



LOVSKI DOES IT DIFFERENTLY

TURNING A PASSION
INTO A PROFESSION

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Music has globalized tremendously in the past decennium. Back in the early 2000's the music industry was falling apart due to the decrease in CD sales caused by the growing popularity of downloading illegal music. Luckily, the music industry reinvented itself and over the last years and streaming culture has developed. This shift from old school channels, such as radio and CD's, to streaming platforms and online video channels, had a significant impact on the geography of music. Now, the entire world has access to online platforms and all the music available there. Borders are not an obstacle anymore for artists to make their music worldwide (*R. Van Gijssel, November 2020*). One of the artists who used this aspect in their advantage is Igor Sekulovic who was born in Banja Luka, former Yugoslavia, and came to the Netherlands as a refugee at the age of 10 years old. What started out as an unfortunate experience, turned out to be the beginning of the successful story of 'This is LOVSKI.'

Who is Igor Sekulovic?

When he arrived in the Netherlands, young Igor started his school career. After finishing his HAVO degree, Igor applied for several schools such as the rock academy in Tilburg, and Rotterdam Conservatorium. He has always had a passion for music, which started with his sister buying him a guitar when he was younger.

"My sister brought me a crappy electrical guitar with a crappy amplifier, I still have it!" Igor states, showing he holds this gift dear to his heart as this was the start of his life and career today. The guitar was also a way to escape his daily routine and offered him the discipline to work hard to become a good at something.

He got accepted into both schools he applied for however, decided to go to Tilburg due to a specific guitar teacher. He used it when he wanted to escape his daily routine and it also gave him the discipline to work hard to become good at something.

While attending the Rock academy, Igor dedicated his graduation project to his Balkan heritage. He started to gather different musicians playing typical instruments belonging to the Balkan music scene, such as the double bass, trumpets, saxophone, accordion and even a bouzouki. Together with other Dutch students, he put on a big show dedicated to Balkan sounds and Igor describes the outcome as *"surprisingly excellent! In total honesty, I was afraid the audience would think that this kind of music was rather funny, and that they could not understand it."*

After this enormous success, the group decided to create a big festival setlist for one year and started the so-called 'Project Rakija.' They gained quite a success within the Netherlands and achieved a large community behind them. Thanks to their popularity, they were able to start playing at well-known festivals such as Sziget, Lowlands and more all over Europe.

Despite the project getting much recognition through several prizes, Igor decided to leave the group to start a new project on his own called 'This is LOVSKI.' This name comes from his original last name, Sekulovic, and it refers to "something crazy." According to Igor This is LOVSKI was created because *"I want to create something, I don't know exactly what, but it is mine."* This name came very natural to him, and he feels like it truly represents the meaning of his work

LOVSKI in a nutshell

Since starting This is LOVSKI, Sekulovic started his most recent project called Sunshine Sound. When asked about the project, the producer and artist explained Sunshine Sound is his own name for the music he makes. It does not necessarily fall into a genre of music, he describes it as an overall positive vibe. The purpose of this project is to look for a deep connection on a human level between This is LOVSKI and his audience. Igor explains that this project aims at creating an international feeling,

especially during his performances. Where everyone feels welcomed and accepted and where differences do not matter.

Igor's Balkan roots were a reoccurring topic during our interview, and he mentioned that he often writes with the Bosnian community here in the Netherlands. As a bilingual person, Igor prefers to sing in English as it is the most international language. In addition, it allows him to reach a greater audience which resonates with the initial goal of This is LOVSKI to be inclusive, multicultural, and international. An interesting discovery was that the artist found a lot of acceptance in the Dutch music industry towards his cultural background, although merely a small community truly accepts and listens to his music. However, he is okay with that. *"Be normal, you are crazy enough"* he says.

Another side of LOVSKI

During our conversation, Igor informed about something new he has been working on. The concept that the artist is developing connects art to music. He does this by taking an object of any kind and connect his music to this piece. The owner of this item scans it with their phone, similarly to a QR-code, and is then redirected to private This is LOVSKI music. This way, the consumer can buy that feeling in their house and not on Spotify as Igor states. This project is still at its early stages, but he is excited to develop this idea in the upcoming years. One thing is sure, it is going to be very exclusive and a real must-have!

Brabant C's influence

Brabant C has been a huge help for Igor. They fund his project in multiple ways. Think about help in productions, becoming more sustainable and promotions and connections. Brabant C provides a greater network for him, which helps him with spreading his music. Igor tell us they trust his vision on music and that gives him a warm feeling. Without Brabant C, Sekulovic would not be where he is today.

Igor knows what he wants in life, and in the end, we asked him where he saw himself in 5 or 10 years. The good news is, he said that he will still be creating music and performing on stage! In addition, he wants to connect the world with more communities and sustainable music. His personal advice to artists: "All artists should stay connected with many other artists, don't be competitive and push them away. Be sustainable and help eachother."

References

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