interested in?

**Darude:** Music-wise or outside of music?

**DN:** Outside of music.

**Darude:** I play ice hockey in a beer league in Finland. Actually now my knee is a little sore, I sorta tore my MCL a little bit. I can walk, I can dance and I can bounce around but I'm not gonna go skating in the next couple of weeks. I've been sort of trying to fix it the last two or three weeks. I got a son who is 7 years old, he turns 8 this year, and a wife so they take a good amount of my time. Outside of that, I like Netflix and chill with the wife.

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