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# DARUDE: "I DON'T LIKE 'REAL UNDERGROUND' PEOPLE CLAIMING TO BE THE ONLY 'REAL DJs'"

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By **Jack Phillips** (/writers/jack)

Posted On **7 May 2015**

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**Darude (<http://pulseradio.net/artists/darude>)'s 'Sandstorm' has become the EDM track everyone on the web knows but there is more to the Finnish producer than just one 15-year-old track.**

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**The track that defined Darude's career barely broke the Hot 100 when it was released all the way back in 1999, but it is still rearing its head over a decade and a half on. It has been parodied, trolled and adored for so long its hard to open an interview with Darude by not talking about it.**



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**But what many people do not know is that Darude is more than a one hit wonder and was in fact producing live shows before the 'beep beep beep beep' took hold. Darude who's real name is Ville Virtanen may not have reached those dizzying heights with any of his other releases but that doesn't mean he has been idle. At the beginning of 2015 he released 'Beautiful Alien' which encompassed the distinctive Darude sound and has been on the road this year propping up stages alongside Oliver Heldens, Paul Van Dyk and Super8 & Tab.**

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**Darude turns 40 in July, a date that will mark a career that has spanned two decades (depending on where you start the count) which has encompassed chart topping, 1000's of shows, a spinning world record attempt in Brasilia, festival stages, a label, many hair colour changes, hundreds of goatee trims and a huge back catalogue of productions. With so much time spent in, beside and out of the spotlight we sat down with Darude to talk about his music in 2015 and the current state of electronic music.**



Darude feat. AI AM - Beautiful Alien (OFFICIAL VID...



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**(Pulse) You state that the ethos behind your label EnMass Music "lies in the shared vision and goal of the same grass-roots approach to connecting with people through music." Can you explain what you mean by that?** (Darude) We feel that at the core, we are music lovers, just as anyone else is; from club-goers to radio-listeners to DJs. We keep that in mind with the label's releases.

**Your 5th release on EnMass called 'Welcome to the Future' by Kristina Sky, Randy Boyer and Shy Boy really had that big room sound that is currently going great guns in the US. How have you seen the US's appetite for EDM change in the past 5 years?** EDM has become mainstream in the US. You hear it everywhere from grocery stores, to sporting events, to festivals. It is everywhere and we love it!

**With the industry still working out how best to split profits between labels, artists and producers (especially where digital is concerned) do you have any suggestions of ways to improve the business of music?** I honestly don't have any suggestions for a solution right now. It is a rather complicated issue, as there are many parties trying to get a piece of the pie, each of them have their own

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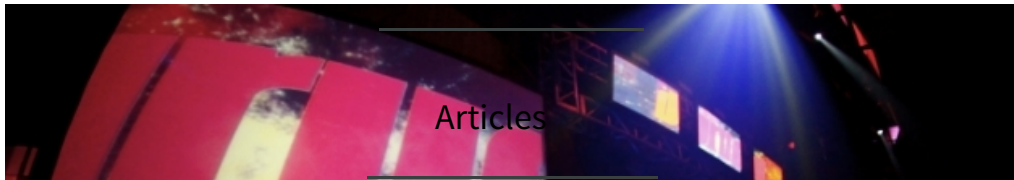
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idea of how that should go. One thing I do know, though: thinking of splits or money in general when working in the studio is not very conducive to a relaxed and creative atmosphere, so you should work with people you trust and have that clear and figured out before hitting the studio, so you don't have to worry about that stuff.

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*Darude in Las Vegas. Photo: Supplied*

**In 2002/03 you started DJing in the way we would recognise today but before that you were a live production act who brought musicians, singers and light shows to the stage. What would you say are the main differences between the two approaches?** Live-fying your studio-made tracks is quite an ordeal.

Every track in a live set needs to be prepped, some parts left out, some mixing left undone, room left for extra live parts from extra performers etc, so that those can be done on the fly during the show and it takes a lot of time, planning and preparation. It's a lot of work, but very satisfying when it finally goes down well and the audience gets to hear and see the effort.



