

= Annie (Norwegian singer) =

Anne Lilia Berge Strand (born 21 November 1977) , better known by her stage name Annie , is a Norwegian singer , songwriter , record producer and DJ . Annie began her recording career in 1999 with the underground hit single " The Greatest Hit " and gained international acclaim , particularly from music bloggers , for her debut album *Anniemal* (2004) .

= = Biography = =

After completing secondary school , Annie started DJing in Bergen , where she met house producer and soon @-@ to @-@ be boyfriend Tore Kroknes . In 1999 , Annie and Kroknes released the single " The Greatest Hit " , which sold out in two days and became popular in Norwegian and British nightclubs . Before Annie and Kroknes could release an album , Kroknes died from a congenital heart defect in 2001 . Annie went on to sign a record deal with Britain 's 679 Recordings in 2003 , releasing her debut album *Anniemal* in 2004 , for which she received widespread critical acclaim and several Norwegian music awards .

Annie has been praised for her unique , " indie " style of electropop and synthpop music and has been described as " a pop singer with credibility , an indie artist with one eye on the dancefloor " , and " the Kylie it 's cool to like " . Annie describes her music as " pop with strange edges " .

Annie released her second studio album , *Don 't Stop* , on the Smalltown Supersound label on 19 October 2009 . Annie currently lives in Berlin .

= = Early life = =

Annie was born in 1977 Trondheim , Norway and was raised in the coastal town of Kristiansand . Annie 's father , a church organ player , died of cancer when Annie was 7 . After a series of moves , Annie and her mother , a teacher of English and religion , moved to Norway 's second largest city Bergen when Annie was 13 . By this time , Annie sang in choirs .

At age 16 , Annie and a group of friends formed Suitcase , an indie rock band . Suitcase only performed once , before a panel of judges for a music competition where they did not reach the finals . A few years after Suitcase 's inception , Annie left the band when " the other members wanted to make trip hop . "

Annie attended secondary school until around 1997 , when she began to DJ around Bergen , getting acquainted with members of the Bergen music scene . During this time she met producer Mikal Tellé , owner of the Bergen @-@ based Tellé record label , and Norwegian house producer Tore Andreas Kroknes , known professionally as DJ Erot .

= = Music career = =

= = = 1999 ? 2002 : " Greatest Hit " = = =

Annie and Kroknes became romantically involved , and began to collaborate musically . Annie 's talent for writing melodies and vocals worked well with Kroknes 's production skills . Annie launched her solo singing career in 1999 with the single " Greatest Hit " . The song was recorded after Annie played Madonna 's song " Everybody " for Kroknes , who was experiencing a creative block at the time . Kroknes sampled the song , and Annie started to sing a melody to it . They recorded and released the song under the Tellé label . The song saw a limited release of 500 7 @-@ inch singles , which sold out in two days . " Greatest Hit " became an underground club hit in Norway and Britain , and Annie received offers for record contracts . Annie reflects that she and Kroknes had recorded the song " for fun " , but with the success of the single , Annie says , " I realized that I could actually make a living out of this . "

Annie and Kroknes made plans to release an album and began recording " I Will Get On " in 2000 .

However , Kroknes , who was born with a degenerative heart condition , fell ill near the end of 2000 and was hospitalized repeatedly . In April 2001 , Kroknes died of complications from his heart condition at the age of 23 . Annie told Clubbing Magazine :

" After that , I was so depressed I just wasn 't able to do anything . I stayed at home , away from everyone , completely in my own world . I wanted to make the album with Tore ? that was the plan . After he died I just didn 't think I had the heart . But then I thought , ' Right , you 're really depressed now but you have to make this album . Tore would be quite pissed off if you just stopped doing anything . ' "

After a hiatus from music , Annie returned to DJing and songwriting in late 2001 , running a club night called Pop Till You Drop at the Agora nightclub in Bergen with DJ friend Fröken Blytt . Among the music acts booked for Pop Till You Drop were Peaches , DJ Adam Mac , and Finnish DJ Timo Kaukolampi of Op : I Bastards . Annie later DJed at Kaukolampi 's own night club in Helsinki and lent her vocals to some Op : I Bastards tracks .

= = = 2003 ? 05 : Anniemal = = =

Annie was signed to British label 679 Recordings in March 2003 . Annie recorded the track " Kiss Me " with Kaukolampi , and was approached by Richard X to record vocals for the track " Just Friends " on Richard X Presents His X @-@ Factor Vol . 1 , released in August 2003 . In return , he and Hannah Robinson co @-@ wrote " Chewing Gum " and " Me Plus One " for Annie . Annie and Richard X continued to work together , releasing the single " Chewing Gum " in Annie 's name in September 2004 . The track was named single of the week by NME soon after its release , and charted in the UK at number 25 .

Later that year , Annie released her debut CD Anniemal , collaborating with Timo Kaukolampi , Richard X , and fellow Norwegians Röyksopp . The album featured " The Greatest Hit " , " Chewing Gum " , and the album 's second single " Heartbeat " . The song , produced by Röyksopp , was voted number one on Pitchfork Media 's Top 50 Singles of 2004 list , before the song was officially released . " Chewing Gum " held the number @-@ eleven spot on that same list . " Heartbeat " was remixed by Canadian electronic duo MSTRKRFT in 2005 .

