



Nordic Spotlight

THE BEST MUSIC AND MUSIC FESTIVALS IN ICELAND, NORWAY, SWEDEN, FINLAND AND DENMARK

Interview: Darude (FI)


by Robert Ham on September 29, 2015 in [Interview](#), [Music](#), [Music from Finland](#)



If the DJ/producer known as [Darude](#) had never released another original track beyond his breakaway, meme-

embraced trance single “Sandstorm,” he would have still earned a place in the dance music pantheon thanks to that song’s devilish hook and dizzying builds and drops.

But Ville Virtanen has spent the past 15 years since “Sandstorm”’s release moving above and beyond that initial burst of recognition. He has released four albums of wide-ranging electronic pop, including the recently released *Moments*, and maintains an exhausting looking schedule of DJ appearances and live dates. When we caught up with him for a quick interview backstage at The Whiskey Bar in Portland, just before one of those gigs, Virtanen didn’t appear at all tired, instead looking focused, confident, and ready to take on the world, one dancefloor at a time.

		Beautiful Alien (feat. AI A... Darude, AI AM Moments
1	Beautiful Alien (feat. AI AM) - R.. Darude, AI AM	3:18
2	Be With You Tonight (feat. Will ... Darude, Will Sly	3:17
3	Coming Home (feat. Mahan M... Darude, Mahan Moin	3:16
4	Moments (feat. Sebastian Reym.. Darude, Tom Fall, Sebastian Reyman	3:44
5	Warrior	4:01
6	Supersized Darude, Caater	5:56
7	One Lifetime (feat. Sebastian R... Darude, Sebastian R...	4:07

There was a long stretch between your last album and *Moments*. Why was that?

Life happened. I got married and we had a kid. There was some illness in the family. So I wasn’t able to concentrate fully on production. The last two years or so I’ve been back into the production work consistently so I’ve been able to work on whole pieces of music and concepts. I’ve been touring all the time. So I guess I was on a hiatus, but I was still touring and remixing and working on things. I’m quite excited that I finally got the album done and out. I absolutely do not mind playing regular DJ gigs, but now that I have my new album and I can promote my new tracks, as an artist, obviously it’s exciting to be able to push my own music.

Have you been doing a lot of live performances rather than just DJ gigs like tonight?

Not with the new stuff really. I did a couple of festival sets and other gigs in Finland where I had Sebastian Reyman, who sang on two of the tracks, with me. But nothing more at the moment.

One of the most exciting things about *Moments* is how diverse the album is. It isn’t just a straight-up trance record. Was that an easy thing to do?

Yes and no. I started making music late, at around 19 or 20 years old. I don’t have any musical education. It wasn’t

until I realized that with computers I could make music that I started making my own. I didn’t see music as little layers or bits like I see them now. I would hear a great track and remember the chorus but I didn’t realize that there

was a kick drum or bass. I started hearing that when a couple of my buddies started making music with computers and synthesizers. I slowly developed through tinkering to purposeful composing. This album was way more song-based. Several are campfire acoustic guitar songs or piano first, then produced electronic work next. In that way, it became way more diverse. I decided I didn't want to try and put them in one mold. I also worked with different producers whose tracks I liked and played in my DJ sets. I wanted to borrow their sound and style on my tracks.

Can you talk about the guests on *Moments* like Kristina Wheeler and Sebastian Reyman and Apocalyptica?

"No More Tears To Cry" was an instrumental first. I made a chillout track that I knew was going to be on the album. On all of my albums, I have one chillout track. Kristina Wheeler is a Finnish singer who has her own career and loved her voice. I got in touch with her through my record company, but we never met in person until recently. A buddy of mine recorded her vocals in Helsinki while I was checking it out via Skype in America. Sebastian is another Finnish singer that has been in a couple of different bands. I wrote "Moments" with him. He was the demo singer initially but I realized I didn't need to look for anyone else. The Apocalyptica guys...Mikko [Sirén], the drummer, used to play percussion live with me. When he joined with them, they were working on a song called "Peace" that they asked me to remix. And I did, to a point, but it never got released. So as I was putting together the songs for the album, I asked if I could re-visit that remix. There are several tracks that were started a long, long time ago. That was one of the challenges, at one point I thought I would have to redo every track so it would be closer to today's sound. But then I thought, "Screw it." They started as something for some reason and I should just go with that.

Is it a pretty close knit community of musicians in Finland?

Not that I know everything about other genres, but it's a small country and the music industry is small in that way. The record company bigwigs and A&R reps are a small circle of people. I've been doing this for 15 years, and in that time, all of those people have circulated from company to company to company. So I know a lot of those people.

Considering how musically diverse the album is, was it easy to find a way to connect them all conceptually?

As I got every track almost done, I had them in an iTunes playlist. I'd be listening to them and the track list formed really quickly. It just felt natural, flowing from beginning to end. Then when I finished the tracks, I did find some sort of glue from track to track to track, if you listen to it carefully there might be a clap sound or synth traveling from track to track.

How would you compare touring the U.S. versus doing shows in Europe or elsewhere?

