ORLA GARTLAND

BEING AN ARTIST

WHAT IS AN ARTIST / ARTIST PROJECT?

...A SOLO ACT, DUO, BAND OR BUNCH OF COLLABORATORS RECORDING AND RELEASING ORIGINAL MUSIC.



NOPE



ALSO NOPE

. . . THESE KIND OF ARTISTS:





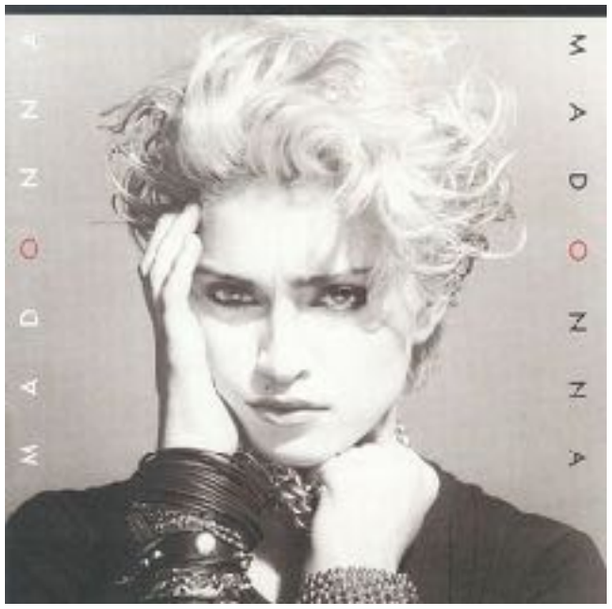




ARTISTS ARE IMPORTANT.

ARTISTS AND THE SONGS THEY RELEASE ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY.

WITHOUT MUSIC OUR VENUES, LABELS AND STUDIOS WOULD SHUT DOWN. THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR SOUND ENGINEERS, BOOKING AGENTS, MANAGERS AND MORE.





ARTISTS SHAPE OUR CULTURE, AND THE MUSIC THEY CREATE CAN DEFINE A GENERATION.

MUSIC CAN CREATE AN ESCAPE FOR THOSE WHO CONNECT WITH IT.

THIS POWER IS NOT TO BE UNDERESTIMATED!

TODAY

- **Being an independent artist:** recording, releasing and promoting your own music
- **Building a team around you:** managers, agents, publishers, labels..
- **10 commandments for artists!**
- Q & A

BEING AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST

INDEPENDENT MEANS WHAAAAT?

(UNMANAGED, UNSIGNED, UNPUBLISHED!)



DOWNSIDES OF BEING AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST?

- **MONEY!** SELF-FUNDING CAN BE TOUGH & CAN BE RESTRICTIVE
- **MAKING CONNECTIONS** IN THE INDUSTRY ISN'T ALWAYS EASY
- WITHOUT GUIDANCE, IT'S LIKELY YOU'LL MAKE MORE **MISTAKES**

SO WHAT'S THE UPSIDE OF BEING AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST?

TOTAL. CREATIVE. CONTROL.





RECORDING YOUR OWN MUSIC.

Recording your own music has NEVER been easier.

It’s accessible - great home studio gear is more affordable than ever and so whether you learn to produce yourself or choose to work with others, you can record and release high quality tracks from your bedroom.

A few pieces of gear to build up a basic home studio..

1. A LAPTOP/ COMPUTER



2. A DAW (DIGITAL AUDIO WORKSTATION) of your choice



MORE GEAR FOR A STARTER HOME STUDIO

3) A MICROPHONE! (pick a great mic or two and you can use them to record any audio - vocals, acoustic guitar, percussion, piano..







4) AN INTERFACE (or soundcard, if you're American)

AND MORE





5) A MIDI CONTROLLER !

(no sounds built into these.. they simply trigger samples from within your DAW)

