



Written by Fares Bou Nassif · 3 September 2014

Jay Wud: He (Kind of) Walks The Line

The quiet, unexpectedly shy man with long hair and a moustache sat on the couch outside the lounge waiting for 4 o'clock, when I stumbled across him by mistake, immediately noticing him.

Sort of like you would with his music. He almost didn't look like a musician. Then he stood up, and I got it.



Jay Wud

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Sure, there's no definitive 'look' for an artist, but you kind of get a sense of quirkiness when you meet those people Steve Jobs referred to as "the rebels, the misfits": a kind of flair for creating.

Jay gives off a passionate humility and adoration for his craft that is rare. He is what his art is, and getting to know him helps you understand how far he can go with his music.

A man with who prefers doing rather than saying, creating instead of discussing, he talks about his work like it will, it does, define who he is, he just doesn't quite put it in words, letting it speak for itself.

The melody and the rhythm of his creation is, to him, enough of a spokesperson. Coaxing and reassurance is necessary.



Jay Wud

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And so, like pulling teeth, the questions finally bring him out of his shell, to an astute and insightful observation:

The region doesn't really help. It doesn't help us, it doesn't give the artist the tools needed to grow and create.

Trying to start a rock band here comes without support, without any framework, you just have to figure things out as you go, and it takes time to do it properly.

The music industry in this region is in its infancy. There's no structure to build on, as independent artists from diverse genres.

This region has a lot to offer, but there has to be a balance between Arabic pop artists and the whole gamut of talented, multi-genre, multi-lingual musicians out there. With a commercially driven industry that can't take risks and give genres that haven't been tried a tested a chance, we're stuck in somewhat of a vicious cycle. Radio stations and TV stations help in giving a bit more exposure, but the focus of the mainstream is still the familiar Arabic pop star.

I believe that one day an artist or a band will break from the Middle East and that's when the game will change.

**Jay Wud**

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His drive is motivated by that realisation. If he didn't do it himself, nobody will.

He keeps pushing; after several milestones in his life made him ever more certain that his one inescapable love is his guitar and his music.

This struggle is exactly why, today, he tries to be as active as time allows in helping younger, newer guitarists and songwriters find their way.

"We all have long day jobs and then we do this thing we love and, ultimately, it's hard to stay encouraged. It would be hard enough even if we did have a support system."

Through leveraging social media and constantly interacting with fans and followers, his Instagram a testament to his art, Jay is someone every kid with a guitar and a love for rock music can relate to.



Jay Wud
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"I was surprised when I walked out to play and all these kids, 16 to 18, knew every word, and were passionately singing along. It's beautiful when you see that you have a fan-base, and I just immediately felt like I wanted to keep in touch with them, to maintain that relationship. Social networks make that easy and fun."

He talks about moving, constantly going forward, struggling to break free of imaginary but tangible shackles, like his life depends on it. Because it does, to him. It's everything he believes in, which is what makes his music so powerfully intense, a sound that screams catharsis.

His need to break out has been with him since he was 18, opening for Robert Plant with The Kordz, and seeing this huge production happening around him, making him realise that there really is a huge world out there, and he could be part of it.

So, by 2010, struggling to find time to put a band together that could meet up to record an album, he recorded his own first album all on his own. New Blood was born in 2010.

STAY TUNED FOR PART 2 OF THE INTERVIEW.

About Jay Wud: Jay Wud is a Lebanese guitarist, singer, songwriter based in Dubai.

Jay collaborated with many musicians, bands and supported big acts such as Aerosmith, Robert Plant before kicking off his career.

Jay released Two albums, Debut album "New Blood" (2010) followed by second album "False Utopia" (2012). He's known for his guitar chops, versatile singing and stage persona which led him to support Guns'n'roses & Skunk Anansie as he kicked off his tour for his second album "False Utopia" early 2013.

Jay Wud is endorsed by Orange Amplifiers, Wild Custom Guitars, Shure mics & Steve Clayton picks. Currently working on the third album to be released early 2015

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