In 2005 , Annie won several awards for her work , including Best Pop Album and Best Newcomer at the Norwegian Alarm Awards . " Chewing Gum " had also been nominated for Song of the Year . In addition , Annie won the Best Newcomer award at the prestigious Spellemannprisen . Annie 's 5 February performance at the Alarm Awards was one of the first live performances of her solo career .

Annie toured around the world in 2005 to promote Anniemal , including a brief stint opening for Saint Etienne , to whom she had sent a demo tape while still in Suitcase in 1996 . Annie performed at sold out club venues in the United States in 2005 , and returned to the US later that year .

In 2005 , Annie released a DJ mix album as part of ! K7 's DJ @-@ Kicks series . Around this time , she began a record label called Totally , with Timo Kaukolampi , and planned to release a 12 " single with Datarock . She also provided vocals for the Teddybears track " Yours to Keep " as well as the Ercola track " Follow Me " , and re @-@ recorded her songs " Chewing Gum " and " Heartbeat " in Simlish for The Sims 2 : Nightlife 's Danish and Norwegian localisations .

= = = 2006 ? 10 : Don 't Stop = = =

In January 2007 , Annie signed an international deal with Island Records , owned by Universal Music Group . She had planned to release her second album , Don 't Stop , in September 2008 , preceded by the Richard X @-@ produced single " I Know UR Girlfriend Hates Me " , after she finished touring on the Popjustice Wonky Pop Tour . In November 2008 , Annie announced that due to internal problems within the label , she had decided to part ways with Island Records ; in interviews following the eventual release of Don 't Stop , Annie explained that her original A & R agent at the label , Nick Gatfield , left to join EMI UK , and Annie left the label because her new agent was not enthusiastic about her work . Although this left her second album 's future uncertain ,

she retained legal control over the songs she recorded during her contracted period with the label . Verdens Gang suggested that the split with the label was precipitated by the poor chart performance of " I Know UR Girlfriend Hates Me " , which charted at number fifty @-@ four in the UK . Don 't Stop leaked in its original incarnation in 2008 .

After her departure from Island Records , Annie released a new single , " Anthonio " , via producer Richard X 's Pleasure Masters label in May 2009 . The song tells the story of a holiday affair between Annie and the title character ; Annie described the song as " the ultimate summer track " .

In August 2009 , Pitchfork announced that Don 't Stop would be released via independent label Smalltown Supersound and Annie 's own label Totally Records . It came out in the UK on 19 October 2009 and in the US on 17 November . Don 't Stop includes collaborations with former collaborators Richard X and Timo Kaukolampi , as well as British producers Xenomania and Paul Epworth . The album 's release was preceded by two digital singles : " Songs Remind Me of You " , a Richard X production , and " My Love Is Better " , which was produced by Xenomania and features guitar from Alex Kapranos of Franz Ferdinand . The latter initially featured backing vocals by British pop group Girls Aloud , but their record label intervened .

Annie co @-@ wrote Mini Viva 's debut single " Left My Heart in Tokyo " , released in September 2009 and produced by Xenomania .

= = = 2010 ? present : The A & R EP / Endless Vacation EP = = =

In October 2010 , Xenomania 's News Blog reported that Annie was back in the studio recording her follow up to 2009 's " Don 't Stop " . Annie started recording in August 2010 with Brian Higgins at Xenomania 's studios in Kent , England . During 2010 , she also contributed vocals to the song " Crazy for You " by New York electro duo Designer Drugs (who remixed her track " Anthonio ") for their debut album Hardcore / Softcore , released on February 2011 and to " Alien Summer " by French producer The Toxic Avenger , for their album Angst released on 18 May 2011 . By the second half of 2011 , Annie began working on The Night Within Us ! , an EP that was slated for an early 2012 release . The Skatebard @-@ produced title track and soon @-@ to @-@ be single " The Night Within " , is the theme song for an homonymous short film by Hildegunn Waerness and part of an interdisciplinary project by Norwegian artist Bjarne Melgaard . The installation and set of paintings , exhibited on the Guido W. Baudach gallery in Berlin from 26 November 2011 to 25 February 2012 , are based on the lyrics and theme of the song , which " deal with love and loss " , and capture " the existential need for human tenderness , trust and partnership on one hand , and the painful realisation of lies , deceit and abandonment " , all of which have been somewhat present on Melgaard 's work . A video has been done for the song , based almost entirely on the exhibition .

Annie released the single " Tubestops and Lonely Hearts " on April 26 , 2013 . The track is a " song for the dance floor , " and is , " inspired by the rave scene in Bergen . "

The A & R EP was released on July 29 , 2013 , and features the single " Back Together " .

On February 7 , 2014 Annie released " Russian Kiss " , a song with Bjarne Melgaard and Richard X , which condemns Russia 's homophobic laws .

On August 20 and 21 , 2014 , Annie was a guest member of the jury on Idol Norway .

On October 16 , 2015 , Annie released an EP entitled Endless Vacation .

= = Personal life = =

Annie currently lives in Berlin , where she moved after being evicted from the apartment in Bergen she was living in because it was going to be turned into a hotel . She owned a cat named Joey , whom she named after both Joey Ramone and Joey McIntyre of New Kids on the Block . Joey died on 29 January 2010 . Annie is an avid reader and follows global politics . She is friends with musician Peaches . Her musical influences include Madonna , Saint Etienne , the Pet Shop Boys , and Kate Bush . She has a green belt in karate .

= = Discography = =

= = = Studio albums = = =

Anniemal (2004)

Don 't Stop (2009)