6) STUDIO MONITORS/ HEADPHONES

you should probably be able to hear what you're making





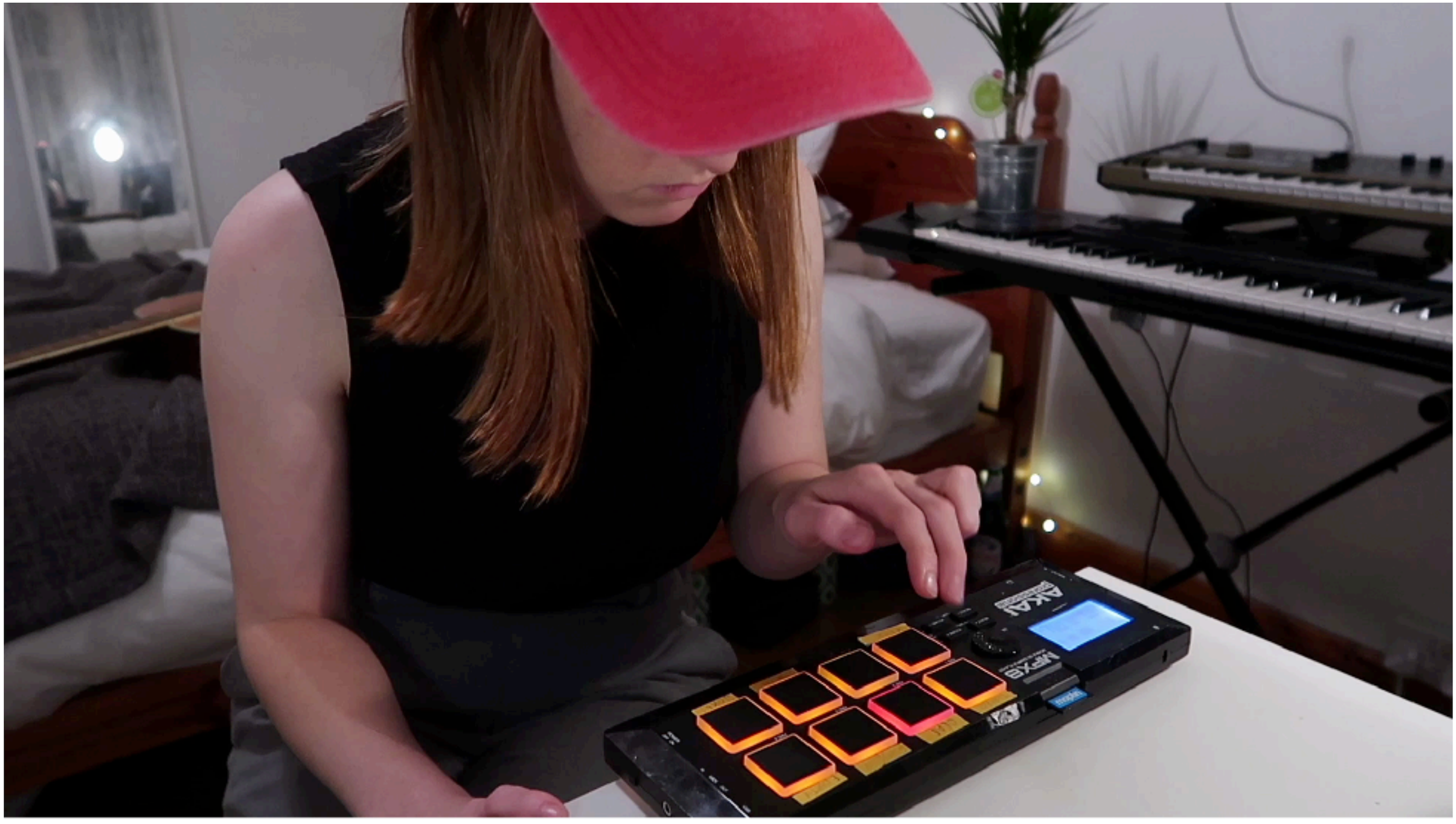
WHERE DO I EVEN START

There are a ton of incredible resources to help teach you how to produce..

- Online courses
- YOUTUBE is a goldmine for lessons & tutorials.. get searching
- ORRRR if you love making music but can't get your head around recording yourself.. try find a tech-minded friend who can record & produce songs for/with you.



HOME RECORDING EXAMPLE - ‘IMPOSSIBLE’



TAME IMPALA - ‘CURRENTS’ ALBUM RECORDING CLIP



RELEASING YOUR MUSIC INDEPENDENTLY.

YOU'LL NEED TO PICK A DISTRIBUTOR. A distributor is a middle man company who will distribute your music to Spotify, Apple Music, iTunes etc.

tunecore

cdbaby
DISCOVER MUSIC

DITTO

AWAL

They all make money in different ways, so be sure to research each company carefully before you choose - some distributors take an up-front fee per track released and then no more - others take none up front, and instead make money through taking a percentage of the income generated by your music.

PROMOTING YOUR MUSIC.

Devoted audiences aren't built overnight.

- As soon as you've got your artist/band name **get online** & fire up the socials - make profiles on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Soundcloud.. whichever ones you think would be most beneficial! Be clever about your handles/URLS for each site.. **don't make it impossible for people to find you.**

- After developing an online/live presence artists may choose to make an **EPK** (Electronic Press Kit) to promote a single/EP/album release.. this is sent around to industry contacts (many of whom can be found online) such as independent labels, music blogs, management companies etc.



MAX WAVEMAN

PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE CLUB DJ

PERSONAL INFO

Real name: Max Dixon
Location: New York, NY
DJ Since: 1996
Category: Club DJ, House DJ, Mobile DJ
Available for: Celebrations, Club, Concerts, Events, Fashion, Festivals, Private Party
Genres: House, Nu Disco, Easy Listening
Duration Set: 3-8 hours
Pay Range: $300 - $500 per hour

VENUES PLAYED

The Egyptian Theatre (London, UK)
Las Palmas Night Club (London, UK)
The Room Night Club (London, UK)
Skinny's Lounge (London, UK)
USC Campus College Event (Los Angeles, CA)
The Varsity Lounge (Los Angeles, CA)
The Vortex (Los Angeles, CA)
Hacienda Hotel (Los Angeles, CA)
Fu's Palace (Los Angeles, CA)
The Odyssey (Granada Hills, CA)
Marina Cafe (Marina Del Rey, CA)
Downtown Disney (Anaheim, CA)

SAMVINYLUNKIEDEVIANTART.COM

BIOGRAPHY

From coast to coast, DJ Jonathan Doe keeps dance floors moving with his ear for great music. Jonathan cut his chops at quintessential Lower East Side hot spots and chic NY nightclubs. From these experiences, Jonathan has gone on to rock the decks at world-famous events from DJ appearances at the Winter Music Conference and Art Basel to a VIP residency with the Brooklyn Nets to performing with artists like Chromeo and Lady Kier.

Jonathan's impressive DJ style is eclectic and energetic, and he is passionate about bringing his skills to couples looking for a fresh, fun take on a wedding DJ. "I love to mix genres and play everything from James Brown to Rihanna to FUN. in the same set and appeal to everyone at the wedding."

AWARDS

Bebe, Bloomingdale's, Buffalo Jeans, Diesel, Harrah's, H&M, Macy's, Brooklyn Nets, Oribe, Saks Fifth Avenue, Sephora, TopShop, Tribeca Cinemas, Ultra Music Festival, Born Electrix, Kazantip, Moscow Music Festival, Ravers United, WeLoveTechno.