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**And DJing?** DJing on the other hand is technically quite a lot easier than manipulating several pieces of live gear. You choose what you want to play from all the music in the world, but at the same time for prepping you need to go through a lot more music and on stage you need to figure out what you're going to do with the quite minimal visual factor of one person doing much less than you can potentially do with a bunch of live gear. I've been known to sample the crowd and put their voice on the music on the fly, for eg. Today with all the technology it's possible to blur the line between a live show and DJ set, like using the Remix-Decks functionality of Traktor and/or Djing with Ableton Live you can do all kinds of stuff that isn't necessarily what "traditional" DJing mixing "just" two or three records together is about.

**What do you tell the acts you sign to your label. Are their pearls of wisdom you feel the need to give them in order to cope in today's industry?** I advise people to make their own music and decisions. Making and playing music that you want translates to an honest representation of who you are. In the long run that's the only way to go. It's not always easy, but you should create a crowd, not cater to one.



Darude

Sandstorm (Radio Edit)

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**You don't shy away from the idea of 'overground/mainstream' electronic music unlike many other acts who seem so vocal in wanting to tread the 'underground' path. What do you see in 'mainstream' electronic music that's exciting?** Hmmm, well, 'overground' or underground is really not the point. I make music I



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like. Some days it could be hard and banging and monotonous, others it's melodic and emotional, purposely catchy even. I don't think all the music is good for all the situations, like there are the moments (or hours) when I really enjoy listening or dancing to some chunky sexy deep or tech house or techno, other occasions it's trancey uplifting something and sometimes full on pop on the radio that tickles me. I'd say that the only thing I don't like is the "real underground" people claiming to be the only "real musicians, DJs, scenesters", because that's a flawed elitist way of thinking. There's room for everyone. I love it that EDM has spread pretty much everywhere now. While there might be some negative sides to the phenomena, too, it's great that we get more and more people exposed to our music.

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Darude

Salmiakki Sessions 120 - 255 - studio mix

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**There seems to have been a dramatic shift away from the music press actually talking about music and instead talking about the gossip that occurs off stage - has it effected you personally in any way?**

No, I try to keep things mostly music related. The shift is sort of natural, though, as the more the music becomes commercial, the more it becomes pop culture and the more the tabloids get involved and things on the news front become more superficial quickly. And there are of course some label and management machines, too, who purposely talk about many other things than music to get a wider audience for their artists.

**I am thinking of the recent interview Axwell and Sebastian Ingrosso (http://pulseradio.net/articles/2015/04/axwell-ingrosso-call-underground-dance-music-amateur) recently had**



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with the New York Times where what they said was reportedly taken out of context (http://pulseradio.net/articles/2015/04/full-transcript-released-from-axwell-ingrosso-amateur-interview). What's your opinion on the whole sordid affair?

I try to steer clear of commenting on things like that. One thing in general I can say (not necessarily pertaining to the Axwell/Ingrosso issue) is that taking anything out of context and twisting it backwards and inside out is easy and is being done all over the place all the time. Media has serious power. Headlines are click baits and the actual written story or especially actual spoken interview might give you totally different vibe from a single (often edited) line grabbed out of context. A lot of people often only read the headlines and never get the actual real story.



Darude at Lovevolution, San Francisco in 2009. Photo: Supplied.

**Looking at your latest release 'Beautiful Alien' there is something recognisable about the sound. Do you consider it to be an evolution of your sound or something not unlike a classic Darude?** This track came about in sort of a new way to me: I went to a



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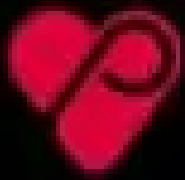


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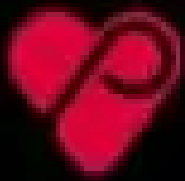
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
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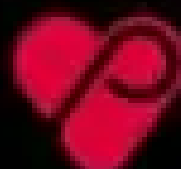
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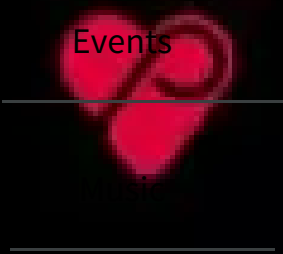
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