Pretty similar. Music lovers everywhere to me are pretty much the same. Of course cultures vary, sometimes drastically. In some places, based on their culture, they don't go nuts but they stay for the whole set and they love the music. That can vary from city to city. The other night in San Antonio was great, but compared to a couple of nights before that in Seattle, which is one of my favorite cities to play, it usually has a lot of energy and they go nuts. If you have a crowd that is not that wild but you can tell they're enjoying it, you still have to read that energy as well.

Do you feel an obligation to play "Sandstorm" in every DJ set you do?

Yeah, but it's not like I don't want to. I love playing it. I can say that, at this point, selfishly because people usually got apeshit when I play it. So I really don't mind playing it.

Comments

0 Comments

Sort by **Oldest**

Want more Nordic music, festivals and travel?

Get a steady stream of awesome!

Related Posts:

- [MIYNT \(SE\) – “The Strangest Game”](#)
- [Exclusive – Nordic Spotlight Mix #002: Reggie Got Beats \(NO\)](#)
- [Burning Hearts \(FI\) – “Work of Art”](#)
- [Nordic Spotlight Monthly – Summer Festival Preview #1](#)
- [Efterklang \(DK\) – “Cities of Glass”](#)

📌 **Darude, Finland, Finnish music, interview**

< [Shining \(NO\) – “Last Day”](#)

[Daniel Kvammen \(NO\) – “Fuck deg, helsing 90-talet”](#) >

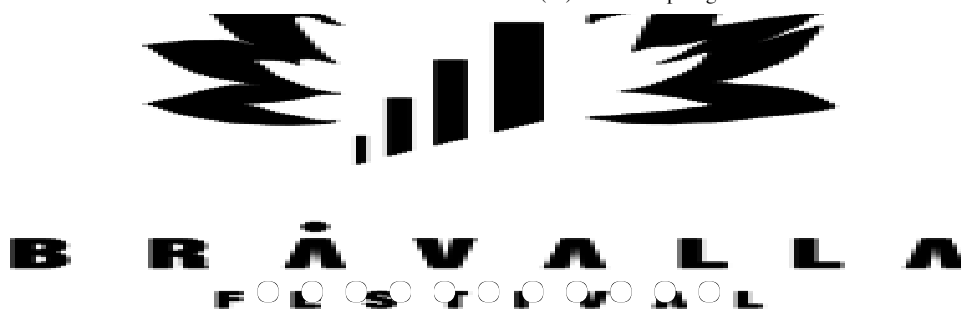
Leave a Reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.

Music Festival Tickets and Travel Packages

We've got [music festival tickets and travel packages](#) available for the destinations of [Iceland](#), [Sweden](#), [Norway](#), [Denmark](#) and [Finland](#). Meet you there?



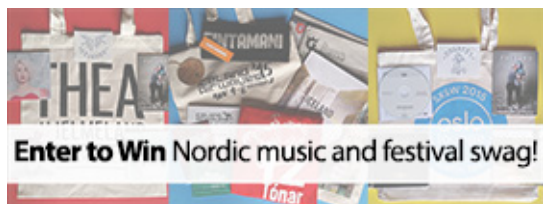


Subscribe & Connect

Get a steady stream of awesome!

SUBMIT

Enter to Win (It's Easy)



Stream Our Nordic Music Podcast

Nordic Spotlight Monthly - Summer Festiva...



00:00 / 57:02

Follow Us On Hype Machine





Follow Us On Twitter

Tweets by [@NordicSpotlight](#)



Nordic Spotlight

@NordicSpotlight

Excellent show from Danish rockers The Sandmen at tinderbox_official, with lead vocalist Allan... [instagram.com/p/BHC67gaAltV/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BHC67gaAltV/)

40m



Nordic Spotlight

@NordicSpotlight

Our first report from the ground at this year's [@tinderbox_dk!](#) bit.ly/28WbouP



[Embed](#)

[View on Twitter](#)

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Nordic Spotlight promotes the music and music festivals of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Finland, and provides Nordic travel advice, tips and deals.

We share third-party content in the form of embedded music players (such as YouTube, SoundCloud and Bandcamp media players) for the sole purpose of promoting the content. We make no claim of ownership of the embedded media. If you are the owner of media embedded on this website you want it removed, please send us message via our contact page and let us know.

Rock on.

TAGS

AURORA Baby In Vain **Bandcamp** CeaseTone Choir Of Young Believers **Danish music** Death By Unga Bunga
Denmark Fallulah Faroe Islands Faroese music **Finland** Finnish music **Iceland** Iceland Airwaves
2015 **Icelandic music** Instagram interview Jenny Hval Kill J Kygo **Metal Monday** Mew Mixcloud Nordic
Spotlight Monthly **Norway** **Norwegian music** photo gallery Podcast Rangleklods Reykjavíkurdætur Satellite Stories
SoundCloud SPOT Festival 2015 **Spotify** **Sweden** **Swedish music** SXSW 2012 SXSW
2016 Team Me The Foreign Resort Travel **YouTube** Yung Øya Festival

© 2016 Nordic Spotlight. All Rights Reserved.

[Site Map](#) | [Privacy & Terms](#)