WWW.WAVEMAN.DJ HELLO@WAVEMAN.DJ FOLLOW ME #DJWAVEMAN

SOCIAL MEDIA.

Building an audience gives you value as an artist - folk who will buy & stream your music, fans who will buy your tickets and sing your lyrics back at you.

Whether it's online or offline (live shows etc), as an independent artist you should **always value trying to build an audience over attracting the attention of the music industry**. If you've self-released some music and build up a following, *the industry will come to you*.

BUT WHERE DO I START?

Which social platform appeals to you most, or suits your artist project most? Think about the kind of content you'd like to put out and what the best home for it might be.

If you pick one to focus on make sure you maintain a presence across other sites - social media platforms come & go and so it's unwise to put all your eggs in one basket!

(remember MySpace?! yeah. me neither)

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS – PROS & CONS



PRO: VIDEOS ON FACEBOOK CAN HAVE A GREAT REACH, WITH VIRAL POTENTIAL

PRO: NOT A NICHE PLATFORM - EVERYONE'S GOT FACEBOOK

CON: AUDIO CONTENT CANNOT BE SEAMLESSLY EMBEDDED - PHOTOS & *NATIVE VIDEO CONTENT* ARE THE ONLY POSTS THAT EVOKE ENGAGEMENT

CON: YOU CANNOT ACTUALLY REACH EVERYONE WHO LIKES YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE

facebook

Email or Phone

Password

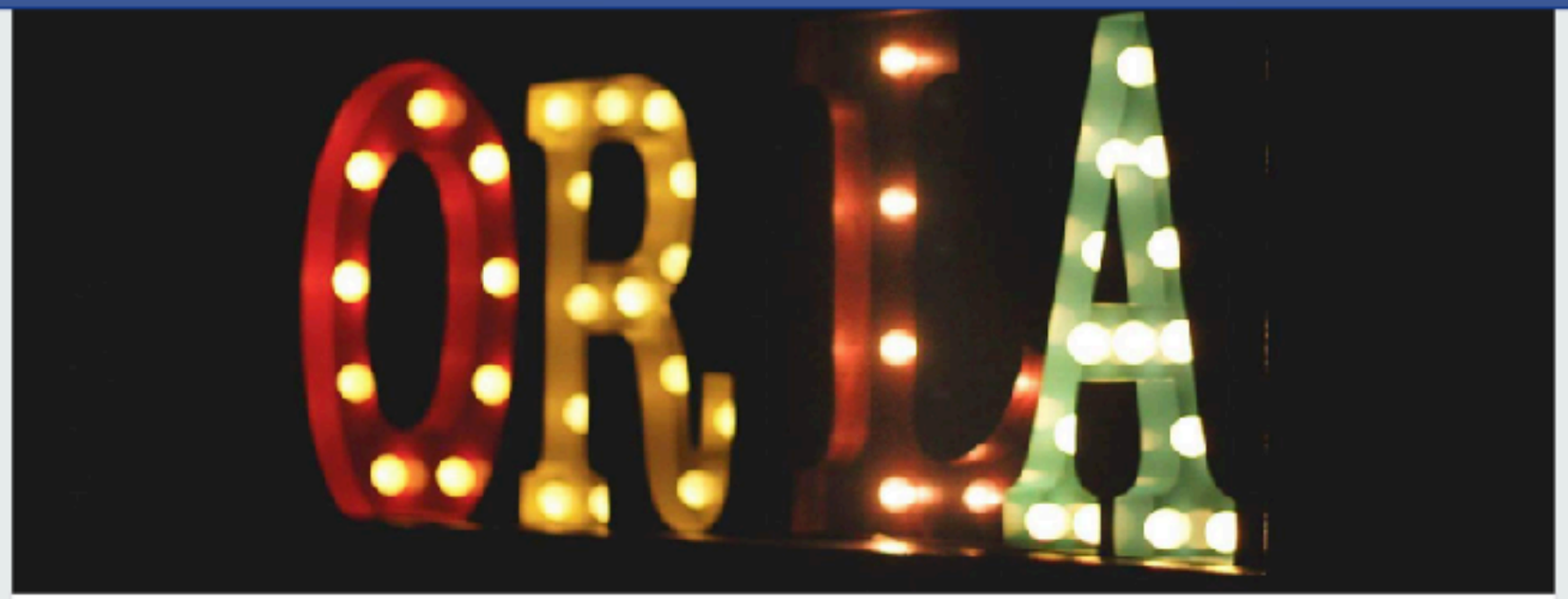
Log In

Forgotten account?



