

PURPLE SNEAKERS

From 'Sandstorm' To 'Outlaws': How Darude Leveraged A Hit Track Into A Long, Successful Career

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"I like to think that I'm not booked only because of 'Sandstorm', but at the same time, if you come to my gig in 2023 because of it, that's another opportunity for me to show what I do today."



Few musicians have managed to leverage a singular hit into a sustainable and successful career as much as EDM icon **Darude**.

An artist who needs no introduction, Darude - real name **Ville Virtanen** - is best known for his turn-of-the-century hit *Sandstorm* after became a global trance emblem smashing over 600 million worldwide streams and being hailed as "one of the most iconic dance tracks of all time."



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The tale of *Sandstorm* is most definitely an interesting one.

After first being released in 1999 in Finland and in 2000 across the rest of the world as part of his debut studio album, *Before the Storm*, the high-energy track quickly stormed the charts while propelling Darude into the spotlight at the age of just 25.

The iconic track again saw a resurgence in popularity over a decade later, which would subsequently introduce the song to an entirely new generation of music lovers.

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The ongoing popularity of *Sandstorm* is evident, with the track currently sitting at over 600 million worldwide streams.

Now, over two decades after the anthemic track put him on the map, the talented DJ has dropped his first new original track in four years alongside Finnish up-and-comers **House Body** and **Oskr**, titled *Outlaw* - and it definitely doesn't disappoint.

The track is a certified party starter, with its uplifting energy and infectious vocals sure to please fans of the music legend.

The new single was released to celebrate the launch of Darude's new record label, *Vibing Out*.

We spoke to Virtanen amid the release of *Outlaws* to talk about everything from the ongoing intergenerational popularity of *Sandstorm* among EDM fans, to how he's managed to stay in the zeitgeist amid the changing musical landscape.

We're really digging your latest track *Outlaws*, it has that really fun vibe that reminds me of going out to clubs back in the mid-2000s - it's almost a bit nostalgic. Can you tell us a bit about your process in making the track?

Darude: That just gave me goosebumps! It's very hard making music, and I'd be lying if I said I don't want success - of course I do, I want to be number one right now. But I've tried my hardest, especially in the last few years to try and shake all of that.

I draw inspiration from whatever is new and whatever is hot right now, but I also heavily rely on just what I like. I know it's this utopian world that I live in, but I want to make timeless music rather than try to jump on a trend because it's cool when it happens, but when enough people jump on that bandwagon, it just saturates out - it's not long-lasting.

I'm not purposefully going like 'I have to create a hit', but I'd rather create timeless stuff or something that you can listen to now, and also listen to it in two, or even 10 years.

Darude: Obviously we saw your first hit *Sandstorm* make a huge resurgence not too long ago, was that a strange experience for you?

Darude: *Sandstorm* started it all for me. I made music a couple of years before that, but that was the first thing that gave me a huge boost and it's how I gained my name. Since then, I've been busting my ass to keep up there, but yeah, it was weird because the track really never went away - we had it in sports broadcasts and on movies like *Fun With Dick and Jane*, but that was almost pre-social media.

Now, there's been a bazillion TikToks of somebody playing a potato flute or someone scrubbing a shower to the tune of *Sandstorm*. I was so weirded out by that because I didn't understand what was going on,

but then somebody clued me in and I started to understand it.

Eventually, I started embracing that and looking for those in the wild. I haven't tried to create memes myself, but when I come across a good one I'll share it or like it, and it obviously works for me because it brings my track to people's minds and ears, so I love that.

It's nice to think that I'm not booked only because of *Sandstorm*, but at the same time, if you come to my show in 2023 because of *Sandstorm*, that's another opportunity for me to show what I do today.

I'm also bold enough to say that if you liked *Sandstorm*, you'd enjoy my other tracks since they're not that far off vibe-wise. I also like playing for the crowd and being there with the crowd, so I try to make an interactive event where we feed each other.

A lot of artists in today's climate are coming up through non-traditional means like TikTok, what are your thoughts on that as an artist?

Darude: Well, I want to sort of make a point of saying I'm not against the trends, it's cool. If I don't get it, that's probably on me. I have a 14-year-old son, and he's at the age where he's getting bombarded with whatever's trending, so I tried to look into that and try to keep an open mind but it's really hard to wrap my head around all of that stuff.

It's the best time ever to be a music consumer today because you have Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, TikTok and whatever - you can get anything and everything right now in a way that you couldn't 20 years ago. Tech-wise, it's easier to be a producer today and get your stuff heard out in the world - but that doesn't mean that it will get heard.

There's a lot of competition and it's almost like you have to elbow your way to being heard. So there's more opportunity but then at the same time, it creates this noise with stuff that's not exactly cutting it.

But the good thing is that the cream rises to the top eventually. I always say to artists that it's amazing that there are all these tech advancements when it comes to making music, but please study, ask why and look at the technologies and those things behind everything so that you understand it, and not just use it blindly. For instance, a music producer today can get decent-sounding stuff out really quickly, because you have templates and all that, and people can just bang it out.

But as a record company looking for tracks to release, I hear great productions, but I hear little content. So the sound quality can be great, but then the ideas are still, in my opinion, what matters most of the time. If you're serious about this stuff, you should definitely like hone into the craft and art of it, not just think of the money - that creates longevity.

You've just announced your new record label, *Vibing Out*. How did that come about?

Darude: Well, *Vibing Out* is a name that I took from my Twitch stream that I'm still doing every Friday that I randomly started in 2015 a few times a week. But when the pandemic started, I started doing regular studio streams on Mondays, chat streams on Wednesdays and a DJ stream on Fridays, and I've been able to build this amazing community of people that are so open, so accepting, loyal and loving, so I'm honouring them by naming my label that.

I also want to release my own music through it without anybody telling me what to do and how to do my thing, as well as find new people to work with while being a very transparent label, with no weird

contracts and whatnot.

You've toured Australia a lot over the years. What is your favourite thing about playing for an Australian crowd?

I played on the **Future Music** tour back in 2015 and there were such amazing crowds. I think I played at 12 pm, and before me were **Yellow Claw** and **Tchami**, and then there were several acts before **The Prodigy** headlined.

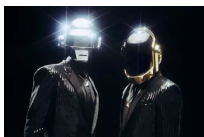
And I'm telling you this because it was incredible seeing after every act, the crowd barely changed - Australians just love to party! It doesn't matter what the genre is, as long as the party is good and the music is good, I feel like you guys just love it, and that open-mindedness is such a great thing for a performer or DJ like me, because you can try things out and do your best to connect, and it's always a great party.

Darude x House Body x Oskr - Outlaws



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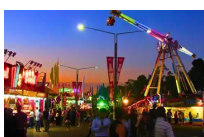
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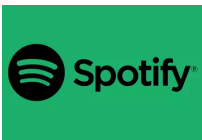
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