Orla Gartland

@orlagartland



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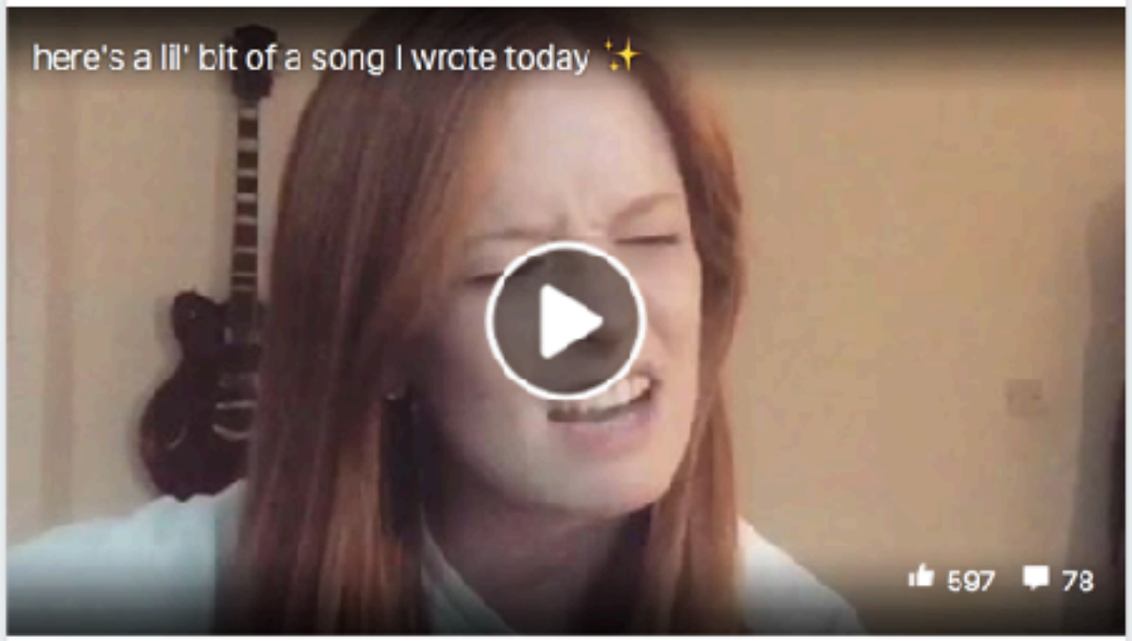
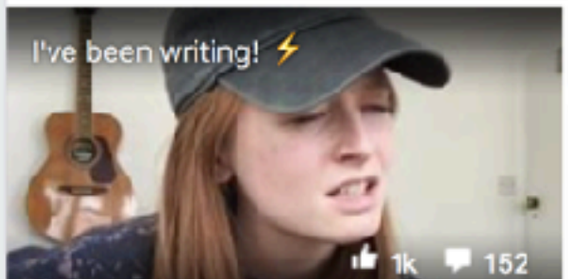
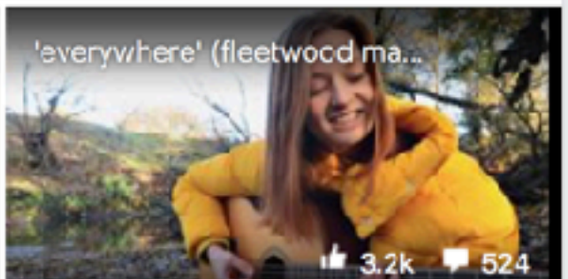






Musician/band

Community See all

80,176 people like this

77,641 people follow this

About See All

Musician/band

People

80,176 likes

People Also Like



doddleoddle

Public figure



Orla Gartland
Published by Alro Gartland [?]
Like This Page · Yesterday ·

80,000 LIKES! we are an ever-growing bunch of legends. 💕 brand new music coming early next year, I promise it'll be worth the wait

Tag photo | Add location | Edit

11925 people reached — Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share

374 — Top comments

Rebecca Balzani Barrow What were your parents THINKING?! 😂😂*jokes*
Like · Reply · Message · 1 · Yesterday at 10:04

Orla Gartland Thinking wow what a cool kid
Like · Reply · 5 · Commented on by Alro Gartland [?] · Yesterday at 10:05

View more replies

Ashton Sarver Discovered you not too long ago after iTunes recommended you to me... I'm impressed

Write a comment...

TWITTER



PRO - THE CASUAL, CONVERSATIONAL TONE OF THE SITE ALLOWS PERSONALITY TO SHINE THROUGH

PRO - IF YOU HAVE 10K FOLLOWERS, YOU DO APPEAR ON 10K TWITTER FEEDS

CON - THE FEED MOVES QUICKLY, SO ONLY REALLY ACTIVE USERS ON THE SITE ARE LIKELY TO TO SEE ALL YOUR CONTENT

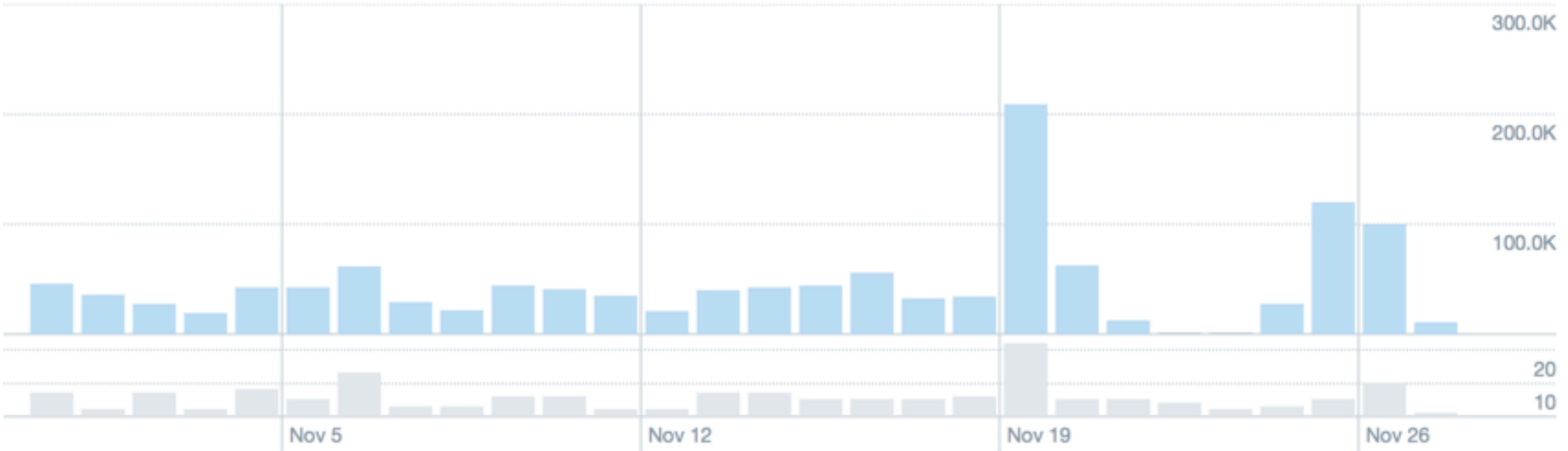
CON - MUCH LIKE FACEBOOK IT HAS NATIVE VIDEO UPLOADS - BUT STILL NO OPTION TO EMBED AUDIO - HAS TO RE-DIRECT TO SPOTIFY/SOUNDCLOUD!

Analytics Home Tweets Audiences Events More Orla Gartland

Tweet activity

Last 28 Days

Your Tweets earned **1.3M impressions** over this **28 day** period



YOUR TWEETS
During this 28 day
44.6K impressions

Tweets | Top Tweets | Tweets and replies | Promoted

	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement rate
orla gartland @orlagartland · Nov 24 LADS I GOT A NEW GUITAR pic.twitter.com/O0cWh4TwiE View Tweet activity	**118,458**	**24,096**	**20.3%**

Promote

Engagements
Showing 28 days with

Engagement rate
3.4%

PRO - PEOPLE GIVE MORE TIME/ATTENTION TO VIDEOS HERE THAN ON FACEBOOK

PRO - NICHE COMMUNITIES EXIST ON YOUTUBE - IF YOU ADD RELEVANT TAGS TO YOUR VIDEOS, THE ‘RELATED VIDEOS’ SECTION CAN BE A GREAT WAY FOR PEOPLE TO DISCOVER YOU

PRO - YOU CAN SPEAK DIRECTLY TO PEOPLE - A SUPER POWERFUL WAY TO GET INFO ACROSS

CON - IT’S A VERY SATURATED SITE AND SO IT CAN BE HARD TO STAND OUT

Top geographies

Watch time

United States (34%)
United Kingdom (21%)
Germany (5.5%)
Canada (5.0%)
Australia (3.8%)



Gender

Views

- Male (35%)
- Female (65%)



Traffic sources

Watch time

- Suggested videos (40%)
- Browse features (20%)
- Playlists (14%)
- Other (26%)



Playback locations

Watch time

- YouTube watch-page (99%)
- Embedded in external websites and apps (0.4%)
- YouTube channel page (0.3%)
- Other (0.0%)



PRO - PLAYLISTS (IF YOU CAN GET ON ‘EM!) ARE A GREAT CHANCE FOR EXPOSURE

PRO - IT’S A MUSIC PLATFORM SO YOU’RE NOT HAVING TO COMPETE AGAINST VIDEO CONTENT, PHOTOS, TEXT POSTS ETC

PRO - YOU ACTUALLY MAKE MONEY! 1 MILLION STREAMS = BETWEEN £4,000 & £5,000

CON - IT’S NOT AS NON-COMMITTAL AS OTHER SITES - YOU CAN’T SIMPLY UPLOAD AND TAKE TRACKS DOWN AT WILL

CON - TRACKS FOR SPOTIFY MUST BE WELL RECORDED, MIXED & MASTERED. A HIGHER QUALITY IS EXPECTED ! £££

HOW SHOULD I ACT ONLINE?



BE AUTHENTIC.

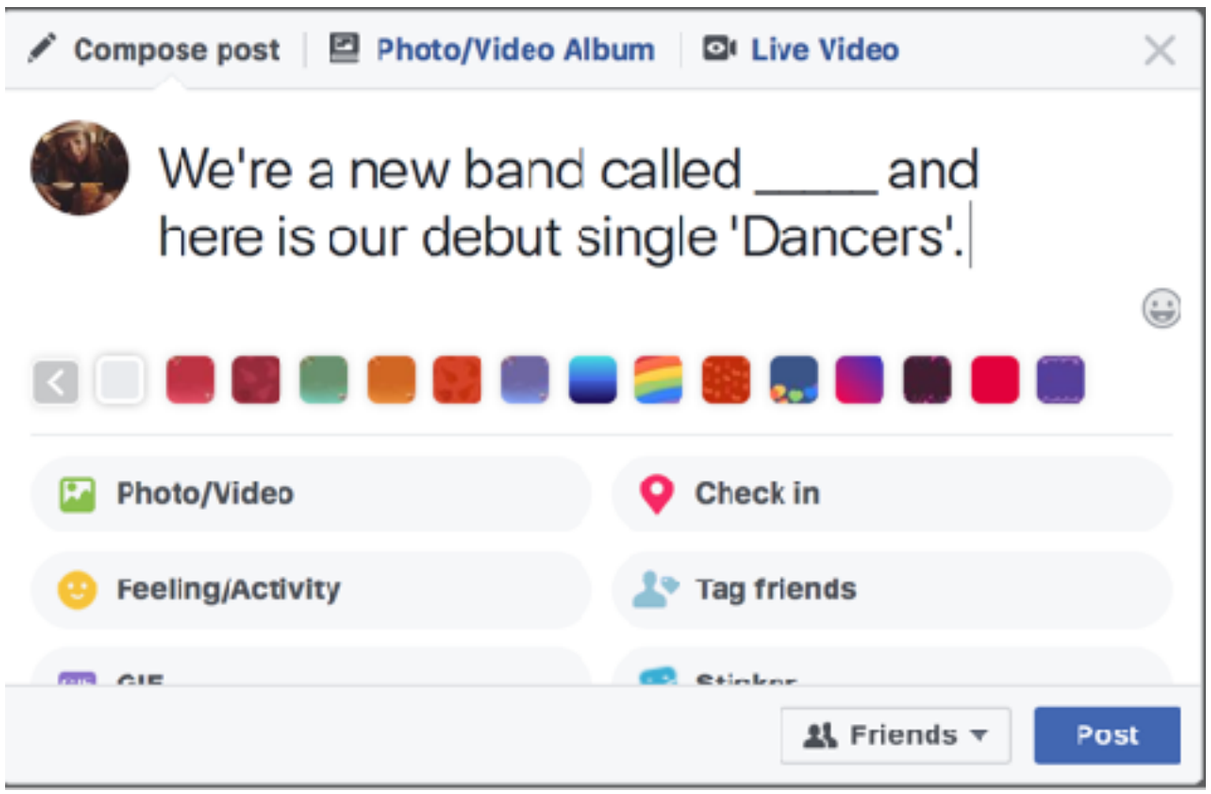
If your artist project is mysterious, even faceless, you should still **always be yourself online.** People can always tell when you're trying to be something you're not!

Start dialogues; engage your followers in conversations, not just about your music but about anything that's important to you. Allow your supporters to see you not just as an artist, but as a rounded human.. this only makes the artist/fan connection stronger.

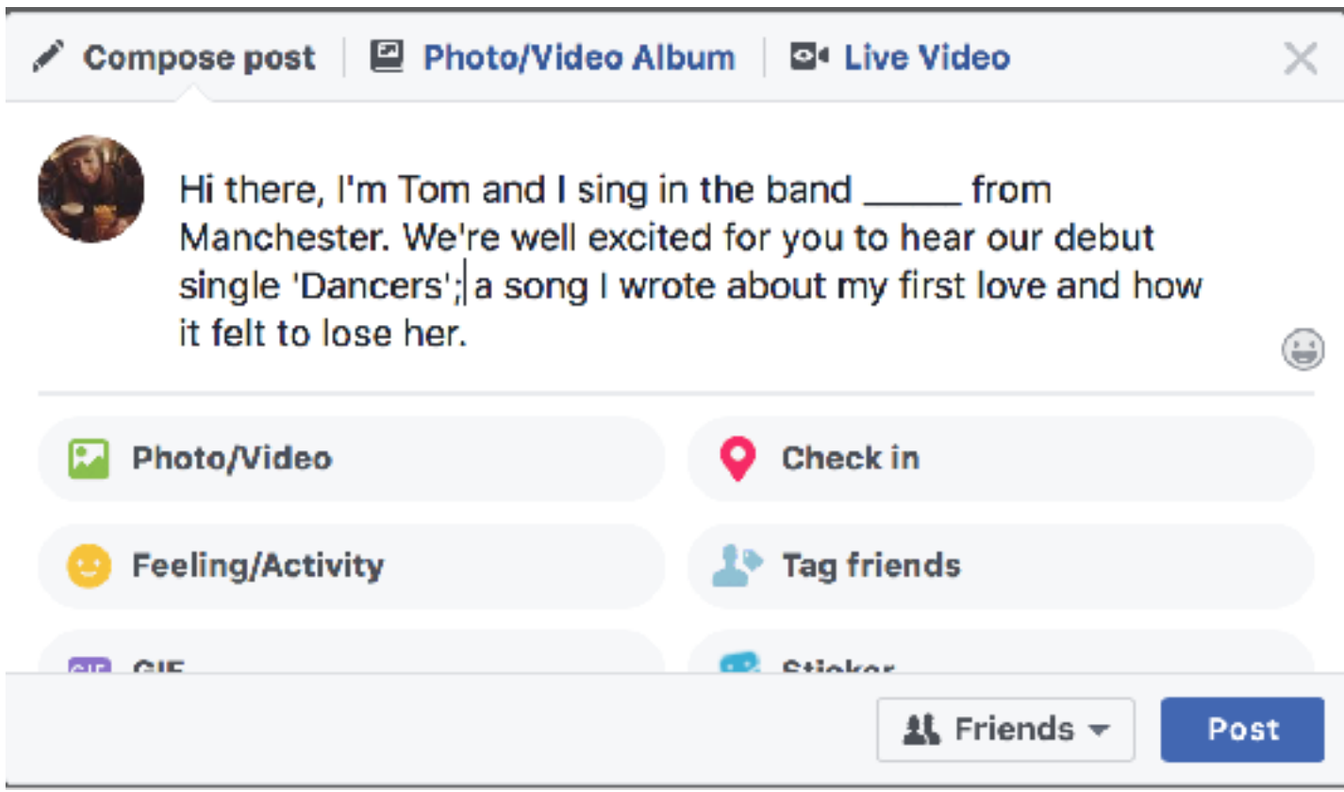
Of course, keep your private life private. Social media gives us a unique insight into the lives of others - whilst it's nice for your followers to know your favourite food, it's not cool for them to know everything about your family or personal info like where you live. Be smart!

random sample band! GIVE THEM A NAME





MEH



WOO! TELL ME MORE



orla gartland
@orlagartland

tomorrow I'm giving a talk in a school about *being an artist* and i'm curious - where do you find new music?

63% spotify

26% youtoob

5% radio

6% other (tell me!)

2,244 votes • 10 hours left



Terry Woods @Brainysod · 13h

Replying to @orlagartland

I don't use spotify, I prefer to buy music. But I often get suggested tracks on youtube. This'll lead me to buy an album/EP.

1 2



Conor Coughlan @conorcoughlan_ · 13h

That's the way to do it! Spotify and Apple Music should be used only as tools to discover new artists - I think they're incredibly useful for that. People need to get back to buying records.

1 2



Terry Woods @Brainysod · 12h

Honestly things like spotify are killing the industry. Kids don't want to pay for anything anymore. It used to be a treat to buy an album and have to make a choice between two when you could only afford one. Nobody makes money on their art anymore.

1 2



Conor Coughlan @conorcoughlan_ · 12h

Absolutely. It's just wrong - music isn't for rent. Power to ya man 👌

1



everett @holiday_eyes · 11h

Replying to @orlagartland

i voted for utube cos i feel like i find more new /artists/ there, people whose careers i want to follow, whereas i find a lot of new songs on spotify but usually they're just one-offs and i'm not grabbed enough to look into the artist. word of mouth is a big source too tho

1



Kaitlyn @kaitlynmartin11 · 12h

Replying to @orlagartland

Google play music!



Jonny Eveson @JonnyEveson · 12h

Replying to @orlagartland

Most of the time I let Apple Music Radio Playlists play throughout the day and it usually coughs up some great stuff.



Emi Salida **19 days !** @embly99 · 13h

Replying to @orlagartland

via recommendation!

5

CO-WRITING / COLLABORATING

Not all songwriters write songs completely on their own - it's more common than you'd probably think for artists to collaborate creatively with other artists, writers and producers.

Songwriters don't collaborate because they can't write on their own - another creative in the room to bounce ideas off can be an amazing experience, especially if they can push you to be better or explore a side to your writing you'd never go to on your own.



To effectively co-write, you must be willing to be vulnerable. Starting a musical idea from scratch or crafting a lyrical concept requires opening yourself right up in the company of another - or at least it should.. if it makes you feel exposed, you're doing it right.

Know your strengths and approach co-writing with an open mind - it's inevitable that you'll learn something new that can help you become a more rounded songwriter yourself.

BUILDING A TEAM

After working on your artist project for a while, you may decide you need some help, particularly with the business side of things. Not all creatives make great business people!



Before you start looking to build a team around you, it’s important to understand the different **roles!**

MANAGER



Your manager is without a doubt the most important person in your team - they'll help you assemble the others. Typically no established artist speaks directly to their booking agent or the head of their label - the manager **corresponds on their behalf.**

Your manager helps you **manage & schedule your time** in the most effective way. When you have no music to promote, your manager may organise writing sessions for you. When you're on tour promoting a new release, your manager may organise and schedule in promotional opportunities such as radio appearances.

Your manager should be able to plan and see the bigger picture. So it's totally important that *their vision for your music aligns with yours*.

MANAGER

Typically, artist managers take commission of about 15-20% on all relevant income. You should NEVER pay a manager up-front, or pay a wage on a regular basis. These kind of characters are COWBOYS to be avoided at all costs!



Seeing as managers earn from their artists in this way, they should only take on artists they truly believe in and will work hard for - if you earn, they earn!

BOOKING AGENTS

Booking agents **represent artists for live shows**. Booking agents can be independent or work for a larger booking agency, and typically have a **roster** of artists they look after all at once.



Much like the manager, your booking agent should be **thinking always of the bigger picture..** which gigs could lead to other gigs, which festivals suit your music best, which venues you should play headline shows in and at what stage.

Booking agents make money by taking a **percentage of the artist's show fee** - typically 10%.

RECORD LABELS



RECORD LABELS

A **recording contract** (**record deal**) is a legal **agreement** between a **record label** and a **recording** artist(s), where the artist makes a **record** for the **label** to sell and promote.

Artists are often given an ADVANCE up front, and all costs of producing & promoting their record will be covered by the label. In return the label will take commission on every one of the artist's income streams (360 deal) - this is all taken off before the artist or manager sees any £££.



RECORD LABELS

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

MAJOR RECORD LABELS (Universal, Sony, Warner and their sub-labels) operate in a very different way to INDEPENDENT record labels (everyone else). They tend to take different approaches with their artists and invest/take money from them in different ways.

The role of record labels in the music industry has changed hugely in the last few years. Major labels are taking fewer risks and struggling in some cases to “break” new artists.

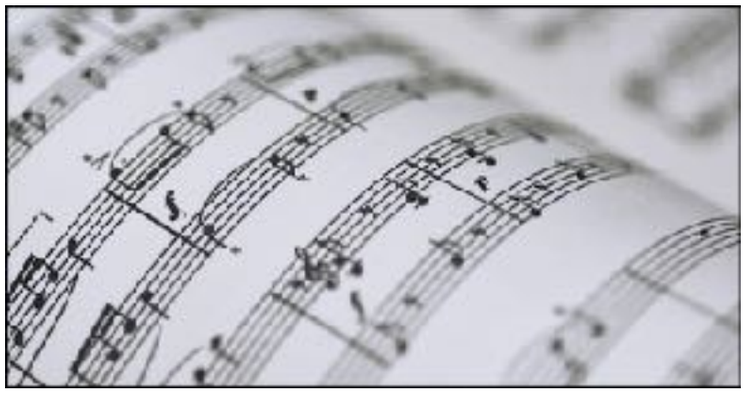
Many mainstream artists are choosing to go down the unsigned route, or to sign to an independent label - Chance the Rapper & Macklemore are both unsigned, and Adele is signed to an independent label (XL Records).

Recently there has been a culture of artists wanting full control of their work.

PUBLISHING COMPANIES

If you sign a publishing deal, your publisher/publishing company represents you as a songwriter. Songwriters who do not have artist projects of their own can still sign a publishing deal.

Your publisher owns the songwriting rights to your songs whilst you are signed to them (and sometimes for a while after). During this time they will typically try and seek opportunities to exploit your songs.. e.g. sync opportunities to ads, TV & film.



Your publisher wants you to be writing great material as often as possible, so they're likely to be setting up co-writing sessions with other writers & producers.

PUBLISHING COMPANIES



Much like record companies, there are MAJOR publishing companies & INDEPENDENT publishing companies, each operating with different approaches.

Most publishing deals also include an ADVANCE for the writer and an agreed split of their songwriting income (royalties/sync fees). Again - they invest in you and only earn if you earn, so a good publisher should work tirelessly to bring you opportunities as a writer.

Overall your team should be as motivated and enthusiastic about your music as you are - never settle for less.

OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

- Lawyer
- Radio Plugger / PR



And on the creative side..

- Producer
- MD/live session musicians/sound engineer

It’s normal for you to have to fill a lot of these roles yourself, especially at the beginning.

After a few months/years of operating independently you can identify your strengths and identify what aspects of being an artist you could use help with.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

OF BEING AN ARTIST

1) CREATE A POOL OF CONTACTS FOR YOURSELF



random stock image of man networking

- Surround yourself with creatives!
- Plan ahead!
- Get savvy with pulling (and giving) favours.

2) BE GOOD WITH YOUR MONEY



- Making music, releasing music, promoting music - it all costs money. Get comfortable with the fact that you'll most likely have to start from your own pocket !

- When it comes to signing publishing/record deals, try to sign contracts for the right reasons!

- It's all a gamble.. if you're the kind of person who needs a steady annual salary, being an artist is simply NOT for you.

3) TAKE YOUR TIME



- Development is EVERYTHING! Value it, enjoy it

- Doing it right beats doing it soon!

- You can only control what you can control

4) BE YOURSELF

- People value authenticity.

- Substance over style! Avoid following trends.

- Take what makes you different and wear it on your sleeve.. milk it if you have to!



5) FOCUS ON THE IMPORTANT THINGS

- The music is the most important thing.

- THE MUSIC IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.



6) DON'T SEE OTHER ARTISTS AS COMPETITION

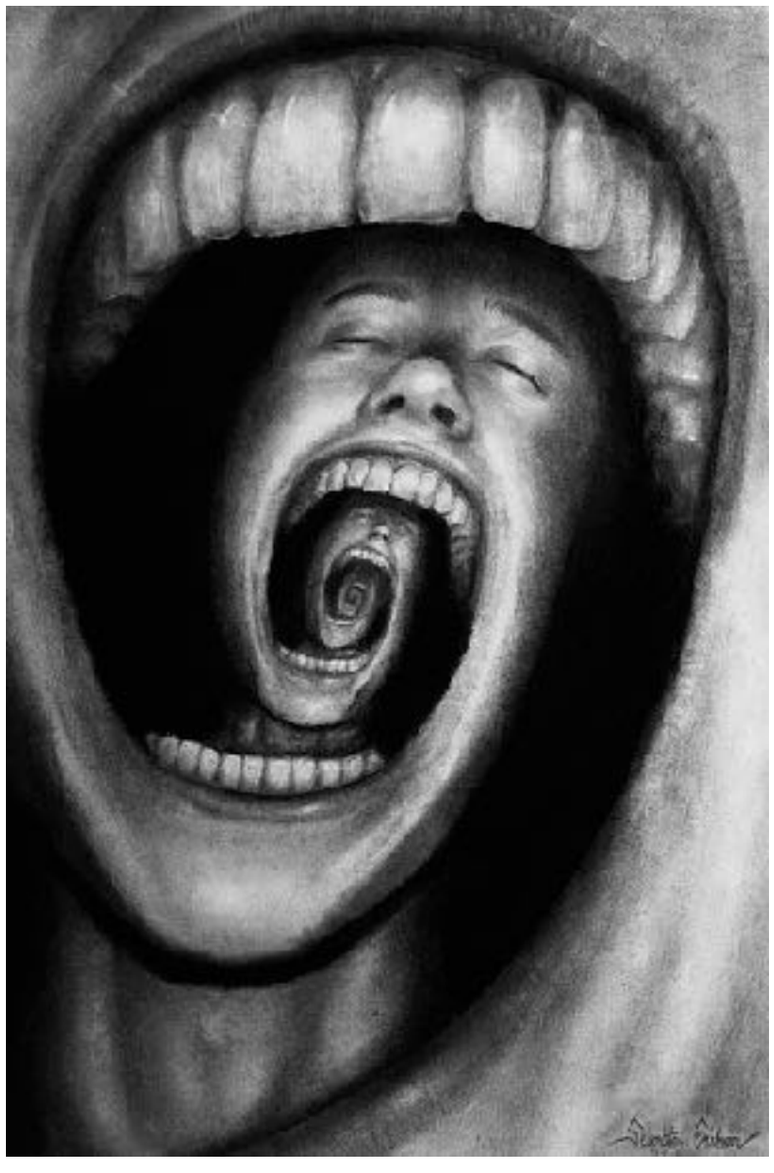


It is a MYTH that only one artist of a certain kind can be doing well at the one time!

Be humble; help each other, collaborate, share stories & experiences.

7) LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Being a creative, inward-facing person can really weigh down on your mental wellbeing; mix that with the idea of putting yourself 'out there' and it can become a tough, lonely lifestyle.



Try your best to see an uncertain future as exciting, not daunting!

Listen to your instincts & practice self-care. Seek help when you need to talk

8) HAVE PATIENCE



Great, lasting careers aren't built overnight. Don't expect instant success!

Put the work in, make mistakes, make more mistakes..

If you love what you make and truly believe it should be heard, then you should stick at it!

9) BE NICE

Seriously. The music industry is TINY.



10) VALUE YOURSELF!



Art can change lives.

It serves as an escape for so many people - that’s worth something.


BYE